

Editorial

The League of Nations

PEOPLE the world over are troubled to know how the "League of Nations" will affect nationality. To take an illustration, they say: "If a league is formed, and then one of the strong members breaks through and forms a combination with some other members, what is the league going to do about it?" Is there to be an international police force abroad in the world, and if so, is it to be stronger than that of any and all of the nations? In case of disagreement within the league, who will direct this police force? In the end, does it not mean the rule of the strongest? Because of this, will not nations continue to protect themselves by building huge fleets and raising standing armies? Is there any way out of it? These are the questions that the man unlearned in world politics is asking, and it is not easy for him, nor for the great company at Versailles, to give an answer to them all.

In the limit, a League of Nations is based on good faith. Just as selfishness, and mistrust on the part of husband or wife will lead to family discord, just as denominational jealousies in a neighborhood will lead to ill-will and misunderstandings, so in a League of Nations, nothing will keep peace if the units are selfish in their aims and ambitions, and unwilling to subscribe to the great law of unity—"Each shall love his neighbor as himself." This law is the condition of abiding peace everywhere, and there is no group large or small which will not work harmoniously if the precept is followed in thought and action.

Nor will it be necessary for Britain to do away with her fleet. As a member of the league she will continue to use her contribution for the safety of the nations and the protection of the smaller peoples. Her fleet will be at the service of the league. So, too, of the armies of France and Italy. It is just as if in a family the father used his knowledge of business to win bread for his children, or just as if in a community some particular church freely gave of its ministry for the public good. The stronger any individual is in his own line the better—provided his heart is right. And that, after all, is the crux of the matter.

The practical bearing of this is that the one important thing for men and nations is the development of character—the cultivation of unselfishness and brotherly love. This and this alone will solve labor troubles, political rivalries, national jealousies and family discords. So one may say in all surety, and without cant or hypocrisy, that the only hope of the world is Christ and His message.

In order to be a good member of the League of Nations, no country is asked to forget its nationality. Strong nationality is an asset. Just as the man who is true to himself makes the best member of the family, just as the best-trained and most prosperous family is the greatest gift to a neighborhood, just as a prosperous city brings credit to the whole state, so a happy and well-ordered nation will contribute most largely to the success of the league. Loyalty in the smaller field is the condition of success in the larger. The league cannot welcome into its fold very gladly any member that has not some contribution to make. And power to contribute depends upon individuality. It may therefore be expected that from now on there will be an intensifying of national spirit; but this may well be without any feeling of jealousy, rivalry and ill-will. If these persist the league will be a failure. If they persist, civilization without a league will be a failure.

Bolshevism

THERE is a Bolshevik element in every land today. In Russia and in Germany the great body of the people are more or less in sympathy with this misguided class. It is because they have been so robbed and so ill-used by the men in authority. In good old England, it is different. The people are anti-Bolshevist because they feel and know that they have had fair treatment, that the few are not permitted to tyrannize over the many, and they believe Lloyd-George will fight the thing through. In the United States the whole effort of late has been to curb the power of the big interests. The railroad trusts, the oil trusts, the meat trusts are in turn being subjected to scrutiny, and at least one of them brought under federal control. And so we may believe that America will be triumphant over this new power which makes for anarchy. In Canada there is no doubt where the sympathies of our people lie. It is for those in positions of power to act so that every man will be a supporter of organized government rather than a dangerous sympathizer with rampant Bolshevism. The greatest calamity that could befall any democracy is that people should lose confidence in their own government. In the end it is an admission of their own moral failure.

Now all of this implies that the government of a country is able to regulate prices if it only cares to do so. Where a real grievance exists and a government fails to take action, then it is untrue to the people. No man and no group of men, however wealthy nor however powerful, should dictate policies inimical to the body of the public.

This whole matter has been summed up by a writer in the Atlantic Monthly in these words: "There is a dangerously narrowing limit now to the confidence of the common man in the intelligence and good faith of those who direct his affairs." Unless something is achieved to prevent the very possibility of another great war, "systematic force, overstrained and exhausted, will give place to chaotic force and general disorganization will ensue. Thereafter the world may welter in confusion for many generations, through such ruinous and impoverished centuries as close the Roman imperial story, before it develops the vitality for an effective reorganization."

Aliens

THERE is one good thing about the speeches of the men who have returned from actual warfare. They talk to the point, and their speech has snap and "pep." One of the best of recent speeches was made by Col. A. W. Woods at Brandon. In it he pays his compliments to Canadian Bolsheviks in these very choice terms: "We have fought the war in Europe, and now we have to fight the war at home at close range; and we do not want any fire-brands from other countries to come telling us what to do." That is good enough, and we can let it go at that. And by the same token there are some British-born people in Canada who individually or through their class-organizations, are living so close to these fire-brands from other countries, that when the time for cleaning comes, the trains may take away more than aliens.

