

can offer mediation, jointly or severally. It is not an act of hostility, but an act of friendship. The Hague Convention, to which all the governments are parties, expressly declares that the offer of mediation shall not be considered an unfriendly act. The duty of offering mediation may seem to rest primarily upon the United States, the largest of the neutral nations and the one most intimately bound by ties of blood to all the belligerents. The United States did make an offer immediately after the war began, but why not again and again and again, until our offer or SOME OTHER OFFER is accepted? Why not stand at the door and knock, as we would at the door of a friend if we felt that the friend was in need and that we could render a service?

But our action or failure to act need not deter any other neutral country from acting. This is not a time to stand on ceremony; if any other country for any reason—no matter what that reason may be—is in a better position than we to tender its good offices, it should not delay for a moment. It is for the belligerents to decide which offer, if any, they will accept. I am sure they will not complain if, following the prompting of our hearts, we beseech them to let us help them back to the paths of peace.

Will they object on the ground that they will not consent to any peace until they have assurances that it will be a PERMANENT peace? That suggestion has been made—I think both sides have expressed a desire that the peace, when secured, shall be permanent—but who can give a pledge as to the future? If fear that the peace may not be permanent is given as the reason for refusal it is not a sufficient reason. While no one can stand surety for what may come, it is not difficult to adopt measures which will give far greater assurance of permanent peace than the world has ever known before.

Second. The treaty in which they join should provide for INVESTIGATION by a permanent international commission of EVERY DISPUTE that may arise, no matter what its character or nature. The United States has already made thirty treaties embodying this principle and these thirty treaties link our country to nearly three-quarters of all the inhabitants of the world. We have such a treaty in force between the United States and four of the countries now at war—Great Britain, France, Russia and Italy. The principle of this treaty has been accepted by three other belligerents—Germany, Austria and Belgium—although treaties with these nations have not yet been negotiated. THESE SEVEN WARRING NATIONS HAVE ENDORSED THE PRINCIPLE EMBODIED IN THESE TREATIES, NAMELY, THAT THERE SHALL BE NO DECLARATION OF WAR OR COMMENCEMENT OF HOSTILITIES UNTIL THE SUBJECT IN DISPUTE HAS BEEN INVESTIGATED BY AN INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION. Why can they not apply the principle as between themselves? What cause of war is of such magnitude that nations can afford to commence shooting at each other before the cause is investigated? A treaty such as those which now protect the peace of the United States would give a year's time for investigation and report, and who doubts that a year's time would be sufficient to reach an amicable solution of almost every difficulty? Does anyone suppose that the present war would have been begun if a year's time had been taken to investigate the dispute between Austria and Serbia? It will be remembered that Serbia had only TWENTY-FOUR hours in which to reply and it will also be remembered that during this brief time the rulers of the old world endeavored to find a means of preventing war. If they had only had some machinery which they could have employed to avert war, how gladly would they have availed themselves of it! The machinery provided by treaty can be resorted to with honor—yes, with honor—no matter how high a sense of honor the nation has. The trouble has been that while the nations were abundantly provided with MACHINERY FOR CONDUCTING WAR, they possessed no machinery for the promotion of peace. A year's time allows passion to subside and reason to resume its sway—it allows man to act when he is calm instead of having to act when he is angry. When a man is angry he swaggers around and talks about what he can do, and he often overestimates his strength; when he is calm he considers what he OUGHT to do. When he is angry he hears the rumbling of earthquakes and the sweep of the hurricane; when he is calm he listens to the still small voice of conscience.

Third. While the period of investigation provided for in our treaties will go far toward pre-

venting war, still even a year's deliberation does not give complete protection. In order to secure the investigation of all questions without exception, it was necessary to reserve to the contracting parties liberty of action at the conclusion of the investigation. War is thus reduced from a probability to a mere possibility, and this is an immeasurable advance; but the assurance of permanent peace can not be given until the desire for war is eradicated from the human heart. Compulsory periods of investigation supply the machinery by which nations can maintain peace with honor IF THEY SO DESIRE, but the final work of the advocates of peace is educational—it is the cultivation of the spirit of brotherhood condensed into the commandment, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." Is it impossible to imagine a civilization in which greatness will be measured by service and in which the rivalry will be a rivalry in doing good? No one doubts that the lot of each member of society would be infinitely better under such conditions; why not strive to bring about such conditions? Is it visionary to hope and labor for this end? "Where there is no vision the people perish." It is a "death grapple in the darkness twixt old systems and the Word." The old system has been broken down; it can let loose the furies, but it can not bind them; it is impotent to save. The question is not whether the Word will triumph—that is certain—but when? And after what sufferings?

Thomas Carlyle, his voice rising clear and strong above the babble of mammon, asked, in the closing chapters of his French Revolution: "Hast thou considered how Thought is stronger than Artillery-parks, and (were it fifty years after death and martyrdom, or were it two thousand years) writes and unwrites Acts of Parliament, removes mountains; models the world like soft clay? Also how the beginning of all Thought, worth the name, is Love."

