

THE INTERNATIONAL

The Secret Treaties

Among the most important political events of the end of the year has been the publication by the Russian revolutionaries of some of the secret treaties made between the Czar's Government and the governments of the allies. While our politicians were publicly declaring that the Entente Powers were fighting not for their own aggrandisement, but only for right and justice, they were making treaties which they kept secret from their own people and which flatly contradicted their public assertions of disinterestedness.

On December 12th, 1917, the Manchester Guardian published the text of a few of these treaties and though they have been referred to in the House no one has dared to deny their authenticity. We quote from the Manchester Guardian.

Constantinople and the Straits.

A confidential telegram, dated March 5th, 1915, from M. Sazonoff, Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs, to the Ambassador in Paris, contains the following passage:

In his conversations with you Delcasse had previously more than once given his assurance that we could rely on the sympathy of France and only referred to the need of elucidating the question of the attitude of England, from whom he feared some objections, before he could give us a more definite assurance in the above sense. Now the British Government has given its complete consent in writing to the annexation by Russia of the Straits of Constantinople within the limits indicated by us, and only demanded security for its economic interests and a similar benevolent attitude on our part towards the political aspirations of England in other parts.

Persia and Afghanistan.

A confidential telegram, dated March 7th, 1915, from M. Sazonoff (apparently to London), contains the following:

The Imperial Government confirms its assent to the inclusion of the neutral zone of Persia in the British sphere of influence. At the same time, however, it regards it as just to stipulate that the districts adjoining the cities of Ispahan and Yezd, forming with them one inseparable whole, should be secured for Russia, in view of the Russian interests which have arisen there. The neutral zone now forms a wedge between the Russian and Afghan frontiers and comes up to the very frontier line of Russia at Sulzager. Hence a portion of this wedge will have to be annexed to the Russian sphere of influence. Of essential importance to the Imperial Government is the question of railway construction in the neutral zone, which will require further amicable discussion.

The Imperial Government expects that in future its full liberty of action will be recognized in the sphere of influence allotted to it, coupled in particular with the right of preferentially developing in that sphere its financial and economic policies.

Lastly, the Imperial Government considers it desirable simultaneously to solve also the problems in Northern Afghanistan adjoining Russia, in the sense of the wishes expressed on the subject by the Imperial Ministry in the course of the negotiations last year.

Anyone who wishes to know how Czarist Russia had already used the "liberty of action" allotted to it in Persia is referred to the following books: "The Fruits of our Russian Alliance," by H. N. Brailsford; "The Policy of the Entente," by Bertrand

Russell; "The Strangling of Persia," by W. Morgan Shuster.

Central Europe and Poland.

A confidential telegram from M. Sazonoff to the Ambassador in Paris, dated February 24th, 1916, contains the following:

All suggestions for the future delimitation of Central Europe are at present premature, but in general one must bear in mind that we are prepared to allow France and England complete freedom in drawing up the western frontiers of Germany, in the expectation that the Allies on their part would allow us equal freedom in drawing up our frontiers with Germany and Austria. It is particularly necessary to insist on the exclusion of the Polish question from the subjects of international discussion and on the elimination of all attempts to place the future of Poland under the guarantee and the control of the Powers.

The insistence that the Czar should be free to do what he liked with Poland, free from international guarantee, is particularly interesting, and Great Britain (to judge by Article 9 of the reply to President Wilson on January 11th, 1917) seems to have been complaisant in the matter.

On February 26th, 1917, M. Isvolsky, the Russian Ambassador in Paris, declared in a telegram that the government of the French Republic, "recognizes Russia's complete liberty in establishing her western frontiers." This was a quid pro quo, as will be seen by the following:

What France Wanted.

On February 1st, 1917, M. Sazonoff, in a note to the French Ambassador in Petrograd, wrote as follows:

In your note of to-day's date your Excellency was good enough to inform the Imperial Government that the Government of the Republic was contemplating the inclusion in the terms of peace to be offered to Germany the following demands and guarantees of a territorial nature:

1. Alsace-Lorraine to be restored to France.
2. The frontiers are to be extended at least up to the limits of the former principality of Lorraine, and are to be drawn up at the discretion of the French Government so as to provide for the strategical needs and for the inclusion in French territory of the entire iron district of Lorraine and of the entire coal district of the Saar valley.

3. The rest of the territories situated on the left bank of the Rhine, which now form part of the German Empire, are to be entirely separated from Germany, and freed from all political and economic dependence upon her.

4. The territories of the left bank of the Rhine outside French territory are to be constituted an autonomous and neutral state, and are to be occupied by French troops until such time as the enemy states have completely satisfied all the conditions and guarantees indicated in the treaty of peace.

Your Excellency stated that the Government of the Republic would be happy to be able to rely upon the support of the Imperial Government for the carrying out of its plans. By order of his Imperial Majesty, my most august master, I have the honor, in the name of the Russian Government, to inform your Excellency by the present note, that the Government of the Republic may rely upon the support of the Imperial Government for the carrying out of its plans as set out above.

The Meaning.

