

Peace Even at the Price of War

(Written for the Journal of Commerce by Rev. J. W. MACMILLAN, D.D., Manitoba College, Winnipeg)

The New Year dawns again upon a world convulsed with strife. And the struggle is more desperate than a year ago and the ruin more widely spread. Belgium, Poland and Serbia are in the hands of the brutal enemy, while Armenia, the land over which horror constantly broods, has been outraged by atrocities more unspeakable than ever. There are hundreds of miles of shallow ditches, in parallel lines, where hundreds of thousands of men crouch day and night, rising only to launch missiles of death at each other. And these ditches run like scars across the faces of the most civilized countries of the world, and the men in them are the fairest and strongest of the youths of the most civilized races on earth.

All precious things have been cast into the melee. Gold is poured out like water. The familiar groups which seemed so stable, in household, shop, club, college, church, office, or where you will, have broken up and the units rearranged themselves in platoons, battalions, brigades and divisions. All human activities are swallowed up by the war. The contending nations — themselves almost half the world — are straining every sinew to win. While the neutrals look on as fascinated, or hurry to their factories to provide munitions for the belligerents. Never was there such an era of "confused noise and garments rolled in blood" in the history of the world. Neither Alexander, nor Caesar, nor Attila, nor Napoleon played a part in such an all-embracing tragedy.

It is necessary to maintain this larger view if one would see right through the war. As it is sometimes said, one cannot see the woods for the trees, so it may be said that fighting hides the fight. The incidents and details, huge and meaningful as they are, must not be allowed to obscure the greater significance which is realized only when we "see it steadily and see it whole."

I suppose that the truest and most vital reflection upon it all is of the infamy of warfare. If a father came home to his family to find them engaged in a violent quarrel his deepest feeling would not be concern as to which of his

nearest right. It would be rather a feeling of shame that, whatever their differences might be, his children should fly at each others' faces. Not the cause of the quarrel, not the beginning of the quarrel, but the quarrel itself is the main fact. Differences of opinion between men and nations must always be. There is nothing disgraceful, perhaps nothing even regrettable, in such disagreements. What is disgraceful and lamentable is that, after all the progress the human race has made, it is still liable to these orgies of carnage and destruction.

It is certainly curious to hear, among ourselves, in one form or another, implied laudations of war. Learned lecturers and publicists dilate upon its benefits, and predict the golden age to follow in its wake. Even pulpits sound the same note, misled no doubt by the sacrifices of the heroic soldiers. No one says, indeed, in so many words, that war is better than peace. But they emphasize what is incidental, and raise to a controlling position what is subordinate; and they indulge in unwarranted dreams of society regenerated after the war. Surely there have been wars enough to forbid that expectation. If mankind could have fought its way, with cudgel, or lance, or spear, or cannon, into the millenium, we should have been there long ago. Not by shedding man's blood shall come the new heavens and the new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness.

Perhaps the root of this error is the delusion that one cannot fight heartily unless one loves fighting. This philosophy is then an offering upon the altar of patriotism. Alas! that sacrifice has already been laid upon the altars of false gods. For it is nothing but Bernhardism in a new guise. The alignment between Britain and Germany is precise upon this point. For Germany believed in war, prepared for war, and intended to grow great by war. But Britain did not prepare for war, and shrank from war, and knows that her greatness is just because she has long since purged from her blood the poison of militarism. When the King was forbidden a standing army, and the parliament made the maintenance of the troops dependent on an annual bill, she pledged herself to the policy of peace and advertised it to

And, therefore, because we hate war—because we believe in peace at any price, even at the dreadful price of war—we set our teeth again this New Year's day. We regard Henry Ford's ship of peace as a joke, and the Kaiser's *weltpolitik* as a curse. We know that peace cannot even be discussed till the Hohenzollern has changed his heart, or his throne its occupant. Dr. Moritz Busch, in his memoirs of Bismarck, tells of a poor French woman, whose husband had threatened a German hussar with a spade, and who had been arrested, on the march to Paris in 1870. This woman appealed to Bismarck for her husband's liberation. (I quote the book.) "The Minister listened to her very amiably, and when she had done he replied in the kindest manner possible: 'Well, my good woman, you can be quite sure that your husband' (drawing a line round his neck with his finger) 'will be presently hanged.'" It is because this leering ferocity must not sit in the high places of the earth, as it aspires to do, that we have gone to war.

And we know that when the war is over the question of ensuring peace for the future must be taken up. The war will not have settled that question. After a few years of rest and recuperation, unless something is done, men will be as ready to fight as they ever were. Germany will be prostrate for a while, but there are other nations in the world who may be led to cherish similar ambitions. The present war is only a preliminary to the war upon war, which the assembled intelligence and goodwill of mankind will surely make.

