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THE ARMAMENT CONFERENCE

It seems to be the fashion to refer to the approaching conference at Washington as a "Disarmament" Conference. Possibly the expression is used more or less colloquially, and as a brief one than the correct expression, which is a "Conference for the Limitation of Armaments." However, if the repeated use of the word "disarmament" in the public mind that the nations plan to get together and agree to lay down their arms, dismantle their fortresses and scrap their navies, it should never be employed again by any thoughtful person.

These are just the things that the nations have no intention of doing. Complete disarmament would be worse than folly. It would be suicide. It is not because the nations are armed to protect themselves, that the whole world is threatened with bankruptcy, and civilization itself imperilled. It is competition in armament that constitutes the world's present peril.

Since the world war the larger nations, who were allied in that great struggle, have been running a race to see which would build the most ships and raise the largest armies. It is perfectly obvious that if this competition were continued it would end in ruin for all. What had been intended as measures for protection would become agents of destruction. It is this competition that the Washington conference is designed to end by mutual agreement. The world will still have armies and navies, but if the conference succeeds, nations won't be spending all of their resources trying to have bigger armies and navies than their neighbors have.

THE PORTLAND ROUTE.

We publish today a despatch received by a Portland newspaper from a Montreal correspondent, on the subject of the shipment of this season's grain. It is of particular interest to the citizens of St. John, for it bears out the contention that has been put forward in these columns over and over again, that the railway acquired the Grand Trunk Railway the Government will be compelled, in order that it may pay its way, to see that traffic is provided for it, which traffic would, but for the exigencies of the Grand Trunk, have come to shipboard either at St. John or Halifax. What in the world was the National Transcontinental built for, if it was not to provide an All-Canadian route from the Western wheat fields to the Atlantic seaboard? It was the custom a few years ago, among certain sections of the Conservative Press to refer to the N. T. R. as "two streaks of rust and a right of way." Apparently that may yet be its correct description, if it is going to be robbed of its legitimate traffic in order to keep the Grand Trunk and the harbor of Portland, Maine, busy.

THE GERMAN MARK

Quite a number of people on this continent have been investing their odd cash in the purchase of German marks, in the fond hope and belief that the time would come when the present depreciated value would improve and return a nice profit on the investment. The value of the mark, however, continues to decrease, and today the nominal value of 23.8 cents on our money, is less than one cent. The cause of the decrease as expressed in Germany is the compulsion by the Allies of the payment of the indemnity, which Germany declares she is financially unable to pay, and doubtless this is the reason that the German Government is using its printing presses at high speed in printing paper marks, and with these buying the gold needed for the payment of the Allies.

It is impossible to see the result of the German Government's attitude in steadily forcing down the value of the paper mark by excessive paper money issues. There may come a reaction but today the value of the mark is much less than it was at the time of the armistice, although German manufacturers are running at capacity and industry is very busy.

The belief that eventually Germany will be compelled to liquidate is held by many financiers and it is stated that many purchasers of German marks who have thought that eventually they would realize largely on their purchases, are changing their views and are relinquishing their holdings for what they can get, having reached the conclusion that it will be a long time, if ever, before the mark assumes a value that will pay them for their investment. The unending by many of these speculators is probably another reason for the continued depression in the value of the mark.

"ANTI-WASTE" IN ENGLAND

A very strange situation is presenting itself in British politics. The tendency to form groups apart from the old line parties seems to be increasing. Where there were two, or at most three, parties—Liberals, Conservatives and Laborites—there are now Coalition Liberals, Independent Liberals, Anti-Waste Liberals, Coalition Unionists (Conservatives), Independent Unionists, Anti-Waste Unionists, and Laborites, but, as the Journal of Commerce points out, perhaps the most curious feature of this new alignment is the prominence given to those who call themselves "Anti Waste" men. There is no party or group that would be willing to admit that it favors Waste. Economy is a watchword with all political parties. The British Government's expenditure is enormously large. It is much easier to demand economy in a general way than to point out the appropriations that can properly be cut down. The British public, however, are disposed to listen to the candidates who stand on the Anti-Waste platform.

The recent election in the Westminster Abbey division indicates the temper of the people. The division has been one of the strongest in support of the Conservative party in time past. Its late member, Mr. Bartlett Burdett-Coutts was elected by acclamation at the general election. In that district, if anywhere, it was to be expected that the Coalition Government would have an easy victory. But no candidate could be found who was willing to stand as a straight supporter of the Government. An Independent Conservative, running on the Anti-Waste platform, which is a condemnation of the Government as extravagant, has been elected. In several previous by-elections Anti-Waste proved the winning card.

