

## Disarmament in Sight

(From The Literary Digest.)

The discouragement and pessimism of people the world over who thought all the bloodshed and suffering of the black years of war had brought nothing but heartache and taxes seemed to turn again into hope a few days ago when our President sent out a call of the Great Powers to a disarmament conference and they all agreed to come. "The peoples that walk in darkness have seen a great light" is an ancient phrase that appears to fit the case today like a glove. Nation seemed to call to nation in the cable dispatches from London, Paris, Rome, Tokyo, and Berlin, telling of cheering parliaments and approving statesmen and leaders of opinion in the press, rising to a world-circling chorus. Because "we have set foot upon the road that will lead us to the era when the world's battle-flags will be furled," there is "a new hope and deep rejoicing in the world today," says the Philadelphia Public Ledger. "A start has actually been made" toward disarmament, and, the New York World notes, "the richest and most powerful of all countries has taken the first step." The premiers of France, Britain, and of the British self-governing dominions join in expressing the deep and sincere satisfaction felt by their peoples. Mr. Lloyd George welcomed President Harding's act as "one of far-seeing statesmanship"; Premier Briand thanked the President for taking such a "noble step"; it is a message "which the whole world will hail with joy," according to Premier Hughes, of Australia; Premiers Massey, of New Zealand, hopes "it will be thoroughly successful in bringing nearer the time when all wars shall cease," and in the opinion of Premier Meighen, of Canada, "it offers to a distracted world new hope and a promise of relief from the uncertainties and apprehensions that have clouded the future." British press opinion is solidly back of the movement for disarmament, and the London Daily Express hails President Harding's statement as "a bright augury for the peace of the whole world." The Paris Temps echoes the satisfaction expressed by Premier Briand, while in Japan the Jiji-shimpo and Yomi-uri-shimbun speak the intense gratification of a people who have been stirred by great campaigns for disarmament. In Germany, the announcement from Washington is recognized as "a world political document of the most far-reaching consequences" and as "proof of the American people's genuine will to peace." And so, while the cables report a few cynical, skeptical, and discouraged utterances from the countries recently at war, Europe as a whole, as one distinguished American traveler reports, welcomes the call to disarm "with more enthusiasm and relief than any event since the armistice."

These confident hopes are based on more than wishes, editors and press correspondents in several capitals inform us. For one thing, the Harding announcement was no bolt from the blue, but had been fore-shadowed in touch with what was going on in London and Washington. The conference is no whim or hobby of the American Executive, but the expression of the wide-spread sentiment of the American people as voiced through the newspapers, the utterances of various publicists, and, most important of all, by the passage of the Borah disarmament amendment with only four dissenting votes in both houses of congress. The call was not made until similar popular sentiment had been widely expressed in England, the British dominions, and Japan, and the leading statesmen of the far-flung British Empire had definitely and emphatically said that they were waiting for such a disarmament conference as the President proposes. Moreover, in making the announcement, President Harding specified that one of the subjects of discussion was to be that very problem of the far east which most observers consider to be the chief obstacle in the path of disarmament on the part of the great maritime nations.

Most important of all, our newspapers repeat, is the great desire of the peoples of the world to be relieved from bloodshed, conscription, and taxation for war purposes. When all is said and done, observes the Columbia Record:

"The masses of the earth have the power in their own hands to ban war. And the thought is pleasing that these people, from Dan to Beersheba, from Washington to Hongkong, and from Calcutta to Guatemala, are opposed to the curst burden of war. They are tired of slaughter of their neighbors. They are tired of keeping their noses to the grindstone from one generation to

another to pay for the ravages of that cruel monster of destruction which General Sherman classified as a demon from the infernal regions. With the people of the world nailed to the cross of greed to feed the hungry hounds of war today, the time is ripe for action to stop it."

Whatever the statesmen who meet in Washington may say or do, continues this South Carolina editor,

"The men and women throughout the earth will say whether the hellish specter of war shall again stalk through the earth to lay waste our beautiful cities, slay and maim our women and children, and literally loose the devil so that he may cut high jinks to his heart's content. Disarmament? If not, why not? Fight? Who says so? Pay for destruction and seas of blood? Where do you get that stuff, Mr. Statesman of the future?"

"Peoples staggering under an unbearable burden of taxation are not likely to support government quibbling and halting," now that the start has been made, says the New York World.

While President Harding's leadership is acknowledged and praised by the press of both our great parties, and while Senator Borah's fight for a disarmament resolution wins him many an editorial laurel, is it evident from the history of recent months that British and American statesmen have played a not unequal part in laying the ground-work for the meeting which is expected to realize the dream of disarmament. While the President did not sign the naval bill with the Borah amendment until July 12, the state department issued this momentous announcement on the 10th:

"The President, in view of the far-reaching importance of the question of limitation of armament, has approached with informal but definite inquiries the group of powers heretofore known as the Principal Allied and Associated Powers, that is, Great Britain, France Italy, and Japan, to ascertain whether it would be agreeable to them to take part in a conference on this subject, to be held in Washington at a time to be mutually agreed upon. If the proposal is found to be acceptable, formal invitations for such a conference will be issued.