Therefore, we will fight the more heartily, even if the more solemnly. Our spirits will be the more resolute because our purpose is greater. We feel that we must win this war more than any other war, because this war is about the value and the place of war, and not for territory or markets or even human life. We are fighting for something higher and holier than our lives. Freedom is at stake, and

"We must be free or die, who spake the tongue
That Shakespeare spake, the faith and morals
hold which Milton held."

But we know all the while that winning this war is only getting ready for permanent peace. When mankind breathes freely again, rid of the menace of the Prussian bully, then begins the task, the triumph of which has been often foretold but never realized, of driving the world to the face of the earth

The Pooling of American Securities

(Written for the Journal of Commerce by W. E. DOWDING, London, England)

In a previous letter, it will be remembered, the scheme of pooling American held securities by the British investor for the benefit of exchange operations by the British Government was foreshadowed. At that time it seemed but a vague idea floating through the minds of one or two individuals. So it would have appeared from the perusal of various journals; but it is possible to state now, what was not desirable before, the idea that has been under consideration in responsible quarters for several weeks. There has, ere now, been cabled abroad the definite announcement that the British Chancellor of the Exchequer proposes laying before the House of Commons a Bill for the control of all important transatlantic securities which would be utilized either to raise credit or influence the exchange by sale in New York. What the details of the scheme may be will be known before long, but they must in the nature of things be complicated and give rise to acute discussion and perhaps strong opposition.

A first glance would seem to overrule the possibility of much objection. What more feasible than that at a time like this the Government should commandeer whatever it needs for the benefit of the nation at war? So stated, there can be only one answer. But it is possible in carrying out even an accepted principle to be met with difficulties of no small magnitude. Broadly there can only be two causes. Either a purchase out-

right is made or else the securities are loaned to the Government on terms acceptable to the individual concerned. But whichever it be the question of compulsion must be conceded. The whole scheme otherwise is liable to break down through the refusal of a coalition of large interests. It must in addition apply to Trust Cos., Banks and Insurance Cos., as well as to private individuals. There must be no exceptions; if there are it may be found that playing a game contrary to the interests of the British Government will be possible and the efforts to rectify the exchange will be defeated. Here we come up against the practical difficulties and objections. A purchase of this class of security withdraws from the possession of the holder a valuable negotiable instrument which in these days possesses distinct merits when there are so many stocks unrealizable owing to the continued existence of minimum prices. The same objection applies to the enforced loan of American securities, and, in the case of Banks and Insurance Cos., the predicament which they have to face is a real one. The contention that the increase on the rate of interest returned to the holder, the extra $\frac{1}{2}$ per cent, compensates the lender in return for the pledging of the holding, misses the real point. These securities may be held as much for their value as credit-raisers as for their revenue-earning capacity, and if that be destroyed by the control being taken out of the hand of the registered holders a vital asset is wrested from their hands. This raises the question of course

whether this difficulty may not be surmountable. Clearly it can if the certificate issued in exchange is valid on which to raise credit. If that be understood then much of the objection raised in private circles will fall to the ground. But the difficulty will only completely disappear if the American securities are purchased outright, and not loaned. It is one thing to be allowed to borrow on a certificate, but scrip representing a definite parcel of mixed securities cannot very well be split up and sold. For instance, supposing a holder under the scheme lodged, say \$15,000 value of such railway stocks as Pennsylvania, Aftchison, Eries and Rock Islands in varying proportions, the certificate presumably would attest to the face value and the market value of the total deposited. How could this certificate be sold to, say, the extent of \$25,000? Money might be raised to that extent repayable at the termination of the pooling scheme, but half of the certificate could not change hands. The objection then is two-fold: (1), that the certificates would not be negotiable, and (2), that if used as a floater it would involve long term borrowings which might be difficult to raise.

If the scheme matures, these difficulties will need to be overcome, and if it is carried it will be the most remarkable instance of State Socialism that the world has ever seen. But it is not nomenclature that will hinder its passage, but real difficulties, for it can be truly said of the British people that all are for the State and few, if any, for self.

FOREIGN TRADE OF ITALY.

The combined value of the exports and imports of Italy for the first nine months of 1915, according to Italian official statistics, was \$779,897,480. The exports reached a total of \$331,570,095, an increase of \$10,414,001 over the corresponding period of 1914. The imports amounted to \$448,327,385, a decline of \$15,133,955 from those for the same period of 1914.