

# THE LIVING AGE

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## A WEEK OF THE WORLD

THE DELAY IN THE APPEARANCE OF THE LIVING AGE IS DUE TO A GENERAL STRIKE OF THE PRINTING TRADES IN BOSTON. AFTER MAY FIRST, WE HOPE TO RESUME PUBLICATION UNDER NORMAL CONDITIONS —IN ACCORDANCE WITH ARRANGEMENTS MADE LONG BEFORE AND INDEPENDENT OF THE STRIKE.

### EUROPE APPRAISES OUR PRESIDENTS.

At the close of the March fourth session of the Hungarian Parliament, there was a great ovation to President Harding. On the motion of Representative Karl Hussar, the National Assembly directed its speaker to send a message of greeting in the name of the Assembly, of all Hungarian parties, and of the Hungarian nation, 'to the President of the great American republic.' In his speech supporting the motion, the delegate referred to the United States as the first country to come to the help of the Hungarian people after the overthrow of the Bolshevik government in Budapest. The welfare work of the Americans was a splendid example of human solidarity. The members rose from their seats as a token of respect when the resolution was read.

THE *Journal de Geneve*, one of the most prominent exponents of neutral

opinions in Europe, expresses itself as disillusioned with President Harding's inaugural speech. It says, that 'like his predecessor, Mr. Harding seems to delight in abstract generalities and moral themes; but we do not discover in his words the nobility of accent and the note of profound idealism which, in spite of everything, gave such an air of distinction to Mr. Wilson's public utterances.'

A Paris correspondent of the same paper, summarizes the judgment which the French press passed upon Mr. Wilson, at the time of his retirement, as follows:

'Most of them credit the President with noble sentiments, ill-supported by practical knowledge of European problems. . . . Perhaps the greatest wrong done him was in placing him upon too lofty a pedestal. . . so that disappointment was inevitable. . . . It was in passing from the realm of idealism to the realm of facts that Mr. Wilson proved wanting. He believed himself in possession of a revelation,—an all-powerful master of destiny. He left out of account the constitution of his own country, refusing the cooperation of the Senate, without which no

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treaty could be ratified; he serenely ignored the outcome of the election which gave the Republicans a majority in Congress; he occasionally formed unjust and summary opinions regarding European matters. But he was encouraged in all these faults by the foreign statesmen associated with him, most of whom regarded him as a dangerous man, not to be utterly opposed, but to be brought around by various devices. No one ever talked to him frankly. This explains his blunders.'

#### A PEASANT CONGRESS IN BULGARIA.

THE Bulgarian compulsory labor law, the principal provisions of which we published in our issue of December 11, could not be put into effect on account of the veto of Great Britain and France, who feared that it might disguise a plan to organize the whole nation on a military basis. It was essentially a farmer's project, and the Bulgarian farmers are far from being militarists. Last February, they held a great congress in Sofia, attended by five thousand peasants. The mottoes which adorned the hall where their sessions were held were significant. Here are some of them:

*Long live the International, which shall dedicate the People of Europe to fraternity, and shall suppress the dictatorship of minorities!*

*Farmers, join hands. The plow and the plow horse feed the world.*

*To the scaffold with the men who caused the war, and with militarists.*

The Bulgarian peasant organization invited the peasants of other Balkan

countries, Czecho-Slovakia, Austria, Bavaria, and Germany, to send delegates to this congress, but very few representatives from those countries were able to reach the Bulgarian capital. While the congress championed rural radicalism, it would have nothing to do with the radicalism of Lenin. It opposes a Green International to the Red International; small free holds to communal agriculture; farm unions to labor unions. Yet sentiment was in favor of entering into relations with the International Bureau of Labor.

#### ADOBE IN EUROPE.

THE present scarcity of houses and high cost of building have revived interest in Europe and Great Britain in *pise*, or what we would call in the United States adobe. *Pise* walls, according to recent British reports, can be built for two fifths the cost of ordinary brick walls, in addition to which, the expense of plastering is entirely avoided, as these walls can be finished like ordinary mortar walls, directly on the surface. The French, who are building such houses in Ypres, find that these walls can be distempered so as to take wall paper without staining. In the suburbs of Brussels, three-story buildings of *pise* are now being erected. In England, the system is to have the first story eighteen inches thick, and the second story fourteen inches thick. This construction dates back to Roman or pre-Roman times in Spain and other Mediterranean countries—in fact, back to the sun-dried brick of Egypt. The modern European method, however, resembles more closely our concrete construction, the adobe being compacted *in situ*, in wooden forms.