The Government recognized this manifestation of public opinion by announcing their purpose to appoint a committee to advise concerning measures of economy. Sir Eric Geddes, whose duties as Minister of Transportation will shortly cease through the return of the railways to the companies, heads the committee, which includes a member of the House of Lords and one outside business man. The novelty of this proposal has led to enquiries in Parliament whether it is not a departure from the principles of responsible government, which require the Cabinet to be held responsible to the House of Commons for financial policy. The Government, however, hold that the committee as proposed may be helpful in an advisory way. The work of the committee will be watched with much interest by all who have to do with the financial problems which are of so much importance today.

The electors of the city of Quebec by a majority of some eleven thousand, voted to repeal the Canada Temperance Act within their municipality and to permit the sale of intoxicating liquor under the provincial law. The Canada Temperance Act was not enforced with any zeal, and by all accounts there was much illegal sale in the city. When the formalities are observed and the repeal just voted for is made effective there will be much sale, but to be open. The electors understand the situation, and feel that it is better to be traffic, it is better that it should be recognized vendors rather than bootleggers. It is a sad pity that the people of some other provinces haven't sense enough to appreciate this fact too.

The appointment of Mr. J. S. Flahar to the position of Postmaster in this city will meet with the cordial endorsement of all classes of citizens. Mr. Flahar has devoted his whole life to the Post Office service, and has earned universal regard and esteem through his unflinching courtesy and the efficiency with which he has always discharged his various duties. His new position comes as a fitting rounding off of a life long career as a public servant, and as a due recognition of services conscientiously and faithfully performed. His fellow citizens will undoubtedly tender him their hearty congratulations upon his attainment of the highest position open to him.

One of the curious results of prohibition, according to Dr. J. B. McCulloch, professor of anatomy at the University of Toronto, is a scarcity of bodies for medical school dissection. How is this as a campaign argument for the "drys"? It is about as good as many others that they will see.

WHAT OTHERS SAY

Burglar Riots in New York.
 While the ten per cent increase in burglar insurance rates in New York City cannot be expected to act as a deterrent to this form of crime, it may, perhaps, arouse a public sentiment that will stir the police to greater activity in rounding up burglars and checking the alarming increase in robberies in that city. The rise in the insurance rates is merely an increased tax on the public for maintaining a police department that either cannot or will not afford reasonable protection from theft. Where such a situation exists it is the duty of the citizens to inquire into the matter, ascertain the true cause, and apply the needed remedy.—Springfield Union.

Long Way to Look Ahead.

Four men in Riverhead, New York, have been playing dominoes for 28 years and cannot tell yet which pair excels in the game. In fact, they think it will take a decade more to determine the question. As the eldest member of the quartet is now 94, he will be getting on a bit in years by that time.—Providence Journal.

Page Mr. Creel.

The press congress of the world will meet next month and take up, with other things, the question, "To what extent is freedom of the press desirable?" This may serve to bring Mr. George Creel forward once more as an expert on the subject.—Washington Star.

Why Spread The Suggestion?

Possibly there's a hint for ingenious persons of a less philanthropic turn of mind than Mr. Ledoux in this "slave auction" business. It appears that nothing gets a sentimental American crowd "going" more effectively than a public display of seven unfortunate men, so eager for work that they will undergo the form of a "sale" of their bodies. Mr. Ledoux does this no doubt in a charitable spirit; but why might not others, seeing how these weeping crowds pour out their money, emulate the idea elsewhere and make a pretty fair thing of it?—Lowell Courier-Citizen.

Unseating John Marshall.

Mr. Gompers hope that "some day the people of the country will demand that Congress restore the sovereign rights of Congress to enact legislation and deny the judicial branch of the government the right to annul it" is only the "recall of judicial decisions" dressed in unnecessary verbiage. Either proposition would be the unseating of John Marshall as the expounder of the principles of the American Constitution, and that will be a most difficult job.—Philadelphia Bulletin.

A BIT OF VERSE

A WOMAN'S "IF."

If you can face the sun when all the others
 Are sitting with their backs toward
 the light;
 If you can look so nice that your own
 brothers
 Admit that you find favor in their
 sight;
 If you can talk—and not be always
 talking;
 Or being screamed at, keep your
 tongue quite low;
 If you can do a good two hours walk-
 ing
 And not complain of blisters on
 your toe;
 If you can bear to see the socks
 you've knitted
 Used by your swain to clean his
 motor bike;
 Or smile to see your greatest rival
 fitted
 With just the sort of costume that
 you'd like;

If you can buy a hat a French "crea-
 tion"
 A hat that puts all others in the
 shade;
 And wear the hat, and cause a great
 sensation—
 And never tell a soul how much you
 paid;
 If you can cry and still remain attrac-
 tive;
 If you can see a joke and tell one,
 too;
 If you can hear them talking and stay
 inactive
 If any scandal spreading there's to
 do;
 If you can play at bridge without re-
 voking;
 Or read a book—and not start at
 the end;
 If for your sake a man will quit stock-
 broking
 And forthwith start his own way
 to mend;
 If you can greet with every sign of
 pleasure
 A man who eats his gravy with his
 knife,
 He'll be convinced that you're a perfect
 treasure,
 And what is more—he'll take you
 for his wife.

