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LONDON IN WAR TIME

II.

After Mr. Dickinson had sat down Mr. Baker, the British Secretary of the Constance Conference, arose and addressed parliament as follows:

Mr. Allen Baker: I should like to say that I heartily endorse the remarks which have been made by the last two or three speakers. My Hon. friends, the member for York (Mr. Rowntree) has raised a point of very great importance, and it is one which came under my notice little more than an hour ago, when I was addressing a number of workmen whom I employ. I said to them in regard to reservists who had already gone to do what they believed to be their duty, that they would have their positions safeguarded till they returned from performing that duty. Any of them who may be required by the government for service as engineers, as well as others, I stated, would be treated in the same way. I want entirely and heartily to endorse the words of my hon. friend, the member for Cokerham (Sir Wilfrid Lawson). He has deplored, as I am sure we must all deplore, that the country has been, I suppose, dragged into or forced into this unhappy position, and that we in the past might have prevented this war. We have had offers and offers, again and again, from the great nation of Germany, saying that they want to be close friends with us, that they wanted to cultivate our friendship. In supporting the ideas and sentiments expressed by my hon. friends, the member for North St. Pancras (Mr. Dickinson), I believe heartily, from intimate knowledge of the people of Germany, that the mass of them, including many in high station and positions, have been entirely against this war. They have been, and are, friendly to us in this country, but they have been overborne by the military class who are dominating the position, and who have caused this war. They fear, and they fear not without reason, the great Slav population, who are double the number of the Germans and who have been arming and preparing for this conflict for years. To Germany, with enemies right and left, east and west, it is a matter of life and death. They feel that they are in a desperate position, and, if you could realize their position, I think you would see that there is very much to be said for the hasty action they have taken. (Hon. Members: "No, no.") They felt that the only opportunity they possessed was by striking quickly. (Hon. Members: "Oh, oh!") I say that they have been forced into this position. (Hon. Members: "No!") I believe they are entering into this war with deep regret, and certainly, on the part of the masses of the people, with great friendship towards us. I have been pained, most deeply pained, to hear the almost laudatory cheers and to hear sentiments of gladness—almost of joy—that have been expressed by Members on both sides of the House. (Hon. Members: "No, no.")

The Chairman: I am sure the Hon. Member would not like to make any reflection on the motives of his colleagues in this House.

Mr. A. Baker: If the House will permit me to say so, the impression I gathered was—(Hon. Members: "Withdraw!") I certainly withdraw any imputation against any individual member, but I gathered from the cheers that went up, and they also gave me the impression that many in this House were going into this awful business with a satisfaction. (An Hon. Member: "We are as sorry as you are!")

The Chairman: If aspersions of that kind were made, they might have to be made from two points of view, and that is most undesirable.

Mr. A. Baker: Perhaps I may be permitted to put it this way. In the enthusiasm of loyalty there are expressions often used that make one almost weep with sadness to see with what alacrity we are ready to go and slay. (Hon. Members: "No, no!" and "Sit down!")

The Chairman: I must appeal to the Hon. Member to give other Members of the House the same credit for sincerity which the whole House has always accorded to him.

Mr. A. Baker: I entirely withdraw anything against any Hon. Member, but, having just passed during the last thirty hours through the country where war is about to be waged, and then coming to this country and finding the same thing in our streets, and already almost we see the spirit of "Maffeking." (Hon. Members: "No, no!" "Withdraw!" "Sit down!") That is the impression I have gained, and the point I wish to make is this, that we are entering on one of the most important horrible acts in this and other countries of Europe that will have effects and results that we can in no way at the present moment estimate, war is of such a horrible character with the present weapons and with the machinery of slaughter to mow down men. I do not intend to vote against this vote. In entering on this war it should be with feelings of the deepest sadness, and with the prayer that it may soon come to an end, and with the desire that a generous and lasting peace may soon be agreed to.

It was interesting to note the fact that, at the very moment when England was entering upon the war, from many sources came the appeal to Englishmen to be both calm and just.

