

Polk County Observer

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BY LEW CATES

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AMERICAN NEUTRALITY.

According to one well known American correspondent now in London, there is a widespread feeling both in England and in the other European countries now at war that the United States is losing friends and making enemies all around by its policy of rigid neutrality, ignoring the invasion of Belgium and confining its protests to so-called mercenary resentment of interference with its own commerce. The influential men among the allies, according to this correspondent, blame the United States for not protesting against the violation of The Hague conventions when the neutrality of Belgium was disregarded, while the Germans are represented as condemning this country for driving a good commercial bargain in the sale of munitions of war and other commodities to the allies.

Just how much of this is mere "correspondence" and how much accurately reflects the sentiments of the leaders among the countries involved cannot, of course, be asserted. Nor does it materially affect the facts in the case, which amply vindicate America's absolute refusal to become embroiled in the controversy and also its protest against interference with its commerce in violation of the rules of both war and peace. The opinion has been frequently advanced in interested quarters that the United States should have protested against the invasion of Belgium, and from other quarters have come various tempting appeals to "take sides" in the war, at least diplomatically.

The sincerity of most of these representations may well be doubted, however. Each side naturally seeks every means of gaining American sympathy and would cheerfully involve us in serious difficulties with the other, if it could. Those who contend so insistently that this country was bound to protest at the alleged violation of Belgian neutrality are among those who witnessed unprovoked the numerous massacres of Jews in Russia and Christians in Armenia and other parts of Europe. They are among those who did not intervene to prevent or stop the horrible slaughter of the Balkan wars, though the nations which might easily have called these smaller countries to account were "on the ground," while the United States is 3,000 miles from Belgium.

America's position of neutrality is sound, and those countries which are prating of "idealism" would do well to employ some of it in the "bloody business" in which they themselves are engaged. They cannot consistently complain of derelictions, real or fancied, of nations that stand aloof, while they themselves butcher and destroy. The prime question, so far as America is concerned, is not whether she is "making friends" or losing them by her course, but is rather whether that course is dictated by the highest considerations of national welfare and is in accordance with the laws of nations. This country is not the avenger of wrongs which are committed on the doorsteps of so-called civilized nations, whose own duty in the premises is paramount.

FORD PLAN A SUCCESS.

This week marks the first anniversary of the rather remarkable profit sharing plan adopted by the Ford Automobile company of Detroit. Under this plan the Ford company has distributed \$10,000,000 to its employees during the past year, over and above their regular wages. The system provides that all regular employees shall receive a bonus above their wages sufficient to make their average regular income \$5 a day. At the outcome this caused some dissatisfaction among the higher priced employees, who could not see the justice in common laborers receiving as much for their work as was paid to the skilled mechanics.

Nevertheless, the officials of the company declare the system has worked out in a satisfactory manner and will not be changed. The enormous profits made by the company enable it to pay this huge bonus to its employees, and still leave enough to provide for the payment of handsome dividends to stockholders. Of course it has been a fine thing for the employees and the records kept show the latter have made good use of their prosperity. There has been a much higher rate of marriages among employees, a

large proportion of them have invested in homes, and the saving habit has been encouraged and promoted. The company maintains a regular department to look after all this, and the wasteful and extravagant employee is soon brought to time.

Nothing is said concerning the effect of this profit sharing plan on the higher efficiency of work performed by employees, but it is fair to presume the company has been benefited to some extent in this way. Workmen who are treated fairly and generously, as the Ford company evidently is trying to deal with its employees, naturally will do their best to safeguard and promote the interests of their employers. That the company received full returns for the \$10,000,000 invested in this manner is not likely, but it no doubt does secure the very best efforts and most conscientious work which its employees can render. Also it is assured of a spirit of loyalty, which is worth something.

THE SAVING HABIT.

The habit of regularly saving money and placing it on deposit in a bank is one of the first steps to financial independence, and any community which has this habit well developed among its citizens is indeed fortunate. Dallas is to be included in this list, for the proportion of people here who have either checking or savings accounts with the local banks is unusually large, indicating habits of saving and thrift which are highly commendable and worthy of encouragement. The banks themselves might, however, largely improve this condition of affairs by pursuing a systematic advertising campaign, and otherwise, to encourage the saving habit and induce the people to make regular deposits in the banks.

The advantage of depositing savings in a bank need scarcely be argued, yet there possibly are some who fail to do this, either because they regard their savings as too small, because they are not fully acquainted with banking methods and rules, or for other reasons equally at fault. Of course it is a very simple matter to open an account with a bank, and even a small customer is always welcomed by the banker who realizes that the little accounts often grow to big ones, and who also appreciates the fact that many small customers are better than just a few big ones—in fact, the big ones are more often borrowers than depositors.

SECURING JUSTICE.

It is not always possible to secure justice through the law and the courts, for the simple reason that when it comes to litigation the man with money holds an obvious advantage over the man without funds or credit. Theoretically justice balances the scale with impartial hand, but everyone knows that in innumerable instances the final accounting favors the man who can hire the shrewdest attorneys, and who by resort to technicalities and delays can tire out his opponent, or escape the penalties for obvious wrong-doing. Nor is it easy to suggest a practicable remedy for this condition of affairs, which is peculiar to no nation but is an evil of world-wide extent.

