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WILLIAM J. BRYAN CHARLES W. BRYAN
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THE COMMONER, LINCOLN, NEB.

Discerning people long ago discovered that if one were to believe those who were not of it the government is always managed by the most incompetent men who could possibly be selected.

For the first time in its history the woolen trust has announced a dividend on its watered common stock. The democratic tariff law, it will be remembered, completely prostrated this industry.

Governor Whitman of New York, once pointed out as the Moses who would turn the promised land trick for the republicans, says that he has but one ambition, and that is to be re-elected chief executive of New York. Mr. Whitman is politically-wise at any rate.

The two republican delegates from the Third Missouri district announce themselves in favor of the nomination of Senator Weeks for president. It is a long way, in distance and political thought, from the Back Bay to Missouri, but it looks as though bridging it was not impossible.

Patriotism has long been defined as a love of country, but it has been noticed that those who are just now professing to be our greatest patriots are the ones who are denouncing the people as being white-livered and neither able nor willing to fight any foe that they may choose to pick for us.

When any person can show resolutions endorsing the "scaredness" program that have been passed by any bonafide convention of farmers, union laboring men or church organizations, we will begin to think that possibly there is a sentiment in the country for it. None have yet been printed.

Nearly 600 of the 985 delegates to the republican national convention will be elected from states which provide for selection by direct primary. Opposition to a declaration in favor of the presidential primary ought not to be very strong in a body so largely composed of men from states where the principle is enacted into statute law.

As an indication of the strong trend of the republicans and progressives to unite it may be pointed out that when the California progressives offered an even split of the delegation to the republican national convention they were turned down without hesitation. It is easy to reach an agreement to unite, but when it comes to distributing the offices and honors, that's different.

In declaring that no peace proposals will be acceptable until the object of the entente allies is achieved, the English press say that the avowed purpose is to stamp out militarism in Europe, meaning thereby the fully armed and equipped for war idea. Yet sober, serious-minded men in America are advising that we adopt a policy that Europe is so heartily tired of that she is spending men and treasure without stint to end.

Is Our Country Safe from Attack?

Is our country safe from attack? Yes, never more so. The one danger before us lies in the spirit of militarism which is now being cultivated and in the diplomatic policies which accompany militarism. No nation has any intention of attacking us, and if any nation had such a design, the ocean is a barrier which makes a successful attack impossible.

We are spending more today on the army and navy than ever before, and our preparedness is increasing relatively as other nations exhaust themselves. There is no reason therefore why the country should yield to the demands of the munition manufacturers and burden our people with enormous expenditures to get ready for imaginary wars. To do so is not only indefensible from a financial standpoint, but it is a challenge to Christian civilization and a surrender of the ideals which have given the nation its moral prestige. All history disproves the theory that a permanent peace can be built on force and fear. Every consideration compels us to put our trust in honest friendship and the spirit of brotherhood.

W. J. BRYAN.

IS IT WORTH A WAR?

The Chicago Tribune asks the very pertinent question "Is the right of an American citizen to ride upon an armed belligerent merchantman worth a war?" The opinion of the American people on that subject is all one way. By an overwhelming vote they will say "No." This country will not, by deliberate action, enter the biggest, the most expensive, and the most inhuman war in history to vindicate the right of a few foolhardy Americans to disregard their country's welfare as well as their own safety. If the American people MUST go to war they will select some cause worthy of the blood of a patriotic people.

Peace advocates really owe a debt of gratitude to the persons who financed the various security, defense and navy leagues that have been trying to organize preparedness sentiment. Nothing has so cemented the belief of the people that a negro lurked in the big army and navy woodpile as the spectacle of organizations so well financed that they could turn loose a large number of orators and deluge the country with costly printed matter. Men will spend money liberally for two things, for profit and for an ideal. As there is no idealism in getting ready for war, the people had but one guess left.

A proposition to resubmit in 1917 the amendment granting the vote to women has been acted favorably upon by the New York assembly judiciary committee almost unanimously, and it is predicted that it will have easy sailing through the two legislatures that must pass upon it. The soul of John Brown isn't the only thing that goes marching on in this country.

