

The Debt of the Allies

The cat is out. British authorities announce that they proposed a cancellation of debts among the Allies—that is, each of the nations was to write "paid" on the obligations it holds. Our government wisely refused to enter into such an agreement. Cancellation of debts would mean little to Great Britain for she would be relieved of her indebtedness to the United States on the one side, while on the other side she would be releasing those who owe her. With us it would be entirely one-sided. We would cancel obligations to the amount of nearly 10 billions and receive nothing in return. This proposition is entirely different from one I have been advocating; namely, that we use the debt TO PURCHASE DISARMAMENT. If we make this cancellation of the amount due us dependent on disarmament it can be used to so revise the terms of the treaty as to permit a lifting of the burden of militarism from the toilers of the world. To use the debt to purchase peace universal and perpetual is one thing—to give it to the Allies to be used in getting ready for another war would be worse than wasting it. The expenditure of such a sum by the Allies on preparedness would be used as an argument in favor of increased expenditures on our army and navy. If we can purchase disarmament the amount due us would soon be saved in reduced appropriations.

W. J. BRYAN.

MAKING ANARCHISTS

In a single week we find Senator Calder of New York declaring that the coal men have robbed the public of a billion and a half of dollars (that is pretty strong for a senator from New York). Sugar men indicted for trying to corner the molasses market, builders, material men and labor leaders being indicted in New York and Chicago for conspiracy against the public, a bill to regulate the packers passed by the Senate after a ten years' fight against obstruction, and a lumber combination being investigated. All this plundering by big business and yet none of the guilty sent to the penitentiary. No wonder the anarchist crop grows. What are you going to do about it, Mr. Honest Business Man? Are you going to join with the plain people and stop this highway robbery, this defiance of law? These are the things that encourage the bandit and the burglar. If law is to be enforced we must stop grand larceny as well as petit larceny.

W. J. BRYAN.

A WELCOME TO WEEKLIES

A progressive Democrat writes of his intention to start a weekly paper. Good. As a rule, that is the only kind that can be kept Democratic in the north. There should be such a weekly in every county and in every state.

Democracy—real democracy, which means progressive democracy—must be known to be accepted, and until we have a National Bulletin to present both sides our party must rely largely on the weekly press. The Commoner will gladly welcome all such papers—they are badly needed. And they afford the earnest advocate of Democratic principles a splendid field for service.

W. J. BRYAN.

PROHIBITION IN SCOTLAND

The Associated Press reports that at the recent election in Scotland 1,153,978 votes were cast; 442,530 were cast for prohibition, 19,226 for limitation and 692,222 against any change. While the majority against prohibition was considerable, the vote of 442,530 for prohibition was surprising. If prohibition can poll more than one-third of the vote at the FIRST election we may expect a dry Scotland in a few years. Some 447 licenses were cancelled. Good for Scotland.

A GREAT MAN DEAD

On another page will be found a brief report of a memorial meeting held in Washington in honor of General Gorgas. He was a really great man—wise, kind courageous, and as modest as a child. His life was consecrated to service and it was a very large service that he rendered to the world. What he drew from society was insignificant in comparison with the immense good he did. And his wife was a fitting companion for such a man.

W. J. BRYAN.

If the Democratic organization is stranded a rise in the tide may set it afloat, but it must be remembered that the tide is furnished by the voters—not by the officers on the ship.

BIG PROFITS

The "National Acceptance Journal" has an article from a St. Louis business man from which the following extract is taken:

"From every angle, trade and commerce seem fairly safe against radicalism and offer the most wonderful opportunities for profit ever known in commercial history. The United States is in the midst of domestic and foreign trade, the volume of which is overwhelming. Profits are extraordinary. Turnovers of capital are quick; orders easy to secure; the demand often greater than the supply. The game is exciting and, at the same time, creditable and useful to mankind. Men of great ability are attracted by its magnitude and profits. The genius that might have built and successfully operated a railroad is now constructing a giant industrial plant, or building a vast commercial enterprise, trading at home and with the countries across the seas.

"The pecuniary rewards are greater than ever derived from organizing and financing railroads or trolley lines, but not so conspicuous and therefore not so vulnerable. Probably no other country and no other time in all the commercial eras of the past offered such wonderful opportunities for business success and wealth."

Pecuniary rewards are GREATER but not so CONSPICUOUS and therefore not so VULNERABLE. It seems about time for another investigation.

JUDGE POLLOCK'S INTERVIEW

Whenever one criticizes a judge, he is usually rebuked by those who are especially zealous in upholding the dignity of our courts. What will these self-appointed guardians of justice say when a judge gives out a statement like the one recently credited to Judge Pollock of the United States District Court? He attributes the crime wave to the prohibition law which carries out a constitutional amendment and has been sustained by the highest court in the land. The men who are smuggling liquor into the United States and selling it in violation of the law are encouraged in their crime by a judge before they may be brought for trial. Judge Pollock in effect brings an indictment against the congress that submitted national prohibition, and against the forty-five states that ratified the amendment, as well as against the thirty-three states which, by their separate action, adopted prohibition. It is amazing that any man with standing enough to secure a judicial position should be guilty of such inflammatory utterances. If Judge Pollock desires to join in the crusade for the restoration of the saloon, with all its iniquities, he ought to resign. He has no moral right to use his office for so base a purpose.

