

THE INTERNATIONAL

REVOLUTIONARY RUSSIA'S "SPLENDID ISOLATION."

Johna Wanhope in the New York Call.

Viewing the chaos that now exists in Russia, the attempt to make a summary from a recital of details is usually hopeless and merely makes confusion worse confounded. But there is one thing that stands out with tolerable plainness. The uncertainty that now exists as regards Russia's future course in regard to her allies is in the main due to their apparent ignorance, neglect or contempt of the tremendous revolution that has taken place there. They do not sympathize with it; they do not want to understand it; they care nothing whatever for the revolutionary point of view of the Russian masses, and make no allowances for it; in short, they will not in any way recognize it. They assume to regard Russia as not essentially different from what it was before the revolution, and treat it as such. And on this general assumption they express wonder, disgust and anger when the Russian people show signs of wavering as their ally, finally showering its leaders and spokesmen with oburgation, abuse and denunciation, supplemented with enormous volumes of lying fabrications and sinister motives attributed to these men. They are, in short, provoking the very disaster they dismally anticipate.

Naturally, the Russian people now want peace. They recognize that when the war began it was not their war,

but that of the czar and his regime, that they have since overthrown. And that they do not consider a separate peace with Germany is easily seen by their demands that their allies plainly state their objects in the war, a statement which they naturally recognize could be made to form the basis of a discussion with a general peace as its object. But this demand has fallen on deaf ears, and there seems not the slightest disposition to comply with it, though pretenses which only irritate revolutionary Russia, which knows them for what they really are. The result is that revolutionary Russia begins to regard her allies in the war as enemies of the revolution she has accomplished.

And yet her request most certainly seems a reasonable one from the standpoint of her own people. Naturally, they want to know what they are now urged to continue the fighting for. But the question arises, can the others afford to tell them? Can they afford to tell them the truth, whatever it may be, now, that lying no longer deceives?

And we make bold here to say they cannot. Revolution is not a thing to be parleyed with. These allied statesmen are not really stupid. They know that any compromise with revolutionary Russia, any understanding with it, based frankly upon its present revolutionary status, would infallibly accelerate and encourage similar revolution among the peoples of their own countries. Therefore, we have an im-

possible deadlock, with revolutionary Russia gradually drifting away from her allies, though certainly not in the direction of autocratic Germany, even if the drift is automatically in the immediate and temporary interest of that autocracy, as it relieves them of a former antagonist. But the German autocracy is, after all, no more happily situated with regard to the Russian revolution than are the ruling classes of Britain and France. For them to attempt to come to an understanding with revolutionary Russia would involve speedier danger of a similar revolution in Germany, and it will be remembered that the Russian revolutionists have always declared their object to be to bring about a revolution in Germany similar to their own.

In the final analysis we have capitalism and class rule confronting social revolution, accomplished and to all appearances permanent. Neither will give way. The Russians will fight for nothing that does not promise to conserve and maintain their revolution; they will fight for nothing that they consider might endanger it. To them that seems the acme of reasonableness; to the others it is exactly the opposite. And it must to all appearances ever remain so until one or other conquers; until Russian revolution is beaten down and czarism restored, or the revolutionary leaven of Russia leavens all Europe. Between the two conflicting elements—capitalist class rule, and social revolution in being and power—there seems to be no common ground, and in a certain sense, perhaps, the whole situation may be regarded as one great phase of the irreconcilable class struggle.

duced by contemplation of the actual physical horrors of the war. What good can come from all this shiftiness, this unmanly refusal to face facts, these lies?

Watch these newspapers of ours: see them, hesitating for a "lead" on some matter which has arisen, take a non-committal attitude; see them adopt a "strong" position; see them begin to trim; see them express opinions one week at variance with opinions which they expressed last week; see the veering of their opinions even from one day to the next; see them proclaim a victory, and then see the proclamation gradually qualified until it is the admission of defeat: see their efforts to convey false impressions, even when the news printed is literally accurate, by the headings they chose or by the arrangement of the news. Certainly similar phenomena may be observed in ordinary times, but in war time they are manifested in a very special degree. "Moulders of public opinion," do you imagine that the solution of the world's problems will be aided by your lies, your mental cowardice and prostitution?

G. S. W.

AND NOW HE'S FIRED.

"What do you mean by whistling like that in this office?" demanded the merchant.

"Well, sir, I thought I'd like you to know that I'm bearing up cheerfully in spite of my miserable salary," answered the clerk.

Reading Socialist literature, listening to Socialist lectures and chatting with Socialist friends are very pleasant and all very well, but more than these are required of a good Socialist. He must do something towards making more Socialists, such as getting subscribers to the Canadian Forward.

PATRIOTISM.

