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THE OLD YEAR AND THE NEW

What the year that died at the last midnight brought to the world is now history. Its record is that of an annular period far surpassing in magnitude that of all the ordinary years of the past. No year since the world began has had a more remarkable influence, of a purely secular character, upon the destinies of many nations, in events yet in progress and the results of which are undetermined. It began without a cloud of war larger than a man's hand on the horizon. It ended with the darkest war cloud ever witnessed by man covering at least a fourth of the habitable globe. And as yet no ray of light pierces the black and fiercely raging storm of war that still breaks in unceasing fury upon the nations vainly striving to destroy each other. What a change from the prospect of world peace with which the year, now just ended, was ushered in. Then the song of the bells was sounding all over the civilized world.

"Ring out the old, ring in the new;
Ring out the false, ring in the true."

But who can tell what is the false and what the true in the mighty conflict that is drenching large areas of Europe in human blood? If that were only known and the song was prophetic of a just end and a lasting and righteous peace, it would have been appropriate to sound it out over the civilized world. But who can tell what is the false and what the true in this and other affairs of men and nations? Most of us have opinions concerning the justice or the injustice which impels the warring nations to continue the gigantic struggle and determine to fight it out to the bitter end; but these opinions are, to a certain extent, based upon prejudice, and thus one hopes for the triumph of one side, while another is equally anxious for the success of the other. Whether the year which began a few hours ago is to see the end of the struggle, or it is to go on and on into future years, is a question with us all. Predictions concerning that are useless, but are indulged in by many. Perhaps it is right to concern ourselves about it, but it will be the part of wisdom to accept the situation as it stands and await in patience and with submission the end, which must come, whether it shall be in harmony with our sympathies or against them.

To Americans the old year held much of more than ordinary interest for them; much that has, perhaps, been partially lost sight of in their eagerness to grasp and study details of the strife raging across the ocean. It was a year fraught with consequences more or less detrimental to the general welfare of the people. It witnessed the introduction into the economic affairs of the country of principles and policies at variance with those that, with brief periods of interruption, had obtained during the preceding fifty years. The legislative processes by which that was brought about were not watched by our own people with half the interest they have exhibited, and continue to exhibit, in the war on the other side of the Atlantic. The daily newspapers found no anxious throngs about news stands or looking for the latest reports of the doings of Congress. There was, however, an under current of interest which manifested itself at the November election and indicated that, absorbed as the people were in comtemplation of the greatest war the world has ever seen, they were not oblivious of what had transpired in their own country during the preceding months of the year, and were becoming aroused to the importance of returning to the policies under which the country had grown to unexampled greatness and prosperity. Outside of the change of the political economy much legislation was carried through during the year, the effect of which is yet to be determined; but no year since the great Civil War which ended fifty years ago, no one of the years of the last half century has a record of more important events than that of the year of Our Lord, 1914, in this country.

The entire year has witnessed, for this government, an exasperating experience with the neighboring country of Mexico. Perpetual prospects and promises of a return of peace to that distracted country have only been entertained for a moment, to have them vanish in thin air, and still there is no peace. Insurrection has followed revolution until all hope has vanished and the New Year enters without a peg upon which to hang such a hope.

The Old Year, however, has not been without some bright spots here and there in a dark back ground. One of these was the completion of that mighty work, the Panama Canal. Perhaps the only works at all comparable to this in magnitude are the celebrated Chinese wall and the pyramids of Egypt, and for all practical purposes neither of these are of value to the human race. The completion of the canal is one of the truly great events of modern times and that this occurred in the year just closed marks it, the year, as an era in human achievement.

But the door to the New Year is open and the whole world is anxiously looking into the future and perhaps wondering whether it will be marked by events so trancendantly great as many of those which have transpired during the year that was rung out at midnight last night. What does the New Year hold for any country or any people. The Old Year came in with only a vague premonition of the mighty events which have taken place especially in its closing months. Will the New Year also be an era of great events, of mighty achievements in many of the ways and walks of mankind, events for good and for evil? Who can tell. There are prophets and prophets, but no prophetic ken can pierce the hidden things of the future, or foretell what a day, and much less a year, will bring forth.

