

Counting the Profit

The Birmingham Age Herald in its issue of Nov. 27th quotes a number of its citizens as advocating preparedness, WITH A POSTSCRIPT, as it were. They want preparedness, and say it will increase the demand for Birmingham's products.

One man says, "Birmingham, or rather the Birmingham district, will prosper when the government proceeds to carry out the plans of the President."

Another man says, "In carrying out the ideas of the President, the iron and steel companies of this district would share in the profit. The coal producing companies of this district would share in the profit. More ships would consume more coal. More markets would be created."

Another citizen says, "As to the benefits which would accrue to this district as a result of carrying out the plans of the President, there is no question. We would, of course, furnish our prora share of iron and steel."

Another citizen, "When the President's plan is put into effect the Birmingham district will furnish its share of coal and steel and iron."

A fifth citizen says, "In putting into execution the idea of the President the districts manufacturing iron and steel will be called upon to put their staples upon the market."

Here are five prominent citizens interviewed, all of them are counting on Birmingham's share in the profits of preparedness. Some of them say that Birmingham's needs in the matter are secondary, but none of them forget to mention the prospects of profit.

Those who are whooping it up for preparedness are not losing sight of the by-products. Their city, which they think will be specially benefited by the President's preparations, is reminded of its share of the swag. Strange that they should pass by the farmer and the laborer who will not only help pay the taxes but will have to furnish the men to do the fighting when preparedness provokes war. The masses are never consulted by the special interests. The plain people are expected to give their money in time of peace and their lives in time of war—while the profits go to the few.

W. J. BRYAN,

HUDSON MAXIM'S INTEREST IN PREPAREDNESS

The following editorial appeared in the St. Louis Republic on the 27th of November, 1915:

"THE PRACTICAL MR. MAXIM"

"Hudson Maxim has been lauded in these columns as an orator—and so he is. But permit us to add that he is an exceedingly practical person. Eminently practical, if you please. He spoke in St. Louis Wednesday as a representative of the National Security league. He advocated a navy as large as any in the world, and spoke with approval of Uncle Sam's 'Matching dollars with any other nation as long as they want to play the game.' And on Friday the morning papers carried the advertisement of the stock of the Maxim Munitions Corporation, capitalized at \$10,000,000, formed to take over the 'important inventions of Mr. Hudson Maxim,' among which, as enumerated, we note indicators to show the positions of submarines and improved periscopes. In the light of this advertisement we have no difficulty in understanding Mr. Maxim's buoyant optimism with respect to Uncle Sam's dollar-matching operations in the naval field. In view of the ways that are dark and tricks that are vain which have been resorted to by other 'interests' which have a money stake in naval preparedness, we recommend the blazing frankness of the methods of the promoters of the Maxim Munitions Corporation. And we recommend to those most moved by Mr. Maxim's arguments that they be re-read in the light of these stock-selling advertisements."

It is not only an eye-opener, but it indicates that the Republic is seeing more clearly than it did the real force behind preparedness.

And this is the advertisement that opened the Republic's eyes; it appeared in the columns of the Republic as an advertisement on November 26th, two days after Mr. Maxim's St. Louis speech in favor of preparedness.

"Capitalization, \$10,000,000. MAXIM MUNITIONS CORPORATION. Par value, \$10.

"The Maxim Munitions Corporation was formed to take over the important inventions of Hudson Maxim in aerial torpedoes, bomb-throwing devices, aeroplane guns, improvements in

range-finding guns, position indicators to show constantly the geological position of submarines and other vessels, improvements in periscopes and many others.

"Further details in this space tomorrow. Full report on application.

"We buy, sell and quote the above."

It ought to open the eyes of everybody. Who so blind that he can not see the active special interest behind the propaganda for preparedness?

"Match dollars"? Yes, the manufacturers of munitions will advocate this international gambling game just as long as they can spend Uncle Sam's dollars, but why should anyone else advocate it?

W. J. BRYAN.

POPE PLEADS FOR PEACE

A New York dispatch, under date of Dec. 25, says: Christmas was a day of anguish to Pope Benedict, who sent a message to America through the United press, urging universal prayers for an early ending of the European slaughter. The Pope's exhortation was received by cable tonight as follows:

"Rome, Dec. 25. — While the hymn of the angels resounds: 'Glory be to God in the highest heaven and peace on earth good will to men,' the slaughter in Europe, of which there is no example in history, continues.

"All men are brothers because they are sons of God and more specifically are Christians and Catholics. All, moved by this feeling of spiritual brotherhood, must work and pray for the speedy ending of this terrible war, which has dishonored Europe and plunged all humanity into mourning.

"This is the exhortation that the holy father, his heart filled with anguish, sends forth to the world.

"PIETRA CARDINAL GASPARRI,
"Papal Secretary of State."