As we understand it all that the progressive party leaders ask of the republicans is that the next republican national convention select a progressive for president and adopt the progressive national platform. We suspect, however, that the right to move an adjournment will not be sufficiently alluring to satisfy Mr. Root.

If there are any fluttering hearts that need treatment after reading Senator Root's key-note speech in denunciation of the democratic administration it might be communicated to them that Mr. Root would not have been any better pleased had the democratic administration done exactly the opposite of what he objected to.

THE NEW SECRETARY OF WAR

The appointment of ex-Mayor Baker, of Cleveland, as secretary of war to succeed Mr. Garrison, will greatly please the progressive democrats of the country. Secretary Baker grew up under the instruction of Tom Johnson, which is certificate enough. He has ability, character and experience, and his sympathies are with the people. The President could not have done better. The public has yet to learn Secretary Baker's views on the size of the army and the general subject of preparedness, but there is nothing in his past career to indicate a tendency toward militarism.

W. J. BRYAN.

ROOSEVELT AS HE IS

On another page will be found a statement which ex-President Roosevelt gave to the public at Trinidad, West Indies. It was prepared with care, and furnishes as good a photograph of himself as he has ever offered to the public. It exhibits his two controlling impulses. First, he is a partisan—no one more blinded by partisan zeal. He helped to defeat the republican party in 1912, not because he wanted the democratic party to win, but because he was egotistical enough to believe that he could defeat both Taft and Wilson.

Ever since he found that he could not build up a successful party around himself he has been working his way back to the republican party. He will be back in line this year, getting any crumbs he can, but back, no matter how humiliating the terms. He would support Penrose for president if necessary—he would even allow Barnes to write the platform.

His last statement shows the partisan side of his character, and it also shows the Hamiltonian strain in him. He is more Hamilton than Hamilton himself, and has not the excuse that Hamilton had. Hamilton lived at a time when democracy was UNTRIED, but Roosevelt lives in a day when democracy has been vindicated, and yet he would turn the clock back toward autocracy and arbitrary power. His "new nationalism," which died aborning, contemplated, as he boldly stated it, the absorption by the federal government of some of the powers of the states, and the absorption by the federal executive of some of the powers of the other branches. Since the war in Europe has come with its excitements, he wants to add the brutality of a war lord to the consolidated civil power which he covets. He wants to do something "heroic." Well, the people are not ready to abandon their high ideals and lofty hopes for the pleasure of following an ambitious glory-hunter through blood and mire. Not yet.

To illustrate just how large a horizon unrolls before the eyes of American manufacturers it may be pointed out that they are already insisting that they must have a bigger tariff wall built than now exists by law if they are to share in the world trade after the war ends and unlooses the energies of the business men of the belligerents. They want a wall high enough to keep foreign goods out, and then expect to sell their surplus at lower prices in world competition than they do at home. The fact that the world long ago adopted goods as the medium of exchange between nations hasn't permeated far into Rhode Island and Pennsylvania. If America expects to sell abroad she must also expect to buy abroad, and a tariff wall that is so high that it keeps out imports will be too greatly elevated to allow exports to be hoisted over it.

The Washington correspondent of the Houston Post is quoted as saying that a belief exists in the capital that the President isn't at all displeased by the opposition of western congressmen to his preparedness program, and that he thinks a little holding back by sections other than the east, which is frankly alarmed, will prevent the country from being swept off its feet. To which it might be added that this is a pretty big country, with its feet fairly firmly planted.

The Krupps kept a large lobby and a number of press agents busy in Germany for a number of years telling the people there that the surest guarantee of peace possible is a strong organization that can fight at the drop of the hat. History is as surely repeating itself in America. How far that repetition proceeds will depend upon how far we follow the example of Germany in the matter of preparedness.

Former Senator Root's speech before the New York republican convention has been heralded as the keynote of the republican campaign. Inasmuch as the only possible interpretation of that speech is that the United States should go to war with Germany and Mexico, there will be no mourning in democratic circles if it is officially adopted as the republican attitude.

It is significant to say the least that those newspapers which profess to believe that the surest guarantee of peace is a large army and navy are also the same newspapers which sneer at Henry Ford in every issue and call him crazy because he is willing to spend his money in the interests of peace.