

Mr. Wilson Acts

BOTH in the United States and abroad, President Wilson has frequently been criticized for his great caution in his negotiations with Germany in matters arising from the war. His many "notes" became the subject of derision in some quarters. He manifested a patience that was roundly condemned. Mr. Wilson evidently regarded war with Germany, or anything that appeared likely to lead to war, as a much more serious matter than it seemed to be to his critics, and he labored earnestly to bring all negotiations to a peaceful end. The patience he thus exhibited, even in the face of great provocation and widespread criticism, gives a tremendous force to the decision which he announced to the joint session of Congress and conveyed to Germany in a formal despatch which is now in the hands of the authorities at the Foreign Office in Berlin. Unless Germany forthwith agrees to abandon her submarine warfare against passenger ships on which non-combatants travel, the United States will withdraw her Ambassador from Berlin and break off all diplomatic relations with the German Empire. It is not easy to see how the German Government can any longer evade the issue. To assent to the proposal of Mr. Wilson or to face a condition not far from actual war with the United States seems to be the way now open to Germany.

The breaking off of diplomatic relations with the Kaiser's Government will not necessarily mean a declaration of war by the United States. There are precedents to show that under such conditions war may perhaps be averted. But a refusal of the American demand will mean a determination by the Germans to continue their submarine policy, and its continuance will mean a probable repetition at an early day of attacks on ships on which Americans are travelling on peaceful missions. And another case like that of the Lusitania or the more recent Sussex would create conditions under which war could hardly be longer avoided. Meanwhile all neutral nations must be profoundly affected by the action of the United States Government.

Prohibition Troubles

NO great reform is accomplished without causing some disturbance of existing conditions and some embarrassments in the application of the new order of things. It is not surprising that the Ontario Government have met some snags in their present movement towards prohibition.

Their first trouble, after the determination to enact the legislation became settled, was with the druggists of the Province. The legislation, as in other places, contemplated that liquors might be sold for purposes of science or medicine, and the druggists were expected to be prepared to attend to this part of the business. But many of the druggists object to the participation in the business that is offered to them. They have learned from the experience of other communities that the selling of liquor by druggists under prohibitory laws does not elevate the character of the drug business proper. It is generally believed that many of the visitors to the shops under such conditions have but a very limited interest in science, and that they give the word medicine a very liberal interpretation. Many customers expect the doctors and druggists to hold similar views, and are disposed to resent any rigid application of the law. Altogether the druggists think that any profit there

may be in such selling of liquor is outweighed by a deterioration of the drug business proper, and of the general standing of the establishment. So the Ontario Government may have to establish shops of their own to supply the liquors in the cases in which the selling is still to be allowed.

Next came the hotel question. It may not be a pleasant fact, but a fact it probably is, that the sale of liquors in hotels, at bars or otherwise, has been one of the most profitable parts of the hotel business. Indeed, it has often been said, with much truth, that it was only through the sale of liquors to the other patrons that the travelling prohibitionist could obtain comfortable accommodation at reasonable rates. There have been many honorable exceptions among the hotels, but most experienced travellers will agree that the temperance hotel in the town was not the one in which they expected to find the highest comfort. Now that the profitable bar branch is to be cut off the fear is expressed that in some towns and villages the hotels will be unable to continue business and that the places will be left without accommodation for the travelling public. Perhaps the anticipations in this direction are needless. Perhaps the public will meet the situation by cheerfully paying the higher prices which the hotel men will demand. Perhaps—but this is a naughty suggestion—the prohibitory law will be as gently enforced in Ontario as in some other places, and the hotels will, without license, do business as before. The Ontario Government, however, admit that there is some ground for anxiety as to how the public are to be accommodated. Legislation has been enacted to authorize municipalities to aid hotels by tax exemptions, and even to subsidize hotels to a moderate extent if such action should be deemed expedient.