SLOWNESS OF HEARING

Many elderly persons are afflicted with an infirmity commonly supposed to be deafness or hardness of hearing, when, in fact, the difficulty arises not so much from the inability to hear sound as to understand or interpret it. This is, no doubt, well known to ordinary practitioners, but better known to ear specialists. The individual thus afflicted may have the sense of hearing but little impaired. May hear sound as distinctly as when the sense was entirely normal, yet if it be made by the human voice in speech, may be unable to catch its various inflections, if the words are spoken rapidly. The trouble is not hardness, but slowness of hearing, due not to the sensitiveness of the tympanum, but to the diminishing rapidity of its vibrations. To be heard then, words not need be uttered in higher tones than usual, but more slowly, and thus it may be that loud speech, rapidly expressed, becomes less distinct than if spoken in a minor key and slowly. Not everybody afflicted in this manner is aware of the cause, and many suppose it due to approaching deafness, and do not seek relief, or, perhaps may be entirely unaware that the trouble exists at all. They hear some one speaking slowly and hear distinctly, and attribute the confusion caused by rapid utterance to indistinct ennunciation.

Now, metaphorically speaking, that is just the condition of the leaders of the Democratic party at this juncture in the industrial affairs of this country. They hear so slowly that they do not grasp the meaning of the sounds of distress that come up from almost every corner of the land; the stories of the enforced idleness of hundreds of thousands of working men and wage earners in almost every department of business. They hear the sound, but do not interpret its meaning or do attribute it to every cause except the most patent one—the change in the economic policies of the country. They have been students or teachers of these new policies until they have come to regard them as born in the odor of sanctity and their repudiation by any man, or set of men, as an unpardonable political sin.

But the sound that breaks upon their dull ears is growing in volume. Projects for the amelioration of the increasing distress of the unemployed and their families are being suggested. It has even been proposed that the army be employed to discover the extent of the suffering and to distribute the charity which the well to do people of the country are not slow to proffer. And with the knowledge of the existence of this suffering, comes to the men largely responsible for it, a sound that they would do well to heed, not so much for their own sakes as for the relief of the suffering ones. The sound tells to these men the story that a serious mistake has been made and should be speedily rectified. Are they so slow of hearing that they will not heed? Surely, among them may be found some at least as frank to admit the mistake as is Mr. Mack, of Buffalo.

To drop metaphor, does anybody doubt that if the President of the United States and the Congress behind him would acknowledge that a prime cause of the business depression existing is to be found in the radical tariff legislation of the past year, and would consent to a revision upward, there would at once follow a happy revival of many of the industries now either suspended entirely or dragging along in an indefinite and doubtful condition? The cry of the unemployed, the smokeless chimneys and the silent furnaces of the country all tell the story in darker colors than human words can repeat it. For the sake of the suffering women and children and the desperate straits of the unemployed men, will not those in power take heed and, instead of optimistically predicting a good time which does not come, retrace their steps and undo the mischief they have done.

It should not be longer a question of party politics. The need is urgent and of whatever political party a citizen may be a member, if he has a heart in him, he will gladly commend the party in power if it will rise to the occasion, admit its mistake and rectify it. Of one thing it may be assured there is a volume of sound arising from all over the country to which it must speedily open its ears, if it may escape the political wrath of the people.

THE FOOT-AND-MOUTH-DISEASE

The Sentinel has heretofore expressed wonder or surprise that a remedy has not been discovered for this disease of cloven-footed animals. It has seemed an unnecessary waste to destroy whole herds where probably a single animal has developed the malady. Some means should have been devised to save such as have not shown any symptoms of it. Like epidemics among human beings there may have been many of the cattle slaughtered that would have escaped contagion, or by reason of strength or some other quality, have been immune from its ravages. If the law has made this wholesale destruction necessary it is at fault and should be amended. Some persons who claim to have had experience in similar epidemics among animals, are of the opinion that a large percentage, even of animals attacked, can be saved by proper treatment. The Baltimore Sun of Monday last published a communication from a writer who signed his name "Dr. John Wm. Spranklin," in which he says:

"From an experience gained in 1902-3 in Massachusetts and this one in Maryland at present, a practical experience,' I can offer a few facts about this disease which I forsee will eventually come about. As is well known, all cattle in contact with a confirmed case are killed. Now, this is absolutely unnecessary. By proper quarantine of infected areas and treating these cases over 99 per cent. can be cured by the simplest of remedies. After curing animals, have a general clean-up of premises, barns, etc., from a hygienic standpoint, and I can truthfully say there will be no danger to anyone. The owner's business is saved, his pocketbook is not depleted and the Government's money-chest is not hurt.