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WHAT DOES HE MEAN?

The American Defense society held a meeting in New York on January 5th, attended by ex-President Roosevelt, HIS COUSIN, Philip Roosevelt, Hudson Maxim, the munitions man, and others. They resolved in favor of the immediate construction of forty-eight dreadnaughts, and a standing army of 200,000 men, to be supported by a citizen soldiery whose service would be COMPULSORY."

At the close of the meeting "cousin Philip" stated, "We are preparing for an emergency that will arise during the next twelve of thirteen months." As that is about the time the next president will be inaugurated it raises the question: Was he speaking for his cousin, the ex-president? And does the ex-president expect to be president then, and in position to drag this country into war?

"WONDER WHO IT WAS?"

On page 268 of his book entitled, "Serving The Republic," General Miles says that there was only one member of President McKinley's cabinet in favor of war with Spain, and that an assistant secretary under McKinley was very anxious for the war.

General Miles says: "Wonder who it was, wonder who that assistant secretary was, who thanked God that the one member of President McKinley's cabinet who was favoring war with Spain—was doing all he could to bring it about."

Wonder if the man who was then assistant secretary was afterwards president, and whether he is the same man who has been trying to get this country into a war with Mexico, and later into a war with Europe? Wonder if he would thank God if this country was now plunged into war?

THE PAN-AMERICAN CONVENTION

On another page will be found the President's speech outlining the proposed convention between the American republics. The plan is a long step toward peace in the western Hemisphere, and deserves the enthusiastic support of the United States and our southern neighbors. Success to the plan.

It is now reported that Consul McNeely was advised against traveling on a belligerent ship. There were neutral ships upon which he might have sailed. But even if there had been no neutral ships it would be better for the United States to carry its officials on government ships than to allow them to menace the nation's peace.

Shall Militarism Devour the Farm?

On another page will be found a condensed report of the department of agriculture, showing the estimated value of farm products for the year ending December 1st, 1915. It is \$5,568,000,000, the largest ever known, exceeding by nearly six hundred millions the estimate of last year which had never before been surpassed.

The readers of the Commoner are invited to inspect the figures carefully. Speaking in round numbers, the principal crops are valued at: Corn, \$1,755,000,000; wheat, \$930,000,000; hay, \$912,000,000; cotton, \$692,000,000; oats, \$555,000,000; potatoes, \$221,000,000; barley, \$122,000,000. These figures are re-stated here that the readers may more easily compare the value of our crops with the appropriation asked by the army experts. The army program would cost MORE THAN FIVE HUNDRED MILLIONS for the first year, and each year thereafter, according to their estimate, this program would fasten upon the country a permanent cost of over three hundred millions. In other words they would ask us to spend during the first year MORE THAN ONE-FOURTH OF THE CORN CROP, or MORE THAN ONE-HALF OF THE WHEAT CROP, or MORE THAN ONE-HALF OF THE HAY CROP, or NEARLY ALL OF THE COTTON CROP, or MORE THAN TWICE THE POTATO CROP, GETTING READY FOR WAR. But let us make another comparison which is even more appalling. If we estimate the farmers' net profit at an 8 per cent of the gross value of his crop it will be found that the board of army experts asks us to spend on the army MORE THAN THE ENTIRE NET CROP INCOME OF ALL THE FARMERS OF THE UNITED STATES.

Eight per cent on \$5,568,000,000 is less than the proposed expenditures for the first year; and thereafter they ask us to spend more than two-thirds of the net crop incomes of the United States on the army each year.

Remember that these figures are for the ARMY only and do not include the amount which the jingoes want to spend on the NAVY. Is it possible that this country will consent to any expenditures approaching the expenditures desired by the army board? Surely the democratic party will be the last political organization to countenance any such a scheme.

And if we are not to follow the recommendations of the army experts, why give them any consideration? If their recommendations are to be repudiated, why not abolish the board and relegate these distinguished experts to the ordinary routine of the army. Of what advantage is it to have a board of experts ridiculing our present preparedness and belittling us in the eyes of foreign nations, if their judgment is not to be trusted? They simply furnish talking material for jingoes and for the lobbyists of the special interests that fatten on government contracts.

Attention is called to these figures for the purpose of impressing upon the readers of The Commoner the fact that militarism has no respect for the toiler, and the toiler should therefore have no respect for it. The men who labor upon the farm and in the factory—producers of wealth—have the votes with which to control the policy of the country. There is no reason why they should submit without a protest to the impudent and insulting attitude of these men who, enjoying life positions and receiving comfortable incomes, look down with undisguised contempt upon the masses.

W. J. BRYAN.

Extra copies of The Commoner will be supplied in bundles by mail at 2 1-2c each if they are desired for free distribution.

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