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The League the Issue

In these last weeks of the Presidential battle in the United States it is becoming clear that the position of the Republic towards the League of Nations is to be the chief issue in the contest. In some degree it has been a leading issue throughout the campaign, but in both political parties there was an inclination to adopt what Theodore Roosevelt would have called "Pussyfooting." A Democratic President had been one of the principals in the preparation of the League scheme. Therefore the Democrats from the beginning had to recognize their responsibility for it. A Republican Senate had refused to ratify the treaty of which the League was a part. Therefore the Republicans had to stand before the country as opponents of the League. But on both sides there was a disposition to approach the subject cautiously until the trend of public opinion could be ascertained. Of course, some cautious Democrats said, they were favorable to the treaty, but they did not wish to take an extreme position in support of it. If reservations could be devised which would make it clearer, without in any way impairing its force, they could

be considered. On the Republican side there was a similar hesitation. The cautious Republicans said they had opposed the treaty, but perhaps it could be made acceptable by reservations, etc., etc. They pointed out some eminent Republicans—notably Mr. Taft—had approved of the treaty. So, of course, they must not be considered as irreconcilable opponents.

This was the attitude of the two parties in the early weeks of the campaign. Both were apparently reluctant to make the League the dominant issue. Both were willing to direct the attention of the people to other matters. But in the present stage of the battle it has become evident that attention is to be concentrated more on the League and the electors are to be asked to make it the main question. The Democratic managers have called for the help of President Wilson, who will give it only on the condition that the League is kept to the front in the fight. The Republican managers, alarmed by the threatened defection of Senators Borah and Johnson, have required Mr. Harding to take a firm stand. Thus both Presidential candidates find it necessary to make clear-cut declarations. "I am against the League" said Mr. Harding in one of his latest speeches. At Nashville, Tennessee, Governor Cox recognized the challenge and accepted it. "Senator Harding," said Mr. Cox, is against the League; I am for it." The "Pussyfooting" on both sides has ceased. The issue is to be squarely faced. Are the American public for the League of Nations or against it? This is the main question to be answered at the polls next month.

Mr. Sandwell's Retirement

The Journal of Commerce is called upon to part with one of its principal contributors, Mr. B. K. Sandwell, who has for some time past filled the position of Managing Editor. He leaves us to enter upon the important office of Assistant Professor of Political and Economic Science in McGill University. Mr. Sandwell has won a very prominent place in Canadian journalism and in Canadian literary circles. All who have been associated with him in newspaper work will heartily congratulate

him on his appointment to a responsible position in Old McGill and give him their best wishes for a successful career in his new field of labor.

Ireland and the Philippines

Under this caption, some time ago, we commented on the utterances, in Congress and outside, of some American public men who, to cater to the Sinn Fein Irish vote in the States, demanded in speech and resolution the "freedom" of Ireland. President Wilson had written of the right of a people to "self determination" and Great Britain was notified by these American vote-seekers that she must permit Ireland to become a Republic. We ventured to suggest that if American politicians were so much wedded to this notion of the right of every people to "self determination" they might begin at home by dealing with the Philippine question. The Philippine Islands were taken by the United States by conquest from Spain. Although some degree of popular government was allowed to the people, the islands were, and still are, under American rule. The Philippines have heard of Uncle Sam's admiration for the doctrine of "self determination" and have asked him to apply it in their case by granting independence to the islands. More than once deputations of the Philippines have come to Washington to plead for independence, but they have pleaded in vain. Uncle Sam has been profuse in his assurances of goodwill and of an intention to some day give the Philippines their freedom—but not yet. This is one of the cases in which people are not ready to practice what they preach.

There are, no doubt, good reasons why the Philippines should remain subject to American rule, just as there are good reasons why no Irish Republic can be recognized by the British Empire. We notice with pleasure that the bearing of the Philippine claim on the Irish question in America has been observed by Senator Harding, the Republican candidate for the Presidency. At De Moines, Iowa, last week, Mr. Harding was heckled by some of his hearers on several questions. One inquiry was—"What about Ireland?" In all probability the question had been anticipated and Mr.