For an hour the captain had been lecturing his men on the duties of a soldier, and he thought that the time had come for him to test the results of his discourse.

Casting his eye around the room, he fixed on Private Murphy as his first victim.

"Private Murphy," he asked, "why should a soldier be ready to die for his country?"

The Irishman scratched his head for a while; then an ingratiating and enlightening smile flitted across his face. "Sure, captain," he said, pleasantly, "you're quite right. Why should he?"—Chicago News.

When convicted grafters sit in judgment it is no disgrace for honest men to be in jail.

The Orange lodges, which have run Toronto these many years, are up against Big Business in the matter of the Street Cleaners' strike—and what Big Business says goes.

"Loyalty," like charity, covers a multitude of sins.

The man who really loses his vote is the man who votes against his own interest. The man who loses a vote cast in his own interest, really saves

War Time Elections

It was a resident of Toronto (Goldwin Smith) who left us the reminder, so pertinent in these days of rampant nationalism, "Above all nations is Humanity."

Those who are filled with enthusiasm for a fight find it difficult or impossible to conceive that the failure of others to show a similar enthusiasm and to throw themselves into a fight can be due to anything other than cowardice. While in Montreal recently, Harry Lauder, who exhibits the combination, so frequent to-day, of piety with ferocity and hate, hotly attacked the French Canadians for their comparative indifference to the war. He said that they had only "bas and French blood" in their veins and practically called them cowards. I thought to myself: no body of men could justly be declared in this wholesale way to consist of cowards, and certainly the French Canadians are not cowards; it is only that Lauder has not attempted to understand their attitude and the reasons which account for it, but, possessed by the hot passion of war, is satisfied by denouncing them. It is exactly a similar emotional condition, I reflected, which allows people to dismiss the conscientious objector as a coward without making any attempt to understand his views.

I made this reflection on Harry Lauder's remarks in Montreal; and, surely enough, as though to confirm the justness of my reflection, I learned from the newspapers a few days later that Lauder had actually said in a speech at Toronto, "The conscientious objector was a coinage of the present war for the benefit of cowards."

And the war enthusiasts would certainly dismiss the Bolsheviks as cowards were it not that the Bolsheviks have recently demonstrated, in the Revolution, that they are not such in the only way which the war enthusi-

asts can now appreciate, namely, by engaging in fighting. Being unable to call the Bolsheviks cowards, the war supporters have to content themselves with calling them anarchists.

The conduct of the relations of the British Empire to foreign nations during this "war for democracy" is in the hands of—two Cecils!

Have Sir Robert Borden or any of the members of his government any reasoned opinions at all about war aims or the nature of a desirable settlement? Is the Prime Minister a bitter ender; does he favor a restatement of the Allies' aims; does he believe in a negotiated peace or in a dictated peace? Really, the people of Canada have no idea as to what views their political leaders take of the profoundly important questions which the approach to peace raises, or, indeed, whether they take an yview at all of them. "Win the war," these leaders shout, and are content to leave the matter there. "Win the war" appears to be with them a mere cry; and, with a docile blankness of mind they are content to leave all questions relating to the purposes of the war and the terms of settlement entirely in the hands of the British statesmen.

It is proposed that after the war a Parliament of the Empire shall be formed and shall have a directing voice in the foreign relations of the Empire. If "colonial statesmanship" is represented by men such as those forming the present governmental class in Canada, it may be considered as certain that the British Foreign Office will have the colonial statesmen in its pocket and that for practical purposes there will be no better guarantee than formerly that Canada will not be plunged into war, as a result of secret intrigue by the Foreign Office, without the people of Canada having had any effective voice at all in the matter.

Apart from its sheer horror and the lamentable spectacle which it presents

of the older men of the civilized nations sending their young men out to kill each other because of the older men's disagreements, perhaps the most repulsive feature of this time of war is the debauched condition of the public mind. To men who regard mental integrity as more precious to humanity than any superficial patriotism or loyalty, the mental effects of war-making on the population engaged in it are peculiarly painful and repulsive. Delusions, distortions of the truth, contradictions, lies are never uttered so frequently or accepted so readily in war time. To those whose fundamental faith includes the belief that truth only can make the nations free: that only on truth can mankind build a fine and peaceful future: that the fundamental requirement for the salvation of human society is "veracity of thought and action"—to such war stands condemned, if for no other reason than its mental effect.

Lies, lies—how can any permanent good come from these? The deliberate sacrifice of truth and mental honesty to "patriotism" and war-time passion—can human progress ever be served by a process involving these? The deliberate cultivation of delusions, exaggerations or minimization so palpable as almost to be grotesque, unfairness—unfairness so great that sometimes one is almost nauseated,—of these things our newspapers are to-day so full as to produce a feeling of depression short only of that pro-

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