

# ESSENTIALLY WHAT'S WHAT

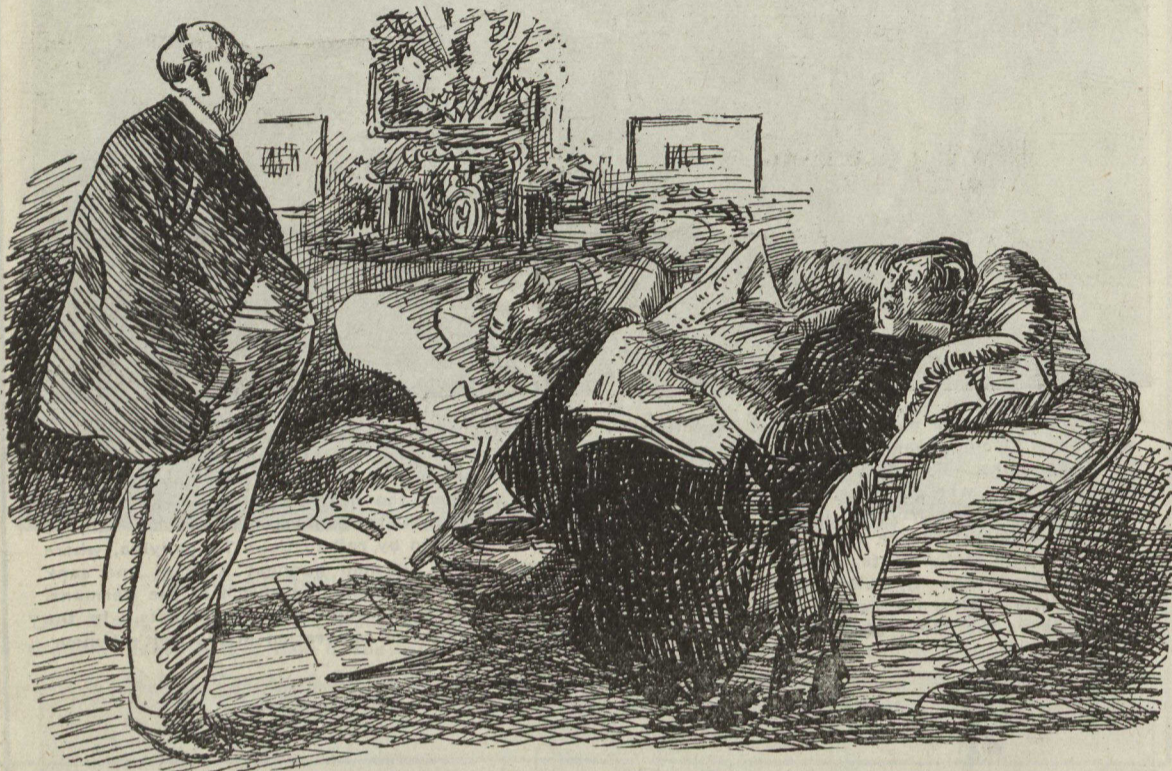
*Interesting Phases of the World's Doing and Thinking as Recorded in Current Periodical Literature*

## Do They Want To Win?

**M**R. L. J. MAXSE asks the pertinent question in the May issue of the National Review, "Do they want to win?" By "they" he means the powers that be; and he proceeds to find an answer to the question by intimating just who the men of

Lord Haldane—who can overrule the Five without even hearing the experts, upon whom, nevertheless, all the blame is chivalrously thrown when it comes to a tragedy.

It is only the politicians who can answer the question at the head of this article, and we shall know by that answer what to think of



"George, did you read this article on the duty of what they call the comfortably-off classes? Never saw such impertinence. Written by an anarchist, I should think. We ought to do this, and we ought to do that—just as if we were the working classes!" —London Opinion.

Great Britain are that should be winning this war instead of parliamentarians and tacticians of debate. He says:

In a lawsuit against Germany none of us would complain of the conduct of our case by Mr. Asquith, K.C., M.P., Sir F. E. Smith, K.C., M.P., Lord Robert Cecil, K.C., M.P., and Sir George Cave, K.C., M.P., though we must suggest that this array of talent be reinforced by Sir Robert Finlay, K.C., M.P., Mr. H. E. Duke, K.C., M.P., and, last but not least, Sir John Simon, K.C., M.P.—to say nothing of others. If faults were committed—as they might be, because it is human to err—we should at any rate know that these gentlemen, learned in the law, were more likely to be right than their critics because they are experts.

So in a parliamentary debate with Germany we should be delighted to leave our interests and our honour in the hands of Mr. Asquith, Mr. Balfour, Sir Edward Grey, Lord Curzon, Mr. Bonar Law, etc., etc., confident of their ability to overcome in such a tournament Dr. von Bethmann-Hollweg, Dr. Helfferich, Herr von Jagow, Herr von Zimmermann, and the rest of them. Unfortunately, we are at war with Germany, in which neither forensic acumen nor dialectical skill are of the smallest avail. On the contrary, they are positive drawbacks. Lawyers are tempted to shackle British sea-power with "juridical niceties." Debaters are liable to waste irreparable time in futile discussion.