The Favored Classes

ONE of our good friends writes complaining that our editorial utterances are not to his liking, that the cause of the farmers is not championed and that profiteers are not hit hard enough. We were under the impression that we had been a little too emphatic in our denunciation of the big interest of Canada, but in reply to the challenge would simply reprint the following from the editorial page of November 1916. This is only one of many references to the favoritism bestowed upon the moneyed classes of Canada:

The Rule of Wealth

During the last three years, as never before, Canada has been in the grip of the moneyed interest. Appointments in and out of the government have gone to those who possessed gold, or who were willing to fall down and meekly worship the golden image. The possession of wealth has been to those in office a sufficient recommendation for leadership. Think of the last appointment to the Canadian Senate, think of the chairman of the most important of our commissions. Think of all the other appointments that meant so much to Canada during the war, and of the character of the men who have had at all times the ear of the government. If ever a country was ruled by a small coterie of men rather than by the representatives of the people that country is Canada. If ever there was a disgusting aristocracy it is the aristocracy of dollars that has the ascendancy just now. It is a small satisfaction to see the common people come into their own in England, Russia and other European states, and to find that right here we are in subjection to a few men, most of whom have acquired wealth as the result of special legislation, or because of donations from the public treasury. We can have no true democracy until the directors of our national life are true representatives of the people, rather than creatures of special privilege or worshippers of the money-chests.

Anything could go so long as the money-kings were left in possession of their plunder. The militarism of Germany is bad, the moneyed bureaucracy of Canada is worse, because in this case we are responsible for the evil.

The Remedy

How shall we get things right? There is only one way. The people can rule just as soon as they make up their minds to do so. No one need fear chaos and confusion. There could be no greater blundering and injustice than we have had during these last three years.

There is only one thing stands in the way. An old philosopher has told it all in a parable. Would you

hear it? "Once upon a time the fishes of the streams and lakes waited upon King Pike and complained that he was too rapacious, that every year he swallowed too many of their number. King Pike, after careful deliberation, replied that there was, perhaps, some ground for the complaint, and that he would improve matters by allowing one of the little fish each year to become a pike. Then they all left perfectly satisfied, for each one hoped to become that pike."

The cure for all our ills is public spirit. There are public-spirited individuals in every community. Let us entrust them with authority. These are the only men and women who can be trusted. After all it is a question of moral worth. Canada will not be great, prosperous, happy, so long as dishonest, unscrupulous, blinded partisans control its destinies. Nor will it be any better if its policies are shaped, and its interests administered by men who represent special interests. A man who is a grain grower and nothing more, a trade unionist and nothing more, is just as unsuitable for public office as a man who is conservative and nothing more, or liberal and nothing more. In public office men must rise above their private affairs, they must cease to be partizan, they must be men.

"God give us men! A time like this demands Strong minds, great hearts, true faith and ready hands;

Men whom the lust of office does not kill;
Men whom the spoils of office cannot buy;
Men who possess a conscience and a will;
Men who have honor, men who will not lie;
Men who can stand before a demagogue,
And damn his treacherous flatteries without winking;
Tall men, sun-crowned, who live above the fog,
In public duty and in private thinking,
For while the rabble with their thumb-worn creeds,
Their large professions and their little deeds,
Mingle in selfish strife—lo, Freedom weeps,
Wrong rules the land and waiting Justice sleeps!"

As to the matter of tariff, The Western Home Monthly has probably been more extreme than any other paper in Canada, arguing that absolute free trade and direct taxation are the soundest policy for any country, but that our people are unfortunately not yet ready for it. The Monthly sympathizes with farmers in their long struggle for free implements, not only on the farmers' account, but because it should mean cheaper food for the poorer classes, and because the whole system of taxing the people to foster special industries or favored classes is unpatriotic and indefensible. Naturally the Monthly was silent on this question during the war period.

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Canadian Talent

THE following letter received from a soldier at the front voices a thought that is common to many correspondents, and it explains why The Western Home Monthly has endeavored to cultivate Western talent. It is comforting to note what is said. It may be an incentive to some with literary ability who have not yet made themselves known.

Dear Sir:—

I have had the pleasure of receiving a few copies of your magazine at varied intervals during the past year and am very enthusiastic over your pages as a real representative of Manitoba. The one province of "God's Country" to us here on our task in Europe.

I feel that as a Canadian I have been guilty of the universal fault of having placed a great deal too much confidence in American magazines and it is only when I find myself longing for a real Canadian story, or find myself eagerly turning the pages of the Home Monthly and such papers that I feel myself taking more pride in our own literature.

Do you not think that our own authors have been forced to a back seat by the inroads of the popular trashy novels from New York—and that it will be a great improvement when our public discovers in our Canadian literature a moral soundness; a general note of higher standards and ideals which has enabled the little Canadian fighting force to become in General Currie's words—"that powerful hitting force which has won the fear and respect of your foes and the admiration of the world."

Do you not think that the literature of the people whose midget army has become—"the hardest, most successful and cleanest fighters of this war"—should take its proper place in the world's literature? Why not? It is for us to ask the question and consider the answer.

Sincerely yours,

Geo. H. Hambley, 115644,

B. E. F. France,

"A" Squadron, Canadian Light Horse.