

The President's Peace Note

The appeal which the President has sent to all the belligerent nations opens the way to negotiations.

He urges them to state in definite terms the conditions which they regard as necessary to an enduring peace. The request is reasonable and can not be refused.

It would be a reflection on the nations at war to doubt that they themselves clearly understood just what it is that they are fighting for, or to assume that they are seeking any advantages which they are unwilling to avow.

Since, therefore, they know what they are fighting for and have no secret reasons for continuing the war they will welcome the opportunity which the President affords them to present their respective sides.

While both sides will probably ask for more than they expect to secure, they will recognize that from now on the responsibility for a continuance of the war will rest upon the side that makes unreasonable demands.

All the rulers have denied responsibility for the beginning of the war and they can not fail to understand that responsibility for continuing the conflict is still more grave, because the war is more cruel and more costly than anyone could have imagined beforehand.

All the other neutral nations will be glad to support the President's efforts out of consideration for their own welfare as well as for humanitarian reasons.

The peace conference when it assembles will furnish the representatives of Christianity an opportunity to offer the philosophy of Christ in the place of the philosophy of Pilate, the philosophy which is responsible for the present war.

The nations of the world have built their hope of peace on their ability to excite fear. They have tried to terrorize each other into peace. They have allowed militarists to set up false standards of honor and to give a threatening tone to their diplomacy. The time is ripe for the substitution of love for hatred, and the spirit of co-operation for the spirit of combat. It has been popular to argue that JUSTICE must come BEFORE love. That is not the order in Christ's teachings.

"LOVE YOUR ENEMIES," WAS THE LAW HE PROCLAIMED. LOVE COMES FIRST AND BRINGS JUSTICE WITH IT.

W. J. BRYAN.

TOO LATE

Mr. Busch, of the great St. Louis brewery, has come out strongly for the purifying of the saloon, and he is doubtless sincere in his efforts—but it is too late. He did not get busy until the saloon had been driven from twenty-three states, not until more than half the people resided in dry territory, and he could not have done anything even if he had commenced earlier. If he had refused to sell to a bad saloon, others would have taken away his trade. The saloon can not be purified; it would suffocate in pure air and wholesome surroundings. If the public accepted the saloon's promise to "clean up," the promise would be broken at once because the scare would be gone.

"When the devil was sick, the devil a monk would be,
When the devil got well, the devil a monk was he."

The place to clean the saloon is in the MORGUE—when it lies in state with its victims.

A WORD OF WARNING

The democrats in congress—both senate and house, should beware of the insidious efforts that are being made to restore a protective tariff. The special interests never sleep. Their lobbyists are always on hand, ready to make Washington life pleasant to those who are willing to forget "the folks at home." The protective tariff is the veteran corruptionist of our land; the system has been routed in the open; it must not be permitted to return by secret influence.

W. J. BRYAN.

HOUSE RESOLUTION INDORSING PRESIDENT'S PEACE NOTES

Congressman Bailey of Pennsylvania submitted the following resolution in the house of representatives, December 22, 1916, which was referred to the committee on foreign affairs and ordered to be printed:

Resolved, That the house of representatives strongly indorses and approves the action taken by the President in sending diplomatic notes under date of December eighteenth to the nations now at war, suggesting and recommending the first steps in possible negotiations to arrange the terms of peace.

Resolved, That in taking this action the President has rendered an invaluable service to a war-stricken world. In asking the belligerent nations to set forth the concessions and assurances which they deem necessary to the establishment of a lasting peace, he has afforded them an opportunity which it is fervently hoped they may not disregard. It would be a reflection upon the nations at war to doubt that they know the ends for which they are fighting or to assume that they have any purposes which they are unwilling to reveal.

Resolved, That a definite statement by both sides, no matter how far these statements may be apart, will clear the air and afford a basis for negotiations; and when negotiations begin we believe they are not likely to terminate until an agreement is reached, because we believe neither side will consent to assume responsibility for continuing the unspeakable horrors of this conflict, if any reasonable terms can be secured.

Resolved, That we congratulate the President on the stand he has taken and that we extend to him our earnest wishes for the complete and speedy success of the great movement which he has had the honor to inaugurate.

WHY NOT?