## THE UNITED STATES VS. LIBERTY.

THE Spanish press is reviewing, without unqualified approval, a little documentary work of some three hundred pages, by Isidro Fabela, a talented young Mexican writer and diplomat, reviewing the relations of the United States with Cuba, the Philippines, Panama, Nicaragua, and Santo Domingo. The title of the work is: *Los Estados Unidos contra la libertad*. Its thesis seems to be two dicta enounced by international jurists: 'No foreign power has the right to set itself up as a judge of the conduct of the head of another country, or to force the head of another country to change its policy in any respect, and: It follows necessarily from this principle that governments are free and independent, that each possesses the right to govern itself as it may judge expedient, and that no other government possesses the slightest right to interfere in the operations of another government.' Spanish reviewers are brought to a pause by the fact that incidents have occurred in some Spanish American countries which 'at least afford a pretext for Yankee intervention in their domestic affairs.'

## JEANNE D'ARC ON LONG ISLAND.

FROM Paris, by way of a German channel, comes the following comment regarding a statue of Jeanne d'Arc said to have been recently placed in a church at Elmhurst, Long Island. Introducing the anecdote with the observation that no such statue has been set up in England, and that the incident has been featured as an indication of Franco-American friendship, the narrator says: 'The statue has a his-

tory. The details are not even yet fully known. One of the boulevard dailies has merely hinted at the story. Soldiers of the Sixtieth regiment of the United States Infantry took the statue back to America with them. They did not collect public subscriptions and commission a sculptor to make it. Neither are such statues of more than life size commonly found in antiquary shops. So our Paris newspaper remarks that it is surmised that some French commune is mourning the loss of one of its works of art. Of course, this paper says, no one would accuse the soldiers of stealing such a monument. (The German comment is that this is a charge reserved for the Hun.) 'The Americans carried off the statue in an excess of enthusiasm, as a memorial of the sacred cause of the Allies.'

## RUSSIAN RUMORS.

EVIDENCE is accumulating that the discord between Lenin and Trotzky so often reported during the past two years—at times in a very sensational way—actually exists. A current newspaper debate between the two men—is conducted by Lenin in the Petrograd *Pravda*, which is edited by his supporters, while Trotzky employs as his press organ the Moscow *Pravda*, which is edited by one of Lenin's opponents, Boukharin. In an article in the Petrograd *Pravda* of January 30, Lenin refers to a long debate in the Central Committee of the Communist Party, occupying two sessions in November and December, 'when Trotzky was left standing alone among its nineteen members.' Lenin accuses Trotzky of 'stabbing the party in the back' and then continues: 'Is there a

single serious man in his right mind who considers such attacks, by so prominent a leader as Trotzky, as right and honorable?' The particular matter at issue in this controversy is the part the Trade Unions are to be allowed to take in the political and economic administration of the country. Lenin apparently favors enlarging the powers of the unions, and liberalizing somewhat their constitution, while Trotzky inclines toward an increasingly military organization of labor.

ACCORDING to statistics published in the *Krasnaya Gazeta* last January, there are 24 trade unions in Russia with 6,970,000 members enrolled. However, a majority of the latter 'have been ascribed to the union mechanically.' Not more than half a million of these are communists. These unions are industrial rather than craft organizations;—that is, they are groups of employees of particular industries rather than the employees in particular trades.

*Isvestia* mentions in its issue of January 12 the organization of a Communist Party in China.

*Ekonomicheskaya Zhizn* reports that the government succeeded in collecting just under 100,000,000 poods of grain from the peasants last autumn. This is less than half the amount laid down in the government programme.

Thieving is very common among the employees of the textile factories in Russia, if we are to believe *Krasnaya Gazeta's* report of the congress of textile workers held in Petrograd last winter. Operatives stealing trifles 'such as a half pound of cotton' are not infrequently reprimanded, but

'those guilty of large thefts are not discovered.'

