

## Let the People Rule

Ex-Governor Jelks of Alabama introduced at the last meeting of the National Democratic committee the following resolution:

"Whereas, the democratic party is the party of the people and has jealously contended from the foundation of the government for the equal rights of all the people and has specifically denied special privileges and rights and powers to favored or preferred persons; and

"Whereas, the 'unit rule,' recognized heretofore in our national conventions, is, certainly in a measure, subversive of that law.

"Therefore, be it resolved:

"First, that the chairman of this committee in the next national convention be instructed to recognize on any preliminary motion which may come before him, the right of congressional district delegates to vote as instructed by their districts, the order of any state convention to the contrary, notwithstanding.

"Second, that the temporary chairman of the next national convention be instructed to recognize, in like manner, the instructions of the districts.

"Third, that these resolutions are to apply to district delegates only.

"Fourth, that these instructions may be modified, of course, by the said chairman where special statutes of any state may provide the necessity for a contrary ruling."

The Jelks resolution presents the true democratic policy, and ought to be adopted. It will be remembered that the Baltimore convention took this position in the Ohio contest. The state convention of Ohio, which met after the district delegates were elected and instructed attempted to commit the entire Ohio delegation to the support of Governor Harmon. The nineteen delegates who had been instructed at the primaries, refused to be bound by the action of the state convention, and the national convention decided in favor of the delegates and they were not only permitted to carry out their instructions, but they played an important part in the national convention.

The position taken by ex-Governor Jelks is therefore not only sound, but in harmony with the most recent precedents.

W. J. BRYAN.

### THE RIGHTS OF A NATION

On another page will be found a Bill of Rights for nations, prepared and published by the American Institute of International Law, composed of five members from each of the twenty-one American republics. The declaration is a step in advance and may prove the beginning of a better understanding of the rights of nations.

Heretofore we have had to rely upon international law, which is but a series of precedents, and, since these precedents rest upon invasion of rights, as well as upon recognition of rights, they do not make a very near approach to a code of ethics.

The declaration of rights for the western hemisphere may prove a model for the old world. There ought to be some code of international morals, conforming to the moral code now applied to individuals, and the Pan-American declaration is a step in that direction.

### RELIGIOUS REVIVAL NEEDED

On another page will be found a press dispatch giving the views of Admiral Beatty, who commanded the British Squadron at the first North sea fight. It is encouraging to see a soldier who recognizes the fundamental need of religion. The admiral is entirely right when he says that the great need of the world today is a religious revival, and the need is not confined to England. All of the belligerent countries need religious revival and the neutral countries need it also. It is especially needed in the United States to put a quietus upon the military influences that are trying to make the United States over into a frontier trading post, and would convert our citizens into blanket Indians and put them to practising war whoops.

### OPPOSITION TO PREPAREDNESS GROWING

The Mississippi house of representatives, by a vote of 62 to 55, VOTED DOWN a resolution endorsing the army and navy increase proposed by the President. Good. The President is hear-

ing from the people—from the democratic people—and they are a very different people from those who applauded him at the Manhattan club banquet, and make their living in a very different way.

### WILLIAMS' WISE RECOMMENDATION

In another part of this issue will be found a condensed report of Hon. John S. Williams, comptroller of currency. It is worthy of careful perusal.

Having investigated the banking system, which is under his department, he makes a number of important recommendations in the interest of better regulation.

He advises that bank officers be prohibited from borrowing from their own banks. This is a necessary precaution in view of the influence which the officers exert over the directors.

He advises that directors be prohibited from borrowing except upon formal approval by the board.

He also advises that officers and employees be required to give security bonds.

One of his most important recommendations is that a limit be placed upon the direct and indirect loans which may be made to one individual, firm or corporation.

He asks also that the comptroller be authorized to bring proceedings against directors for violation of the National Bank act. This is a very important recommendation and will go far toward compelling care on the part of directors.

Comptroller Williams is justifying the confidence that the public feels in him. He is conscientiously endeavoring to raise the standard of banking by recommending reforms which are so reasonable that congress can hardly refuse to carry out the recommendations. It is fortunate for the country that we have at the head of the comptroller's department, a man who has an exhaustive knowledge of the banking business and is so completely in harmony with the business world, made up of depositors and borrowers—the world that the bank is established to serve.

Another reform should be secured. It is not sufficient to punish the speculator AFTER he has lost. He should be removed as soon as he yields to the temptation to speculate. It would be a blessing to him, as well as a matter of security to the depositors. No man who handles the money of others should be permitted to speculate. No one complains about a rule forbidding the carrying of matches in a powder-house. The risk, while of a different kind, is no greater than the risk incurred when a bank official is allowed to speculate. The law should prohibit speculation by bank officials.