The truth which he uttered is still truth, and, no matter who uttered it, the thought is the thought of Him who spake as never man spake; who was described in prophecy as The Prince of Peace; whose coming was greeted with the song of "Peace on Earth; Good Will to Men," and whose teachings, when applied, will usher in the enduring peace of an universal brotherhood.

W. J. BRYAN.

LABOR'S INTEREST IN PEACE

(Extract from speech delivered by William Jennings Bryan at a peace meeting held at Carnegie hall, New York, June 19, 1915, under the auspices of organized labor.)

I could find no more favorable auspices under which to begin the work which I feel it my duty to perform, namely, to aid in the crystallizing of the sentiment in favor of peace in support of the president in his efforts to reach an amicable settlement of all differences that may, during the war, arise between this country and belligerent powers.

The auspices are favorable because no portion of our community is more deeply interested in the prevention of war than that element known as the labor element, an honorable appellation which implies a compliment to, rather than a reflection upon, those to whom it is applied.

There is no reason why any citizen of this country should desire war and I am sure that the number of those who do actually desire it is infinitesimally small. This class is made up of those who have a pecuniary interest in war and of those who regard war as a moral stimulant. Outside of the class actually desiring war there is a somewhat larger class whose members, while opposing war as a general proposition and desiring peace in the abstract, magnify international differences. They believe that a nation's prestige requires it to constantly reiterate its willingness and readiness to resort to force. The great mass of our people, however, prefer the use of reason to the use of force in the settlement of international differences, and not only consider it honorable to agree to peaceful means, when proposed for the settlement of disputes, but honorable to PROPOSE a resort to peaceful means. Instead of regarding love of peace as a weakness they regard it as manly and praiseworthy. The voice of this peace-loving mass is not always heard; it is sometimes drowned in the noisy clamor of that portion of the press which represents the special interests.

Of all the advocates of peace, none have a

deeper interest in its preservation than the laboring man. He not only has no pecuniary interest in war, but he recognizes that war is hurtful to him, no matter from what standpoint it is viewed. It deranges business and that is apt to subject the laboring man to idleness; it increases taxes and the poor man pays more than his share of the taxes. Then, too, he may be called upon to offer himself as a defender in arms; in fact, the laboring men are most likely to respond to the first call. They are an important part of that great army of producers who not only create the nation's wealth in time of peace, but who also fight the nation's battles in time of war. The families of the laboring men, too, suffer more from war than the families of the rich, for the soldier who is buried in an unknown grave seldom leaves an estate to safeguard his widow and his children; and it must be remembered that, on the average, he leaves more children than the rich man. It is natural, therefore, that a peace movement should begin with the laboring men and it is to be expected that organized rather than unorganized labor will take the lead, because organized labor has its machinery for propaganda already existing and in operation.

It is natural, also, that labor should favor the government ownership and operation of the manufacturing plants upon which the nation must rely for its weapons of defense and for the ammunition required. This reform would not only contribute to the government's independence, but it would rid the country of the menace of a sordid private interest which sails under false flags and, professing a superior patriotism, preaches the gospel of "preparedness for war" because it sees in this policy the prospect of securing rich government contracts. Recent investigations have shown that nearly all of the leading nations have suffered from the organized conspiracies of these conscienceless exploiters.

Those who work in the cause of peace will find it necessary to combat the forces of militarism as well as to do educational work in behalf of the principles upon which the hope of permanent peace rests, and I deem this an opportune time and place to invite you to enter a protest against two organizations which are already asking the support of the public. Both of these organizations are officered and manned by men of great respectability.

One of these organizations has for its object a large increase in the army and navy. It has set for itself the task of providing for the national security, and it is busily engaged in minimizing the force and effectiveness of our army and navy in order to furnish arguments in favor of the enlargement of both. Ex-President Roosevelt is the most potential factor in this group and it is quite natural that, on account of his prominence, his great ability and his extreme views, he should direct the general policy of the organization. He speaks with all the force of conviction and discredits not only the intelligence, but even the motives, of those whom he contemptuously describes as pacifists and advocates of "peace at any price." He more than intimates that they are physical cowards and that their attitude on international questions is due to fear of bodily injury. It is not necessary to answer Mr. Roosevelt upon the low plane upon which he pitches the controversy. It is entirely possible to credit him with the purest motives and the sincerest patriotism, and yet resolutely oppose the methods which he would employ for the safeguarding of the country. If a fireman insisted upon pouring oil upon a fire he might be separated from the service as a matter of precaution, and yet he might possibly escape criminal punishment on the ground that he was so anxious to have a part in the fire that he did not take time to inquire as to the inflammable character of the liquid used. So, Mr. Roosevelt might be excluded from the list of the nation's advisers on all matters relating to peace or war on the ground that he is so anxious to get into any contest that involves blood-letting that he can not be trusted to deal with any phase of the subject. The preparedness which he advocates would provoke war instead of preventing it and the hatreds which it would arouse would destroy our nation's moral influence.

Mr. Roosevelt's plan is to make this nation a rival of the powers of the old world in military and naval preparation, and, since the only way of measuring preparedness is to compare our preparedness with the preparedness of other countries, his plan would involve an indefinite increase in the expenditure of money, in the construction of ships and in the enlistment of men, to be continued so long as other nations continue to increase. The preparedness that