

The Herald

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Monmouth
Meditations

In other words, Dr. Powers believes that as long as we have neighbors, we might as well be neighborly.

"Wilson Endorses Creel" says a head line. Since Creel spends his spare time endorsing Wilson, a turn about is only fair play.

Although each drive of Hindenburg's is scheduled in advance as the "biggest one of all" none of them has carried with it the sense of seriousness possessed by the first one in the spring, that threatened Amiens and Ypres. High tide of German effort was reached on that occasion and although it may take a long while to drive the invaders back to the east side of the Rhine, it seems merely a question of time.

The Austrians appear to be badly demoralized. With famine at their back and victorious Italy at their front the soldiers of the dual empire may well be discouraged just now. They may well ask themselves "what is it all for?" Famine privations, death in various forms, massacres, atrocities, sacrifice of every description, perversion of moral and civil laws. And why? That Germany can get a place in the sun; a nation that sets out deliberately to take lands which it covets by force. The Austrian may well ask himself what he expects to get out of it.

It is soberly announced that Congress refused to alter the zone postal law, and that the law was passed because Congressmen and Senators are irritated at disparaging comment about themselves and their work appearing in the periodical press. How better could they justify the criticisms? If Congress seizes advantage of its power to discipline periodicals through postal laws for alleged personal attacks they are doing their best to justify the attacks made on their capacity and concept of public service.

The Salem Capital Journal was interrupted in its publication this week by the refusal of union men to work on it because of an editorial in it in which union labor was attacked and compared to the I. W. W. as friendly to the cause of Germany in the war. The recent acts of union telegraphers inspired the editorial which was direct and to the point. It is a lamentable fact that the union idea gives to the group it holds together, the kaiser notion that the rest of mankind is open prey. Some day unionism may broaden to the point where it takes in the conception of "live and let live" and there are indications that the war and the patriotic spirit of the times will have a salutary effect.

The veto by President Wilson of the bill making the minimum price of wheat \$2.40 was altogether

right. The plea was made that with the mounting costs the price set by the food control was not high enough but it will be asked—when will mounting prices stop? Surely not until regulated by the law of supply and demand for there is not a sufficient supply to meet the demand. If under the plea of high prices in other lines, commodities are allowed to raise prices there will be no end to it. A higher price for wheat would immediately serve as an excuse for raising prices on every commodity in the market. This in turn would compel another increase in the price of wheat, and so on. Wheat, more than any other product is the staple on which the business of the country rests. A compensation for any comparatively low price now is that when supply lowers other cereals, wheat will still have a price guaranteed by the government.

It is reported that the potato crop of the United States is larger than the average altho not as large as the bumper crop of last year. The apple crop of New York state is also said to be six times what it was last year. The Oregon cherry crop is much larger than had been expected; fully up to the normal yield. Kansas is harvesting a large wheat crop. These things taken in conjunction with the behavior of our boys along the banks of the Marne will give the Kaiser a thing or two to think of.

With ideal summer weather the enjoyment of the finest climate in the world is marred for many people by a realization that profitable vegetation of many kinds is hampered and handicapped by a lack of moisture. As the Independence Post says tourists who see the beautiful green setting of our landscape and recall our reputation as the web-foot state can hardly believe that we suffer from drouth. We have gone three months without rain and probably no where else in the world could vegetation show the same attainments with like conditions. But irrigation for a few weeks in midsummer would make our agricultural products world beaters. With numerous streams flowing from the coast range to the Willamette, irrigation could be readily arranged.

The Germans have been asking for peace for the past two years but the plea is now a great deal more persistent than ever before. They have steadily wanted to quit with hands filled with plunder and as the prospect for this grows more distant they become more urgent. For the longer peace is delayed the less will they have to bargain with.

If the government is to handle the railroads it is fitting that it should handle the telegraph and telephone wires. In fact, the latter should have preceded the former. The wires occupy a relative position to the people of the country that the mail does and the public character of the work involved could be best done as public work. A duplicate system of telegraph or telephone service is as irritating as a duplicate system of collecting and distributing mail would be.

Somehow we do not believe the Germans will make many more big drives. From now on they are apt to act on the defensive, and at that they may make a lot of trouble before they are driven back on their own territory. Now is apparently a good time to start an army into Siberia. With the prestige of Western victories the Russians will rally to the side of the Allies and make short work of Germany in Russia.

The action of the state food administration which went up the

wheatless hill and then came back again to the fifty-fifty basis has puzzled many people but it seems the action was taken by a voluntary convention of representatives of the state in a moment of enthusiasm and while the state food administrator was out of the state. The following is taken from a long and interesting description of the activities of W. B. Ayer in the Oregon voter: "It is as Federal Food Administrator that he has been revealing anew his tact, amiability and unquestioned dominating power. The problems of a food administrator are all new. The administration is based primarily on securing voluntary co-operation rather than enforcing penal laws. His faculty of listening sympathetically to all sides, of hunting up new sides that were not represented in voluntary hearings, have given a false impression occasionally—that he was agreeing with those to whom he listened. Usually everybody who tells him his story departs pleased and satisfied. But Ayer investigates and analyses, and finally comes to a conclusion. He is not always clear in expressing his conclusions but rather relies on others interpreting what he means. This has led to some misunderstanding. Yet the spirit of his decisions is that of fairness to all, tempered with sympathy with those upon whom the burden falls, so he has secured the voluntary co-operation of the food manufacturers, merchants and consumers to a degree that hardly was thought possible when the work was undertaken only a year ago.

The most severe test to his food administration was when, during Mr. Ayer's absence from the state Oregon went wheatless by voluntary action of a convention of delegates representing the counties. The public generally did not grasp the fact that the move was voluntary, so there was much complaint when some bakers, dealers and individuals seemed to have plenty of wheat flour while others surrendered theirs. This resulted in much discontent that was difficult to allay.

But the main trouble did not appear on the surface. It was the purchase of all the flour that was turned in to the food administration. There was no money with which to pay for the flour, and yet individuals and dealers had been led to believe that Uncle Sam would pay for it in spot cash as fast as it was turned in. If they had known they were simply selling it to the food administration on credit, the whole scheme might have toppled. Mr. Ayer showed his sportsmanlike instinct. He personally financed all of the flour purchases, aggregating something over \$100,000. Of course, he was reimbursed in due time as government red tape unwound, but he took the risk on every purchase and put up his own money. This fact has not leaked out before, and Mr. Ayer will be incensed when he reads this in print."

Austria may not know where it is going but it certainly is on the way.

Baseball follows the flag. The signs are that it will not be a purely American game much longer.

Politics may be adjourned but there are numerous evidences that many of the wheel horses have not heard of it yet.

It would be interesting to know what old man Hindenburg really thinks of the crown prince as a general.



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