W. J. BRYAN.

The Philadelphia Inquirer says that Congressman Mann's speech "lifts him into immediate prominence as the real leader of this important movement," and the Congressional Record says that the republicans applauded when this extract from the paper was read in the house. The real leader? Why not? As the doctrine of scaredness is a republican doctrine, the leadership ought to fall to the republicans, and no republican in public life is better qualified to lead a distinctly republican movement, designed to aid special interests, than this same Congressman Mann, who conversed with the Serpent in the Garden.

The owner of a large and completely equipped combination printing plant—job printing, book-binding, along with newspaper equipment—in one of the most prosperous northwestern middle states, in a city of between 10,000 and 15,000 inhabitants, desires a partner to found a democratic daily newspaper in one of the most prosperous fields to be found anywhere. This party wants a man reliable and competent to share the burden and responsibilities. Comparatively but little capital will be required by the right party. For full information as to this field and opportunity write to "C," care of The Commoner office.

### "THE FORGOTTEN MAN."

Some years ago an economist made a strong argument against the protective tariff because of the burden it placed on "the forgotten man." Militarism places a double burden on the forgotten man. He not only pays the taxes, but he is the man who fights in the wars into which the militarists lead the nation for their profit.

## Americanism

Americanism, when properly defined, is a virtue which ought to be found in every American; that is, when defined as that devotion to the welfare of his country which leads every American citizen, whether native-born or naturalized, to put the interest of the United States first, and to be willing to render a whole-hearted service to the nation at all times, whether in peace or war.

As every virtue has its imitation, it is to be expected that the word "American" will be misused, and made a cloak for prejudice unworthy of a patriotic citizen.

Americanism does not require, indeed it does not tolerate, the stirring up of animosities between different groups of citizens divided by lines of descent. It should be the desire of all good citizens to facilitate the amalgamation and assimilation of the various elements of our population. This can not be done by the arousing of race antipathies; Americanism, therefore, implies charity toward other Americans, as well as the conscientious fulfillment of the obligations which each citizen owes to his government.

W. J. BRYAN.

### THE CHRISTIAN CONSCIENCE AROUSED

It is very gratifying to note the increasing evidence of an aroused Christian conscience in the United States. Various organizations of Christians have passed resolutions against preparedness, and leading divines are speaking out with a growing emphasis against the policy of preparedness—a policy which rests upon the doctrine that force and fear are the only foundations upon which peace can be built. This doctrine is a challenge to the spirit of the New Testament and to the Christian church.

The Missionary Voice, published at Nashville, Tenn., by the Board of Missions of the Methodist Episcopal church, south, devotes a large part of the January number to the subject of preparedness, assailing it with splendid vigor. On another page will be found its editorial, entitled, "Preparedness and National peril." It also quotes extensively from other papers, among them being the Raleigh Christian Advocate, the Evangelical Herald, the St. Louis Advocate.

### A DENIAL

A Miami, Fla., dispatch to the Birmingham Age-Herald, dated Jan. 25, 1916, says: "William Jennings Bryan today published a statement denying published reports that he intended following in the wake of the President on his trip through the middle west, making a series of speeches in answer to those of the President on preparedness. He said he would remain in Miami until he left for Lincoln, Neb., on February 20, to attend a birthday dinner."

"Mr. Bryan said he would make a few speeches on his way to Lincoln, but they would have no connection with the President and his references to preparedness would be along the line of the addresses he delivered last fall.

"He added that the dates for these speeches were arranged before it was announced that the President would make his speaking tour."

### NATION DWELLS IN COTTAGE

One of the many striking sentences employed by John Bright in pleading the cause of the masses in Great Britain reads: "The nation in every country dwells in the cottage." It is a powerful indictment of those who in matters of legislation look only to the rich and think only of the tax-eaters. The strength of the nation is in the cottage, not in the munition plant—of what value is a weapon without someone to use it? Neither is the nation's strength in the officer—of what use is the officer without soldiers to command? The men in the cottages are opposed to unnecessary preparation for imaginary wars.

### WHICH?

Now that Col. Roosevelt has pre-empted that portion of the stage set apart for the militarists and is shouting for a peace resting on force, will the President enlist under the Roosevelt banner, or will he organize a real opposition and appeal to those who have faith in the moral philosophy taught by the Author of the Christian religion and seek for a permanent peace built upon love and the spirit of brotherhood?