

Woman's Advocacy of Peace

The advocates of war, and of that "preparation" which insures war, are prone to describe peace propagandists as "feminine" and "womanish"; they speak contemptuously of "woman's crusade against militarism."

My purpose in calling attention to the lack of respect with which the jingoes treat woman's efforts in behalf of peace is to emphasize the influence that the present war is having in shaping opinion as to woman's right to a voice in these matters. Those who boast of the possession of martial spirit consider war a "man's game," because it is man who kills or is killed in war. But who is man that he should be so ready to slaughter and to offer himself for slaughter? Is he some independent creature who comes into the world OF himself, lives in the world BY himself and departs from the world WITHOUT CONCERN TO OTHERS? On the contrary, his life begins in the travail of a woman—in anxiety and pain such as the warrior does not know. At his birth the most helpless of all animate things, man needs and receives a woman's care for many years. If you would know which parent's care contributes most to his welfare, compare the fate of the motherless boy with the fate of the fatherless boy. Is the boy at liberty to forget his duty to his mother and throw himself into battle without thought of her future need and comfort? And is she, after having contributed him to the world and prepared him for his work, to sit silent while men make a mockery of her suffering and her tears?

But the mother is also a wife and, as wife, co-tenant of earth's only paradise, the home. Is she to have nothing to say when that home is made desolate by the cry for blood? Is it no concern of hers that the man to whom she pledged her life is demanded that he may give his body to the bullets of the enemy? By what logic shall we say that only the one who leaves the home is entitled to decide questions of peace and war while the one who stays at home and bears a double burden has no claim to voice or choice? What moral right has a man to link his fortune with a woman, make her the mother of his children, bring increasing responsibilities upon her and then deny her a vote when the hour comes for the nation to decide whether he shall live with her or die a soldier's death? "He must respond to his country's call," you say? Yes, but who constitute "his country"? And who shall frame the call? Are the men the only inhabitants of the country—the only ones who can rightfully speak for the country? If those who thirst for gore are to use the ballot to impress their views upon the country, why should not the country have the benefit of woman's conscience also at the polls?

If war is to be determined by financial interests, why should woman have no voice in weighing those interests? If, on the other hand, war is a matter of honor, who will say that man has a finer sense of honor than woman? And by what process of reasoning can we reach the conclusion that man only can wisely decide questions that involve the sacrifice of human life?

The advocates of militarism confuse the punishments inflicted upon individuals for the commission of crime with the punishments which nations inflict upon each other by war. There is a very marked distinction. In criminal punishments the penalty falls upon those who are guilty and only after fair trial. In war the penalty falls upon guilty and innocent alike—more, in fact, upon the innocent than upon the guilty. Its heaviest burdens are borne by women and children. The men who cause or declare war seldom enlist; the men who fall in battle are not usually potential in deciding for war or peace—

"Theirs not to reason why—
Theirs but to do and die."

When a criminal is imprisoned or executed it is upon the theory that society is better off without him, but no such presumption justifies the maiming or the killing of the very pick of the nation. War calls for those who have health and strength—not for those who are feeble and weak. The drain that war inflicts upon society is incalculable because it is impossible to compute the value of lives made fruitful by the stimulus of great ideals.

The war now raging in Europe can not fail to impress the thoughtful people of this country with the conviction that woman not only needs

the ballot to protect her rights as wife and mother, but that society needs woman's active influence in government on the side of those peaceful methods to which the world is looking. But whether the time be long or short before woman assumes the responsibilities of suffrage, woman's influence is certain to be an increasing factor in the formation of that public opinion which, by controlling governments, speaks the word that determines the methods to be employed in the settling of international disputes—and this war will exert a tremendous influence in this direction.

W. J. BRYAN.

WHAT "FADS"?

Ex-President Taft is reported as saying, at Kansas City, that the time has come to welcome the progressives back to the republican party, but he insists that "They must leave behind their fads, nostrums and isms." It requires some boldness for a defeated presidential candidate, who received less than HALF his party's vote, to fix the terms and conditions upon which the majority will be permitted to return to the organization controlled by the minority, and it will be interesting to learn just what Mr. Taft regards as "fads, nostrums and isms." These words have never been clearly defined and are promiscuously applied as epithets to most anything that is regarded as objectionable by the person using them. The progressive majority must be very anxious to return to the standpat minority if they are willing to submit to the humiliating terms imposed by the arrogant reactionaries. They must "have their principles well under control" if they can so easily put aside the views which led them to abandon the republican organization. At Chicago the standpatters would have been willing to allow the progressives to write the platform, but now they must give up their "fads, nostrums and isms," and meekly bow to Wall street and smilingly submit to the plutocratic lash. The four years will have witnessed a remarkable change if Mr. Taft, discredited in 1912 by the smallest vote received by any republican candidate, can in 1916 dictate terms to the insurgents who caused this mortification. The republican reformers will make their claim to virtue seem ridiculous if they do not spurn with indignation the terms proposed.