None of us would dream of suggesting that Admiral Jellicoe, Admiral Sturdee, Sir David Beatty, Lord Kitchener, Sir William Robertson, Sir Douglas Haig, or indeed any sailors or soldiers, should be invited to run a lawsuit or a debate against Germany. But we do suggest, and indeed demand, that for the duration of the war our parliamentarians confine themselves to matters they understand, such as civilian administration, the management of Parliament, and the education of public opinion, and leave the war to those who know something about it. There is only one institution more childish than the Five Politicians who have put themselves in a position to overrule both Army and Navy on purely military or naval questions—without the country being even allowed to know that the experts have opinions—and that is the Twenty-three Politicians—or Twenty-four if you count

them. "Do they want to win?" "Yes," if they hand over the management of the war to sailors and soldiers. "No," if they refuse.

## The President to Be

**A**S the Republican Convention meets in Chicago this week to nominate a candidate—Roosevelt, Hughes or Root?—it is of immediate importance to consider the Presidential situation in the United States. What kind of man, whether of one political stripe or the other, should be next President is discussed frankly in the May issue of The World's Work. The writer says:

There is only one person in the American Government whom all the people have jointly had a hand in selecting; only one, that is, who represents the whole nation. Constitution or no constitution, the people regard the President as the head of administration and look to him to make their will effective. A President is a success or failure according to the success or failure of the legislative programme which is passed in his administration. Everything he does interests us. What Congress says or does interests us hardly at all. The people look to the White House for leadership, not to the other end of Pennsylvania Avenue. In reality the Constitution, as well as the popular voice, has made him leader, and in asserting his leadership he does not violate this document, even technically. The Constitution makes it the President's duty to recommend legislation and gives him the right to veto; it is, therefore, preposterous to insist that executive initiative is "usurpation" and encroachment "on the legislative power." This contention is particularly preposterous since the average Congressman and Senator notoriously spends his time not on national but on local issues.

The successes of Mr. Wilson's administration find their explanation in this courageous assertion of the Presidential leadership. When he has failed he has failed because he has temporarily abandoned this leadership and left Congress to flounder about without a rudder. In obtaining tariff revision, the new currency law and the Federal Reserve Act—in practically all domestic questions—Mr. Wilson has given the nation a splendid illustration of a resolute captain at the head of the nation. In failing to assert this same championship of public opinion in the improvement of our military and naval defenses, his administration has been a disappointment. In refusing to back up Mr. Garrison and in letting Congress, almost without guidance, transform our army into another gigantic pork barrel; in retaining as Secretary of the Navy so absurd a person as Mr. Joseph Daniels in face of an almost universal popular demand that this post, the most important of all at this

moment, be filled by a man of great intelligence and energy—these are the details in which the President has proved false to his own conception of his office. In his recent stand for American rights, however, he has asserted once more his leadership, with results that have thrilled the nation.

## Violations of International Law.

According to the Wilsonian theory, the President's duty, in this as in all other large matters, was to make effective the popular will. What then, was the popular will on this great question of American rights? Did the American people stand upon the unquestioned principles of international law, or were they prepared to waive these principles in the interest of the Kaiser? This particular question struck deep at the issue that lies at the base of the European war. Whether Americans should travel on armed merchantmen was merely a detail. No one, not even Germany, disputed the legal point involved. For centuries merchant ships had had the right to carry defensive guns without acquiring the status of war vessels. Germany merely contended that the point was academic; that, since the development of new methods of warfare made the old rule obsolete, she could ignore it. What the Central Empires really demanded was the right to change international law whenever international law conflicted with their military advantage. That idea has apparently dominated German military philosophy all through the war. Stripped of all its fine-spun arguments, it means that a nation at war is justified in doing anything to win. On this ground Germany justifies her invasion of Belgium, the bombardment of unfortified towns, Zeppelin raids, the burning of Louvain, the massacre and violation of Belgian women and children, gas bombs, and the sinking of the Lusitania. All these things, the German legal authorities will admit, contravened international law, as international law had painfully developed through the centuries. Since such violation helped Germany however—or German militarists believed that they did—they were justified. Should the American people acknowledge this contention?

## Food in War Time

**H**OW nations are fed in war time is of tremendous importance now that there is talk of nationalizing the meat supply of Great Britain, and since Germany has issued yet more stringent orders regarding the supply of food to soldiers and civilians; orders that a year ago would have been regarded as sensational to the point of calamity. A recent article by D. Noel Paton, M.D., in Chambers' Journal on "Food in War Time" brings out the main features of this problem from the standpoint of one who examines the qualities of food in regard to nutritive value. He says:

Our food is the sole source of our power of doing work. How do we measure the energy value of foods? It is done by finding the amount of heat each gives off in combustion. Now there are three great groups of foods: (1) the fats, (2) the sugars and starches, (3) the flesh-building foods—by proteins. Each of these yields a definite amount of energy in the body, and the diet must contain a sufficient quantity of them to provide the energy required. Any intake of food over this amount is simply wasted.

Obviously the diet must be adjusted to suit the conditions of life. One of these foodstuffs is absolutely essential. There must be enough of the flesh-forming material to repair the wear and tear of the body in the adult.



The American attitude on the German submarine policy.—By Louis Raemaekers, Noted Dutch Cartoonist.