Because of the paper shortage in Russia, the authorities recently decided to use old archives, and old editions of presumably 'bourgeois' works for paper stock. A writer in the *Krasnaya Gazeta* of January 12 describes how valuable historical documents, costly editions of the classics, and even soviet publications—apparently through inadvertence—are thus being destroyed. This writer says that some 2000 pounds of an official pamphlet printed only last year were sent to the paper mills to be ground into pulp, while a second edition of the same pamphlet was being published.

The following quotation from *Isvestia* relating to the Vanderlip concession in Kamschatka illustrates rather aptly some aspects of Bolshevik statesmanship and the assumptions upon which its foreign policies are based: 'In granting it—its concession—we are defending Kamschatka against military seizure by Japan on the one hand, while Japanese expansionists will keep a sharp eye out to prevent the Americans from placing troops in the territory. The Americans will be allowed to import only machinery. This will enable soviet Russia to retain control of Kamschatka. With the development of the proletarian revolution in America and in Europe,—and this will occur within a few years, if not within the next few months,—the capitalist order will be destroyed, and we shall inherit a very considerable amount of American machinery and goods from its late bourgeois society.'

WHILE Paris and Berlin have their dadaists, and Milan its futurists, Moscow has its 'imaginists,' according to

a Russian newspaper published in Prague. Imaginism is the last fashion of a group of young poets who are still running an art store in Moscow, one of the rare private shops which has not yet been nationalized. What these young Bolsheviki in poetry and painting are up to is rather obscure. One of them tries to explain the movement by saying that 'the word is in reality an image. We are not interested in the content of the word or in its sound. Under those aspects, the word belongs either to philosophy or to music. . . . We are seeking to poetize poetry by eliminating philosophy and music from it.' Just what this means, we leave our readers to 'imagine.' The only further ray of light we can throw upon the subject is the following remark by a Russian critic, Lvov-Rogatchevsky, at an imaginists' reunion, held in their favorite cafe in Moscow: 'Imaginists? What does the word mean in good simple Russian, without going into philosophical technicalities? It means "hot air" artists. And the Bolsheviki? Are they not past masters of imaginism—of the "hot air" art?'

LAST autumn, the Russian government placed with firms in Sweden, Germany, Austria, and Czecho-Slovakia, orders for 2000 freight locomotives and \$15,000,000 worth of spare parts for locomotives, as well as for several pumping plants. Orders for 1000 of these engines were placed in Sweden, 100 to be delivered this coming summer, and the whole order to be completed by 1925. Orders for the remainder were placed in the three other countries mentioned. Most of the parts are being made in Germany. All the locomotives are of a single type, and the makers in the four coun-

tries guarantee that all parts, wherever made, shall be interchangeable. A contract has been placed with an English firm for the repair of 1500 locomotives, and negotiations are under way for the repair of between 2000 and 3000 locomotives in Germany, Norway, and Denmark.

#### RACE PROPAGANDA.

ELBRIDGE COLBY, discussing the coming clash of races in *East and West*, a Calcutta review, mentions the following suggestive incident:

'Down in the tropics in Panama City, there is published a negro weekly called *The Workman*. Up to a short time ago, this was devoted almost exclusively to news of the West Indian homes of the colored workers on the Canal. It was a sort of consolidated "home town paper," bringing back local gossip to those who had left their native localities. When the labor problem, complicated with the race question, became acute on the Canal Zone, this sheet was gradually transformed. Slow infiltration of propaganda became evident. Finally, the alteration was complete, and *The Workman* today is almost pure agitation, a Central American replica of *The Negro World*. It assails white labor, white foremen, white administration, white justice, even white ministers of the gospel. The only thing about it not colored black is the paper on which it is printed.

It proclaims a negro democracy, and urges former soldiers in the British West India regiment to retain their skill at arms for a future war for black liberty and black democracy. To it, the color line shall no longer be a frontier of freedom. Its work has been

effective because it was gradual, and because by penetrating an established journal it took over a clientele already formed, and had a circulation among subscribers to the weekly in its original character.'

