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"Millions of star-gleams and sands by the sea;
Birds by the thousand to carol their glee.
Life's countless hours and showers of dew,
Myriad flowers but only one 'You!'"

As a straw to show which way the republican wind is blowing it might be stated that the New York Sun has recently been canonizing the late Senator Nelson W. Aldrich and declaring him to have been a much maligned and misunderstood patriot.

Senator Cummins has started on a campaign tour of the west in the interest of his candidacy for the republican presidential nomination. This will be an interesting experience for Mr. Cummins, and it won't interfere in the least with the schemes of the republican national bosses, who have other plans.

Uncertainty controls most of the affairs of life, but it needs no gift of prophecy to declare that the next republican platform will be written by the same men who composed the declaration of principles upon which Mr. Taft ran, and the progressives will be asked to swallow it or stay outside as they did then.

A recent cable stated that the cause of the coal strike in South Wales was that while coal prices had gone up 35 per cent the wages of the miners had increased but 7 per cent. If those miners had been familiar with the theory of the protective tariff they would have understood that the ratio of 5 to 1 in distributed benefits is the best they could expect.

All of those who believe that if the republicans regain control of national affairs they will not fill the service with deserving republicans will kindly raise their hands. And yet one of the oft-repeated criticisms of the democratic administration is that it was intent upon filling these same offices with democrats whose service to the party had earned that reward.

Sixty per cent of the articles sent out to republican editors from Jonathan Bourne's philanthropic publicity organization at Washington are upon the necessity of an increase in the tariff on some schedule or another. Only three guesses will be permitted as to who were the mysterious republicans who endowed this committee with several hundred thousand dollars cash.

The difference between the republican way and the democratic way is indicated in a recent bulletin of the department of agriculture which suggests that the farmers in those sections of the country where it has been demonstrated that flax can be profitably grown, unite in securing experienced men who can prepare the fiber for the market. The republican way to help the flax grower was to levy such a tariff upon linens that the foreigner was barred from the country and the linen trust could thus be undisturbed in fixing the price to be paid for flax. The democratic way is to teach the farmers how to help themselves. The republican way was to make it easy for the manufacturers to help themselves to the farmer's flax crop.

THE CATHOLIC POSITION STATED

The Knights of Columbus acted wisely in giving a formal answer to the misrepresentations which have been circulated in regard to the attitude of American Catholics on two important subjects, namely, on political questions and the public schools. The Knights, at their recent annual meeting at Seattle, say:

"We should lose no proper occasion to declare the position of Catholics and the teachings of the church on this matter, namely, that while Catholics acknowledge the pope to be supreme in spiritual matters, they do not hold that he has any authority in civil matters. If any spiritual authority were to direct us to do any act contrary to the rights of free citizens, or the welfare of society, we would be bound to disobey."

Other points touched upon in the report to the meeting, as published, are as follows:

"The report declares that Catholics uphold and support the public school system, but feel that religious instruction is necessary, and, therefore, bear an extra burden for private schools. An opinion was expressed that in time all general forms of religion will be taught in free schools.

"The report condemns the action of politicians in raising religious issues in campaigns, as well as the activities of quasi-political societies in discriminating against persons of any faith."

Those who have come into intimate acquaintance with representative Catholics did not need to be informed that they do not concede to the church authorities the right to direct their course in political matters, but many Protestants, lacking this knowledge which comes with personal acquaintance, have been misled, and the statement above quoted is both wise and timely.

So, in the matter of public schools. A parent may send his child to a private school — as many Protestants as well as Catholics do—without indicating hostility to the public school system. The American public school is an established fact; it is a permanent institution, and it is idle to talk of any class or creed interfering with it.

The Knights are to be commended also for protesting against the introduction of religious issues into politics whether to aid the members of a church or to oppose them. The right to worship God according to the dictates of one's conscience is one of the inalienable rights—it must not be jeopardized by the dragging of religion into politics.

W. J. BRYAN.

PRESUMPTUOUS GRAVES

John Temple Graves, one of the "war at any cost" journalists, is giving publicity to a story told by somebody to the following effect:

"When Noah was building the Ark his neighbors stood around and offered advice and criticism. Some said: 'The very building of this craft is likely to breed a bad state of mind and create trouble. It's tempting Providence, that's what it is! Don't you know that it suggests a flood?'"

