

The Ship Purchase Bill

When congress meets again it will doubtless have to deal with a new bill authorizing the government to establish a merchant marine which will be under its control; but for the obstruction inspired by the shipping interest such a measure would have been enacted at the last congress, and the building of new ships would now be well under way. Some of the opposition was based upon the fear, pretended or real, that the government if given authority to do so would buy belligerent ships. This objection could hardly have been made seriously: First, because it implied a distrust in the president, and second, because it overlooked the other means of securing vessels. The only honest argument made against the bill was that based upon an objection to government ownership, and this argument, while sincere, rested upon the constitutional objection which some have to any increase in governmental activities. There are some who denounce as socialistic every attempt which the government makes towards co-operation. The Postal Savings bank was attacked by the bankers as socialistic because it put the government into the banking business, and yet the government assumed this responsibility because the banks themselves refused to give sufficient security to their depositors. The post-office was denounced as socialistic when it was established because it interfered with the carrying of the mail by private companies, but the post-office has not only justified itself but has exceeded expectations. The socialistic objection was again raised when the post-office department inaugurated the delivering of mail to business houses and private residences, and it seemed to some still more socialistic to deliver mail to those living in the country. The public, however, is becoming too enlightened to be deceived by the specious arguments that are now made in the interest of the shipping trust and other corporations which seek to exploit the public, and which know that government competition means the end of their power to oppress. It ought not to have required a great war to teach the country the advantage of a few government ships which can in time of peace be utilized in the establishment of trade routes and to do other pioneer work.

When congress meets again the democratic majority in the senate will be six greater than it was in the last congress, there being three less republican votes and three more democratic votes. With this increase in their voting strength it will be possible for the democrats to carry out the president's recommendation in favor of the securing of government ships. With the enactment of the Cloture rule the passage of the shipping bill will be even more certain.

W. J. BRYAN.

A JINGO GENERAL

Retired General Wood is urging an increase of the regular army to TWO HUNDRED THOUSAND, and he is also taking occasion to express a lack of confidence in the volunteer soldier. A poor return for the salary which he still draws.

ENOUGH PREPARATION

We are already spending a large sum every year on preparation—why is that not sufficient? Why abandon our historic policy because of a war that lessens rather than increases the danger from other powers.

PREPAREDNESS PHILOSOPHY

Take a little raw blood before breakfast, and threaten to kill somebody before dinner or you may be a mollycoddle before supper.

THE EXPOSITION

If you have not visited the San Francisco Exposition, you should do so—it surpasses anything yet attempted in that line. The trip will be a vacation and an education at the same time. Do not miss it. And, if you go, see that your ticket gives you the privilege of seeing the charming exposition at San Diego also, and the coast cities of California. They are marvels of growth and beauty. If time permits, return via Oregon and Washington, and see what western enterprise has done.

W. J. BRYAN.

THE GERMAN-AMERICAN RESOLUTIONS

The national German-American Alliance, recently in session at San Francisco, has vindicated public confidence in the organization by the wisdom and moderation which have characterized the action taken. It was predicted that the resolutions would condemn the president in strong terms; instead of this the members contented themselves with a declaration in favor of the measures which they deemed it proper for congress to enact. They are especially to be congratulated upon having resolved in favor of legislation which will forbid "passenger traffic on ships transporting munitions of war." This is not only right but feasible; the American people will stand back of such a proposition with practical unanimity.

An embargo on arms would be an unneutral act because not only calculated to help one side, but so intended; the separation of passengers from ammunition, however, would be not only an entirely neutral act but it would protect American citizens and lessen the danger of our being drawn into the war. The German-Americans can stand on the new resolution and insist on the separation of passengers from ammunition. WE ARE UNDER NO OBLIGATION TO INSURE DELIVERY OF CONTRABAND. Those who purchase arms and ammunition here must take all the risks connected with their transportation to belligerent countries—THEY CAN NOT ASK US TO SAFEGUARD SUCH PURCHASES WITH THE BODIES OF AMERICAN CITIZENS. Congress will have to deal with this subject when it meets and it can hardly be doubted that the members of the senate and house will support legislation having for its object the very thing urged by the German-American Alliance, namely, the separation of passenger traffic from traffic in munitions of war.

