

EDITORIAL

Peace, or the Next War?

THE hand of Esau, but the voice of Jacob. Austria's bid for a peace conference is more psychology. The crooked German mind deems all minds oblique. We can be caught by camouflage. The peace overture may be linked up with the sob speech of the Kaiser at Essen. Both have the same characteristics. Both were intended mainly for home audience. Winter is coming. Germany is hungry. Give him twelve months and he may remedy that, if not beaten at war before that time. Already we learn he has engorged Russia to the extent of one-third of her railway mileage, one-third of the population, 79 per cent of the iron, 89 per cent of the coal, 1,800 saving banks, 298 sugar refineries, 918 textile factories, 244 chemical factories, 644 paper mills, and 1,000 machine shops. These will take time to digest. The West front is awful. Nothing but ruins, defeat and retreat. Ten weeks ago Paris and the Channel looked possible. The copy-writers in Berlin waited for the best moment to spring the peace drive. The time never came. The tide turned. It must be done soon or more "psychology" would be wasted. Austria, known to be in a bad way, might get a hearing. An offer from her might puzzle the Allies. Once get them debating on the psychology and they might get to re-examining their own peace terms and discover that they no longer had the same unity in councils as in the field. America might waver. Some time ago Hamilton Lewis, Democratic whip in the Senate, made a speech in which he predicted a huge peace drive from Germany, an attempt to shoo the Allies away from the East front by ceding all they were fighting for on the West, even to Alsace-Lorraine plus reparation to Serbia and guarantees to Roumania.

In his address to the Austrian Upper House on July 18, 1918, Count Czernin, the ablest brain in Austria, said: "The war is at the bottom a duel between Germany and Great Britain. The moment Germany and Great Britain can come to an understanding the world war is at an end."

Probably Czernin knows why Austria was made the cat paw. The German people believe that the Allies want to exterminate Germany. Both the Kaiser and Ludendorff have said lately, "All factions must be postponed." Then factions are admitted. If consent to a conference might divide the Allies, refusal to confer would unite the Germans. The old wall—"the enemy will not have peace, let us fight on"—would be effective on a people already impressed by the noble sobs of the Emperor at Essen.

"Streams of pent-up human kindness," says the writer of the Austrian note, "would be released, in the warmth of which everything essential would remain."

This must have been written by Mr. Britling.

And the Allies have refused this heartrending appeal! without even a caucus. Secretary Lansing sends his reply within half an hour of the time that he received the Austrian note which would have taken him at least 29 minutes to read. Did he know it was coming? And had he been instructed beforehand? And had all the Allied Governments previously consented to let President Wilson answer on their behalf?

We do not know. Some big things are done in a hurry nowadays. All nations are becoming adept at what is called psychology. Personally we should have sent one delegate from Great Britain to confer with Count Czernin on this interesting note. But, of course, a referendum of our armies would say, "To blazes with the Austrian peace! Let's get on with the war." And after all, Foch knows. A German peace now would be a prelude to the next war framed up from the East Front, where Germany expects Japan and the United States to come to loggerheads. Foch does not want any next war; because he will then be too old to be in command of the armies. And for the umpteenth time let us reiterate that the Allies do not intend to exterminate Germany, which is impossible, but to de-Prussianize Germany, so that he will have no appetite for any "next war."

Gravitation, Methodism and Union Government

ONCE upon a time a man named Newton lay under a tree and discovered the law of gravitation from the fall of an apple. Later there was a man named Wesley who stood under the tree of good and evil, and from the decline and fall of mankind represented by the fox-hunting parson, evolved the principle of Methodism. In the fullness of time there came along one Newton Wesley Rowell, who, from the apparent decadence of Liberalism in a time of war, deduced the regenerating theory of a Union Government which, including Rowell, might be effective in saving the country.

This prospering Methodist corporation lawyer who was once a parcel boy in a London, Ont., drygoods store, afterwards without college education a pillar of Methodist propaganda, an orator, leader of the Liberal party in Ontario, apostle of the Abolish-the-Bar movement, now the President of the Council in the Union Government, has come in for the execrations of at least three kinds of editors. One writer said that he left the Liberals because he could not oust Laurier. Another alleges that there was a Cabinet quarrel about Rowell's going to the Imperial Conference, that he bludgeoned the Premier into taking him and that he is disliked by all his colleagues. Another says that Mr. Rowell engineered the congratulatory telegrams to the Premier concerning the enactment of Dominion-wide Prohibition in order to stand in with Sir Robert.

