

Notes and Comments

(Rev. R. G. MacBeth, M. A.)

The struggle for the presidency of the United States will soon be decided in so far as the choice of the country is concerned. But even if there is a change of administration, as is generally felt there will be, the incoming president does not assume the office until March next. This is surely a defective point in the United States system of government. The outgoing president is at the head of affairs for months after his rejection by the people has taken place and if he is lacking in force, a great deal of damage may take place. At the most critical hour in the history of the United States, Lincoln was elected president but Buchanan one of the weakest of public men continued in office for months, while Lincoln had to stand by and see irreparable and deplorable events happening in connection with the secession of the South. Had the Constitution allowed the mighty energy of the brave, sagacious and magnanimous Lincoln to be felt immediately he was elected the saddest chapter in the history of the Republic might never have been written.

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The narrow margin by which a far-reaching strike on our biggest railway was avoided shows how perilous and unstable is the foundation of our present industrial system. The Canadian Pacific in the thirty years of its existence, has not had very many serious labor outbreaks. But that has been more by reason of the remarkable sagacity and fairness of such railway managers as the late Sir William Whyte and others, and the generally wise leadership of the labor brotherhoods than by reason of the inherent justice of the industrial system. The publication of corporation statements annually, when these show immense profits without any adequate accompanying advance in wages naturally irritates men. There are many who think a profit sharing system the best solution of labor troubles, but the necessary implication of loss-sharing in certain years has not proved alluring to the workers. Yet there is much that is hopeful in the general suggestion, and back of all right systems must be the perpetual factor of personal good character.

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The menace of the Hun submarine on this side of the Atlantic is becoming a factor that specially involves the country to the South of us. Despite the conventions and the three-mile limit and such like, it seems incredible that the big Republic is going to permit Germany to prey against United States export trade and that United States war vessels are going to wait around to rescue the crews of boats torpedoed by Germany under the very noses of American onlookers.

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The high cost of living is to be the subject of municipal probes. And the upshot will likely be the usual discovery of shortage in food production and the inhuman manipulation of markets. It might be well to investigate the *cost of high living* and denounce those who glory in vulgar ostentation. And it might not be amiss for the municipality to secure some of the enormous takings of places of empty amusements. If people who do not go to the front persist in haunting tawdry shows instead of husbanding their resources for better ends, then the municipality might well capture some of their money by levying on a percentage of the