A specially convened meeting of the National Council of Evangelical Free Churches, held at the Memorial Hall, August 5, adopted the following resolution:

"The crime and horror of a universal war has fallen upon European civilization. It is useless to seek merely to apportion blame. Our first duty is to humble ourselves before God and to wait upon him."

"It is a matter for thankfulness that the efforts of Britain, though unhappily unsuccessful, were put forth strenuously and to the last moment on behalf of peace, and that our intervention has been determined by regard for weaker nations, and for the sanctity of the treaties which safeguard them."

"In these conditions the Council appeals to the Free Churches of this country to realize their high responsibilities and to discharge them faithfully."

"The churches should arrange a service of daily united prayer that the nation may be divinely guided and that peace may speedily be restored."

"The duty rests upon the churches steadily to foster those more generous and humane sentiments which war so ruthlessly destroys."

"The churches should steadily inculcate the duties of self-restraint and mutual consideration. In particular, they must denounce all endeavors to snatch selfish advantages through either greed or panic, and, above all, must emphasize the importance of general sacrifice in the interests of the poor, upon whom the worst hardships of the war threaten to fall."

"The churches must be prepared to co-operate at once with the government and with the civic authorities, in administering to any distress that may arise."

"They must be continually on the watch in order that they may offer, as occasion may arise, counsels of wisdom and moderation."

The following directions for Englishmen appeared in the London papers of August 6 and attracted much attention:

First and foremost—Keep your heads. Be calm. Go about your ordinary business quietly and soberly. Do not indulge in excitement or foolish demonstrations.

Secondly—Think of others more than you are wont to do. Think of your duty to your neighbor. Think of the common weal.

Try to contribute your share by doing your duty in your own place and your own sphere. Be abstemious and economical. Avoid waste.

Do not store goods and create an artificial scarcity to the hurt of others. Remember that it is an act of mean and selfish cowardice.

Do not hoard gold. Let it circulate. Try to make things easier, not more difficult.

Remember those who are worse off than yourself. Pay punctually what

you owe, especially to your poorest creditors, such as washerwomen and charwomen.

If you are an employer think of your employed. Give them work and wages as long as you can, and work short time rather than close down.

If you are employed remember the difficulties of your employer. Instead of dwelling on your own privations, think of the infinitely worst state of those who live at the seat of war and are not only known out of work but deprived of all they possess.

Do what you can to cheer and encourage our soldiers. Gladly help any organization for their comfort and welfare.

Explain to the young and ignorant what war is, and why we have been forced to wage it.

One of the finest utterances on peace we have ever seen was the Message of Friends "to men and women of good-will," which has already been printed in The Christian Work.

FREDERICK LYNCH.

The Seven Wonders of the Modern World

The contest which the Scientific American conducted about a year ago, with the object of ascertaining what are the ten greatest inventions of our time—inventions, in other words, which have been commercially introduced within the last twenty-five years, seems to have inspired the European press with the idea of conducting similar inquiries. The Berliner Lokalanzeiger recently asked its readers "What are the seven wonders of the modern world?" thereby bringing down upon itself a veritable avalanche of replies. No less than 151,764 readers of the paper were heard from, each having promptly reacted with seven answers.

The result of the contest is illuminating, not because it definitely establishes what are the seven wonders of the modern world, but how great is the power of publicity, how responsive is the general public to the influence of the press. For example 17,148 votes were cast for wireless telegraphy; 16,259 for the Panama Canal; 12,828 for the flying machine; 11,428 for applications of radium; 11,296 for the moving picture machine; and 6,276 for the steamship "Imperator." All of these have received much publicity. Wireless telegraphy is placed in the first rank by less than one eighth of all the votes. Apparently 134,616 contestants either never heard of Marconi and his achievements, or did not consider wireless of much importance.

In commenting upon the psychological aspects of this contest, a writer in Prometheus, the well-known German scientific periodical, points out that the voters were not able to bring forward the necessary proof that a single one of their selections is a world wonder in the accepted sense. It would not have been too much to ask that all the 151,764 voters should have agreed upon at least one modern wonder. If there is one supreme modern achievement, surely all would have noted it.