W. J. BRYAN.

I want to join the jingoes and with the jingoes stand,
A pistol in my pocket, a musket in my hand,
Before the hosts of Europe with blood in either eye,
I'd kill ten thousand thousand or know the reason why.

—A. L. Bixby, in Nebraska State Journal.

THE RULING PASSION

The republican leaders have learned nothing by defeat; they seek a return to power on the exploded theory that the people are incapable of self-government and need a few exploiting corporations to manage their government for them. They have but one remedy for all ills, the remedy proposed by an intoxicated student at a medical examination. A case was stated to him and the following dialogue ensued: Teacher: "What would you do in such a case?" Student: "Bleed him." Teacher: "But suppose the bleeding did not help him?" Student: "I would bleed him some more." Teacher: "But suppose after a second bleeding he was too weak to sit up, what would you do?" Student: "I would prop him up in bed and bleed him again."

A PREPAREDIST PREACHING WAR

Mr. Bacon, who was formerly connected with the state department (under a preceding administration) is training for war. He confesses his unpreparedness. He is also talking war—he says we can not remain neutral but "must take a position." That is what they are preparing for.

Ex-President Roosevelt says he is not willing to have this country spend a year "investigating" before declaring war—and yet Mr. Roosevelt spent several years investigating Boss Barnes before he declared war on him. Where's the difference?

THE WAR PRAYER

O Lord, help us to tear the soldiers of the foe to bloody shreds with our shells, help us to cover their smiling fields with the pale forms of their patriot dead; help us to lay waste their humble homes with a hurricane of fire; help us to wring the hearts of their offending widows with unavailing grief. Blast their hopes, blight their lives, water their way with their tears.—Mark Twain.

A National Bulletin Needed

The time has come when congress should consider the propriety of issuing a national bulletin for the information of the public as to the work of the federal government. We have a cumbersome Congressional Record through which the people secure authentic information as to measures passed by, and speeches made in, congress. Some of the departments also issue publications which give information concerning their particular work but none of these fully meet the needs of the voters.

In a government like ours, responsive to the will of the people and dependent for its proper administration upon the intelligent exercise of the right of suffrage, there should be an official publication, giving concise and condensed information which all could consult and upon the accuracy of which all could rely. Today the voter depends almost entirely upon a partisan press or upon a press falsely called independent. The following suggestion is, therefore, respectfully submitted and an expression of opinion invited.

Suggestion: That a national bulletin be issued by the federal government and furnished free to all universities, colleges, academies and schools, public and private; to all libraries, and to all governors, mayors and other state and local officials; it should exchange with all newspapers and periodicals (such other or quasi-public persons can be added as congress may designate) and be furnished at cost to all desiring to subscribe for same. It should be controlled by a board of directors, so chosen as to insure representation of at least the two larger parties. For instance, one of the board might be appointed by the president, one by the majority of the senate, one by the majority of the house, one by the minority of the senate and one by the minority of the house; the board to decide upon the matter to be printed. To insure a thorough and authentic discussion of the issues as presented in the bulletin each party might be given editorial space in proportion to its voting strength at the last election; the editor to be selected by and be responsible to his party's national organization.

This suggestion is submitted in the belief that it would, first, aid the voters directly, by giving them both sides of all national questions, and second, aid all newspapers, both partisan and independent, by giving all the facts and arguments that are deemed important for an understanding of the issues upon which the voters must act at national elections. The expense would be small in comparison with the service rendered.

W. J. BRYAN.

A PRAYER

By Theodosia Garrison.

I do not pray for peace
Nor ask that on my path
The sounds of war shall shrill no more,
The way be clear of wrath.
But this I beg Thee, Lord,
Steel Thou my will with might,
And in the strife that men call life
Grant me the strength to fight.

I do not pray for arms,
Nor shield to cover me.
What though I stand with empty hand,
So it be valiantly!
Spare me the coward's fear,
Questioning wrong or right;
And in the ring of battling
Grant me the strength to fight.

I do not pray that Thou
Keep me from any wound,
Tho' I fall low from thrust and blow,
Forced fighting to the ground,
But give me wit to hide
My hurt from all men's sight,
And for my need the while I bleed,
Grant me the strength to fight.

I do not pray that Thou
Should'st speed me victory;
Enough to know that from my foe,
I had no will to flee.
Battered and bruised and banned,
Flung like a broken sword;
Grant me this thing for conquering,
Let me die, fighting, Lord.