

What Country Thinks of Shelving Bonus

(From the Literary Digest.)

The loud protests reaching this office in various papers against reburying the soldiers' bonus in the files of a senate committee give strength to the belief of Secretary Hoover's Washington Herald that the matter is merely postponed, not defeated, and "is as assured as if already acted upon." Thus we find a western editor crying, "shame and disgrace" upon the "fickle and unappreciative," Mammon-worshipping nation which can not out of its vaster resources do for its soldiers what Great Britain, Canada, New Zealand, Austria, France, Belgium, and Italy have done for theirs; which will not compensate the men who fought and suffered and bled for \$1 a day while shirkers at home were getting \$10 a day and the profits of war-time business were making 23,000 new multimillionaires! This cry is echoed by other papers and is taken up by individuals, journals, and organizations speaking for the veterans of the war. It is true that President Harding's insistence upon a postponement of the bonus bill on the ground that it would wreck the nation's finances quickly persuaded a majority of the Senate, and the postponement seems to be heavily indorsed by the prevailing newspaper sentiment of the country, irrespective of party lines and sectional prejudice. Yet it must be recorded that many refuse to accept this disposal of it as logical, or fair, or generous, or ingenuous. "The soldiers and sailors have been buncoed and they are not backward about saying so," we read in the Chicago Journal (Dem.) The boys who fought this war, stingingly observes the Des Moines Register (Ind. Rep.) may well read Kipling's "Tommy Atkins"—"It's always Mr. Atkins when the band begins to play." It strikes the Columbus Citizen (Ind.) as more than passing strange "that there should be no money available for the soldiers while money by the hundred million is available for the railroads." There was money enough for a naval-building program to cover the estimated bonus three times over, declares the Tifton Gazette (Dem.), in Georgia, but "everybody else, munition, armament, and supply, profiteer; capital and labor must be paid before the men who fought are paid—if they ever are paid."

Foremost among the service-men's journals, The American Legion Weekly insists that the people of this country, in so far as they have spoken, are clearly for a bonus. It calls attention to the fact that fourteen states have decided to give bonuses. In five the legislature acted; in the other nine the people spoke "unequivocally and conclusively" in referendum; as follows:

	For	Against	Ratio For
Maine	105,712	32,820	3.2 to 1
Michigan	471,159	185,602	2.5 to 1
New Jersey	534,532	165,555	3.2 to 1
New York	1,117,546	630,265	1.8 to 1
Oregon	88,219	37,866	2.3 to 1
Rhode Island	10,535	1,303	8.1 to 1
South Dakota	93,459	56,366	1.7 to 1
Washington	224,356	88,128	2.5 to 1
Wisconsin	165,762	57,324	2.7 to 1

In asking the Senate to lay the bonus bill over, President Harding, declares The American Legion Weekly, "prevented the passage of a measure which a majority of the people of this country and a majority of our national legislators had come to regard as inherently founded on justice." The American Legion, we are told, must insist that President Harding and Secretary of the Treasury Mellon failed to make out a case against compensation:

"To assume that a country which spent billions in the war can not add to this a proportionately small amount is to assume that if the war had lasted a few weeks longer the country would have been ruined. The American Legion can not subscribe to the belief that this is sound. While the government did not borrow money without paying a fair rate of interest, while it did not conscript industry without adequate remuneration, it conscripted men and remunerated them as it pleased. The American Legion can not subscribe to the belief that this is fair. If it was unjust to ask a contractor to work for the government for less than cost plus 10 per cent, it was unfair to ask a man to fight for it for cost

minus 50 per cent. The American Legion must believe that it will become apparent to the American people that President Harding, in his remarkable message, set forth no reason whatever to justify the Senate in delaying action on a bill so vital alike to the well-being of the men who served their country and to the country itself. It must express the fear too, that normalcy can not be attained by ignoring obligation."

Defending the bonus as meaning "fair, square treatment for the men who fought for America," The Stars and Stripes (Washington), another ex-service-man's paper, similarly attacks the Harding logic. The more it studies the message the more it feels "that it was a piece of expediency coming from the hand but not from the heart of the Chief Executive, and that in good old army slang 'he may be sorry when he gets sober.'"

Precedent, says National Commander John G. Emery of the American Legion, disproves Secretary Mellon's "prediction of financial collapse if the adjusted compensation bill passes. England and her overseas dominions, France, Italy, and Belgium enacted national-relief legislation and found money thus expended a potent factor in stabilizing conditions generally through rehabilitation of individuals."

With these spokesmen for the veterans stand such widely distributed papers as the New York Call (Socialist), Chicago Saturday Blade (Ind.), Milwaukee Leader (Socialist), Shreveport Times (Dem.), Minnesota Star (Labor), and Seattle Union Record (labor). Labor (Washington) calls for a survey of profiteering and a levy upon the profiteers thus discovered of a special tax with which to pay a bonus. William Jennings Bryan makes a simpler suggestion in his Commoner. "Why not keep the excess-profits tax and use the proceeds to pay the ex-service men?" The New Majority (Chicago), organ of the Farmer-Labor party, tells the disappointed ex-service men that this lesson should teach them "that the old parties are alike," that "there is no help for the worker—and the ex-service men are workers, except the few who wore the shoulder-straps—except in their own party."

