

Polk County Observer

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DISCOURAGING.

Those who hope for an early ending of the European war will find a note of discouragement in a prediction just made by Hudson Maxim, the famous inventor and munitions expert who is also a close student of present war conditions, and who is perhaps as well informed regarding the latter as is any person in this country. Mr. Maxim declares that in his opinion the present war will last from three to seven years longer, and will end in a draw. Even so, however, he believes that neither side will come out of the war exhausted, either economically or in men. They may be poorer financially, he says, but will rapidly recuperate and soon commence to prepare for the next great struggle. In other words, he thinks the present war will settle nothing, at least permanently, and that the inevitable result will simply be a period of renewed preparations and then another test of strength between the nations whose interests must always and unavoidably clash and conflict with each other.

Of course this is contrary to the belief and predictions of some, who have professed to see in the present war a lesson to humanity that might lead to general agreement to provisions intended to prevent international wars in the future. And yet, after all, there is little on which to pin this hope, and much to support the theory and prediction of Mr. Maxim. From time immemorial men have fought with each other—singly, in groups, by tribes and in vast organized armies—and never yet have they learned the lesson that it is best to live in peace and harmony. Even the progress of civilization has failed to eliminate warfare, and the present war is itself conspicuous proof of this. Why, then, is there any good reason for believing that this will be the last great war? Is it not just as reasonable—even more so, in fact—to believe that history will again repeat?

As for the predicted duration of the present war, it seems unlikely, of course, that the grueling, grinding struggle can continue for another three years, much less for seven years, the extreme limit fixed by Mr. Maxim. Yet it is possible that he is nearer right than are other authorities who insist "another year will tell the story," although intelligent people throughout the world will hope to see the latter prediction come true. But certainly if this war "settles nothing" and is to be followed by others, it is up to this nation to be prepared, while failure in this respect would be a grievous mistake.

CYCLE OF PROSPERITY.

It is an old axiom that hard times and good times move in periodic cycles of similar length and duration, and experience has shown there is some basis for this claim. Away back in bible times there is a record of seven lean years followed by seven fat ones, and some authorities are trying to apply this old rule to conditions in the United States at the present time. It is pointed out that following the panic of 1907, hard times have continued for the specified period in biblical history, that is to say, up to and including 1914. The present year has witnessed a decided change for the better, however, with many evidences of returning prosperity, and this is accepted by some as evidence that seven "fat" years for this nation now are due and actually have commenced.

This theory may be a fanciful one and without any real basis, yet every one will hope it may work out in actual fulfillment. Certainly the numerous signs of returning prosperity are not to be mistaken, and the shrewdest observers are unanimous in agreeing that this prosperity is real and is destined to continue and grow for a considerable period. There are some who maintain that the end of the European war may bring a world-wide reaction in business, and that this nation will suffer along with the rest. On the other hand, it is stated by good authorities that enough business has already been booked in the United States to carry good times through 1916, at least, and without regard to what happens in other parts of the world.

In any event, there can be no question that just at present this nation is the most prosperous and blessed of any in the entire world, and certainly there is nothing as yet to indicate a check to America's good fortune. On the other hand, there are

many things to support the confident predictions of greater and more abundant prosperity to come. It must be remembered, for instance, that some of the great commercial interests of the country—especially the railroads—have been keeping expenditures down so closely during the lean years that they must soon enter the market for long-deferred supplies, and some of them are already doing so. Also it has been history that when the railroads are prosperous and buying, the whole populace is likely also to enjoy good times.

Every indication, in fact, now points to a progressive increase in prosperity in the United States, and there is no reason to believe it will not last at least as long as the traditional seven years.

THE PROPOSED MERGER.

The agitation among their membership to effect a consolidation of the La Creole and Commercial clubs of Dallas is having the effect of bringing out considerable opposition to the merger, and especially so from members of the former organization, the opinion being expressed among these that the aims and objects of the clubs are so distinctly different the absorption of either might have a tendency to result in the obliteration of the very things which they are calculated to promote. The La Creole club is purely a social organization, while the Commercial club is intended to promote the material interests of the community as a business organization. The argument is also advanced that there are many members of the La Creole club who are from the younger set, and whose sole purpose in being identified with it is to receive the amusement privileges which accrue to them through the payment of monthly dues, and who, having no financial interests in the community, give little heed to its advancement. While the arguments may or may not be well founded, it is nevertheless true that opposition to the proposed plan, which was first suggested by the social club, is meeting with so much opposition that its successful consummation is scarcely probable.

With a well formulated working plan, however, the merger should prove advantageous to all concerned, and especially so since the membership of one is to a considerable extent the membership of the other. But it is feared by those who refuse to entertain the proposition that the La Creole club might lose its identity, and become absorbed absolutely by the commercial organization, and this would be without their liking. The committees appointed to investigate the mode of procedure through which the clubs at Salem were recently merged are now acting inquisitorially, and until such time as they submit their report it would be well to withhold judgment. If the consolidation can be effected without one organization seriously conflicting with the aims and objects of the other, then why not merge?

INCONSISTENT.

"Every day scores of babies who have every right and reason to live—normal, healthy babies who ought to live—die through the ignorance or neglect of their parents, and no public protest is made. Yet because a baby that had no excuse for living is mercifully allowed to die by the hospital authorities—because a child born defective and deformed is not saved for a life of misery to itself and its parents—the country cries out and public opinion divides as to whether the act was one of humanity or barbarity."—Exchange.

