

The Commoner

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THE COMMONER, LINCOLN, NEB.

Chauncey Depew says that two-thirds of his friends have died from eating too much. At eighty-four Chauncey is a living example of what a banquet is really for.

The farm implement manufacturers have been placed under federal license. That ought to prove more satisfactory to the farmers than the license the manufacturers formerly enjoyed.

Nebraska claims to have an automobile for every seven inhabitants. This is about the only bit of evidence that has come to hand that the rich are getting poorer and the poor getting richer.

The rulers of Austria and Germany recently met and selected four kings, one each for Poland, Lithuania, Esthonia and Courland. All we have got to say is that they had better watch out for those aces from the American air squadron.

One of the things that rather reconciles us to the fact that a state of war exists is that it has practically ended the pugilistic enterprise. This country is in no mood to make heroes of men who fight only for coin.

Judging by some of the votes cast by some of the republican senators those gentlemen who claim to be so valiantly standing by the president have been getting corns on their feet or at least been changing legs.

James Gordon Bennett left a large part of his fortune to found a home for retired newspaper men in New York. One of the conditions of entrance is that a man shall have worked ten years on a New York newspaper. No one has ever yet accomplished that feat, but Mr. Bennett evidently believed it could be done.

The legislature of Massachusetts voted to ratify the prohibition amendment. Both of her senators, Lodge and Weeks, voted against submitting it to the states. There are times when the theory that this is a representative government shows signs of being largely a theory.

The federal trade commission reports that the millers, despite the fact that the government guaranteed them 25 cents a barrel profit, more than they have been making for years, made as high as 50 and 60 cents a barrel. We doubt if this fact qualifies a miller very highly for passing on the patriotism of his fellow-citizens.

It is significant that most of the men who are now talking of the necessity of at once adopting the policy of universal military training were also the men who were quite sure, before we got into the war, that it was necessary then. By waiting until it is ascertained whether we attain one of the great objects of this war, which is the prevention of all future wars, we would be displaying most excellent wisdom.

Patriotism and Profiteering

On another page will be found the platform of Former Mayor Charles W. Bryan, who is a candidate for the democratic gubernatorial nomination in the Nebraska primaries to be held August 20.

The extent to which so-called big business, also a large number of smaller business institutions, have been taking advantage of war conditions to wring unreasonable and outrageous profits from patriotic people has aroused the nation. The report of the federal trade commission on profiteering has been a revelation to the average man. The federal government is making heroic efforts to curb the greed of the parasites, but the federal government can not give the prompt and adequate help necessary in the various cities and towns throughout the country to stamp out the unconscionable profiteering without the co-operation of state and municipal governments.

Charles W. Bryan has outlined in his platform state legislation to give relief to the farmers, laboring men and consumers from the disadvantages at which they have been placed by various business organizations who have failed to keep within the rules laid down by the federal administration and have been exacting unreasonable profits. The recent bringing to light in Nebraska of the unreasonable, disgraceful and unpatriotic profits that the flour-milling and elevator combine in this state have been exacting from a loyal, patriotic people has brought the question of profiteering to the front as the paramount issue to be considered in connection with the support of the President and our armies in the fight to make the world safe for democracy. A man can not be loyal to his country in time of war while he has his hand in the pocket of a loyal American whose sons and relatives are making the supreme sacrifice at the front.

The anti-profiteering program of Candidate Bryan provides, first, for "unswerving support without question or equivocation of President Wilson's war plans until the war is brought to a successful and permanent close."

Immediate war prohibition and ratification of the national prohibition constitutional amendment.

For a state trade commission similar to the federal trade commission, to investigate and report on the cost of production and distribution and to assist in determining reasonable profits.

Ownership or strict control of grain elevators, bonded livestock commissioner, bonded grain commissioner, state water power development, municipal ownership of public utilities, state fire and hail insurance at cost, sick benefits for wage-earners, old age pensions for dependents and other remedial legislation to meet the conditions which are disturbing the people and distracting their attention from the supreme duty of undivided and hearty support of the nation's war work.