W. J. BRYAN.

U. S. DRANK LESS LIQUOR

"Whisky consumption in the United States decreased from 89,641,985 gallons in 1917, to 5,581,533 gallons in 1920, the first year of prohibition under the constitutional amendment, according to figures announced by the Anti-Saloon League of America. Consumption of alcohol in the same years decreased from 71,081,121 gallons to 22,039,355 gallons the figures showed, while beer consumption dropped from 60,81,379 barrels of 9,231,280 barrels.

"Granting that many million gallons of alcohol and whisky withdrawn for non-beverage use have been diverted to beverage use," said an accompanying statement by the league, "and granting that many million gallons of beer have been made and consumed illegally, a conservative estimate shows that the people of the United States have saved over one billion dollars previously spent for beverage intoxicants."

A WORD TO STUDENTS

Study is a letter of introduction to all that man has recorded on the written page. It gives one the companionship of books and the benefit of the experience of others. "Time is money"—it is more valuable than money—for wisely used (and study is a wise use of it) it brings money and, besides, this, it brings us that which money can not buy. Study is next in importance to service, and it increases the value of our service.

DRINK BILL DECREASES

The Anti-saloon League announces the decrease in the consumption of liquor as follows: Whisky from 89 millions to 5½ millions. Alcohol from 71 millions to 22 and beer from 60 million barrels to 9½ millions—a total saving of over ONE BILLION DOLLARS TO THE CONSUMERS. Who says that prohibition is a failure?

The Cabinet

The President-elect is picking a cabinet—a business so personal that no one feels like making any suggestions. There are three positions which will have a great deal to do with the success of his administration—secretary of state, secretary of the treasury and the attorney-general. The first will represent the President in the carrying out of the plan for an Association of Nations—he should be favorable to international co-operation as far as it can be carried without a surrender of American rights. The secretary of the treasury will represent him in matters of taxation and finance. It is important that he shall not favor a transfer of tax burdens from the rich to the poor and it is also important that he shall not turn the Federal Reserve Bank system over to Wall street.

If the profiteers are to be punished and prohibition enforced the work will have to be done by the department of justice—a strong man is needed to do the work. There are Republicans who meet the requirements of these positions. Will the President call them to his aid?

W. J. BRYAN.

Prospects are reported excellent for the passage of the Capper bill putting so high a tax on all board of trade transactions that do not include the actual delivery of the grain dealt in that it will end gambling in farm products. The idea that in order to find out what is a proper price for the producer to receive for his wheat it is necessary to have a lot of men selling what they haven't got and what they do not actually want in order to find out at how low a price they can buy it back is dying hard but fast.

Congress has about decided to get along with the same number of members of the lower house that has been the rule for the last decade. This will result in a readjustment of membership as between the states that will cause losses in several states, but we may depend upon the Republican legislatures that will do most of the reapportionment to see that a good job of gerrymandering in the interest of the party in power is done.

Nearly a thousand bills have been introduced in the Nebraska legislature, and these embrace almost every subject upon which legislation has been suggested. A number of them contain promise of economic relief for those who have been the victims of organized greed. It will be interesting to note just how little the people will get out of it.

It comes with ill grace from the wets of the country to criticize the enforcement of the Volstead act, when so many of the wet Democratic politicians controlled the appointment of the men to do the enforcing. In a raid in New York the other day the man who was found in a room dispensing the drinks had a badge as a law enforcement officer.

MEN TOLD ME, LORD

(1851-1921)

Men told me, Lord, it was a vale of tears
Where Thou hadst placed me, wickedness and
woe

My twain companions whereso I might go:
That I through ten and three-score weary years
Should stumble on, beset by pains and fears,
Fierce conflict round me, passions hot within,
Enjoyment brief and fatal, but in sin.
When all was ended then should I demand
Full compensation from Thine austere hand;
For, 'tis Thy pleasure, all temptation past,
To be not just but generous at last.

Lord, here am I! My three-score years and ten
All counted to the full; I've fought Thy fight,
Crossed Thy dark valleys, scaled Thy rocks'
harsh height,
Borne all Thy burdens Thou dost lay on men
With hand unsparing, three-score years and ten.
Before Thee now I make my claim, O Lord!
What shall I pray Thee as a meet reward?

I ask for nothing! Let the balance fall!
All that I am or know or may confess
But swells the weight of mine indebtedness;
Burdens and sorrows stand transfigured all;
Thy hand's rude buffet turns to a caress,
For love, with all the rest, Thou gav'st me here,
And Love is Heaven's very atmosphere!

DAVID STARR JORDAN.