There is much more than the proverbial grain of truth in the above observation, which in fact, reveals only one of numerous human inconsistencies that defy both explanation and understanding. In fact, the world is full of curious examples of glaring variation between the professions and avowed beliefs of mankind and the actual conduct of the latter. This is so in private affairs, in social relations, and with respect to the attitude and dealings of organized governments. We prate of peace, truth, duty, justice, righteousness and human brotherhood, and then deliberately turn about and at times ignore or flagrantly violate these very worthy basic principles.

Inconsistency, in fact, is as much a rule of human conduct as is faithful adherence to a line of conduct in keeping with our solemn professions and expressed convictions, although the latter, fortunately, is always in the ascendancy. In other words, while human frailty results in many slips of plain inconsistency, truth, justice, righteousness and a sense of duty still are the predominant influences which direct and control human motives and human actions, making the net result both beneficial and creditable.

And this is just as true in the cited example of inconsistency as it is with all other experiences in life. The note of protest and criticism over the death of this one infant, when hundreds of other deaths, due to neglect and worse, are permitted to pass almost unnoticed, proves nothing more than the human mind is controlled by motives of sympathy, right and jus-



...and is ever ready to respond when its attention is called to a concrete case. And in all such cases, both small and large, the final human judgment will be as near right as human intelligence can perceive the right. For while inconsistencies creep in, humanity still pins its faith to right principles, and always comes back to them with a sincere desire to make human conduct, individually and collectively harmonize with those principles.

Newspapers which are seeking to make the first anniversary of the new banking system point a moral or adorn a tale are simply wasting time. The first year proves absolutely nothing. Banking and all other business has been carried on under abnormal conditions. Until the field clears and it is possible to assign to all the factors of the now situation conclusions regarding the new law are worth considering.

What now? Woodrow wants to raise the tariff on wool and tax the small wage earners' income. No wonder Mrs. Galt wants him to hurry up that marriage. She's going to have but precious little time in the White house the way things look now.

Quick and easy communication between towns, cities, townships, counties and states is one of the great needs of modern times, but to have this, inter-county, interstate and national roads must be constructed, repaired and maintained.

President Underwood of the Erie has just been elected a director of the Southern Pacific, which sounds well for that road, for he does not associate himself with decadent enterprises.

According to one military authority, six babies are born in Germany to every soldier killed in war. And you have to admit it is pretty hard to beat a "system" of that kind.

As Christmas approaches there is an increasing politeness among relatives and friends, as usual.

Well, if we just must have that inter-county bridge, here goes.

OTHER THINGS
A Rare and Curious Collection of Fact and Fancy.

The Has and the Are.
I'd rather be a Could Be,
If I could not be an Are!
For a Could Be is a May Be,
With a chance of touching par.
I'd rather be a Has Been,
Than a Might Have Been, by far,
For a Might Have Been has never been,
But a Has was once an Are.
—Selected.

Doe, Cherrington was comfortably encased in the protecting arms of old Morpheus, laboring under the hallucination that he was again back in Ohio amid Yuletide festivities, and that the tintinnabulation of the merry sleighbells was beckoning him to join a happy and carefree throng in celebrating the joyous season, when the alarm of fire was sounded Friday night. Only half appreciating the meaning of the screeching whistles, he hurriedly rushed forth to save life and property from the destroying element. Reaching the conflagration his first thought was to save those in peril from the burning building. His eagle eye discerned through the dense smoke the form of a fair young girl as she was clinging desperately to a window sill far above the ground. With the alertness of younger days, he grasped a ladder and with one mighty swing landed the business end

of it against the structure, mounted it and while others gazed in horror upon the scene lest two lives instead of one should be blotted from the directory he descended with steady tread and placed his burden safely at the feet of the applauding spectators. Again and again did he go to and fro, delivering helpless women and children from the leaping flames, until the last one was saved, when he fell in a limp and semi-lifeless heap. He had performed a grand and noble deed, the intent and purpose of which was not to merit the applausits and commendation of his fellow man but a deed of valor for humanity's sake. But with its completion had come physical exhaustion and he scarcely retained sufficient strength to pick his weakened self from the floor of his apartments, where he had dreamed of his heroic act, and to crawl back between the sheets.

Speaking of Roads.

J. Waldo Finn, the debonair road-master, says: "You're a darn rascal if you do, and a darn fool if you don't. I'd rather be a darn rascal than a darn fool any day."

"The man who allows his life to justify itself, and lets his work speak, and when reviled reviles not again, must be a very great and lofty soul."—Hubbard.

Jim French had the assuring gall to tell us that he had been kissed once by a girl other than one of the family. Lives there a girl with taste so dead? Preposterous. We can't believe Jim's story, because, in the first place he'd never remove his own horn from his lips long enough to be kissed.

Bill White says: "Never has it failed to materialize, when I had mighty hopes and high aspirations in a matrimonial way, that some one would relieve me of the girl and without prospective. That's why I'm so happy today."

There Dallas Boys Are Whizzers.
Considerable family uneasiness as well as local gossip, is the outcome of a fervid love affair between a young man of Dallas and an Independence lass, both being only fifteen years of age. The young people simply declare they cannot live without each other and openly defy their parents.—Enterprise.

We've been sick in bed and penniless since Saturday and won't be able to fill the column this week. We're eating through the good heartedness of Dr. Staats and some of the other O. A. C. supporters who saved a bone or two from the wreck. Next week's check may put us on our feet again after dreaming of 9 to 0 for seven days.

We didn't get to laugh at Boots Kersey, the tanker, and Walt Vassall, the banker. And we can't seem to find an alibi.

A consignment of very pretty purple and gold pennants as gifts for standard schools during the present year, have been received at Superintendent Seymour's office. There are about thirty pennants in the lot and that would indicate that the office has high hopes for the county schools.

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