It is a matter of interest, however, to note that this abuse is somewhat minimized in the state of New York, through the work and efforts of an organization known as the New York Legal Aid society. During the past year this society has looked after the interests of more than 40,000 persons, nearly one-half of whom were not even citizens of this nation. Men, women and children have been helped by the work of this society without the slightest discrimination. Germans, Russians, Hungarians, French, English and Austrians, and many others, have been the beneficiaries of the Legal Aid society, which is strictly neutral and impartial.

There always are many human sharks that are ready to take advantage of the poor, the uneducated, or those who, as newcomers, are not able to speak English, or if they do, are not familiar with our ways of doing things and the general trend of American life. These prove easy victims for the unscrupulous people who are ready to make money by any means, legal perhaps, but at times, morally wrong. For a thing may be sanctioned by law which is morally indefensible.

The Thaw trial and its endless side issues show what money and the influence that goes with it can do to protect one who is branded as a criminal insane. A poor man, under the same circumstances, would have been tried, sentenced and put out of sight within three months, and this would have been the end of it. This is a matter, moreover, that is of general application; in every country the man with the big roll has a better opportunity to evade the law than the penniless one.

The New York Legal Aid society is, therefore, doing a work that could be duplicated in many other cities of this country. Its work may lead to some practical steps in the way of engineering a movement for the simplification

and reduced cost of all legal procedure. This is a real reform, and it is worth the attention of those engaged in welfare work, who, at times, are tempted to look for things that look bigger or of more vital importance.

REFORMATION OF CRIMINALS.

More attention is being paid these days than ever before to the problem of permanently reforming criminals, or those who have made a start in criminal careers. Oregon has been trying the plan of paroling convicts with fairly good results, only about 30 per cent thus paroled getting back behind the bars. The reformers of the old prison system and punishments feel greatly encouraged in their efforts to turn wasted and dangerous humans into useful ones. No parole system, however, can possibly work out successfully unless it provides for watchful care that the men let out shall have a fair chance at which they can do. The parole system requires a report every month from the paroled prisoner and from his employer as to his work and pay. No prisoner is allowed to drink. He forfeits his parole if he goes into a saloon.

It requires more wisdom, more patience, more brotherliness to try to cure criminals, than the old fashioned idea that they must be locked up and scorned, and be terribly punished. The day seems to be coming when the prisoner will be as interesting to those who take care of him after the court has passed sentence, as a patient is to his doctor; and his cure as much a matter of professional pride.

THIS YEAR'S POTATO CROP.

The European war has had no appreciable effect on the price of potatoes in this country as yet, but it may have a very decided effect before the close of the present year. The commissioner of agriculture of Texas has been making a study of this question and, in a recent circular issued to the farmers of that state, the latter are urged to increase their potato acreage for the coming season, in anticipation of an increased demand and much higher prices.

Here is the way the Texas official figures it out: "The warring nations, grow about two-thirds of the world's supply of potatoes. If the war continues a large percentage of the seed supply for the spring crop will necessarily have to be consumed for food during the winter and then next spring, when planting time comes, those countries will hardly be in a condition to produce more than one-fourth, or at most, one-third of a crop. All this means that next year will see the smallest crop of Irish potatoes produced in Europe that has been known for the past generation, which, of course, will bring exceptionally high prices, not only in the old country, but in this country as well, because under the stimulus of high prices this country will, undoubtedly, export large quantities."

If this question is of interest to the farmers of Texas, much more will it interest the farmers of this state, which is a large producer of potatoes. Of course if there should be an early end of the European war it would materially alter the situation as suggested above, but there is little likelihood that peace will return in time to permit the farmers of European nations to plant their usual acreage of potatoes, while if the war continues even the supply of seed potatoes will probably be diminished to a low level. In fact, it looks, as if potatoes will be a "good money" crop this year, and Oregon potato growers should think over this situation and govern themselves accordingly.

MINES START UP.

Another sign of reviving business prosperity is to be found in the announcement that the copper mines of upper Michigan, in which section the editor of The Observer resided for nearly two decades, will immediately resume working at full time. The copper industry of this country has been hard hit by the war disturbance, but the action taken by the northern Michigan mine managers indicates they see better times ahead. The price of the red metal is still low, but it has shown a hardening tendency of late and the demand by purchasers is said to be steadily increasing. Home manufacturers are taking larger quantities of copper and if this demand continues to increase the mining industry will soon flourish, even independently of the European demand. In addition to this the experts predict that the termination of the war will see a veritable boom in the copper industry and copper securities.

The terrible earthquake disaster in Italy ought to throw a wet blanket on all desire in that country to become involved in the European war. Quakes seem to kill them off fast enough in Italy without resorting to arms.

California may be the land for health and wealth that it is advertised so extensively to be, but it also seems to be a place, under present conditions, at least, where it is next to im-

possible for anyone to connect with a job. "Women, if you are looking for work, don't come to California," is a warning just issued by the California state commission of immigration and housing.