"It is manifest that the question of limitation of armament has a close relation to Pacific and far-eastern problems, and the President has suggested that the powers especially interested in these problems should undertake in connection with this conference the consideration of all matters bearing upon their solution with a view to reaching a common understanding with respect to principles and policies in the far east. This has been communicated to the powers concerned, and China has also been invited to take part in the discussion relating to far-eastern problems."

### "DE DUCKS" EAT UP CORN PROFIT, DRIVE FARMER TO BANKER

A Dubuque, Ia., dispatch dated, July 21, says: When a local farmer sold his corn recently and tried to explain to a banker the necessity of a loan to tide him over a lean period, the niceties of market problems as faced by the farmer now were outlined.

"But," the banker said, "I don't understand why you should want to borrow money when you have just shipped your corn. What did you do with the money?"

"De ducks got it," replied the farmer.

"What do you mean by 'de ducks'?"

"Well," the farmer explained, "I shipped the car to market and sold it for 52 cents a bushel. They de duck freight, that left 31 cents; de duck 1 cent commission, that left 30 cents; de duck elevator charges, that left 27 cents; de duck husking, that left 15 cents; de duck hauling, that left 5 cents; de duck the hired man's wages from that, and you are a darn sight better farmer than I am if you can find anything left."

That business men learn things outside of their own narrow realm of activity is shown by the fact that the Nebraska chamber of commerce has refused to adopt a policy of fighting the farmer, advocated by its imported secretary, and he has resigned. Think of the folly of the business men of a state so wholly dependent for its prosperity on agriculture as Nebraska refusing to help themselves by helping the state's greatest industry.

Plans have been suggested for picking up the Missouri river and moving it four hundred miles west for the purpose of irrigating a section of the country that has little acquaintance with rainfall. Sounds very neat, but our idea is that the sand bars it.

## Commoner Boosters

Lebanon, Ind., August 5, 1921.—Charles W. Bryan, Lincoln, Nebraska. Dear Mr. Bryan: I am herewith enclosing money for eight subscriptions to The Commoner.

I believe The Commoner is, without doubt, the most influential paper published in the United States. The Commoner readers have learned long ago that The Commoner is absolutely reliable and the information therein contained is dependable at all times.

I subscribed for the first issue of The Commoner and have never missed a copy and regard it as the most helpful paper that comes into my home. I always find it a real pleasure to assist in extending its circulation, because of the splendid message it carries to its readers.

I enjoyed the pleasure yesterday of hearing my personal friend, W. J. Bryan, deliver two splendid addresses—one at Bethany Park, Ind., in the afternoon, and the other at Zionsville, Indiana, in the evening. Both audiences were large and very appreciative. Mr. Bryan was at his best and brought to his hearers a great message. His appeal to the conscience of men and women along religious lines, bringing to their attention the responsibility of citizenship, no doubt, will have a greater effect for good upon our nation than his long and continuous fight for political ideals, however, no layman in our nation has wielded a greater influence for progressive legislation or for higher standards of Christian citizenship than has Mr. Bryan. May his health and vigor continue to the end that he may go on with his splendid work for many years to come.

The Bryan influences for the past thirty years, in the United States, has been unequalled by any other private citizen. His contribution to the nation has been large and his millions of friends appreciate the great work that he has done and is now doing.

A great service can be rendered in assisting Mr. Bryan in his splendid activities by asking friends to read his Commoner. If each Commoner reader would succeed in securing five new subscribers each year, it would only be a short time until The Commoner would have a half million subscribers, which would mean, at least, a million and a half of readers. Let us pledge ourselves to secure five new subscribers each year and make The Commoner the most widely read monthly publication in the nation.

JAMES KIRBY RISK

Geo. N. Hodgdon, Washington.—Why do you not raise the subscription price to two dollars. Suppose that is a little too high, we all know that every cent you get hold of will go to advance the cause. And I think that is the easiest way to get Democrats to help to carry the burden—CARRY THE BURDEN. of preaching the gospel of true Jeffersonian democracy. If that will not work urge all of them to take two or more copies each and give them out to doubting friends—CONFUSED friends who need a guide—a sort of North Star to go by. I am paying for two copies myself.

Edward R. Benson, Pennsylvania.—Send The Commoner one year to each of the forty-one names and addresses enclosed and advance my own subscription four years. I enclose five dollars additional to help with the work of arousing Democrats to the necessity of selecting the right persons as candidates for congress. You will find enclosed exchange for \$50.00.

W. C. Stephens, Texas.—I am sending you \$4.00 to pay for four subscriptions, and \$10.00 to be used to help arouse progressive Democrats to the importance of selecting the right kind of candidates for congress and the United States Senate. I will send you \$10.00 every quarter of this year to help with this important work.

R. M. Crumley, Tennessee.—You will find herewith enclosed my check for \$6.00 for renewal of the paper to myself at expiration of time and for the enclosed five new subscriptions which I have secured. These subscriptions were solicited by myself with the hope that the subscribers will be as highly pleased with the paper as I am.

Folks over in the islands are doubtless pleased with the announcement of the government that it will electrify the Philippine railroads, but a declaration of independence for the islands would do a lot more in the electrifying line for the people there.