The Bilingual Question

IN the Ontario Legislature the Opposition leader, Mr. N. W. Rowell, while emphatically supporting the validity of the Ontario law and maintaining the right of the Ontario Legislature to control the schools of the province, expressed the opinion that it might be well to have an independent commission appointed to inquire into the trouble. The Ontario Government have declined to take that step.

Such a commission as was suggested by Mr. Rowell might perhaps obtain information as to the present condition of the so-called bilingual schools which would be helpful. But the question has now got beyond the point at which any settlement could be effected by legal proceedings or by formal action of any kind. Nor can it be settled now by Parliamentary discussion, either at Toronto or Ottawa. So long as either party is disposed to insist on what it believes to be its legal rights, little or nothing can be done. The judgment of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, when obtained, on the appeal that is to be taken from the decisions of the Ontario courts, may settle the law of the question. Privy Council judgments sometimes settle but little, and leave material points undecided. But even if in this instance a clear cut judgment be obtained, it will settle the law only. The conflict between the champions of the two languages will remain. It may even be intensified by the judgment.

What is most needed is the meeting of half a dozen leading men of moderate views on each side, who will be animated by a sincere desire to find a solution which, while recognizing the proper authority of the Ontario Legislature, will give as much consideration as is reasonably possible to the natural desire of French speaking parents to have their children taught their mother tongue. If the question be approached by

the right men in the right spirit, we are satisfied that there will be no difficulty in arranging for a reasonable percentage of French instruction, combined with such instruction in English as is admittedly necessary to the children's success in the battle of life, in a country in which English is the language of the majority. There must be on the two sides of the quarrel moderate men animated by such a desire. He who can bring such men together for friendly conference will do an important service to the country.

Wilson and Roosevelt

THE prospect increases daily that Woodrow Wilson and Theodore Roosevelt will be the two gladiators for the Presidential battle in the United States in November. As to President Wilson, there is no question. He has no rival in the Democratic party. There is a general realization among Democrats that if he cannot win there is nobody who can. Mr. Roosevelt is by no means without opponents in the Republican party. Indeed, most of the old line Republicans look with suspicion, if not with distinct hostility, upon the man who, by leading the Progressive bolt in 1912, destroyed whatever hope of success the Republicans had. They would like to nominate another candidate if they could find a probable winner. They would gladly take Justice Hughes, of the Supreme Court, if he would authorize the use of his name. There is a revival of the movement to nominate Mr. Root, but it is not likely to make much progress. There is no other candidate who looms up largely. A little while ago it seemed that all that the old line Republicans need do was to select a candidate who was not particularly obnoxious to Mr. Roosevelt. The idea then was that Roosevelt would recognize his own inability to win and would be content to exercise something like a veto power on the Republican nomination. Now the indications are that a concession of that kind to Mr. Roosevelt will not be enough for his purpose. It begins to be clear that the only candidate who would not meet Roosevelt hostility is the Colonel himself. The old liners are awakening to the fact that unless they accept Roosevelt there can be no Republican unity, and that without such unity there can be no hope of success in a contest against President Wilson. Reluctantly many of the old guard are accepting this situation and coming out for Roosevelt. The recent declaration of the New York Tribune, the staunchest of Republican papers, in favor of Roosevelt, is significant. There will still be much reluctance to accept Roosevelt, and occasionally an effort to boom some other candidate. But the outlook now is that his nomination will be accepted as the only salvation of the Republican party, and that he and Mr. Wilson will fight the November battle. An interesting fight it will be.

The Kingston British Whig has just issued what it calls a "Prosperity Edition" which should be a good advertisement for the limestone city. The number contains fifty-six pages, in which things Kingstonian are set forth in an attractive manner, with the aid of many illustrations. The business side of Kingston's life of course receives prominence, and the number contains a large amount of interesting information concerning the important educational institutions of the city—Queen's University and the Royal Military College. The number is most creditable to the enterprise of the old Whig establishment. As a piece of newspaper work it would reflect credit on a larger city.