

Parliament, the discussion that has arisen in the press from the publication of the report of Lord Balfour's Committee shows how thorny the subject is, and how unwise it would be to attempt any practical action on it at present.

Neither on the trade questions nor on the Irish question can any policy be agreed on by the British Cabinet as at present constituted. Either the questions must be deferred by common consent or the Coalition Government must break up and the very principle of coalition be abandoned. The latter event would be an Imperial calamity. At the very beginning of the war the Government of the day, under the leadership of Mr. Asquith, recognized that the conflict before the Empire was one to which the machinery of party government could not properly be applied. The co-operation of the Opposition leaders in both Lords and Commons was invited and readily given. Thus, faction was stilled, mutual confidence and harmonious action were ensured, even while parties seemed to remain as before; and out of this condition there speedily grew the coalition, in which the best minds of all parties were brought into the paramount service of organization for the prosecution of the war. Though some changes have taken place as respects individual members, the principle of coalition has remained and unquestionably has worked well for the good of the Empire. The breaking up of this union and a return to the machinery of party would be a calamity. But if this union, so very desirable, is to continue, there must be a frank recognition of the fact that the questions which formerly divided the nation, and upon which so much of bitter controversy arose, shall be laid aside until the war's end has come.

Mutual Needs.

UNDER the pressure of the high cost of living, which is a matter of the gravest concern to the mass of the people, many remedies are proposed or suggested that will commend themselves to the superficial reader, but will not seem so sound when they are submitted to examination by more thoughtful observers. Frequently correspondents in the press argue that there should be a prohibition of the export of commodities that are now sent to the United States. There might be circumstances which would justify and even demand the adoption of such a policy, in the case of a shortage of foodstuffs. But it is well to bear in mind that legislation of that kind is somewhat dangerous. However desirable it may be that a country shall be self-sustaining, able to produce within itself all the things that are necessary or useful for sustenance or comfort, there are few countries which can do this, few countries that do not find it convenient, if not actually necessary, to draw a part of their supplies from other lands. Legislation which aims at the prevention of such trade may easily provoke retaliation. In a recent official review of the wood pulp situation in the United States, the following passage occurs:

"As a consequence Canada is more and more called upon for pulp woods, and American manufacturers are showing an increasing disposition to slip across the border into the virgin forests of the Dominion."

"It is this condition of dependence that should be ended. Changes in the Canadian policy might at any time cut off our newspapers from this source of supply, or make it available only at excessive costs."

That the Americans are largely dependent upon us for these supplies is beyond question.

There are people who too hastily claim that the export of such commodities be prohibited, so that the materials may be used for manufacturing interests at home. There is, however, another side of the question that is too frequently overlooked. The New York Evening Post, with the above extract as a text, says:

"Must we call for complete independence as respects all our raw materials? Have we really ceased to be able to have faith in our neighbors? If we are dependent on Canada, so is Canada dependent on us. She has floated loans here amounting to many millions. She needs our coal and cotton and steel. We are surely in a position to run the risk of friendly dealings which are of mutual advantage. Proposals to increase the domestic supply of pulp wood need not rest on the ground that Canada may take our publishers by the throat."

Revolution in Germany

THERE have been rumors of revolution in Germany which have been promptly denied in Berlin reports. Probably so far nothing of more consequence than the occasional food riots which have repeatedly been reported from Hamburg and other cities has occurred. But revolution in Germany is one of the most likely things to occur. When it comes it will be much less surprising than the recent overthrow of the Russian monarchy. The war, so far as Germany is concerned, was in its first stages a war of the German military class. Thousands there were, doubtless, who did not want the war. Long habit of obedience to the dictates of the Government made them supporters of the war policy. Many others who had little desire for war were carried away by the assurances and the expectation that after a short campaign Germany would emerge from the conflict with a splendor of victory which would make Germany the master of the world. Even the Socialists, who would naturally be expected to oppose the war, seem to have been carried away by the glamour of the prospect. These bright hopes need victories to sustain them. One may be sure that every incident, large or small, that could be presented as evidence of German success has been given to the German people to keep up their courage, while everything like success on the part of the Entente Allies has been either suppressed or treated as unimportant. There must come a time, and that soon, when the truth can no longer be kept from the German people, when they will awake to the fact that, though the battle may rage for months to come, in the end the Central Powers will be soundly beaten. When the full realization of this inevitable result comes to the masses of the German people, what would be more natural than that they should rise in revolt? Scapegoats will be needed then to bear responsibility for the slaughter of the manhood of the country and for the crushing financial burdens that are imposed on the German people. Who can so properly be held responsible as the Kaiser? These are questions which the people will then naturally ask: "If we are to be beaten and crushed in the end why not stop now? Why sacrifice another million of our men and add further to our burdens by carrying on a hopeless war? Why remain loyal to the Kaiser's Government when they have brought us to this ruin? The Entente Allies — especially the British — have declared that they have no desire to crush the German people, but that they are resolved to destroy the German military power. We know that while the Kaiser and his friends rule there will be no peace except on terms that

would be disastrous to Germany. Why not turn out the Kaiser and ask the Allies to make a reasonable peace treaty with the German people?"

Thus, in all probability, will the thoughtful German citizen reason when he becomes aware of the whole truth. And his reasoning will be sound. Germany must be made to pay for the wrongs she has done to the civilized world and to the cause of humanity, and the bill under any circumstances will be heavy. But it will be absolutely reasonable for the German people to believe that, upon the disappearance of the Emperor William and his dynasty, and the creation of a peace-loving and democratic system of government in Berlin, the statesmen of the Entente Allies will be disposed to show consideration that never can be granted to the Kaiser and his military party.

Yes, revolution in Germany is one of the things most likely to occur at no distant day.

History Repeating

THAT history repeats itself is a common saying. How true it is is illustrated just now by market conditions and by press comments on them. The high prices of foodstuffs, the influence of the war on the cost of living, the need of increased production, the paramount importance of agricultural industry, the regrettable disinclination of people to engage in farming, the tendency of the young men to leave rural communities and flock to the towns and cities—these are subjects much talked of and written about at present. A writer in the Halifax Recorder, who loves to delve into the literature of the olden time, has reproduced from that paper of November, 1855, an article that might be applied with hardly a word of change to the present situation. The question of the relation of increased wages to increased cost of living is much discussed now. This is how it was viewed sixty-one years ago:

"One of the Halifax weekly prices current of breadstuffs and every kind of provisions, at the present time, is a matter of very serious consideration to most persons in the community. Wages are high, we are told, and trade pretty brisk, with fair profits to those engaged in it; but, we fear, the prices of the necessaries of life have more than increased in proportion. Indeed, as to a great number of persons, this is certainly the case. Individuals who are 'just making a living'—who support themselves and, it may be, their families, upon fixed and limited incomes, whether interest on capital, salary or wages, begin to find themselves straitened, in many instances, to a degree unusual in Nova Scotia."

This reads much like an article of to-day. In the former time, as at present, war was usually saddled with the responsibility of the high prices, but then, as now, there were people who thought the war was not the only thing responsible. The foundation of the trouble, it was said, was in the fact that farming was not sufficiently attractive to retain the young men on the land, that consumption of food was increasing while production was not. The moral pointed was that the young men must be induced to remain on the farms, thus swelling the ranks of the producers, rather than become consumers in the cities and towns.

Sixty-one years later the same difficulties are found to exist, and the same remedies being advocated. And sixty-one years hence, probably, the student of old newspapers will reproduce the articles of to-day and find that the old problem remains unchanged.