

To the People of the United States

Shall we allow the United States to be dragged into the European quarrel on either side in this last desperate stage of the fighting?

We have not borne the brunt of the battle and we have no more right than the desire to step in, when the combatants are exhausted.

What we can achieve on that field will win nothing for humanity, and for us neither profit or glory, for our adversaries have nothing that we want, and their strength is already gone.

The outrage against international right offered by Germany is her final frantic stand in a blinding fight. And we have in this policy of the central empires simply an extreme example of the madness of war when it is fought to the last ditch.

The President and the congress of the United States ought to continue to bend every effort of their being to prevent this desperate fighting of the central empires from dragging us into that conflict.

They ought to use every expedient of diplomacy and economic pressure to bring the belligerents into a conference.

They ought to recognize that this is a crisis which affects the interest of every neutral nation. They ought therefore not only to consult the neutral governments, but to act in this crisis conjointly with them as the spokesmen of mankind.

The congress ought to debate earnestly and with the utmost deliberation the question whether it would not be better for this country to adjust its commerce to any war zone declared by any of the belligerents in these last frantic days of the war than to be dragged dishonorably into the very conclusion of it because her own selfish interests are injured. No matter what disasters may fall upon our shipping in the war zone, they ought to debate that question at length before taking any belligerent action.

Any chance to win even military glory and honor for the republic in this war is long gone. We can only win the hatred of one group of bel-

ligerents and the jealousy and suspicion of the other. Our glory and our virtue lie in our having, with independent and magnanimous courage, withheld our hand from the quarrel of the world, and stood firmly for the ideals of friendship and civilized understanding. That way, and that way only, lies honor and greatness in the future for our republic.

Petition your President and congressmen to employ every resource of intelligence, and resolution, and patience, and all the time they may require, no matter what provocations arise, to keep this country from an ignominious eleventh-hour participation in a struggle for mastery which is not her own.

And at the last extreme moment if it comes, demand that they submit to the people in a referendum the question whether we shall engage in war to protect our right to enter a war zone, or whether we shall withhold ourselves absolutely from this final disastrous and never-to-be-ended entanglement in the imperialistic politics of Europe.

If you want to spread this point of view widely over the country, send money at once to Emergency Office, Room 1034, 70 Fifth Avenue, New York City, and it will be used for nothing else.

AMOS R. E. PINCHOT
RANDOLPH S. BOURNE
MAX EASTMAN
PAUL U. KELLOGG
WINTHROP D. LANE

MR. BIGELOW'S TIRADE

Poultney Bigelow, author, globe-trotter, diplomat, et cetera, became rampant in Toronto the other day, and in an address before the Canadian club he boiled over and said some things which can do neither him nor his country any good.

Certainly it was not the address of an American patriot.

Of the consular service Bigelow said:

"It is made up of broken-down, wheezy political bosses, worn-out

lawyers and dentists, broken brokers, men who could not earn a living at any honest or respectable business.

"These are the men I find I have to go to as representing the majesty of my nation, and I have to sew my pockets up before I enter their offices. Then I have to turn from his door and go to the British consulate to get what I want."

Such a statement as that every intelligent American knows to be mere cant.

Mr. Bigelow himself has had experience in the consular service of the United States, and he must know that, whatever may have been true in his day, the personnel of this service has undergone vast improvement during recent years, and that the picture he paints of the service as a whole today is absolutely untrue.

We all must admit—the administration recognizes the fact—that there still is room for improvement; but improvement is being made constantly.

Speaking of neutrality, the American diplomat-author said that his country is afflicted with "calamity palsy" in an "effort to preserve benevolent neutrality," and he declared:

"The motto: 'In God we trust,' illuminates the American cent, but nothing else. If Great Britain lost hold upon the United States, German gunboats would sail up the Hudson and Mississippi and sweep everything before them.

"Then we will come crawling and whining to Montreal and Toronto for protection."

Had an avowed enemy of the United States uttered such a mendacious harangue it would pass unnoticed, but because of what Bigelow has been it calls for rebuke. And if this really expresses Mr. Bigelow's feelings toward the United States it is pertinent to inquire, then, why does he not forswear his claim to protection by this country, get out of it, and stay out?

A man who will cross the boundary lines of the United States and utter such sentiments as he has against the best interests—against the very sacred traditions and policies—of his country is no longer a desirable citizen. The United States is not the place for him. — Atlanta Constitution.

COUNTING THE COSTS

Batesville, Miss., Feb. 5, 1917.
Editor The Commoner:

The declaration of war on Germany or the central allies will likely call for an immediate expenditure of a billion dollars by this government, to "get ready." If the war should develop into a serious and long drawn one, probably a hundred billion dollars would be required to finance it.

There are perhaps 30,000 American citizens working on ships plying between this country or other countries and the entente allies' countries. Perhaps there are 15,000 passengers per annum going to and coming from these countries who are American citizens (during a period of one year). Say 50,000 Americans a year. Suppose this government would pay this number \$2,000.00 per annum each to remain off these ships (thereby saving the lives of some of them) and suppose the conflict would continue for five years longer, which would require \$10,000.00 to pay each citizen for the five years' period. Five hundred million dollars. This would save \$500,000,000.00 at the beginning—

not to mention what we would spend in the five years, carrying on the war. We would save the lives of some of these and do away with the "cause of war," perhaps saving the lives of thousands of others.