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The ostensible purpose of tariff laws is to give added wages to labor. The real purpose is to give bonuses to manufacturers. That there is no close relation between tariffs and wages is shown by a recent report of the federal bureau of labor statistics, covering wages in the iron and steel industry. The last two tariff laws reduced the protection given this industry materially, because there was no argument to sustain the old rates, yet the official figures show that in spite of a reduction of about 3 per cent in hours there was an increase in weekly earnings ranging from 6.6 per cent to 26.4 per cent. between 1907 and 1913.

The Nebraska state homeopathic society, at its recent session, went on record as being in favor of prohibition, both national and state. The Nebraska Medical society had previously adopted similar resolutions. The doctors based their condemnation on the injurious effects of alcohol upon the human system, and declared it was under the ban of scientists. The national brotherhood of engineers also went on record during the past month in favor of prohibition. John Barleycorn's lease of life is rapidly ending.

When it came to remodeling the state constitution of New York the republicans chosen were from the ranks of the men who have made Boss Barnes possible and included even the boss himself. These men, who are the kind of representatives business men select, are the ones who will keep on representing the republican party in the halls of government. Fine little outlook for the progressives who are receiving such urgent invitations to enter the fold again.

Mr. Carnegie yearly distributes through his hero fund a large sum of money to those who have been adjudged to have performed some feat of daring during the year. Mr. Carnegie's attention is earnestly requested to the fact that Mr. Taft is showing unmistakable signs of running for president again.

The manufacture of jingo sentiment in the United States is another industry that is assuming large proportions, but the democratic tariff bill can not be urged as having in anywise fostered this.

The Mexican Situation

On another page will be found the president's statement in regard to Mexico. It covers the situation so completely that nothing need be added to it. It may be divided into two parts: First, the statement of the situation in Mexico—two years and more of turbulence, with the results that inevitably follow. It began with the overthrow of Madero government by General Huerta and was followed with the expulsion of General Huerta by the insurgents, under the leadership of Generals Carranza and Villa. This was followed in turn by a division in the ranks of the constitutionalists which resulted in war between those who had by co-operation overcome Huerta and his supporters.

The second part of the president's statement deals with the future. He appeals to the leaders of faction in Mexico to "act, to act together, and to act promptly for the relief and redemption of their prostrate country." If they can not "accommodate their differences and unite for this great purpose within a very short time, this government will be constrained to decide what means should be employed by the United States in order to help Mexico save herself and serve her people." The president has left himself all the latitude possible when he says that it will be the duty of this government "to decide what means should be employed." One sentence which throws light upon the president's purpose reads, "It (the government of the United States) must presently do what it has not hitherto done or felt at liberty to do, lend its active moral support to some man or group of men, if such may be found, who can rally the suffering people of Mexico to their support in an effort to ignore, if they can not unite, the warring factions of the country, return to the constitution of the republic so long in abeyance, and set up a government at Mexico City which the great powers of the world can recognize and deal with, a government with whom the program of the revolution will be a business and not merely a platform."

Not only the people of the United States, but the people of the western hemisphere and all the world unite in the earnest hope that the president's appeal will be heeded by the leaders of Mexico and that they will find it possible to put aside their differences and act together for the restoration of peace and orderly government.

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The republican publicity bureau recently sent out this, among other items: "The National Association of Hosiery and Underwear Manufacturers has just held its annual convention, and all the speakers discovered that the one sure-fire method of getting a roaring response from the delegates was to hand out a slam at the administration for its lack of business sense." By comparing the hosiery and underwear schedules of the Payne-Aldrich tariff law with those of the administration law, it will be easy to see why these responses from delegates were "roaring" and what, in their opinion, constitutes "business sense."

One of the criticisms republicans are leveling at the administration is that "no man borrows easier or in any other place than before the federal reserve banks were opened." In view of the fact that the purpose of the federal reserve bank was not to increase the borrowing capacity of men who had already borrowed to the limit of their credit, but was to make available more money for legitimate business expansion, the value of such criticism may be rightly gauged.

In the last few years Mr. Roosevelt has had a great deal to say about an invisible government, and the recent lawsuit he had with Mr. Barnes gives a great deal of light upon the extent of the colonel's knowledge of the workings of the invisible government. He gave three instances of where he appointed men Platt told him he desired named, and explained that he had found "an element of righteousness" in Platt that he desired to develop.

"The need of military preparation" is the title of most of the jingo speeches and articles one reads these days. It should be noted that none of these gentlemen accurately specify what they consider adequate military preparation. They really want the United States to maintain a large enough army and navy to defeat all comers, but they have discretion enough not to submit such a program for the approval of the voters.