

Go Over The Top in Victory Drive

without the consent of the Government, and the Government, in turn, cannot give their assent until the approval of Parliament has been obtained. The procedure is a necessary sequence of public ownership. Now, public ownership implies costly operation, wasteful and extravagant expenditure. It has always been so.

"The British Columbia incident serves to show the futility of a board of directors in the determination of policy under public ownership, and it is an incident that will constantly recur. The locality petitions the Minister of Railways, the Minister confers with his colleagues, the Government recommends to Parliament, and Parliament keeps a watchful eye on the electorate."

Our Montreal contemporary takes perhaps too gloomy a view of the prospect of the operation of these railways under the system of public ownership. But that the public will look to the Government rather than to any board of commissioners cannot be successfully denied. The railways under the new system cannot be "taken out of politics." They must remain in politics because they are the people's property and politics is simply the channel through which the people manage their affairs. We must make politics better if we are to have any better management of Government railways than in the past.

President Wilson's Latest Note

IN PRIVATE transactions a party who had been shown to be absolutely dishonest would naturally be cut off from communication with decent people. A letter received from him would be treated with silent contempt. A great many people in the United States, as well as elsewhere, feel that the German Government has reached a point where its communications should be treated that way. Hence there is considerable impatience with President Wilson because he has continued to exchange notes with the German representatives. The President, however, seems to have felt that the courtesy of reply was due to the Germans, and he has therefore sent a further note to them. There is little in the note that is likely to give comfort to the Berlin officials. If there was any doubt as to the meaning of earlier notes there can be none in the present case. Mr. Wilson will send to the Governments of the Allies the request of the Germans for an armistice and for peace negotiations, but he will do so in terms which make it clear that nothing short of a German surrender — submission to the military forces under Marshal Foch — will be approved by the American nation. If there is to be an armistice, it must be one dictated by the Allies' military advisers, one which will "leave the United States and the powers associated with her in a position to enforce any arrangements that may be entered into and to make renewal of hostilities on the part of Germany impossible."

The German Government, we may be sure, will not accept these terms if they can see any hope in further resistance. The changes said to be in course of making in the constitution of Germany may affect the question of future wars, but in the consideration of the

present war, the President frankly tells the German Government that the nations of the world do not and cannot trust the word of those who have hitherto been the masters of German policy. If the United States Government, says the President, "must deal with the military masters and the monarchal autocrats of Germany now, or if it is likely to have to deal with them later in regard to the international obligations of the German empire, it must demand, not peace negotiations, but surrender; nothing can be gained by leaving this essential thing unsaid."

Seldom indeed are words like these put into a diplomatic note. But the occasion calls for plain speaking. There can be no peace negotiations with the Kaiser and his military system. If Germany is prepared to rid herself of the Kaiser and the whole Hohenzollern gang, the situation may take on new aspects, though even then Germany must expect to pay for the crimes that she has allowed to be committed in her name. But for the Emperor William and his military system there is only one word—"surrender."

The German Colonies

THE future of the colonies taken from Germany by the British forces continues to be keenly discussed. That the Germans will press, with whatever force they can command, for a restoration of these colonies to the German flag is well understood. Colonial expansion was one of the most prominent features of German policy. Germany hoped to get more colonies. To be obliged to submit to the loss of those she had will be one of the most bitter pills for her. A little while ago British statesmen hesitated to speak freely on the subject. One of President Wilson's earlier statements might be understood to favor the idea of "no annexations," and that might cast doubt on the British claim to those colonies. Of late, however, there is a much more emphatic tone in the remarks of British Ministers. The Allies, at the Peace Conference, can be shown that Germany's treatment of the natives of the colonies proves her unfit for colonial government, and that in the interests of humanity it is best that the British flag, which now waves over those hitherto German territories, shall not be hauled down. Australia, as we have before noticed, is particularly interested in the question. Premier Hughes, who has been in England for some months, is remaining there, largely because he desires to be at hand when the fate of the colonies is under consideration. The British Government is now taking firm ground on the subject. At a luncheon of the Australian and Zealand Club in London on Wednesday, Mr. Balfour, the British Foreign Secretary, spoke out emphatically:

"Mr. Balfour said it was absolutely essential that the British empire's communications should remain safe, and if the German colonies were returned what security was there that their original possessors would not use them as bases for piratical warfare?"

"The doctrine that the colonies should not be returned, Mr. Balfour claimed, was not selfish and imperialistic. It was one wherein the interests of the world were almost as much concerned as the interests of the empire itself. If the empire

was to remain united it was absolutely necessary that the ways whereby the component parts could communicate with each other should never again be at the mercy of an unscrupulous power."

The question will be one for determination by the Peace Conference. But it is not likely that the Allies of Great Britain will be disposed to override the strongly expressed views of the British Government.

Me und Gott

PERHAPS the most striking feature of the recent communications from Berlin to Washington is the entire absence of any mention of or reference to the Emperor William. Under the monarchal system everywhere it is usual for the ruler to speak of "My government," "My people," etc. Even in democratic Britain the old system remains, though there its meaning is not misunderstood. But in the German system the Emperor has been the centre of everything, the unchallenged possessor of supreme power, the ruler, not by the will of the people, but, as he frequently reminded them, the ruler by divine right. My people, my government, my army, my navy, were often referred to, with all possible emphasis on the "My." It was a sad day for Emperor William when he assented to the sending out of a German official despatch in which his authority, his power, indeed his very existence, was ignored. This apparent effacing of himself from the negotiations which the Germans desired to carry on was, of course, a part of Germany's effort to hoodwink the innocent Americans, and to give color to the alleged movement to establish in Germany something like the parliamentary system of democratic countries. Happily, this effort is not to succeed. Uncle Sam is not to be easily fooled. Behind the tricky notes of Prince Maximilian and Dr. Solf stand the house of Hohenzollern, with all its traditions of militarism, all its belief in might above right, all its belief — for it has educated itself into the belief — that its mission is to rule Germany, and through German supremacy rule the world. While the Emperor William or any of his family remain at the head of the German Government it will be impossible for the civilized world to put faith in any assurance that any German official may offer, looking or pretending to look towards the peace of the world.

Population and Production

THE Ottawa Citizen, quoting a passage from an article in the last Journal of Commerce and commenting thereon, takes exception to one sentence. Writing respecting the prospects of immigration we said: "Our part in the war will have left a heavy burden of debt. We shall need as many backs as possible to bear the burden." To this the Citizen replies, "Not numbers, but production is the measure of our ability to pay." That is true enough. But large production requires large population. Whatever may be said of wartime, in time of peace there is no considerable class of slackers in Canada. The idler finds the country a poor one for him. Practically all are workers. Therefore increase of population should mean increased production. Population of the right kind will still be very desirable, in order that there may be increased production.

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