"Others said: 'There isn't a cloud in the sky. We have passed the rainy season. You are nervous and hysterical.'"

"A number remarked: 'When you see a flood coming it will be time then to build rafts and boats. It's "locking up money" to build a ship now.'"

If Mr. Graves thinks that the building of the ark in anticipation of the flood is a parallel case to the preparations for war, which he is now preaching, he must be laboring under the delusion that he has as authentic information of the coming of war as Noah had of the flood. If so, Mr. Graves is very presumptuous to think himself on such intimate terms with the Almighty. If the Lord knows Graves as well as we do he will never tell him anything. He is not at all likely to communicate with him directly, but if He ever does talk to him, He will probably say to him what He said to Ananias rather than what He said to Noah.

Have you noticed that none of these jingoes who are going up and down the land declaring on the supposed unpreparedness of the United States is giving a definite program of expenditure to secure a condition of preparedness that will satisfy him and his fellows? The explanation is that they are seeking to create a panicky feeling among the people that they believe will enable them to secure popular consent to a great expenditure of public money for no good purpose.

Prohibition

It may be assumed that all who advocate legislation for the restriction of the sale of intoxicating liquor regard its use as an evil. The unanimity of the sentiment against the liquor traffic is shown by the fact that in every state in the union there are laws prescribing conditions under which it can be sold—sale to drunkards and minors being everywhere prohibited. Where liquor is sold at all the tendency of public opinion is everywhere toward greater strictness in the regulation. Sale is now generally prohibited on Sundays, and the hours are gradually lessened. In Nebraska the saloon opens at seven in the morning and closes at eight o'clock in the evening. In some states the hour of closing is even earlier. If the liquor interests had left the people free to decide these questions for themselves the sentiment in favor of prohibition would not have grown as rapidly as it has, but during recent years the liquor interests have organized their forces in nation and in state and wherever an issue has been made they have supported the local saloon element with money and with speakers.

The liquor question is, therefore, no longer an abstract question; in taking a position on any legislative phase of it one has to decide not merely what course he would, if able to direct legislation, regard as most practicable, but whether in taking sides he will become the political associate of those who have a personal interest in the sale of liquor, or act with those who have a public interest in the welfare of the community. For many years I felt disposed to decide the question according to the circumstances of each particular case, but I found that everywhere, and at all times, the liquor interests not only preferred the smallest legislative unit, but obstructed every effort made for the protection of the public. I have, therefore, reached the conclusion that complete prohibition of the manufacture and sale of intoxicating liquor furnishes the best legislative solution of the problem. If we allow it to be sold we are kept busy trying to enforce restrictions—it is like inviting a burglar into the house and then staying awake all night to watch him.

I am not in a position to decide when, as a matter of policy, prohibition ought to be made an issue in any particular state, but wherever it is made an issue by legitimate authority my sympathies are wholly on the side of those who advocate prohibition, and wholly against the liquor interests. When the amendment was voted upon in the house of representatives at the last session of congress I expressed the opinion that the time was not ripe for an attempt to secure national prohibition, but I announced, at the same time, that I would favor national prohibition if a constitutional amendment was submitted. The resolution received a larger vote than I expected, having a clear majority—a fact which, in itself, contains a terrific indictment of the liquor traffic. At the rate at which the sentiment is now growing it will not be many years before a national prohibition amendment is submitted, and when the sentiment in favor of prohibition is so strong that two-thirds of the members of both houses favor its submission it will probably be ratified by three-fourths of the states.

I hope that national prohibition will not be an issue in the campaign of 1916. I prefer to see that campaign fought out upon the economic issues which divide the two leading parties. The democratic party has made a splendid record in matters of legislation and administration, and its defeat might result in the undoing of some of the things that have been accomplished. I believe that, for the present, at least until after 1916, it is better to make the prohibition fight in the states that are ready for it rather than in the nation. Wherever it is an issue in the states I hope to see the democratic party take the prohibition side. It is not only the moral side but the economic side as well, and no party can hope to gain any permanent advantage by allying itself with the distillers, the brewers and the saloon-keepers who, for pecuniary reasons, seek to perpetuate an evil which surpasses any other evil in our land.—Public statement by Mr. Bryan.

Four Ohioans are unannounced but none the less real candidates for the republican presidential nomination. As usual they are running principally on the fact that they are residents of Ohio. Nobody knows whether they are for anything except whatever the republican platform-makers decide shall be the issues.