

criticism of the government's action in regard to pensions. And if we are to believe some of the critics the apathy regarding enlistments is in large degree due to the unsatisfactory condition of the pension scheme now in practice. But once the question of pensions is raised as a right of the men and a duty of the government there seems to be no place to stop, short of placing all men upon a plane of equal footing as to sacrifice for country. If a country is to maintain its independence, if its government is to survive, if its institutions are to be preserved, the question arises as to how much each citizen is to contribute.



When a laboring man gives his life in defense of his country, and leaves his family helpless and dependent upon charity, he may well be said to have contributed his all; whereas a man with wealth who has at the same time paid a certain amount of taxes has made no such sacrifice. The critics are pointing out that the laboring man who returns from the war a cripple has been deprived of his power to earn a living; but the man of means who returns, even when disabled to the same degree, enjoys an income that prevents either himself or his family from suffering privation. Hence, the point is made that the sacrifice of the two men is very unequal. And the conclusion seems unescapable that if the demands of service made on the citizens by the state is to be impartial the state must call upon the rich for the same proportion of their possessions as it does upon the poor. And if it takes all from the poor it must take all from the rich. Naturally the government is not at present prepared to go this length; and so, instead of using the present wealth of England to carry on the war, they are resorting to the time-honored expedient of making loans, which simply means the transference of the larger part of the financial burden to the shoulders of future generations.



Nothing of the future, either in men or in materials, will be used in this war. It is the present men and the present wealth that will be consumed. The idea is to use the men without paying for them, but to pay for the wealth used. Hence, the prosecution of this war means the piling up of another great war debt, which will be paid by the people of the future. This means nothing more nor less than that the heirs of the present owners of wealth will enjoy incomes from the bonds now issuing, while the heirs of the working people will be compelled to pay those incomes.

One of two courses is open to countries like England, either they must resort to conscription, or so reform their pension system as to remove the present gross inequality in the sacrifices of the citizens. If the statesmen shall ever arrive at the point of making the sacrifices absolutely equal, or if the people shall insist upon such equality, wars from that moment will cease. When governments take the wealth of the rich with the same freedom that they take the lives of the poor, the Peace Court of The Hague will be exalted, and even questions of honor and national integrity will be gladly submitted to arbitration. S. C.



### The Strongest Defense.

"Nations which have been built on force have died. Those which have trusted in armies and fleets have gone down. Why do not the nations learn that righteousness is mightier than dreadnaughts?" In these few words, Secretary of State William J. Bryan at Chicago on November 29 presented a powerful argument which can not be refuted by all the clamor of jingoes and militarists, and by all the pleas for increased armies and navies. The establishment of justice at home by any nation—something none has yet done—will make its destruction too great a calamity to the outside world to be favored by the most selfish. Justice in dealing with foreign nations will remove whatever other danger there may be of provoking an attack. Armies, navies and fortifications are poor substitutes for such defense.

S. D.



### How to Stop Violation of Neutrality.

The placing of orders for war material by foreign belligerents with American concerns will probably result in lodging of protests with the State Department, if this has not been already done. That such shipments should be prevented seems clear enough. But in undertaking such prevention, care must be taken that it actually result in prevention of bloodshed. Otherwise it will have no object. If an armed individual should protest on grounds of humanity against giving of arms by a third party to an unarmed person whose life he threatens, there will be nothing gained by heeding the protest, should the protestor continue to threaten his defenseless antagonist. So if one belligerent nation protests against securing of arms by its antagonist from the territory of a neutral nation, the heeding of the protest should be made to depend on prompt accept-

ance by the protesting nation of offers of mediation. Acceptance of such mediation must not be accompanied by difficult conditions. In no other way can interference with shipments be prevented from becoming an aid to one belligerent at the expense of the other. Should mediation be refused by the protesting nation, then it will no longer have reasonable ground for complaint concerning shipments. Should its antagonist refuse, then it can not justly complain about stoppage of shipments. The same action should be taken in the case of requests, said to have been made, that the United States endeavor to prevent alleged violation of neutrality by South American nations. If we must be annoyed and subjected to trouble and loss in order to satisfy participants in an inexcusable foreign war, it is not too much to demand in return cessation of fighting.

S. D.



### The Iniquitous War Tax.

Richly deserved will be whatever condemnation may fall upon the Democratic party for the war tax which went into effect on December 1. It is the one measure enacted into law during this administration for which no reasonable excuse has been offered. If Congress was unwilling to meet the emergency for which it provided by reducing expenditures, it could have adopted the bill introduced by Congressman Bailey of Pennsylvania, which levied a surtax on incomes in excess of \$20,000. But the Democratic majority evidently considered party discipline more important than the public good and so voted instead for the present measure because urged by floor leader Underwood. The enforcement of this law must necessarily arouse just resentment. Good politics as well as good morals require the repeal of this law as quickly as possible.

S. D.



### Prosperity and the Balance of Trade.

A number of Democratic papers have adopted the standpat habit of insisting, contrary to fact, that prosperity is here. Like the standpatters, they ignore the existence of widespread poverty and distress. Like the standpatters, their notion of general prosperity is prosperity limited to a small class. And like the standpatters, they are basing their false claims on the Balance of Trade fallacy. The fact that exports exceeded imports during the month of October by \$57,000,000 is being paraded as an indication. Fifteen years ago President McKinley pointed to a similar favorable balance and declared that we were

going to be paid for it in pure gold. But McKinley either did not know or ignored the fact that similar balances have been accumulating since 1833, and few, if any of them, have been paid in pure gold or anything else. These so-called favorable balances usually mean nothing more than so much wealth sent out of the country without return. Included in them must be tribute paid to foreign owners of American lands and to holders of securities in monopolistic enterprises. So far from being an indication of prosperity, this excess of exports usually indicates the reverse. There is nothing in the Treasury Department's report to show that October's balance is of a different nature than most of its predecessors. Democratic papers should be in better business than continuing to spread this old fallacy, or imitating the McKinleyite practice of pretending to see non-existent prosperity.

S. D.



### A Fair Return to Capital.

The New York World, in commenting upon the more kindly public feeling toward railroads, says:

Granger wrath against common carriers would never have arisen to dangerous height if railroad managers had played fair; if they had charged traffic what it cost, not what it would bear; if they had demanded interest returns only on capital invested, not water; if they had refused to build up one enterprise or one community at the expense of others by discriminating rates or by secret rebates. In proportion as railroads deal fairly with the public in future, they may more and more confidently expect fair dealing in return.

That is true enough. Neither railroad men, nor any other class of men, should expect justice from the public till they render justice in return. But it should not be forgotten that railroad men are of the same species as the rest of us, and if their piccadilloes are somewhat more conspicuous than the general average, their temptations should not be overlooked. Reprehensible as their conduct has been, it is merely a more dramatic form of what the commercial world in general has been doing.



They should have "demanded interest returns only on capital invested, not water." That sounds good, and it is to be hoped that the World will thoroughly familiarize itself with the sound. It may be instructive in this connection to note the handling of mining properties. One set of men gets from the state a long strip of land, with the right to run trains of cars on it; another set of men get from the state parcels of land bearing