THE LAUGH LINE

Matches are said to be made in heaven, and nobody will deny that there are times when a porch swing seems just that.

"Days are getting shorter," announces the St. Joseph Gazette, except the one before payday.

Another dangerous summer craft is the hammock. Nearly as many young people become engaged in hammocks as in canoes.

A Long Time Ago.
 "Your condition is shocking, sir," "Judge," said the unsteady and disheveled prisoner at the bar, "I was a guest at a 'home-brew' party."

"Don't ask me, judge," murmured the prisoner, as his eyes closed wearily, "but I think it must have been about 2,000 B.C."—Birmingham Age-Herald.

Private Business.
 The sweet young thing had been

Benny's Note Book

BY LEE PAPE

Me and Puds Slimkins and Leroy Shooter was wawking along Jet wawking along and all of a sudden we saw a lot of loose smook coming out of a cellar, me saying, G, goah, look at that. Holy smokes look at that, sed Puds Slimkins. Jimminy crickets look at that, sed Leroy Shooter. Lets us ring the bell and tell them their cellars on fire, I sed. With we did, all running up on the front steps and Puds ringing the bell and some man opened the door with a red bath robe on, saying, Well? Well?

Meaning wat did we want, and I sed, There's a lot of smook coming out of your cellar window, mister, something must be on fire.

We was just wawking along and we saw it, sed Puds. We all saw it at the same time, sed Leroy. Properly saying that so he would get the reward in case there was any, and the man sed, Go on about your blizzas wawre you came from, cant a man burn up a little waste paper in his furnace without having his bell rung a dussin difrent times and being told his house is on fire?

And he went in and slammed the door mad, me saying, G, wats you know about that?

The next time I see smook coming out of his cellar ill jest leave it come out I dont care if the hole house is burning down, sed Puds, and Leroy sed, So will I and I hope I do. Wich jest then who came up but Pudes sissy cuzzin Persey, and I sed Hay Persey, look at all the smook coming out of that cellar, youre jest in time to get part of the reward wen we tell them their house is on fire, we havent even rang the bell yet.

G, ill ring it, sed Persey. Wich e ran upon te steps and did and us fellows jumped down, and the same man opened the door in the same red bath robe and Persey sed, Your house is on fire.

You dont say so? sed the man. And he tried to kick Persey off the steps, the main reason he didnt being because Persey jumped first.

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MINISTERS GET
THE TRAINING OF
MERE SALESMEN

Chicago Clergymen Speak at London Conference of Interesting Facts.

London, Sept. 15.—Modern ministers are trained as mere "salesmen" instead of Christian apostles and teachers, is one reason why the people generally have a lukewarm attitude toward religion, declared the Rev. Dr. J. Ladd Thomas of Chicago, in an address here today before the Bournemouth Methodist Conference. The speaker said he saw "a real peril" in the effort of denominational leaders to force the ministry into a narrow mechanical scheme whose direct aim is to produce the largest immediate revenue.

"Poorly attended churches all over the land bear witness to the people's indifference toward institutional religion," said Dr. Thomas. "If churches are the exception rather than the rule, it is the empty church which stares us in the face, 'more eloquently than words' speaks of the attitude of that large group of people who have rejected institutional religion as something unnecessary to their lives."

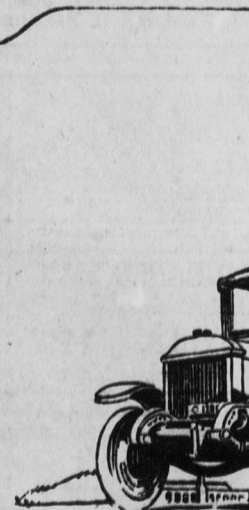
"They are pleasure mad; they have a mania for materialistic indulgence while their belief in the modern church as the representative of God and the Ambassador of Christ does not express itself. The real problem," the speaker indicated, "is how to vitalize the church so that she can authoritatively and convincingly persuade men of their divine inheritance and the mission of sacrificial service."

Asserting that "the average article of commerce confidence in the church as the champion of the 'square deal,'" continued:

"This indifference has arisen from a misconception of God—a wrong teaching of the church and a wrong teaching of the Christian life. Many of the critical hours of history the church has failed to impress the world with an authoritative message—which would bring light into the dark hours on the subject of war, the relations of capital and labor and other vital questions which have been baffling the minds of men."

"Prophets and priests," Dr. Thomas said, must "challenge the people with a gospel that will restore confidence in the church, trust in Christ and service to the world. The church must not forget her social message, but she must also remember that Christianity is a religion of the individual."

Mercury and Venus are the only planets that have no moons. Counting our own moon, the system of planets possesses no less than 27 moons.

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IMPERIAL

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