Readers will remember that we recently referred to the return to Par-

is of two French Socialists, Messrs. Cachin and Moutet, who had gone to Petrograd as convinced supporters of the war and had come back as warm advocates of the Stockholm Socialist Congress. We suggested that they had perhaps had a sight of the secret treaties. If they saw those from which we quote, they certainly had enough evidence of the ways of diplomats to make them desire that they should be forced to come into the open and let the people, who have to foot the bill, know to what they are being committed.

We know now that our government attached no conditions to the annexation by the Czar of Constantinople and the Straits, except the safeguarding of British "economic interests" and a "benevolent attitude" on the part of the Czar's Government towards the "political aspirations of England in other parts." We know now that, in spite of the horrors of Czarist policy in Persia, our government was willing to hand over further portions of that unhappy land to the Czar, on condition that Great Britain should have the rest as an exclusive "sphere of influence." We know now that the Czar and the French Government gave each other mutual "freedom" in drawing up the frontiers of Germany, and that the French Government hoped to annex portions of Germany for "strategical needs" and because they coveted Germany's coal and iron. We know now that the western allies were prepared to allow the Czar to deal alone with German and Austrian as well as Russian Poland, not even demanding any international guarantee that he would not do with Poland what he had done to Finland.

From all this and from what we know of the ambitions of Italy's Government, we may guess the tenor of the secret treaties made when Italy came into the war.

The Moral.

These secret treaties represent some of the ambitions of the allied governments which made them, ambitions which could be realized only by a knock-out of their enemy. We have no doubt that the Central Powers also had their ambitions which could be realized only by a knock-out of their enemy, and that the ambitions of the Central Powers were at least as morally indefensible as those described in the allied treaties. A knock-out by either group of belligerents, attained while their governments are still of the same mind as to what constitutes "security," "guarantees," "interests," would lead to a peace of annexations on a large scale, armed occupation of vanquished territory, the extension of exclusive concessions, the disregard of the desires of the peoples, the fostering of hatred and revenge, the certainty of future and more devastating wars.

Now, by their revolution, the people of Russia have become free to say that they do not desire any of the forcible annexations plotted by the deposed Czar, and they have abandoned the whole of his imperialist policy. By this abandonment they hold that they have the right to ask their allies also to abandon annexationist aims. Who can doubt that the people of France, the people of Italy, the people of Great Britain, and the people of Germany and Austria have no Imperialist ambitions?—H. M. S. International Women's League Monthly.

ENGLISH RAILROADS.

The English Government took entire control of all railways in Great Britain on August 14, 1914, agreeing to pay the stockholders the same earnings as they received in the year 1913.

"As traffic demands increased while facilities decreased, due to

wear and tear and the enlistment of thousands of railway workers, recourse was had to reduction of service and the employment of women and men not capable of bearing arms, the number of women employed increasing in three years from 15,000 to 100,000. Freight cars were pooled without regard to ownership and the loading and unloading of cars were expedited under heavy penalties, fines, and imprisonment; it was made a criminal offense to fail to load or unload in accordance with the rules. Passenger trains were annulled, reservation of seats abolished, traffic diverted, and passenger rates advanced 50 per cent. not so much to increase revenue as to discourage travel.—Advance.

NO INDEMNITIES.

We hear a lot these days about the foolishness of advocating no indemnities. Here are some historical facts: The Seven Years' War was as bloody and as ferocious given the respective numbers engaged and the relative innocuousness of the slaughter machines, as the present war. Yet the treaties which closed it recognized the impossibility of post-penalization.

Thus the Treaty of Paris of February 10, 1763, between Great Britain on the one side, and France and Spain on the other, it was stipulated:

"There shall be a general oblivion of everything that may have been done or committed before or since the commencement of the war that has just ended."

And the Treaty of Hubertsburg, of February 15, 1763, between Prussia and her allies on the one side, and Austria and her allies on the other, postulated:

"There shall be on both sides an internal oblivion, and a general amnesty of all hostilities, losses, damages and wrongs committed during the late troubles by either party, of what nature soever; so that there shall be no further mention of them, nor any compensation demanded, under any pretence, or upon any consideration whatever."

LANDLORDISM.

(Labor Call, Melbourne.)

In every clime beneath the sun, where the flag of Boodle waves,

The guineas of the moneylords are making freemen slaves;

The landlords are increasing and the hardy sons of toil

Are driven forth, like aliens, from their holdings on the soil.

In Erin and in Albion, the Crown gives prince and peer

The people's rightful heritage to feed the lordly deer;

The fruitful hills and valleys, which never should be sold,

Are wrested from the peasants and exchanged for foreign gold.

'Tis hard to see our workless men, in poverty and woe,

Evicted from their cabins when the hills are white with snow;

And hard it is, in storm and rain, the outcast young to see,

Cling, wailing for a crust to eat, about a parent's knee.

The earth that God created, He gave power to yield increase,

That men might work for social ends and share alike in peace;

And woe to Babylonia, when her rulers swell their hoards

By selling men and women and the land that is the Lord's.

When the people of a nation are robbed rudely of the land,

The Spirit of Rebellion walks abroad with crimson hand;

The birds that follow battle, look for bloodshed, on the wing,

And hungry eyes of women turn with hatred to the King.

J. K. McDOUGALL.