

THE SCIO TRIBUNE

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T. L. DUGGER, EDITOR AND PROP.

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THE CHRISTMAS SPIRIT

The American people can celebrate the Christmas holidays without any halts or misgivings. As a rule they have raised abundant crops during the past year, for which unusually good prices have been obtained. Our manufacturing industries have been crowded with business during the year and skilled and common labor has had constant work at wages better than ever received heretofore. So there is no reason why almost every American family may not celebrate the coming holiday week with better spirit than at almost any time in our history. The only drawback is the high cost of living, which bears heavily on the consumer. But, if our producers receive swollen prices for their produce, the consumer necessarily must pay accordingly.

Our friends over in Europe are not so happily situated. Almost every family has one or more of its members at the battle front, many of whom will never return. Homes are being destroyed, and the future holds nothing but gloom for them. The real Christmas spirit will be wanting in nearly every home of these warring people. While the American people sympathize deeply with the European countries in their misfortunes and are anxious to alleviate their sufferings so far as we can, we can but feel thankful that we, as a nation, are not involved in this colossal war. We certainly feel proud that our president has managed our relations with these countries so that we are at peace with all of them. Our diplomatic relations with both sides of this world war, have been strained at times, so that it seemed that we must actively participate in order to preserve our national dignity. But President Wilson, by writing "notes" to these warring nations, has kept us out of the war. The American people have shown their appreciation of this fact by electing him for another four years.

So we can participate in the Christmas festivities without any misgiving. We can do so because we are the most favored of all nations. The Tribune hopes that its readers will all be imbued with the true Christmas spirit. Be happy yourselves and endeavor to make others happy as well. Above all, don't fail to extend a measure of your joy and happiness to your poor and unfortunate neighbor. Remember it is said in Holy Writ that "It is more blessed to give than to receive."

ARE IN A QUANDARY

Tax levying bodies and those who expend tax moneys seem in a quandary as just how to proceed, since the enactment of the tax limitation law. Particularly is this true with those who are in charge of the ad-

ministration of the state government.

In nearly every instance our state eleemosynary institutions, in their budgets filed with the secretary of state, increased appropriations, for new buildings, increased cost of food products, etc., are asked for. Nor are our state colleges at all modest in their demands because of the less amount the millage tax will produce.

So our official heads are puzzling their think tanks to devise some plan to supply the deficiency which is likely to exist in the state treasury. Heretofore, no thought along this line was necessary. After the legislature had made such appropriations as it thought necessary or advisable, the budget was made up, each county was apportioned its share of the state expenses and the county courts did the rest when they made the annual tax levies.

But a new deal is now on. Tax levying bodies can add, in making their levies, but a 6 per cent increase to the sum collected the previous year.

In appropriating state money, the legislature will find itself handicapped for the first time. If too large demand is made on the counties, only such part can be paid as will come within the provisions of the tax limitation law. So in order to make up any deficiency of cash to supply the needs of the state treasury, it is proposed to raise the automobile license from the present to a fee of \$1 per horse power which the machine is capable of developing.

The Tribune suggests a plan to supply this deficiency which it believes will be much more satisfactory to the people. When the business man or farmer finds that his expense account is growing too great for his income, he diminishes his expense account by discharging help which he can get along without, makes fewer improvements, buys less supplies, etc. Why may not the state do likewise?

Legislatures of the past have created some 30 to 40 commissions, most of which draw down salaries for its members, secretaries, inspectors, etc. In fact our state has been building up an expensive bureaucratic government very rapidly during the past few years, the main object of which is to create salaried offices for favorites. Now fully three-fourths of these commissions and the employes connected therewith, can be dispensed with, without injury to the public service. Why not get busy Mr. Legislator and lop off a bunch of these grafters? You would do so if it was your private business and why not use a like economy for the state?

All of these 30 to 40 commissions could be consolidated into one dozen or less, without injury to the public service. Aye, some of them can be abolished and the state will be all the better for it.

Then our state colleges can get along with a few less massive stone buildings for a spell, at least and, possibly, with fewer teachers. In fact they will probably have to do so.

No private business will ever succeed, if conducted so extravagantly as is our state government and any private enterprise expects its employes to work. The state does not or, at least, her employes do not work half of the time. The state employe's only endeavor is to get on the salary list, for his job is comparatively permanent and nobody seems to see that he earns his salary. There is no doubt whatever that a private business of the magnitude of that of the state, is conducted with one-half the number of employes that the state employs.

The people are very much in earnest about this tax reduction business. They demand that the

expense of government, from state to municipality shall be reduced and that better business methods shall be adopted.

The legislature, to meet in a few weeks, will be placed on its metal. The people have said how much money may be expended. Its action will be watched closer than ever before. The people expect that a record of economy and general efficiency will be established. If not, some more tinkering with the state constitution may be expected. So Mr. Legislator, it is up to you to get busy.

A PEACE OR A TRUCE

The most important thing about the German peace proposals is the fact that they have been made.

Holding Belgium, Northwestern France, Russia, Poland and Serbia, with Roumania practically hors de combat, the Imperial government officially admits that the war is a failure, that Germany cannot dominate Europe, that peace cannot be conquered and that recourse must be had to the process of diplomacy which were so contemptuously rejected in the last days of July, 1914.

It may be taken for granted that the terms proposed by the Imperial chancellor will not be accepted by the allies. Neither the British nor the French government could consent to any terms which Germany would not make without the certainty of revolution at home. The sacrifices made by the British and French peoples have been too appalling to admit of a peace improvised in Berlin to suit German exigencies until at least one more desperate effort has been made to break the military power of the Teutonic empires.

Nevertheless, the German proposals are to be welcomed as a first step toward peace. Impossible of acceptance they may be, but they at least establish a basis for discussion and negotiation, and there can be no end of the war except through discussion and negotiation. There will be no Leipzig or Sedan or Waterloo or Appomattox in this conflict, however long it lasts, and there can be no termination until one side or the other sets in motion the diplomatic machinery which must accomplish what military machinery has proved unable to accomplish.

This much Germany has done, whatever the motive may have been. The most natural inference is that the Imperial government is by no means sincere in its profession of astonishment at its own moderation and that its peace proposals have been dictated by a full realization of the significance of internal conditions in Germany and Austria-Hungary. That may be taken for granted, for if Germany were actually winning the war and arriving at the goal from which it could expect to dictate peace on its own terms, there would be no need of proposals. And if the German people were satisfied, the Imperial government would have nothing to consider but the further development of the military resources of the nation.

But the German people are not satisfied. More and more the strain of war is telling upon them, and Berlin has seized the opportunity presented by the Roumanian triumph to make peace overtures to its enemies. If these overtures are rejected, the Imperial government can then present the war to the German people wholly as a defensive operation to save Germany from extinction and proceed to demand new sacrifices for the Fatherland with full assurance that no dynastic dangers are involved.

That is shrewd and far-sighted politics. At the same time it is a formal admission that Germany is growing tired of the war and would

be glad to find a way out. The old catchwords of Weltmacht oder Niedergang now fall upon deaf ears. They were the outpouring of a military rhetoric that no longer appeals to the German imagination. The German people are prepared to accept much less than Weltmacht but are determined upon something better than Niedergang. They are finally discovering that this is a world in which one must live with his neighbors, and that is what the Imperial government admits in effect when it makes its first tentative proposals for peace.—N. Y. World.

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