

The Commoner

WILLIAM J. BRYAN, EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR

VOL. 15, NO. 8

Lincoln, Nebraska, August, 1915

Whole Number 676

WRITE AND WRITE NOW

The power to **DECLARE WAR** is vested in congress—that is the nearest body to the people. The referendum was then unknown—if the constitution was being written today the people would probably be given a referendum vote on war, and women—the greatest sufferers from war—would doubtless be given a voice. But as we do not have a direct referendum we should use every means we do have to impress upon senators and members of congress the fact that **THE PEOPLE ARE OPPOSED TO ENTERING THE PRESENT WAR**: They are **IN FAVOR** of using the peace treaty plan to preserve peace and, if that fails, they are in favor of postponing final settlement until this war is over. This course will enable us to assist as mediator in bringing this war to a close and then we shall have no difficulty in adjusting our differences. **WRITE YOUR SENATORS AND YOUR CONGRESSMEN**, protesting against war. They will listen to you.

W. J. BRYAN

Good Roads vs. Preparedness

The jingoes are now talking about spending three hundred million dollars on the navy and one hundred and fifty million dollars on the army, or four hundred and fifty million dollars per year getting ready for wars that ought never to come. Four hundred and fifty millions a year would amount to about five billions in eleven years! That sum would gridiron the United States with hard roads twelve miles apart, so that no citizen would live more than six miles from a good road which would enable him to go everywhere. It is estimated that a farmer can haul four times as much on a hard road as on a dirt road. What a boon it would be to a farmer to be relieved of the mud embargo! The sum above mentioned would in ten years revolutionize the road travel and traffic of the country, but half that sum would probably supply present needs. If we keep our army and navy appropriations as they are now and simply use for good roads the sum which the jingoes desire to add to these appropriations, the benefits to business will be enormous. Good roads or frenzied preparedness, which?

W. J. BRYAN.

APOSTLES OF PEACE

A few of our ministers have been abroad so much that they have lost the American point of view, and some of these have talked war until they have lost the Christian point of view. But a vast majority of the clergy are not only neutral as between belligerents but are intensely on the side of Christ's gospel, and against the doctrine that Might makes Right. They are apostles of peace, and are using their great influence against the crusade for war which the jingoes are trying to organize.

ON THE WAY BACK

Those who have read ex-President Roosevelt's views on the return of the progressive prodigals of New York to the republican party, will be able to guess with some accuracy as to his own future course. He is sure they—the returning progressives—are "conscientious" in returning and he appreciates the service they rendered while outside the republican party. When the proper time comes Mr. Roosevelt may be expected to conscientiously return to the republican party, content to know that he rendered great service by temporarily separating himself from Penrose, Barnes & Co.

Before we begin squandering money to meet the jingo idea of preparedness we had better consider the journey which the warlike nations are making toward exhaustion. If they go on killing off soldiers and burning money at the present rate, there will be nothing to fear when they get through.

A Few War Facts

TWENTY-ONE MILLION of soldiers are engaged in the unparalleled war now raging in Europe; what will be our quota if we are foolish enough to enter into it?

More than **TWO MILLION** men have been killed thus far. What will be our toll if we take part?

Over **FIVE MILLIONS** wounded. What will be our share if we become a participant?

The nations at war are now spending **FOUR HUNDRED MILLION** dollars per week—more than **TWENTY BILLIONS** per year—what will our expenditures be?

Before we decide to "go in" "at any cost" let some of the advocates of war give us an estimate. We are a great nation and can not be stingy with blood or money if we cast in our lot with the belligerents.

And what is to be gained by war? Protection of American rights? No, that can be secured without loss of life, money or honor; it can be secured without arousing hatreds which would last a century.

And what would we lose by entering into the war? Men? Yes, no one knows how many. Money? Yes, no one knows how much. But more than that, we would lose our place as the leader of the neutral nations and the opportunity to mediate when the time for mediation comes; we would lose the priceless privilege of using our good offices as a friend to assist in laying the foundations of permanent peace.

There is no excuse for war. Our grievances—we have them against both sides—do not justify war; and the treaty plan furnishes the machinery for maintaining an honorable peace. Those who talk war misrepresent the wishes of the people. You can no more measure the sentiment of the masses by the froth of the jingo press than you can measure the ocean's silent depths by the foam upon its waves.

W. J. BRYAN.

CONTENTS

GOOD ROADS VS. PREPAREDNESS
A FEW WAR FACTS
THE SHIP PURCHASE BILL
A NATIONAL BULLETIN NEEDED
CLOTURE COMING
NEUTRALITY TOWARD BOTH
PROHIBITION
WASTING TIME
TEMPERANCE CRUSADE ADVANCING
AMERICAN NOTES TO GERMANY AND AUSTRIA
THE POLITICAL SITUATION
BUSINESS AND THE LAW
STORY OF MR. BRYAN'S EFFORTS TO PROMOTE WORLD PEACE
SECRETARY MADDOO SHOWS URGENT NEED OF MERCHANT MARINE