Why allow the express companies to reap a rich harvest at the expense of the morals of the communities in which they do business? The states are powerless to protect themselves; the responsibility rests on congress. How long will congress permit the lawless representatives of an outlawed business to use the mails and the express companies to over-ride the police regulations of the dry states?

Congress now has a dry majority in both houses; why not stop the issuing of federal licenses in dry territory and the use of the mails and express companies for the violation of state laws?

THE INTERSTATE RATE

Congressman Hilliard of Colorado has introduced a very sensible bill compelling railways to make the interstate rate NOT MORE than the sum of the local rates on the lines followed.

Why not? The railroads never submit to a local rate that is unjust, therefore an interstate rate based upon the local rates can not be unjust. Why compel passengers to get off at the state line and purchase new tickets in order to secure the advantage of uncontested local rates?

A RAILROAD SCHEME

On another page will be found Mr. Bryan's testimony before the Newlands-Adamson committee, which is investigating various phases of the railway question. The railroads are attempting to concentrate all regulation at Washington. Mr. Bryan points out the objections to surrendering the regulating power that the states now have.

SUSPEND PREPAREDNESS

On another page will be found a very sensible editorial from the San Francisco Chronicle, suggesting a suspension of preparedness appropriations while we appeal for peace. Why not? We show very little faith in the success of our appeal if we go on increasing preparation for war while we work for peace.

A suggestion: Why not erect a tall flag pole at some conspicuous place in Washington and keep the big white flag flying until the victory is won? The Commoner will subscribe one hundred dollars to such a Flag Fund.

Now for Liquor Legislation

Now that we have a prohibition majority in both senate and house no time should be lost in enacting such laws as will carry restriction to the maximum. The submission of the national amendment is, of course, the end which all prohibitionists have in view, but that requires a two-thirds majority in both houses. Don't wait. Every law that lessens the use of intoxicating liquors will hasten the day of complete emancipation.

Prohibition in the District of Columbia will be progress.

Shut out liquor advertisements: this will not only cleanse the pages of the papers, but will withdraw the subsidies which the liquor interests pay for the suppression of truth.

Prohibit the issuance of federal licenses in dry territory or require applicants for federal license to advertise in advance where the liquor is to be sold. The boot-logger can not do this.

Restrict the abuses connected with express shipments into dry territory.

Stop treating in rooms in which government licenses are posted.

Require all holders of licenses to report, at stated intervals, amount, value and kind of liquor sold, with alcoholic content of each kind, and anything else that anyone can think of. It is impossible to hit the traffic a lick amiss.

W. J. BRYAN.

PROHIBITION WINS WASHINGTON

Prohibition has raised its white flag over the nation's capitol—let the country rejoice.

By a vote of 55 to 32 the senate passed the bill prohibiting the sale of intoxicating liquor in the District of Columbia. The liquor interests tried to refer the question to the male voters of the District, but the senate, after so amending the amendment as to permit the women of the District to vote, rejected the amended amendment on the ground that questions relating to life, liberty and the home were not referred to the voters of the District, and that the saloon was not more sacred than these. Congress did not consult the people when the saloon was allowed to come into the District; why should they be consulted when it is driven out?

Some of the men most clamorous for a referendum for the benefit of the saloons have been violently opposed to the principle of the referendum. The liquor interests have always opposed the initiative and referendum in wet states.

The house is sure to pass the senate bill and it is now only a question of a few weeks when prohibition will have received the endorsement of the federal government—house, senate and President. Then, who will deny that the saloon is an outlaw? And, then, what democrat or republican will think so little of his party as to be willing to chain it to a corpse. The saloon is dead—the sooner it is buried by the adoption of a national amendment the better.

W. J. BRYAN.

A POST ELECTION LETTER

The Attorney General
Washington, D. C.

My dear Mr. Bryan:

I take this occasion of writing you a few lines to express the personal gratification I have felt at the vigorous and effective part you have taken in the national campaign just closed.

I have observed the important effect of your speeches in every state in which you went, and feel that you are largely responsible for the splendid showing made in the west. The fine patriotism and good will displayed by you towards the administration has given much pleasure to all your friends, although we, of course, knew all the while that you would do just as you have done. This is certainly the most remarkable victory for progressive ideas that this country has ever witnessed.

Sincerely your friend,

T. W. GREGORY.

The mothers who helped to re-elect the President will feel, when they read his appeal for peace, that their confidence in him was not misplaced.