Even assuming that seven modern wonders were to be enumerated, and that accordingly there is more than one really great wonder, it may be further assumed that 151,764 voters would be cast for at least two or three achievements. But even wireless telegraphy, which received the most votes, was not elected to its position with the usual majority of votes; only one-eighth of all the votes were cast for wireless.

The writer in Prometheus examined the psychological side of this contest by classifying the wonders according to their nature. He finds that they fall into three classes:

a. Scientific discoveries, such as wireless telegraphy and the application of radium.

b. Pure inventions such as the dirigible balloon, the flying machine, and the moving picture machine.

c. Remarkable structures, such as the Panama Canal and the steamship "Imperator."

How do the 151,764 voters estimate the relative merits of these wonders in their particular classes?

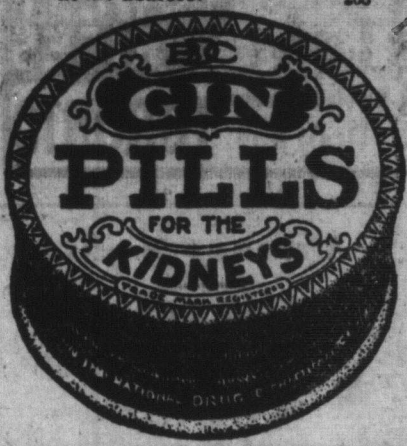
The selection of wireless telegraphy by 17,148 people must be at once commended on this basis, despite the paucity of votes. On the other hand, the Panama Canal has received almost as many votes. Conceding that the Panama Canal is really a noteworthy achievement, still it must be admitted that the success of the achievement depended in large measure upon unlimited financial resources. The same applies to the "Imperator." Moreover, the "Imperator" has been exceeded in size by the "Vaterland" which will probably be exceeded in the future by other vessels. Admitting that the Panama Canal and a giant ship are wonderful in their way, they are not world wonders in the true sense of the term. Hence their selection must be attributed to the great publicity which they have received and therefore to a kind of mob suggestion.

What remains? Radio-active inventions in the field of pure science, the airship, the flying machine and the moving picture machine in the field of technology. This would seem to indicate that technology is able to offer more world wonders than any other form of human activity.

This again, in view of the publicity given to great inventions and the part they play in daily life, is to be

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expected. After all, but very few people in the world have anything like a profound knowledge of scientific problems. How little does the average person know of the wonders of the microscope, astronomy, spectroscopic analysis, chemistry, or physics, or for that matter, even of surgery? Surely the work of an investigator like Sir J. J. Thomson, the investigations of a Wasserman or an Ehrlich, deserve to be mentioned with the great work of great inventors. If we are to regard the Panama Canal as a world wonder, simply because it is big, we might also speak with the same fervor of the Key West Railroad, the great suspension bridges that hang over the East River, the Woolworth Building, and similar engineering work.

The contest did not reveal what are the seven wonders of the modern world, but it did reveal that 151,764 persons could not agree upon a single human achievement which deserved to outrank all others.

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Training Royal Horses

One of the most interesting sights in London is the training of the horses used by the royal household. Every morning at about eleven o'clock, a procession, headed by two chestnut horses in charge of grooms, followed by a detachment of guards with their bands playing vigorously, and a strong force of police, leaves St James Palace, proceeding through the park to the guards' headquarters at Buckingham Palace. The two chestnut horses are the chief sources of interest, for this is their daily lesson in fine deportment. Some day they will figure proudly, with their similarly trained, in a great state pageant, and they are being taught to conduct themselves with becoming dignity and quietness. To test them thoroughly, and make them accustomed to sounds, chosen drummers from the various guards' bands beat fiercely on their drums, while the pipers pipe their shrillest notes. At first the horses are nervous and rather unruly, but after a few weeks become used to the music and pay no attention to it.

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