The Commoner expresses the hope that every candidate on the democratic ticket will express his approval and will pledge his support in case of election in carrying out the patriotic and anti-profiteer program outlined by Mr. Charles W. Bryan. The democratic candidates who have already expressed their approval of Mr. Bryan's anti-profiteering platform are:

Edgar Howard, candidate for United States senator.

Carl E. Slatt, candidate for lieutenant-governor.

Fred C. Ayers, candidate for auditor.

Henry C. Berge, candidate for treasurer.

J. S. Canady, candidate for treasurer.

G. L. Shumway, candidate for commissioner of public lands and buildings.

Candidate Bryan and the other candidates who have endorsed his anti-profiteering program should have the support at the primaries of every Nebraskan who believes the state governmental machinery should be utilized to exterminate the profiteering pest and give the people progressive legislation that will check the constant increase in the cost of living.

The people of Nebraska should insist upon securing public pledges from all state candidates of all parties as to their attitude on the practical program outlined in support of President Wilson's efforts to win the war and to prevent the plundering of the people by the greedy profiteer.

A MILLION MEN IN FRANCE

President Wilson issued the following statement, July 2:

"I have today received the following letter from the secretary of war, which seems to me to contain information which will be so satisfactory to the country that its publication will be welcomed and will give additional zest to our national celebration of the Fourth of July:

MR. BAKER'S LETTER.

"War Department,

"Washington, July 1, 1918.

"My Dear Mr. President:

"More than one million American soldiers have sailed from the ports in this country to participate in the war in France. In reporting this fact to you, I feel that you will be interested in a few data showing the progress of our overseas military effort.

"The first ship carrying military personnel sailed May 8, 1917, having on board Base Hospital No. 4 and members of the Reserve Nurses' corps.

"General Pershing and his staff sailed May 20, 1917. The embarkations in the months from May, 1917, to and including June, 1918, are as follows:

"1917—May, 1,718; June, 12,261; July, 12,988; August, 18,323; September, 32,523; October, 38,259; November, 23,016; December, 48,840.

"1918—January, 46,776; February, 48,027; March, 83,811; April, 117,212; May, 244,345; June, 276,372.

"Marines—14,644.

"Aggregating 1,019,115.

"The total number of troops returned from abroad, lost at sea and casualty is 8,165, and of these, by reason of superbly effective protection which the navy has given our transport system, only 291 have been lost at sea.

"The supplies and equipment in France for all troops sent is, by our latest reports, adequate, and the output of our war industries in this country is showing marked improvement in practically all lines of necessary equipment and supply.

"Respectfully yours,

"NEWTON D. BAKER."

"To which I replied:

PRESIDENT'S REPLY.

"The White House,

"Washington, July 2, 1918.

"My Dear Mr. Secretary:

"Your letter of July 1 contains a very significant report of the forwarding of troops during the last year to the other side of the water. It is a record which I think must cause universal satisfaction, because the heart of the country is unquestionably in this war and the people of the United States rejoice to see their force put faster and faster into the great struggle which is destined to redeem the world.

"Cordially and sincerely yours,

"WOODROW WILSON.

"Hon. Newton Baker,
"Secretary of War."

It may be too much to expect, but the fact seems to be that the senate that found so much fault with Secretary Baker a few months ago owes him an embossed card of thanks in view of the tremendous accomplishments in movement of troops across the Atlantic achieved by his department.

We suspect that if all the jokes sprung on Von Hindenburg because of his failure to keep the various Paris dinner dates he made with himself were placed end to end they would reach from his present headquarters to the French capital.

It would be merely a bit of prudence on the part of the republican congressmen if they would insist on carefully looking over that proposition to draft for war service all who are not performing a useful service, before voting for it.

Just as we go to press, a report is flashed over the wire that one of Colonel Roosevelt's sons has made the supreme sacrifice for the cause of democracy. The nation's sympathy and appreciation will go out to the stricken parents in the loss of this brave and patriotic young man, and to the parents of the many other young men who are giving their lives that democracy may live.