"Again, I doubt that, if the so-called experts were put on their oaths regarding this disease, there would be one who could truthfully swear this to be so highly contagious as the officials would make you believe. There are several other diseases so similar that no one can differentiate, at least at present.' The cause is unknown, and until it is known it is folly, in my opinion, to make mountains out of molehills. Why not treat and cure this disease when so easily done, give our worthy research pathologists a chance to study it, and ferret out the cause, rather than work in the dark, as is now done."

The prefix "Dr." to the name of the Sun's correspondent leaves it open to some doubt whether he is an M. D. or a Veterinarian. From his allusion to his experience in the disease which has been prevailing in Maryland it may be reasonably inferred that he is a doctor of animals. At any rate his assertions and suggestions are worth serious consideration. It is not to the credit of our American veterinarians that the only remedy they have been able to recommend, in dealing with this malady among cattle, is the destruction of the perfectly sound and well animals that happened to be exposed to contagion, as well as of those that had contracted the disease. Possibly too, whole herds may have been sacrificed through errors of diagnosis by inspectors. A herd of 80 belonging to the B. F. Shriver Company, on one of its farms at Union Mills, narrowly escaped that fate, according to a statement in a news letter from the Sentinel's correspondent at that place, several weeks ago. A single animal of the herd was ailing and two of the State's livestock inspectors diagnosed the disease as the prevailing epidemic. Fortunately, a veterinarian of greater skill made a later examination of the diseased animal and found it suffering from a non-infectious disease. That saved the herd from destruction and protected the company against a serious loss.

Dr. Spranklin may or may not be an expert in regard to this troublesome disease, but there seems to be room for doubt as to whether the method of the livestock inspectors and veterinarians, which is authorized by the State, in dealing with the malady, is the best that can be employed.

It seems to be generally understood, too, that the share of the appraised value of the stock slaughtered, which the State must pay, is not yet available, no appropriation for the purpose having been made. This is here stated, not as a fact but as current opinion. Then it is complained by some parties interested, that a low valuation is usually placed upon the stock killed, so that the owners stand to lose much in the sacrifice of their animals for the supposed protection of others. Dr. Spranklin, in his letter to the Sun, cites the following case in illustration:

"Mr. S. Brooks, of Canton, had his cattle killed. When first noticed a quarantine was declared and the owner was forbidden to move any cattle. These cattle were held in quarantine for at least 10 days before being destroyed. This man had to feed and pay help for all this and the Government allowed him nothing for it. Again, he showed me he had paid from $75 to $90 a head for these cattle, and the appraisers allowed him $37.50 a head."

From all this it is apparent that some reform is necessary in dealing with this troublesome matter. Surely a way can be found to deal with it in a more successful manner than has yet appeared in this State.

THE PRONUNCIATION OF PROPER NAMES

One of the things that should be taught in the public schools and insisted upon, is the correct pronunciation of proper names. There is always a general tendency to change and adopt some other than the rect pronunciation of the name of rightfully belonging to persons, places and things; to add to or subtract from them. Evidences of this are to be seen all about us every day. This is particularly true of some of the historical names in this State. Who now ever hears the correct pronunciation of the names of the county in which the State Capitol is located. To everybody now it is Anne ARUNdel, or worse. Fifty years ago there were some old citizens of Annapolis who persisted in using the correct name—Anne ARundel. Why not restore this historical pronunciation and teach it to the children in the schools.

Then there is Paca street, Baltimore. Who ever heard it called by any other name than Packa? Yet the proper pronunciation is PAca.

The name of another street in Baltimore is open to a similar criticism. Who ever heard the broad sound of "a," in its first syllable, given in the pronunciation of its name, Calvert. It should be pronounced as if the first syllable were spelled "Call." All these are historic names and their pronunciation should not have been corrupted.

Outside of Maryland a notable example of this sort of corruption is found in the name of the city of New Orleans. The common, every day pronunciation is New OrLEANS, the accent being placed upon the last syllable. But the prper pronunciation is New ORleans, or, as the name is French, a language in which the letter "s" is usually silent when it does not begin a syllable, it may possibly be properly called New ORlean. That, however, may be demanding too close an approximation to the French pronunciation.

Other examples of this tendency to corrupt pronunciation might be given in illustration, but they may be readily found by anyone desiring to pursue the subject, and who may not regard such inquiries as hypercritical. They will find the names of individuals all about them, which have been changed by this tendency to speak without due knowledge. The schools should be firmly set against it.

