

## The Young Man's Opportunity

In popular government every crisis is to the young man an opportunity. In times of quiet men grow into prominence by slow degrees and the young must serve an apprenticeship before they can aspire to leadership, but when a crisis comes; when a great reform breaks the crust of society and insists upon being dealt with the old leaders are apt to be too timid to meet the requirements of the occasion. Office holding usually makes the occupant conservative. His obligations to those who have elevated him to the place and his hope of continued preferment make him hesitate to disturb harmony or to alienate those upon whom he has relied.

It is at such a time that the young man, free from such restraints, is able to make his way to the front—it is the time that tries the mettle of the man. It is the time when the brave go forth to battle while the weaklings wait.

Such a time is at hand. The old issues are passing; the new ones are here. The tariff has been a bone of contention for a century—first a high tariff and then a low tariff—but we seem to have reached a settlement of the issue. The success of the present tariff law has been such that even the unprecedented disturbances caused by the war have not shaken its foundations. We are not likely to return to the high tariffs of the past, especially if the present administration's policy is endorsed at this year's election.

The currency question is also settled. The country, for the first time in half a century, is freed from the grip of Wall street, and there is no likelihood of a return to former conditions.

The republican party would hardly dare to repeal the present law even if by chance it were able to regain control of the government. And so with the anti-trust legislation, it has come to stay.

We now have the popular election of United States senators; we have the income tax and we have a primary system. We have also adopted the initiative and referendum in the states, and this still further insures the rule of the people.

All these reforms are the result of the movement that began twenty years ago for the overthrow of corporate domination. One more national democratic victory will make these reforms permanent, and with that victory achieved next year the way is open for the new issues—Peace, Prohibition and Equal Suffrage.

All of these appeal to young men and furnish themes which they can present with all the enthusiasm of youth. The boy has caught the spirit of the age and is inspired by a desire to contribute a service to the world, a service which will be measured by the help he can render rather than by exploits on the battlefield. He is enlisted as a warrior for peace.

He is also naturally inclined to Prohibition because he has learned in his youth to avoid intoxicating liquor, and, knowing the intelligence with which his mother has safe-guarded his early life, he is not afraid to trust her influence at the polls when she seeks to use the vote to better the environment in which the children are to be reared.

No trinity of issues could more appeal to the young men—and for that matter to the young women—than those which are now before us: PEACE, PROHIBITION and EQUAL SUFFRAGE. The political arena calls for the energy, the intelligence and the enthusiasm of the new generation, and the call is already heard. The response will come from the country, the village and the city—from the school and the college; from all everywhere who are willing to invest their time and their strength in causes that are righteous and which, because righteous, are sure to prevail.

W. J. BRYAN.

### A SATISFACTORY RECORD

With the tariff reduced, the government's right to issue paper money vindicated, Wall street's grip on business and politics broken, private monopolies "in process of ultimate extinction," an income tax on the statute book, popular election of senators in operation, and a promise of Philippine independence passed by the senate—with all these reforms secured within three years, Mr. Bryan has reason to be pleased with the progress made on domestic questions.

### MINISTERS AROUSED

On another page will be found a copy of a letter sent by twenty ministers of Bridgeport, Connecticut, and vicinity, to the President on the subject of preparedness. This letter is significant for two reasons. First, because it is a protest coming from ministers. It is gratifying to see the stirring of conscience among the ministers of the land and the increased courage with which they are speaking out against the policy which the manufacturers of munitions and the army and navy experts are trying to force upon the country. It is also significant that such a protest should come from Bridgeport, Connecticut—one of the centers temporarily enjoying pecuniary benefit from supplying war munitions to the countries at war. The poison of preparedness finds its antidote in the immediate vicinity of the factories. The President, senators and members of congress can not afford to overlook the protest of those who speak for the Christian conscience of the nation and who, on matters involving morals, exert an influence far beyond their numbers.

### "THERE'S A REASON"

Why are the special interests so SURE that there is danger of war? Because they MAKE MONEY OUT OF "SCAREDNESS." Why are the masses SURE that there is no danger of war? Because they have to PAY THE TAXES made necessary by the "scaredness" program. The special interests are gambling on a sure thing. They will make money even if their predictions fail, and still more if they can provoke war. The people, on the other hand, lose if they have to pay for unnecessary preparation or for preparation which provokes war and compels still heavier taxes.

### WE SHOULD LEAD—NOT FOLLOW

"Yet I am asked, I, who am one of the legislators of a Christian country, to measure my policy by the policy of ancient and pagan Rome!" exclaimed John Bright when protesting against the plans of the militarists of Great Britain. And so the Christian statesmen of the United States may protest against the adoption of a diplomacy which imitates the blood-stained diplomacy of Europe—a diplomacy which reeks with threats and revels in the ultimatum.

