

The Commoner

WILLIAM J. BRYAN, EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR

VOL. 17, NO. 5

Lincoln, Nebraska, May, 1917

Whole Number 697

The Food Question

Secretary Houston is leading the fight for more food, and the leadership could not be in better hands. He is urging, first, increased production; second, greater economy in use of food produced, and third, better organization of the forces engaged in production and distribution.

Every soldier drawn from the ranks of the producers lessens to the extent of his product the total food supply of the nation, and this loss must be made up by increased activity on the part of the remaining producers or by calling into the ranks of the producers those who have not heretofore contributed. Whenever it is possible to give preference to food crops it should be done. Boys and girls should be enlisted in "Produce Something" clubs. Of the 25 millions of school children, fully half are old enough to aid. If during the summer vacation each one of the one-half—twelve and a half millions—raises or produces an average of ten dollars worth of food stuff, they will add a total of one hundred and twenty-five million dollars worth of food.

The closing of the breweries and distilleries would save one hundred and forty-five million dollars worth of grain now converted into alcohol. Here is a possible increase from two sources of nearly three hundred millions.

It is estimated that we annually waste \$700,000,000 worth of food. If, as a war measure, the wives can save one-half of this waste, it will be equivalent to an increase of that amount. Here are three sources of increase from which, taken together, some six hundred million dollars worth of food can be drawn, and the country will be the better if this addition continues after war is over.

W. J. BRYAN.

RAISE SOMETHING

Let every man, and every child old enough to do any kind of work, raise something. No matter how little — raise something. If every man and boy raised one hill of potatoes, it would make more than a million bushels. If every housewife raised one chicken, it would add measurably to the meat product. "Despise not the day of small things" — "every little helps." Millions of individual efforts, added together, make a national achievement. Raise something.

THE RULE OF THE PEOPLE

The people have a right to have what they want in government—this is the most fundamental principle in popular government. It ought to be taught to the youngest children in the public schools so that all, no matter how limited their education, would understand that it is treason to our institutions to try to substitute the interests or wishes of a minority for the will of the majority.

CONSCRIPTION

Following the rule to which he has adhered since the United States entered the war, Mr. Bryan refused to discuss the merits of the selective conscription bill while it was before congress. It has now become a law by joint action of congress and the President, Honest and patriotic men differed as to the wisdom of resorting to conscription before trying the volunteer system, and they presented their views—as they had a right to do. After full and free discussion, final action was taken by those who are vested with authority to act, and the dispute is ended. No matter what individual opinion may have been, the GOVERNMENT SPEAKS FOR ALL, and conscription it is. The authorities at Washington will carry out the details. The men of America will be enrolled, and so many as may be needed will be summoned to put on uniform and perform military duty. Our country is at war, and in war all effort and energy are directed toward success by armed force. **STAND BY THE GOVERNMENT.**

SCIENCE OF GOVERNMENT IN SCHOOLS

Of the children who enter the graded schools of the United States less than 10 per cent enter the high school and less than 2 per cent continue their studies in college or university. Unless, therefore, the principles of popular government are taught in the GRADED schools nine-tenths of the youth of the land will never learn in school the science of the government under which they live.

THE INVISIBLE MADE VISIBLE

Patriotism is written on the American heart; the ink may be invisible in ordinary times, but an emergency makes the letters legible.

Constant Reader: No, the jingo editors have not yet enlisted. They are too modest to crowd the volunteers.

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Two Years' Progress

Some two years ago The Commoner appealed to the young men of the country to take up two coming reforms — woman's suffrage and prohibition. Both have made great progress since that time. 1st, all the parties in the United States declared for the principle in the campaign of 1916. 2nd, statutory suffrage has been conferred upon women by several states. 3rd, Great Britain has announced that suffrage is to be granted to women; 4th, Russia is framing a government based on universal suffrage—including woman's suffrage. The backward states will have to hurry up or Great Britain and Russia will beat them to woman's suffrage.

Prohibition, too, is gaining. More than half the states are now dry. Congress has put the federal government on the side of law enforcement (it used to be on the side of the bootlegger) and the saloons in the District of Columbia will close on November 1st.

And now national prohibition becomes necessary as a war measure. We can not afford to have food stuffs converted into alcohol, or the efficiency of our soldiers impaired by the saloons.

Now is the time to get to work—victory is near.

W. J. BRYAN.

WHY NOT ALL THE TIME?

The following press dispatch will be of interest to readers:

"Washington, May 9.—Beginning tomorrow, the government will issue a daily newspaper giving news and announcements of all departments relating to war preparations. The publication, known as the Official Bulletin, will be issued under the direction of the committee on public information, and will be mailed to all newspapers, commercial organizations or others requesting it. Postmasters have been instructed to post it daily in their offices.

"A weekly bulletin also is planned for issuance to weekly newspapers, which will be asked to copy as many items as possible."

The Commoner has been urging the publication of a National Bulletin permanently, for reasons set forth in a speech reproduced on another page. Possibly the publication of such a bulletin during the war will lead to its continuance after peace is restored—another by-product of the war.

There is a large amount of unimproved land along the railroads—the right of way that might be made productive during the war. Why not put it to work? It is more convenient than the golf-links. They will come later.

Secretary Lansing's announcement is just what might have been expected. Reserving the right to act independently in all things connected with the war we shall be in position to make our influence felt.