A CHANCE FOR FRANK

The Supreme Court of the United States, with a full bench, is to determine whether Leo M. Frank, under sentence of death at Atlanta, Ga., for the murder of Mary Phagan, shall have another chance for his life. The case goes to the Supreme Court on appeal from the Federal District Court of Northern Georgia, which refused Frank a writ of habeas corpus for his release. The appeal was granted by Justice Lamar, of the Supreme Court, who, in entertaining it, said there were several questions of constitutional law involved in the case, which have not been passed upon by the highest tribunal of the country.

"The Supreme Court of the United States has never determined," Justice Lamar said, "whether on a trial for murder in a State court the due process clause of the Federal Constitution guarantees the defendant a right to be present when the verdict is rendered.

"Nither has it decided the effect of a final judgment refusing a new trial in a case where the defendant did not make the fact of his absence when the verdict was returned a ground of the motion, nor claim that the rendition of the verdict in his absence was the denial of a right guaranteed by the Federal Constitution.

"Nor has it passed upon the effect of its own refusal to grant a writ of error in a case where an alleged jurisdictional question was presented in a motion filed at a time not authorized by the practice of the State where the trial took place.

"Such questions are all involved in the present case and since they have never been settled by any authoritative ruling by the full court it cannot be said that there is such a want of probable cause as to warrant the refusal of an appeal."

Inasmuch as there is a very general belief all over the country that Frank was convicted more from the influence of public opinion in Atlanta, than upon the evidence adduced against him, it is to be hoped the Supreme Court may find a valid reason for reaching a decision that will give the man a fair trial. The question of his guilt or innocence will not enter into the proceeding. A fair trial may demonstrate his guilt. But certainly, no man should be taken to the scaffold if there be a reasonable doubt about the justice of his sentence, and such a doubt seems to be widely entertained in this case. If Frank be guilty, however, and his guilt can be established beyond a reasonable doubt, he is a wretch for whom clemency would be a crime.

CAN TAKE NO BACKWARD STEP

Just what will come of a contention that has arisen between the United Statets and Great Britain cannot yet be foreseen. It is, practically, a revival of one of the old questions which led to the war of 1812—the extent of the right of search of neutral ships for contraband of war by nations engaged in warfare. Great Britain has generally gone beyond the limit justly conceded by international law and is making no exception in this practice since the outbreak of the war now raging in Europe. Her armed ships have searched many bottoms on the high seas for contrabrand army goods from America, for neutral ports, but which, a suspicion has been entertained, were intended for the use of her antagonists. She has held merchandise to be contraband which the American government denies as belonging to that category, and has seized ships, carrying such merchandise, as prizes and carried them into British ports for the action of British prize courts. Ships merely suspected of carrying contraband have been taken into British ports and detained without a proper search having been made at sea, to the serious loss and inconvenience of the shippers.

Now, Secretary Bryan, with the approval of President Wilson, has made a vigorous protest, in language not to be misunderstood, against all the actions described and complained of and, inferentially has notified the British government that the United States means to enforce its rights and protect its commerce with neutral nations against this unwarranted and unjustifiable interference, no matter by what nation practiced or attempted. Evidently the question has been under discussion between the two governments for some time, without a satisfactory understanding having been reached, and hence this final protest, which has gone to Great Britain as an ultimatum.

Now that this vigorous policy has been decided upon by the Adminstration, it goes almost without saying, that the American people are behind it to a man. Probably Great Britain will undertake a discussion of the questions at issue and, while making concessions, will seek by diplomacy to practically avoid backing down from the practice she has been pursuing. But on this side of the water there should no step be taken backward. The protest now made by the American Administration is couched in language that cannot be misunderstood. It does not demand an apology for what is past, but it does sternly demand justice for the future.

It should be understood, too, that this demand is not made for the purpose of taking advantage of the present crisis in the affairs of Great Britain, when she is engaged in a gigantic war. That would be ungenerous and unworthy of a great country like the United States. Already this government has been over patient in the matter, and is only contending for a principle which has been held since its foundation.

The situation may be a serious one. If Great Britain shall decide to maintain her policy, regardless of consequences, it can easily be seen how a clash may arise between the Navies of the two countries. If American men-of-war, while convoying shsips carrying American goods, should come into conflict with British warships searching for contraband, it would hardly require a declaration of war to precipitate the United States into the great struggle across the ocean. May all danger of such an event be avoided. It would be a calamity too great to be comprehended.

It is understood at Washington that Great Britain will be called upon in due time to compensate shippers for their losses already incurred on account of these illegal seizures.

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