With the army experts advising a 500 million expenditure on the army, and the navy experts advising the expenditure of 500 millions on the navy—a total of one billion, or twice the net profits of all the farmers in the United States—the plain people can get some idea of the frenzied preparedness toward which the President would lead us.

How provoking it must be to the jingoes to have it leak out that we have the second best navy in the world and were never better prepared than now to repel invasion. It is real mean in any one to so completely answer the slanders which the jingoes are daily uttering against their country.

### THE DISEASE IS SPREADING

An Associated Press dispatch from Havana, Cuba, January 26th, says:

"The question of the increase of the army and navy of Cuba continues to come up for occasional agitation in the press but seems to excite no popular response. The few advocates of Cuban 'preparedness' base their argument on the possibility of the United States being drawn into the European conflict, in which event they fear that the wealth of Cuba might excite the cupidity of some of the combatants who might seize upon her attitude of dependency on the United States as an excuse to violate her neutrality. That Cuba could raise an army of several hundred thousand men is obvious but there are very few, if any, Cubans who can see the faintest necessity for it."

Here we have it, just as might have been expected. Manufacturers of munitions, after trying to scare the United States are proceeding to scare Spanish America. And why should our neighbors on the south be expected to withstand the temptation, if the United States yields to it. "On with the scare, let war be unconfined!" is the shout of the purveyors of war materials and the professional soldiers. What a pity! Or rather, what a sin—but would it not be really a crime, for this great nation to set such an un-Christian example to the Spanish speaking republics as we are now asked to set?

W. J. BRYAN.

## Prophecies and Their Interpretation

I have received a few letters enclosing sermons in favor of war, or in favor of preparedness with a view to war, and these sermons are usually based upon prophecies—the minister so interpreting the prophecy as to mean that war is imminent and inevitable. The error into which these ministers have fallen is due to a failure to distinguish between a PROPHECY and the INTERPRETATION of a prophecy. It is a common mistake into which many fall, to give to an uninspired interpretation the force to which only an inspired prophecy is entitled. One can admit that the prophecies of Holy Writ are inspired without conceding infallibility to those who so interpret them as to find their fulfillment in the present age. A minister ought to be the last to claim for his interpretation any more weight than he himself would give to an opinion of another minister who interprets the prophecy differently. These interpretations are sometimes dangerous, because when a man once convinces himself that his interpretation is correct, he then follows his own opinion as if it had all the binding force of prophecy, and in so doing he may paralyze his Christian usefulness. Suppose, for instance, a minister construes a given prophecy to mean that AT THIS TIME there is to be a universal war, and that the United States is to play an important part in it. If he is convinced that his interpretation is correct, he is not only useless as an advocate of peace but he becomes dangerous to peace. Accepting war as inevitable he becomes an advocate of preparedness, and, if he has any influence, he may, by helping to engender a military spirit, bring about the very wars which he predicts.

The safer plan—is it not the Christian plan?—is to accept the teachings of Christ as a means of preventing war and then apply them, having faith that they will have the effect that Christ promised. If war is to come let no Christian be responsible for it by a misinterpretation of prophecies or by lack of confidence in the power of God to employ love and Christian service for the prevention of war.

W. J. BRYAN.

### THE GROWTH OF THE ARMY

On another page will be found a tabulated statement showing the size of the standing army from the years 1891 to 1915 inclusive, together with the amount appropriated every year, and the amount spent for fortifications. It will be seen that in the 25 years covered by the statistics the number of officers increased from 2052 to 4616, and the number of enlisted men from 23,398 to 87,384. The appropriations for the support of the army increased from \$26,000,000.00 to \$98,000,000.00. The army is practically four times as great as it was 25 years ago, and the hospital corps is five times as great as it was then. This does not include the quartermaster corps or the Philippine scouts. The appropriations for the army are practically four times what they were 25 years ago. As the object is simply to measure the growth of the standing army, no reference is made in the table to the volunteer army which served in the Spanish war.

### A CHILLY DAY

"'Twas a chilly day for Willie when the mercury went down," is the way a witty editor chronicled the death of the lad who swallowed some quicksilver. The lines are recalled by the chill that ran through the militarists when the military committee was informed that the war department could equip FIVE HUNDRED THOUSAND MEN IMMEDIATELY with arms NOW ON HAND, and three hundred thousand more in three months. The testimony shows that "the country was never in better position in this respect."

### AN APPROPRIATE BUTTON

Miss Margaret Winans of Swissvale, Pa., has designed one of the most appropriate peace buttons thus far brought to the attention of the public. It has in the center a dove with an olive branch in its mouth and in a circle around it the song heard at Bethlehem: "Peace on earth; good will toward men."