

# The Commoner.

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## Democracy on Trial

President Wilson is keeping his word in regard to New Jersey. When he resigned the governorship to enter upon his duties as president, he remarked that New Jersey was not far from Washington and that he would return if the "old gang" attempted to regain control of the machinery of the state. The "old gang" went to work as soon as he departed from Trenton, and it succeeded in preventing the adoption of some of the reforms which the party had promised. True to his word, he went back, and he has been giving the country an illustration of his fighting qualities. He does not mince matters when he talks. He understands the polite language used in diplomacy but he also understands the more direct language employed in a political fight. He has left no doubt of his intention to live up to the responsibilities of citizenship in New Jersey as well as up to the requirements of the national office to which his country has elevated him.

He also understands that the democratic party is on trial and that it can not hope for a long lease of power unless it makes good. Here are his words:

"But I want to say a few words about the democratic party. I want everybody to realize that I have not been taken in by the results of the last national election. The country did not go democratic in November. It was impossible to go republican because it could not tell which kind of republican to go. The only hopeful and united instrument through which it could accomplish its purpose was the democratic party. There are certain things which we want done, the country said, not certain persons elevated.

"There were certain things which we wanted demonstrated, such as that the government of the United States can not be controlled by private interests. Now, the democratic party is going to have a try at making these things successful, and if it does not succeed we are not going to have another try."

He is wise in keeping the facts before the public. Conditions became so bad that the republican party, upon full consultation, decided that it was not competent to remedy them. The leaders could not agree. Most of the republicans admitted that something ought to be done, but half of them thought that the remedy proposed was worse than the disease, so, by mutual consent, they agreed to turn the job over to the democrats. They went through the form of fighting each other—the two factions did—but they must have known that the division made it impossible for either side to win. They thus confessed that whatever reformation was necessary must be left for the democrats to devise and bring about.

With a clear understanding of his task, President Wilson has undertaken the work, and that he is succeeding admirably, most of the republicans even will admit. One sure proof of the acceptability of his efforts is found in the fact

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### FOR OUR DEAD—MAY 30

#### I.

Flowers for our dead!  
 The delicate wild roses faintly red,  
 The valley lily bells as purely white  
 As shines their honor in the vernal light,  
 All blooms that be  
 As fragrant as their fadeless memory,  
 By tender hands entwined and garlanded,  
 Flowers for our dead!

#### II.

Praise for our dead!  
 For those that followed and for those  
 that led,  
 Whether they felt death's burning accolade  
 When brothers drew the fratricidal blade  
 Or closed undaunted eyes  
 Beneath the Cuban or Philippine skies,  
 While waves our brave bright banner  
 overhead  
 Praise for our dead!

#### III.

Love for our dead!  
 O hearts that droop and mourn, be  
 comforted!  
 The darksome path through the abyss  
 of pain,  
 The final hour of travail not in vain,  
 For Freedom's morning smile  
 Broadens across the seas from isle to  
 isle.  
 By reverent lips let this fond word be  
 said—  
 Love for our dead!

—Collier's Weekly.

that the republican factions are not able to act together to obstruct his plans. But the promise of success is the greater because the president understands that the democratic party is on trial, and that the same inexorable law that drove the republican party from power when its subserviency to Wall street became fully understood, will operate for the overthrow of the democratic party if that party permits special privilege and private interests to dull its sensibilities and defeat its high purposes. It is fortunate for the party and for the country as well, that the nation's president has such a clear appreciation of the work to which he has been called.

### THE POWER BEHIND THE JINGO PAPERS

Speaking on the subject of war, before the Washington Peace society, Saturday, May 18, Mr. Bryan said:

"War is in the interest of a few people, not of all. The profits are garnered by a few, while the masses pay the taxes. A few men gain glory, while the mothers of the nation furnish the sons who make food for battlefields.

"Back of much of the furor for war is a selfish interest in the manufacture of battle ships. There are men so unpatriotic that they try to stir up trouble in another country against their own so as to make personal profit therefrom.

"The people are learning to discriminate between patriotic newspapers and those that seek only for big headlines."

### THE PRESIDENT IN NEW JERSEY

On another page will be found a speech delivered by President Wilson in New Jersey in support of the reforms outlined in his platform. It is commended to the readers, not only because of the information which it gives on the issues covered, but because it illustrates the high purpose of the president and his determination to live up to the responsibilities of the private citizen while he discharges the duties of chief executive of the nation.

## Jingo Journalism

Hereinafter will be found an interview recently given out by Secretary Daniels of the navy department. It is timely and to the point. The recklessness with which the sensational newspapers, not only of this country but throughout the world, deal with international questions, passes the limit of patience. They are not only indifferent to the truth and oblivious to facts, but they misconstrue, wherever misconception is possible, the words of individuals and the actions of governments.

The newspaper item referred to by Secretary Daniels is only one of many illustrations of the injury that can be done by trouble-loving editor or reporter. We are told that the pen, in the hands of one entirely great, is mightier than the sword, but what shall we say of it when it is in the hands of one devoid of patriotism or sense of responsibility?

In time of war, the man who betrays his government into the hands of the enemy, is guilty of treason. Can he be entirely guiltless who in time of peace deliberately attempts to plunge his country into war by the circulation of untruthful and inflammatory rumors?

In our criminal courts, indifference to human life is punished, as well as premeditated assaults. Can he escape moral responsibility for his brother's blood who, for a few dollars, fans the flames of passion and excites hostility between nations?

There is another kind of journalism scarcely less reprehensible than misrepresentation. It is the discussion of hypothetical questions where the discussion is calculated to arouse ill will. All sorts of imaginary situations are conjured up and public officials besieged with questions concerning conditions that have not arisen and may never arise. The official can not answer the questions without gross impropriety, and yet his refusal to answer them is often made the basis of speculation and even taken as an admission that the questions are under consideration.

The disease is a serious one; is it not time for the public conscience to address itself to it? Is it not time for public opinion to bring its influence upon it?

### SECRETARY DANIELS' INTERVIEW

The Washington Post prints the following: Harassed by frequent queries directed to him with a view to confirming stories dealing with the California-Japanese question which have recently been published in certain newspapers, conveying the idea that this country was on the brink of war, and bending its efforts to prepare for the struggle, Secretary of the Navy Daniels attacked the publications which pursue such a policy.

"Their aim," he said, "has been to manufacture a war, and in their effort to accomplish this purpose they are not only exciting the radical elements in this nation, but conveying an erroneous impression to the outside world, including Japan."

As a result of the persistent attempt of these papers to construe every act of the war and navy departments as a move in preparation of war, Secretary Daniels said that he had ordered every ship in the Pacific ocean to hold its present anchorage. The movement of one, he said, would call forth a hundred different stories.

In the course of his comment he said:

"War scares; reports that this government is facing a crisis because of the California-Japanese situation, and is hastily preparing for an international struggle; the repeated statements that the truth of the affair has been withheld, and the public deceived by the administration, are justified only as far as the public will permit itself to be misled by the image-making power of a certain and unscrupulous portion of the press."

"If there had been even the slightest justification for the publication of these war scares,"