#### A PROTEST AGAINST BEANS

AMONG whimsical bits of self-criticism now current in the Spanish press is that of a contributor to *La Vanguardia*, who believes that one cause of Spain's decadence is its staple national food—beans. He condemns this diet as a symbol of routine, laziness, and lack of ambition. He says beans are the easiest thing for a man's wife to cook; all you have to do is to put them in a kettle and they attend to themselves. A nation that is too lazy mentally to think out a varied fare is hopeless. He urges that repetition of the same diet encourages people to fall into a physical rut, which is invariably reflected in their mental habits. A steady diet of beans tends to keep individuals and nations *in statu quo*.'

#### MINOR NOTES

THE abrupt fall in the price of wool has produced a situation in New Zealand and Australia somewhat akin to that in our own grain raising states as the result of the fall in the price of wheat. New Zealand banks have made large advances against wool deposits and shipments. In order to avoid too much strain upon their straitened credit, the government has already authorized the banks to increase the issue of their notes not only to the extent of their nominal gold reserve, but also to the extent of advances which they had made on first class

securities, and to their investments in government bonds. Now, it is proposed to authorize them still further to increase their note issue, to the extent of the advance which they have made on wool shipments. The amount of paper money circulating in New Zealand is already three and a half times what it was prior to the war.

AMONG the latest devices for speeding up output in England is to provide music in factories, not only during the rest period but during the period of employment. The *Daily Chronicle* reports one firm as saying: 'When the brass band plays, liveliness is born among the workers, and they are heard whistling and singing tunes as they push on with their work.' Naturally, we have the old precedent of music in the army. It has long been the custom in certain industries, such as garment making, and cigar making in Cuba, to employ readers to entertain the operatives while at work.

LAST February, Danish butter was advertised in Holland, itself a vast dairy farm, for 2.90 gilders a kilogram, wholesale. It is reported that consignments of Danish and Canadian cheese are on their way to that country. Explanation: Dutch dairy products have not grown scarce, but Dutch laborers, who even to-day eat margarine, must have such high wages that native cheese and butter are sold at unobtainable prices. There is an old Dutch saying that the good old times will never return when one could buy a pot of butter for a double groschen.

Een potje boter  
Voor eenen stooter  
Die goede tyd komt nooit weerein.

BOTH unemployed and employed members of the engineering trades in



Great Britain exhibit growing bitterness because ship owners are sending their vessels to continental ports to be repaired, on account of the cheaper rates to be obtained there. British vessels are said to be lying six or seven abreast awaiting their turn for repairs at European yards, while many British yards are idle. British ship owners and ship builders claim their action is due to strikes at home, which are likely to hold up vessels under repair for an indefinite period, to the great loss of the owners.

THE latest buyers' strike is reported from Roumania, where it is said to be impossible to find customers for imported goods. The ports and railway stations are congested with unsold merchandise for which there is no market. Partly this is due to difficulties of distribution, on account of the ruined condition of the railways. Immense losses are being incurred by exposure and improper storage. Machinery is rusting and dry goods are being destroyed by mold and damp.

(Rome Political and Literary Monthly)

## THE ANGLO-AMERICAN CONFLICT

BY LEONARD VITETTI

[This study is to appear in a volume entitled *Il Conflitto Anglo-Americana*, which will shortly be published at Rome. Its author is a well-known journalist and London correspondent of *Idea Nazionale*.]

(*Rassegna Italiana* January 81)

By 'Anglo-American conflict' we do not imply that a war is imminent, or will necessarily ever occur, between the British Empire and the United States; nor do we assume that either government wishes to bring to an immediate issue its present and impending controversies with the other. None the less, that conflict is a political fact, which Italians should understand clearly, and which will have a determining influence upon the future policies of both these governments:

This conflict is not a new one. The whole history of the United States has been dominated by its relations with the British Empire. For many years, those relations were shaped by their commercial rivalry. But the war in Europe, ending as it did with the

annihilation of Germany's navy and the creation of a powerful American navy, with Germany's exclusion from South America, with the elimination of Russia from the Great Powers, and with a profound change in the problem of the Pacific, has produced a political situation which can best be described as a state of actual conflict between England and America.

Since the United States has taken the place, or is rapidly taking the place, of Germany, in practically all the positions which Germany held before the European war, it inevitably—I might say mechanically—comes into conflict with England. Its naval policy is opposed to England; its pan-American policy is opposed to England; its general foreign policy is opposed to