The consistency of Legislator Ike Bingham of Lane in wanting to repeal the law providing for rural supervisors of schools is quite remarkable. He would have the law repealed in order to save Lane county approximately \$5000 a year, yet he delights in having the taxpayers of the state dump \$300,000 a year into Eugene for the University of Oregon.

This is the season of the year that is commonly called the "stove season" for every line of outdoor summer sport. The beauty of this particular indoor season is that a fellow does not have to be an expert fisherman to tell fish stories, any more than it takes star ball players to tell baseball yarns.

Managers of the woodworking plants, as are also the contractors and builders of the city, expect a revival in building operations here with the opening of spring. Already several persons are planning to build.

According to one shrewd observer, a woman looks at another woman to see what she wears; a man to see what she doesn't wear. And there is a tincture of truth in the suggestion.

That Dallas man who promised his wife that he would not take a drink during 1915 unless to cure a cold, has put on his summer underwear.

A Massachusetts man received fifteen answers to an advertisement for "a perfect wife." In this state they can be had for the mere asking.

Billy Sunday, the evangelist, says he has no use for a knocker. Yet Billy is some knocker himself.

Russia has put a new army of a million men into the field. Raising the ante, as it were.

PLAN TO ELECT POSTMASTERS.

Bourne Says Communities Being Served Should Elect Servant.

Patrons of the postal service will be interested in a plan adopted by Hon. Jonathan Bourne, Jr., to provide for the election not only of postmasters, but of other Federal officers in the several states, such as United States marshals, district attorneys, collectors and appraisers of customs, collectors of internal revenue, and registers and receivers of land offices. Every business man knows the evils of the present system of political appointment. Men are chosen as postmasters not because of their particular fitness for the position or their facilities for rendering service, but because of party loyalty and activity in politics. Postoffices are sometimes removed from one end of a town to the other in spite of popular protest, in order to locate the office in a building owned by an active supporter of the party in power. Individuals not desired by a majority of the people of the community are appointed to conduct the office.

Former Senator Bourne believes that postmasters should be selected regardless of what party may happen to be in control of the national administration; that the people of the country may have a democratic or republican administration, as they may choose, but that the people of each community should have a postmaster of their own selection regardless of politics. Postoffices are established and maintained for service, not as political rewards, and the people of each community are the best judges of the kind of service they want and the men most likely to render it. Bourne argues that if a postmaster must depend upon the voice of the people of his community for his retention in office rather than upon his effectiveness in politics or his "pull" with political leaders, he will give more time and effort to improve the character of service rendered. Moreover, popular election of postmasters and other federal officers, would take away the principal power of the national political machine which, through that instrumentality, is able in so many instances to dictate local party politics.

Bourne proposes to strike at the root of the matter by a constitutional amendment divesting the president of his appointing power and relieving the senate of its duty and responsibility of confirming such appointments, and leave the whole problem to the several communities, which are chiefly and directly interested in the character of service to be rendered by their public servants.

New O. A. C. Regents.

When the terms of B. F. Irvine of Portland, and E. E. Wilson of Corvallis, as members of the board of regents of the Oregon Agricultural college, expire on February 15 next, they will be supplanted by M. S. Woodcock and N. R. Moore, both residents of Corvallis.

Do Business at Home

There are hundreds of swindlers in the land who take people's money for subscriptions and move to the next town to spend it. Usually these confidence men offer magazines at greatly reduced prices.

Don't pay money for subscriptions—goods not delivered—to people you do not know. Your dealer pays rent and taxes and guarantees that your subscriptions will be properly placed with the publisher. Also he is on the spot as the publishers' agent when anything goes wrong.

Do business at home.

Hayter's Book Store

428 Main Street.

YOUR DRUG STORE

The sale of drugs is somewhat different from that of any other line of goods. You are dependent upon your druggist to a certain degree because he supplies knowledge in regard to his goods which you cannot have. That is why certain drug stores attract and retain an unusual share of regular family trade. The public comes to realize that they can depend upon these stores to protect their interests in every way. Our trade is of a permanent character and we feel that it will pay you in every way to make this your regular family drug store.

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ABUNDANT PROOF

What a Citizen of Dallas Says About Chiropractic Treatment.

The actual experiences of home people should be convincing to the minds of doubting ones. We have repeatedly proclaimed through these columns that chiropractic adjustments when properly applied give the desired results, and now comes Mr. A. S. Collins of this city, himself a benefactor, to substantiate our statement. Mr. Collins, who formerly resided at Burns, Oregon, was advised by his family physician to go to Portland for hospital treatment for heart and stomach trouble, which advice he accepted without getting good results. Com-



ing to Dallas he was treated by Dr. W. L. Holloway, chiropractic-neuro-path, and here is his own story over his signature:

Dallas, December 9, 1914.—Last May I went to Portland with heart and stomach troubles. I doctored there until November without any relief, when I came to Dallas and commenced to take treatments from Dr. W. L. Holloway. I am now in better health than I have been for twelve months.

A. S. COLLINS.

Other equally convincing testimonials are at hand. If you are a sufferer, bring your troubles to me—consultations and examinations are absolutely free.

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