Now, then, a request from the government to its citizens to keep out of the war zone during this particular period would surely meet with a hearty response, and save cause for war without paying out a cent of money.

This is no time to "split hairs" over the fine points of international law or the American citizen's constitutional rights. An American citizen who thinks much of his country would not object to foregoing such technical rights for the greatest good of the greatest number—if he did object he would hardly be "worth the price" we are called upon to pay for him.

Of all the excuses of all the nations who have become involved in the present world war it seems to me that the United States is going into it upon the flimsiest pretext of any of them.

We certainly are not the world's policeman to "walk" the seven seas and arrest any one found violating international laws—if so we would soon have all the belligerents under arrest and in jail. (Too big a task even for Uncle Sam.)

Very truly,

L. B. LESTER.

I AM

I am a curse as old as time. I have made honest men thieves, noble women courtesans and snatched the last crumb of bread from the lips of a hungry child. Not only is death the wage of him who dares to quaff my burning draughts, but I bequeath my cursed heritage to those who come after him. I taint the blood and steal the brain from three generations. I am the poison flower on the primrose path where feet take hold on Hell and death is welcome to him from whose life I have taken toll. I am the gilded chain with which mother's baby girl was led to the brothel and to shame. I am the beckoning demon that lures her son to where a self-inflicted bullet ends it all. I exact my pound of flesh from poor and rich alike.

home and friends, nor do I leave my victim until within my slimy clutch I hold his soul. My pathway leads from Him who in Gethsemane paid the greatest debt that mankind ever owed. I throttle genius, curse righteousness and Crown virtue in her own blood. Free the world? When I am classed with potent poisons, locked in iron vaults and babes within the cradle taught that man's worst curse is me! I am a useless parasite, a blood-sucking vampire, a cancerous plague eating at the vitals of mankind.

I AM ALCOHOL.

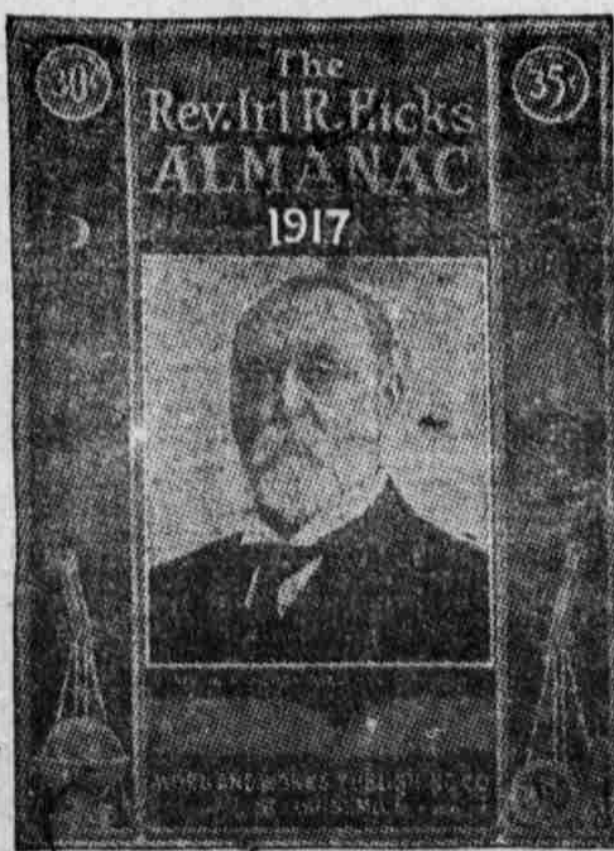
—W. H. Cousins, Southern Pharmaceutical Journal.

LITTLE QUESTION FOR MR. BRYAN

If prohibition is written into the national constitution before the pre-convention campaign of 1920 begins, what will it profit Mr. Bryan to talk about prohibition in that campaign? Would it be very strange if some democrats in congress voted for prohibition for the reason, among others, that Mr. Bryan has had some very pointed things to say about the question recently? Would they be very sorry to have an opportunity to destroy his thunder in advance of 1920?—Savannah (Ga.) News

The Greatest Weather Prophet

Rev. Irl R. Hicks, of St. Louis, during the last thirty years has won an enviable reputation as a most successful national weather forecaster. Many thousands of observers testify that his weather forecasts are more



reliable and of greater value than the predictions of the government weather bureau. This reputation was not won through some occult or mysterious method, as some people think, but by the simple application of scientific principles, which he sets forth in his works. After a long and useful life Professor Hicks died on October 12, 1916. Shortly before his last illness he completed his weather forecasts for his great 1917 Almanac, and also had prepared the weather forecasts a year ahead for his monthly magazine.

Word and Works

This charming monthly contains Hicks' weather forecasts for each month and a great deal of other interesting and valuable family and scientific reading matter. The regular subscription price of **Word and Works** for one year with a copy of The Hicks 1917 Almanac to the subscriber, is \$1.00. We will send **Word and Works** one year with The Hicks Almanac for 1917 and **The Commoner**, for \$1.10. This is a remarkable bargain in family reading matter for 1917 and our readers should be quick to avail themselves of it. Address all orders to

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