THE QUANTITIVE THEORY

Most tolerant-minded persons have looked back on Mr. Bryan's advocacy of free silver in 1896 with more of sadness for a youth they were firmly convinced was misguided and too enthusiastic to be trusted as a leader. They have been willing to forget their ancient belief that he deliberately sought to ruin our currency system because of his later proof of his real interest in the future and welfare of his fellow-countrymen. Mr. Bryan was for free silver because its unlimited coinage by the mint on a parity with gold would have at least doubled the amount of money in circulation and thus given us what in those hard times we needed, a larger per capita. His arguments in support of free coinage were based upon the quantitative theory of money, that is to say, that the prices of products were accurately measured by the amount of money available for paying for them. With money scarce it took more goods to get it; with money plenty it took less goods. We are forced to admit, in the light of the confessions of the federal reserve bankers, that Bryan was a lot nearer being right than many were. The bank has retired about half a billion of its own notes within the last sixteen months, and it did so for the purpose of forcing down prices. Its governors frankly say that they made money dear in order to make goods cheap—and that is the quantitative theory all right.—Nebraska (Lincoln) State Journal.

Political chickens have also a habit of returning to the family roost. During the last legislative session in Nebraska the Republicans omitted nothing that was calculated to make underdogs of the nonpartisan league and organized labor. Now the party leaders are talking of holding an extra-legal convention to winnow the field of candidates for governor and senator so that one man for each office shall confront the league-labor candidates in the primary.

Prohibition, it is true, is not a complete success after two years, but neither is whisky drinking after centuries.—Exchange.

TO MY WIFE

"Teacher, tender comrade; wife,
Fellow farer, true through life,
Heart whole and soul free
The August Father gave to me."
—Robert Louis Stevenson.

THE "CARBUNCLE" OF BOYLE'S THIRTY ACRES

"A moral Carbuncle" is the denunciatory description given by Dr. John Roach Straton, a prominent Baptist minister of New York, to the recent Dempsey-Carpentier championship fight, and a chorus of religious editors joins him in rebuking the "90,000 criminals" who witnessed the bout and the two "brutes" who bloodied each other's noses. The fight occasioned, of course, a deal of sober thinking among those who were interested only in the moral effects it might produce, and, as will be recalled by our readers, several vain efforts were made to prevent the exhibition, Dr. Straton, who saw the fight as a witness for the International Reform Bureau, is quoted in the New York Times as saying that it proved to him that "we have relapsed into paganism." It attracted, he said, "all those elements whose influences are making for the overthrow of our American ideals and customs." "Of course, it was not a boxing-match," says The Christian Work (Undenominational), "and no one supposed it was." Later on, thinks this Journal, "bull-fights and gladiatorial combats will probably be revived." Now, remarks a writer in The Intelligencer (Reformed Church), "it is easier to make a pugilist than a preacher," and he exclaims: "How much need there is of red-blooded Christianity which faces the task of reforming a brutal world and turning energies to the welfare of the race." But The Christian Century (Undenominational) thinks that there was "a certain disgust in the attitude of mind with which a large portion of the reading public received the news of the results already discounted by expectation."

It believes, then, that—

"The prize-fight, no matter what the stakes or how distributed, is an outlaw in the civilized world. It must oppose an evergrowing and healthy public opinion. It must seek furtively an area where the conscience of the community, or of public officials, is lax and corruptible. Like the saloon, it will not long be able to find a place where immunity from a proper regard for law, order, and decency can be secured. It is an outlaw and a pariah."

"Thanks be to God, the 'great' day of shame, national shame, is over!" exclaims the Daily American Tribune, a Catholic paper of Dubuque. "The bloody sport in which two human brutes pounded each other according to the rules of the 'game' in the presence of the assembled thousands was made the center of public attention for weeks, owing to the news agencies and publishers of the thousands of dailies that served the financial interests, pulling the strings, especially the purse-strings, of the American public." Such exhibitions are disgraceful, asserts The Universalist Leader:

"But the prime evil is the conducting of this school of crime and forcing its text-books into the hands and homes of America. And we, the dear people, as we see the laws against gambling swept aside, and all the finer traits of mankind smothered in a delirium of passion and greed, must suffer for it. It will take years to bring back our youth to sober sanity from these months of beastly intoxication incited by our newspapers."

However, the New Haven Journal-Courier is convinced that these critics "talk this way, impugning motives here and blackening characters there, because they have lost their tempers at the disinclination of people to follow them." It recalls that people were called "rummies" because they opposed the ratification of the Eighteenth amendment, and "now others are catching it for similar reasons." So it seems that—

"Anywhere the man or woman who dares to have an original thought or an independent air at once finds himself or herself shot full of imaginary holes by these intemperate guardians of other people's business, these self-constituted administrators of other people's morals."

"We may perhaps suggest to these people that they are increasingly driving the same and sober people away from their standard because of the vulgarity of their methods. It is time they learned that American citizens do not propose to be reformed by their methods, which have been tested and found wanting. A blind man can see the resentment that is expressing itself in every section of the country, not because they lack human sympathy with the marked condition these exuberant folks are blunderingly trying to set up, but because they are intemperate and insolent, overbearing and dictatorial."—Literary Digest.

"Dogs never go mad," says a scientist, "if they can get plenty of drink." A lot of men wouldn't get mad under the same circumstances.—New York Morning Telegraph.