

# The Commoner

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## We Must Win

Those who, before the United States entered the war, thought it better to remain neutral and postpone until after the war the settlement of differences with belligerent nations, will have no difficulty in recognizing the change in the situation caused by our own nation's entrance into the war. Had we remained neutral we might have been able to act as mediator and thus rendered an important service to the world. In entering the war, however, we surrendered that opportunity and incurred the enmity of the central powers. A new situation, therefore, confronts us. We must not only protect ourselves from those who are now our enemies, but we must find an opportunity for world service in aiding to arrange a permanent peace, built on justice, liberty and democracy.

**WE MUST WIN.** Defeat is inconceivable—it would be indescribably unfortunate if it were possible. We can not allow any foreign nation to determine the destiny of the United States—especially a nation committed, as Germany is, to arbitrary government and militarism.

Neither can we afford to have our allies overcome—that would bring upon us the disasters of defeat or the burden of carrying on the war alone.

We are in the war by the action of congress—the only body authorized to take the nation into war. The quickest way to peace is to go straight through, supporting the government in all it undertakes, no matter how long the war lasts or how much it costs.

**WE MUST WIN.** Any discord or division, after the government has acted, would prolong the war and increase its cost in money and men. W. J. BRYAN.

### COAL AND IRON PROFITS

On another page will be found a very forceful letter written by a prominent and patriotic citizen of Washington, D. C., on the coal and iron graft. The figures are appalling. The situation demands attention at once. The nation can not afford to allow the men in charge of these two great industries to hold up both the government and the public. Something must be done. The government should either fix a reasonable price or take over enough of these plants to control the price.

The Washington letter deserves careful consideration.

### THE GOOD SAMARITAN

Any one acquainted with the interest rates charged the Spanish-speaking republics can not but recall the parable of the Good Samaritan. They certainly have fallen among thieves. Now is the time for the United States to be neighbor to them. To underwrite their bonds would be even better than pouring oil and wine on their wounds.

### THE NATION'S PRAYER

(By Josiah Gilbert Holland.)

God give us men! A time like this demands  
Strong minds, great hearts, true faith  
and ready hands.  
Men whom the lust of office does not kill;  
Men whom the spoils of office can not buy;  
Men who possess opinions and a will;  
Men who have honor, and who will not lie;  
Men who can stand before a demagogue  
And scorn his treacherous flatteries  
without winking.  
Tall men, sun-crowned, who live above  
the fog  
In public duty and in private thinking!

### A REFLECTION ON GERMAN-AMERICANS

Those who are suggesting that German-Americans called into our army should be accorded different treatment from those who trace their ancestry to other lands do injustice to this large element of our population. The German-American is a part of our nation; this is his HOME, and he must share the destiny of his fellow Americans. If he is in sympathy with American institutions he can have no sympathy with the autocratic methods or the imperialistic aims of the German government. He can not afford to separate himself from his neighbors. Brother fought brother in the civil war; relative must, if necessary, fight relative in the present war.

### IS WHISKEY MORE PRECIOUS THAN MEN?

Those who insist that the government can not commandeer whiskey, put the poison above those whom it destroys. The government commandeers men, why not whiskey?

Harvard college has gone dry—see account of dry commencement on another page.

## Beer vs. Whiskey

(Published in Congressional Record.)

The effort to separate beer and wine from distilled liquors, so as to continue their sale and use under laws prohibiting whiskey and other beverages containing a large per cent of alcohol, is supported by arguments which are, to a certain extent, plausible, but the movement would not be a serious one if it rested upon argument alone. The real force behind this proposal lies, first, in the financial and political influence of the brewers and, second, in the appetite of the drinkers. Those peculiarly interested in the manufacture of beer or in the making of wine quite naturally contend that they are less harmful than stronger drinks, and those who are fond of their beer or wine echo the argument, but it is not likely to convince the disinterested. It may be worth while, however, to lay before the general public the objections to the beer and wine propaganda in order that well meaning voters may not be deceived.

The first objection is based upon the fact that a surrender to the brewers and wine makers would compel the temperance forces of the country to give up the fundamental proposition upon which their entire fight is built, viz: That alcohol is a poison and that, because alcohol is a poison, alcoholic beverages are harmful.

To draw a distinction between whiskey, for instance, which contains a high percentage of alcohol, and wine and beer which contain a lower percentage of alcohol, would be like trying to fix a line between moderate drinking and immoderate drinking.

No words have yet been coined which can fix the point at which the use of liquor becomes excessive. The line moves forward as the habit grows — it recedes like the horizon until it is lost in the black night of intoxication. Failure would, in like manner, overtake any effort to fix a line between harmless and harmful alcoholic drinks. It is impossible to classify drinks according to the percentage of alcohol which they contain; they must be classified as alcoholic and non-alcoholic, because it is the alcohol in the drink that makes it objectionable.

Alcohol is harmful, first, because of the immediate injury which it does, and, second, because of the appetite which it creates. Scientific experiments have been carried so far as to leave no doubt of the injury which alcohol does to both the physical and intellectual man. Beverages that contain but a small percentage of alcohol will unsteady the nerves and impair the productive value of the drinker, no matter what his occupation may be. They will lessen the accuracy of his aim at target practice; they will increase the number of his mistakes at type-setting; they will confuse his thought and enfeeble his hand. The use of beer and wine increases accidents in industry and decreases the expect-

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