

granted, therefore, that the Premier will arrange to attend the Conference.

The Imperial Government have given no definite statement of the nature of the business to be brought before the Conference, a point to which attention has been publicly directed by Premier Massey, of New Zealand, who is now in England, who apparently thinks that the representatives of the Dominions should, before going to the Conference, have some idea of what is expected of them. Until some further statement of the purposes of the meeting is available it will not be easy to form an intelligent opinion as to its value. We are doubtful as to the practical usefulness of such an assembly at present. The Colonial Office, before the thing is over, may find it an embarrassment. As regards the prosecution of the war, the Conference can do no more than is already being done, or than what the various parts of the Empire are ready to do without any Conference resolutions; and as to the after-the-war problems, it is questionable whether the time has arrived when these can be most conveniently and advantageously considered. However, as the Imperial Government have proposed the meeting, it is necessary that the Dominions shall accept the invitation and of course the Premier of Canada should be present with the representatives of the other Dominions. There will be general satisfaction in Canada at the good understanding that has been come to by the leaders of the two parties in this matter.

Theory and Condition

PRESIDENT WILSON, in his amiable reflections on the desirability of peace in Europe, would do well to bear in mind a bit of philosophy which is credited to one of his predecessors. "It is a condition and not a theory that confronts us," said Mr. Grover Cleveland, in discussing some questions that arose in his day.

Mr. Wilson is full of agreeable theories, which he usually presents in a pleasing manner. But he fails to take sufficient account of the realities with which the belligerent nations have to deal. His speech to the United States Senate reads more like an address to his Princeton students than a practical proposal to meet the conditions which confront Great Britain and her Allies in the war.

The Bopp Sentence

THOSE Canadians who are sometimes tempted to think that the pro-German element receives too much consideration in the United States should give a thought to what has just occurred in San Francisco. Mr. Franz Bopp, the German Consul-General, a German official next in rank to Ambassador Bernstorff, was suspected of having used his official position to encourage German residents of the United States to serve their home country in an unlawful way by placing bombs on board ships of Britain and her Allies and by attempting to destroy railways and canals in Canada. Once the American authorities found fair ground for this suspicion they prosecuted the investigations thoroughly, accumulated a mass of evidence which they placed before the courts, and pressed for the conviction of those who had thus abused the neutrality of America to serve German ends. Now comes the news that Consul-General Bopp has been convicted and sentenced to two years' imprisonment besides a fine of \$10,000. Two other German officials connected with the San Fran-

cisco consulate received similar sentences, and others concerned in the conspiracies are to receive due punishment.

Justice in this case seems to have been prompt and effective. Appeals may be taken and one cannot be certain of the ultimate decision. Meanwhile it is right that the zeal of the American authorities in San Francisco, and the firmness of the court, in vindicating American neutrality shall be acknowledged by all.

Mr. Bopp was for several years Consul-General for Germany at Montreal. One would have thought that an official who had thus partaken of Canadian hospitality would at least have refrained from unlawful conspiracy against Canada. But German "kulture" produces remarkable fruit in these times.

Returns to his First Love

JOURNALISTS throughout the country will welcome the return of Mr. R. S. White to the ranks. The announcement has been made that Mr. Robert Smeaton White, Collector of Customs at the port of Montreal, is returning to the Gazette as chief editorial writer. The Whites have long been intimately associated with the direction and management of that newspaper, and it seems almost strange not to have a member of the family writing editorials for that staid institution.

Mr. White succeeded his father, the late Hon. Thomas White, as editor-in-chief of the Gazette, and later followed in his father's footsteps as Member of Parliament for Cardwell, Ontario. While Mr. White was a useful and influential Member of Parliament his real work in life was done as a journalist. In turn as commercial editor of the paper, as its Ottawa press gallery representative, and later as editor-in-chief he did a lot of constructive work. He is unusually well informed on commercial and industrial conditions, and thoroughly versed in politics. His return to the Gazette will make for the strength and usefulness of that paper.

Compulsion for Home Service

A TELEGRAM from Toronto reports that a military conference held there, attended by two hundred officers, has resolved that it is necessary to bring into operation certain sections of the Militia Act, "which means the calling out of all single men between the ages of 18 and 30 years, and widowers without children, for service in Canada, from which it is expected drafts could be obtained voluntarily for overseas service."

The Toronto conference may have been a very proper meeting, and the policy it proposes may become necessary to meet the conditions of the time. But if the conference authorized or permitted the announcement of its proceedings the wisdom of such a course is questionable. Military officials are bound to give their superior officers the benefit of their knowledge, and their advice should be welcomed. Publicity, however, is the privilege of the responsible head of the department. If the Minister of Militia has authorized the publicity given to the proceedings of the Toronto meeting, nobody can complain. But unless the publication was so authorized by him the announcement of the recommendations of the conference looks like a grave breach of military rules.

A Similar Case

ONE of the complaints against the Adamson law, passed by Congress at the earnest request of President Wilson, was that it required the immediate granting by the railways of ten hours' pay for an eight hour day, and then provided for a subsequent inquiry as to the effect of this change upon the railway business. The question of the constitutionality of the law is now being argued before the United States Supreme Court. The other day, when one of the government's legal representatives was arguing in support of the law, he was interrupted by Mr. Justice Pitney, who put this case:

"Let us suppose that the railroads are buying coal by the long ton and that Congress passed a law compelling them to buy it by the short ton and pay the same price for the short ton that they had been paying for the long ton, and that Congress at the same time provided for an investigation for a period of a few months of the effect on the railroads of this increase in the cost of coal. Would you say that this would be constitutional?"

The lawyer, we are told in the report, "hemmed and hawed and said he couldn't see the analogy to the action of Congress in compelling an increase in wages and providing for an investigation afterwards." It is possible that, as a matter of American constitutional law, there may be a difference between the two cases, but to the ordinary reader they seem the same. Under our Canadian constitution there could hardly be a question as to the power of Parliament to make the law, either as respects coal or labor. As to the propriety or wisdom of doing so, there might be much question. The power of Parliament to do this kind of wrong things, is very broad. In the United States the railway companies seem to feel that they have a strong ground for claiming that the law is unconstitutional.

Whatever else may be said of Col. Theodore Roosevelt it cannot be charged against him that he is lacking in plain and vigorous speaking. In round and energetic phrases he denounces President Wilson's recent speech as a screen behind which the President shirks his duty. While the President's finely written sentences leave so much room for doubt as to what he means, it is refreshing to find his critic talking so plainly. But it is just as well that a person of Col. Roosevelt's emphatic language has not the responsibility of the Presidency.

The visit of the Irish Rangers, of Montreal, to Ireland, on their way to the front, one of the most pleasing incidents of war time, has afforded all parties, classes and creeds in the Emerald Isle an opportunity of co-operation that cannot fail to have a good effect. If Irishmen Canada, differing as they do in many things can lay aside their differences and unite enthusiastically for a common cause, the question naturally arises, why cannot Irishmen at home do likewise? Not only the war service but the general welfare of Ireland should be promoted by this visit of Irishmen from Canada. The men of the various classes who have come together to accord such a warm welcome to their overseas brethren should find in the occasion a bond of union for all other patriotic service.