In all these attacks there seems to be a miniature hymn of hate—Rowell's capacity for making moral issues attractive to a crowd is not enough to keep the critics from biting him. He is probably not worrying half so much as he would be if the critics ignored him. He remembers one beatitude—"Blessed are ye when men shall revile you." Nobody ever says of Rowell, "Oh,

he's as crooked as a snake fence, but you can't help liking him." Good enemies are an advertisement. None of the other Liberal Unionists seems to have so many enemies. Carvell, Guthrie, Calder, Ballantyne, Crerar, may all be forgiven by the clear Grits. Rowell, never. But the Empire is a better theme than Liberalism for expository orations. Mr. Rowell is never so comfortable as when he is thinking up his next big speech—except when he is delivering it. Because he makes so many good Chautauqua speeches people are coming to judge the Union Government by what they think of Rowell's oratory. Which is not fair to either, unless Mr. Rowell has been made general manager of the Imperial issues department in the Government. We do not profess to know when the Borden-Rowell entente really began, though it seemed to be hatching at the Borden banquet in Toronto in 1915. We do not know whether Mr. Rowell was faced with two issues, going against the Premier as leader of the Liberal party in Canada, or trying to lead the Premier by following him in a Union Government. But by making himself the Imperial spokesman of the Union Cabinet he has found a much more stimulating programme than remaining in the good graces of the clear Grits. Rowell has ability, audacity and ambition. He has always seemed to have sincerity. He has also a total incapacity as the popular leader of a party. But for that matter—so for many years had Borden.

What the Empire is Not—

MR. ROWELL'S smug definition in his Orono speech of what the British Empire was, is not and is to be, inclines to make us violently ill. For example:

The British Empire or Commonwealth is no longer a great power with world-wide colonial possessions, or even a great central power surrounded by self-governing dominions. It is vastly greater than either—it is a coalition of free, self-governing nations, all of equal status, all owing allegiance to a common sovereign and bound together by common ideals and purposes; and the Imperial War Cabinet is a development to meet the needs of this Commonwealth.

The Imperial Commonwealth may feel the way Mr. Rowell describes it from the inside of a group photograph of the Imperial War Cabinet. But it does not look that way from the average doorstep in Canada. Even as a statement of fact the definition is wrong. The part of the Empire which contains more than three-fourths of its people is not of equal status with the other overseas dominions. India is not a democracy. India is now asking for the rudiments of Home Rule.

Gasoline and Sincerity

EITHER there is or is not a scarcity of gasoline on this continent. More oil for power is being made now than ever before. Gasoline is a by-product of oil. That there is a shortage of gasoline in Europe may be true enough, but that is due to an abnormal demand met by depleted cargo space. If there is a shortage here the way to overcome it is within the hands of the Fuel Controller. All he has to do is to get an exact census of the cars in Canada from the License Department of the various provinces, determine what is a reasonable monthly mileage for each car, divide that by the average number of miles per gallon and issue cards to all the consumers entitling each man to so many gallons a month for each car he owns and no more. Appeals to people to stop Sunday riding are only a bluff at upholding democracy.

More Sand on the Sugar Question

BACON, coal, wheat and sugar have by turns had the centre of the economic stage. We have got rid of the embargo on bacon and have no compunction about paying sixty cents a pound for all we can afford to eat. Coal is still a conundrum, understood by the minority who have hoarded more than their seventy per cent, not by the other minority who as yet have not a pound. But we are on coal rations, and the price has gone up since 1914 not more than 45 per cent. Wheat we began to understand somewhat when the price was fixed, but lost the clue again when it came to substitutes that cost as much and to war bread which nobody understands at all except some of the restaurant-keepers. Sugar, which threatened to be scarce two years ago, did us no more damage for a while than doubling in price. Now we are on semi-voluntary rations that no two people seem to understand in the same way. From prodigality in ice-cream and a very limited embargo on confectionery we are asked to go short on sugar just at a time when sugar is most needed to save the fruit. We get two small cubes one day, two large cubes the next, and over at the wall in the serve-self shop is a man who gets three lots because he was wise enough to order his meal in three instalments and got two lumps with each. The grocer has no census of families and the public no card. The man who has an India rubber conscience can go to six dealers and buy a pound of each kind from each. We are all at sea on the sugar question, and until the Food Board takes more drastic action than putting a curb on the dealers we are likely to land on the rocks. There is no martyrdom in sugarless tea or even sugarless porridge. Years ago we used to kick about sand in the sugar. What we want now is more sand in those who make the laws about sugar.

INVISIBLE MONEY

By MACDOUGAL HAY

The late John W. Stirling of New York, bequeathed \$15,000,000 to Yale University, of which he was a graduate.—News Item.

MR. STIRLING was a lawyer. Very few preachers have ever left this amount of money, save in the sense that they did not take it with them when they died. Also very few poets, very few philosophers, and not many editors, have prospered so exceedingly. And yet Mr. Stirling labored under the same disadvantage as the preachers and the editors—he was an honest man. And he worked hard to the very end. But, of course, we have to remember that he never married.

The significant thing about this bequest, however, is that Yale will never

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