

The Commoner

WILLIAM J. BRYAN, EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR

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Victory for Woman's Suffrage

The victory for woman's suffrage won in the state of New York may well be regarded as a crowning and compelling triumph. The empire state by a decisive majority of nearly one-hundred thousand extends suffrage to woman on equal terms with man. The carrying of the biggest state in the union, and that, too, in the very center of the east, will exert a powerful influence on the election in other states. It seems quite certain that Pennsylvania will follow New York's example as soon as the voters have an opportunity to express themselves again. Two years ago suffrage was defeated in Pennsylvania by a majority that was small when compared with the majority registered against the reform in New York at the same time. The women, with the most populous state on their side and with the second state in the union sure to follow, will enter the fight with renewed vigor and with stronger hope of an early triumph of their cause. It is not unlikely that the verdict of New York will exert a powerful influence on congress and may give to the advocates of the national amendment the necessary two-thirds majority.

The Commoner congratulates the country no less than the women upon the prospect of full national enfranchisement of women. With the new ethical questions that will arise, the world needs woman's vote even more than man needs the ballot. Her participation in politics will hasten the triumph of national prohibition, and when this reform is accomplished, women's vote will make the settlement of the question permanent.

When the war is over, the world will be confronted by the greatest problem it has ever had to meet, namely, the laying of the foundations of peace that shall endure. When that time comes, the mothers, who in all the belligerent nations are giving their sons to the battlefield, should have a voice in building a machinery for the settlement of international disputes which will make this the last war to redden the earth with blood.

W. J. BRYAN.

NEW MEXICO GOES DRY

Welcome New Mexico to the roll of honor as a prohibition state! She is the twenty-seventh commonwealth to banish the saloon by state action. Some feared that, because a large percentage of the state's population is of Mexican descent, prohibition might not carry, but it seems that the Latin race, as well as the races of the north, is coming to realize the deadly influence of alcoholic liquor.

New Mexico has great possibilities, and these will be increased by the improved social conditions that will follow the driving out of the saloon. Viva! New Mexico.

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THE ELECTIONS OF 1917

The elections of 1917 do not indicate any decided change in the trend of public opinion. The most significant feature is the growth of the socialist vote throughout the country. It fell short of the expectations of the leaders of that party, and they did not secure the victories which they prophesied, but their gain was sufficient to give them substantial encouragement. These gains will be variously interpreted. The more radical socialists will see in them an increased acceptance of the principles of the socialistic party, while those outside of that party will be inclined to account for these gains by considering them an expression of the ultra-anti-war element.

As between the democrats and republicans, the latter have more reason than the former to rejoice. Massachusetts, which has been going democratic occasionally in recent years, gives an oldtime republican majority in re-electing Governor McCall. The democratic majority in Boston is lower than it has been in seventeen years. The republicans also show considerable strength in Baltimore, Louisville and Indianapolis, but the party out of power generally gains some advantage in the off-year elections. We shall have to wait until the congressional election of 1918 to gain any definite idea of the drift of political sentiment insofar as it is likely to affect the national campaign of 1920.

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ITALY'S RETREAT

Italy's retreat is most unfortunate at this time, not because it is likely to have any important bearing on the war, but because it will give temporary encouragement to the military party in Germany. Nothing but success in the field can keep an autocracy in power at Berlin, and Germany's signal victory over the Italians may tide the ruling class over one more crisis.

Of course Italy will in time make a stand and drive the enemy back toward his base of supplies, but it will take weeks to repair the damage done in the meantime.

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Tax War Profits

It will probably be necessary to largely increase the revenue to be raised by taxation, and legislators are beginning now to cast about for new sources of revenue. The Commoner begs to commend the excess war profits as a source of revenue not yet fully explored. As long as a soldier is required to give his life in his country's behalf, congress should not be squeamish about the collection of taxes on industries that profit by the war. Excess war profits mean profits beyond a reasonable amount, and it must be remembered that profits or incomes are from principal and not principal itself. The tax upon the soldier is not upon profits only but upon the principal itself. Any tax upon profits therefore, even if the tax took all the profits, leaves the principal and thus gives the holder of the property enormous advantage over the man whose life is demanded.

The revenue law recently enacted went farther in the direction of justice than previous laws, but it does not go as far as it ought to in view of the demands that are now being made upon the citizen. The President has called attention to the fact that patriotism and profits are not to be put in the same class. While patriotism demands enormous sacrifice from all of the rest of the people, the men engaged in the manufacture of implements of war should not be allowed to fatten out of the nation's perils.

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It is one of the rules of life that the man who doesn't obey the rules soon lands in the discard. If a man disobeys the laws of health he pays the penalty; if he disobeys the laws of morality he becomes a degenerate. Why, then, should any man imagine he can disobey the rules that a citizen owes his first duty of allegiance to his own country and escape the inevitable punishment of banishment from loyal men's society?

BRAVO! DRY DEMOCRATS!

The organization effected in Ohio a year ago, with Senator Miller at its head, has reason to be proud of its work. It gave a rallying point for the Ohio democrats who are opposed to the saloon, and not only added strength to the cause, but secured for the democratic party a share of the glory. In every dry state the democratic party should see to it that the organization is put into the hands of those entirely in sympathy with the prohibition amendment; in the states where the question is still an issue, the opponents of the saloon should see to it that the party organization is not debauched and disgraced by the liquor element. Prohibition is going to win in the nation, and the democratic party can not afford to take the immoral side of this great moral issue. Put none but the trustworthy on guard!

W. J. BRYAN.