

the matter carefully and that they will act with firmness wherever unfair prices are being demanded. A clear understanding on this will be the best means of protecting the public against extortion. The absence of such an understanding will, on the other hand, be a temptation to unscrupulous dealers to act unfairly.

American Unpreparedness

ALTHOUGH a considerable part of United States public opinion and a greater part of the opinion of some other countries would, if possible, have plunged America into the war many months ago, there is now a pretty general recognition that President Wilson was wise in resisting the war movement until events pressed him into action as they eventually did. His slowness in moving made his action at last all the stronger. There is, however, one line of criticism of his policy that seems well founded. It is in respect of the preparations for war that were made. That the President resisted the demand in the early days of the war for a very extensive campaign of preparedness is not held now as a fault. At that time probably there was good ground for expecting that the United States would be able to maintain neutrality. But there came a time when, though the nation was still holding to its neutral position, the attitude of the German Government was such as to turn the probabilities the other way—when Germany manifested an indifference, if not an antagonism, to American interests that should have warned the Americans of the coming conflict. When, after the Lusitania horror, Mr. Wilson's Government sent the despatch notifying Germany that she would be held to a "strict accountability" if the life or liberty of any American citizen were imperilled, a very grave situation was created, which called for preparation for a war which was no longer improbable. It is claimed, with much reason, by critics of the administration, that at that time the American Government should have at once taken vigorous steps to make ready for war. The fact that the strong language of Mr. Wilson's notes was not followed by any strong movement of preparation for war led the Germans to suppose that they could treat America with indifference. It is argued, with much force, that if at that time America had supported her protests by wide and energetic war preparations the Germans would have understood that America was in earnest and would have refrained from some of the acts which later exasperated the American people and made the declaration of a state of war inevitable. The American Government are now exhibiting all the activity that can be desired in preparing for their part in the war. The difficulties that are being encountered in this work, the delay that occurs in so many cases, oblige men to think of what might have been done if the work of preparation had been vigorously begun some months earlier. The impatient Colonel Roosevelt often finds occasion to set forth the disadvantages under which the nation is now placed through the neglect of the past. His latest deliverance touches the question of aviation, a field in which the Americans were particularly qualified to take the lead. He writes to the Aero Club of America as follows:

"I heartily congratulate the Aero Club of America on its efforts to secure a great aerial Government programme here in America. I believe that the peculiar American characteristics especially fit us for success in developing and using the airplane on land and the hydro-airplane on

sea; yet this country, which gave birth to aviation, has so far lagged behind that now, three years after the great war began, and six months after we were dragged into it, we still have not a single machine competent to fight the war machines of our enemies. We have to trust entirely to the machines of our Allies.

"It has been unpardonable folly on our part as a nation that for three years, with this great war staring us in the face, we have absolutely failed to prepare for it, and our folly has been at least as marked as regards aviation as in any other field. No one can tell how long this war will last. If we are true to ourselves, we will make it last just as long as is necessary in order to secure the complete overthrow of the Prussianized Germany of the Hohenzollerns."

Fighting the Submarine

SEVERAL years before the war broke out there was a keen discussion in England concerning the character of vessels required in modern warfare. Some British naval authorities strongly advocated the concentration of effort in the production of battleships of the Dreadnaught class. Others, while recognizing the value of Dreadnaughts in certain conditions, thought too much attention was being paid to them and too little to smaller vessels of the fast cruiser type. One eminent Admiral was laughed at by many of the sailors of the old school when he said that the submarine would hereafter play a large part in sea fighting. Time very quickly proved the correctness of this view. Germany has been able to make successful use of submarines to an extent which has surprised the world. True, she has not accomplished her avowed purpose of starving England by stopping her commerce. Thousands of British ships still sail the ocean, taking and delivering cargoes, in spite of the German submarine operations. But it cannot be denied that the submarines have done much more harm than the British people had supposed was possible.

Of the other side of the question there is little knowledge, for, whether wisely or not, the British authorities decline to make public the record of German submarines captured or destroyed. What is clearest in the matter is that every week quite a number of ships of the Allied nations are sunk and vast quantities of food and other valuable cargo destroyed. The question of how to meet this method of warfare is one of the most important of the war. It is not a case in which reprisals can be expected. If Germany had ships on the ocean there is no doubt that the British navy would dispose of them. If in some cases submarines were required, none can doubt that British skill and British courage would supply them as effectively as the Germans have done. But there is no German fleet against which British submarines can be set. Thanks to the British navy the German flag has been driven from the ocean. Neither German war ships nor German merchant ships are to be found. The German submarines are thus able to prosecute their warfare in a class of operations in which the Allies cannot strike back. All that the Allies can do is to fight the submarines themselves with the best means at their disposal.

One method hitherto very generally employed is to have a large fleet of quite small wooden vessels of the class known as submarine chasers. Hundreds, probably thousands, of these little vessels, turned out of yards in different parts of the Empire, have patrol-

ed the waters in which the submarine menace has been greatest. That these vessels have done much good work will hardly be denied. But the extent to which German submarines are still destroying the commerce of the Allies is creating an impression that some more effective method of meeting them must be found. When the United States decided to enter the war, orders were at once given for the construction of a large fleet of these small chasers. A change of policy is now likely to take place. The American naval authorities are ceasing operations in the construction of these little wooden vessels and are to devote greater attention to the production of more substantial vessels of the destroyer class. American commerce is to rely more largely on its own armament and the speed of its ships. There are few cases, it is claimed, in which merchant vessels carrying an armament and having considerable speed fall victims to the submarine attacks. In most instances the vessels destroyed have been slow ones, incapable of proper manoeuvring, and unprotected. With ships of good speed and effective armament, supported by a large naval fleet of the destroyer class, the Americans think they can at least prevent the Germans extending to the waters on this side of the ocean the destructive campaign that has been carried on nearer to the shores of Europe.

The end of a Famous Case

AN important case, which has been before the American public in one form or another for seventeen years, has just reached its end. It is the labor case generally known as that of the Danbury hatters. The proprietors of a modest hat factory in Danbury, Connecticut, conducted their business on the "open shop" principle. Representatives of the United States Hatters of America desired to "unionize" the factory, that is, to require that only members of the Hatters' union be allowed to work in it. The proprietors refused to consent to this. Some time was spent in efforts to persuade the manufacturers to submit. Fourteen years ago the contest came to a head. Union men were ordered out of the shop, non-union men were threatened and the business of the establishment was boycotted by trade union men throughout the country. The proprietors, after suffering heavy loss, took action against the United Hatters for damages, under the Sherman Act respecting combinations in restraint of trade. The defendants entered a plea in demurrer that the Act did not apply to labor unions. This demurrer was sustained by the first court, but was overruled by the Supreme Court which, in 1908, held that the Act did so apply. Then followed trial and appeal from court to court on the merits of the case, the setting aside of a verdict on technical grounds, a new trial with a verdict for the plaintiffs for \$252,000, and further appeal. Finally the decision of the Supreme Court of the United States confirmed the verdict. The United Hatters then endeavored to obtain an appropriation from Congress to pay the damage, but this effort was not successful. The homes of a number of the defendants were attached to enforce payment of the damages, and these properties were about to be sold a few days ago when the union, which had raised money by assessment for the purpose, paid the amount of the verdict and costs, thus ending the case. The result of the long years of litigation is that the courts hold labor unions as well as all other bodies liable under the provisions of the Sherman Act.