

# HOW THE PEACE CONFERENCE DEALT WITH SILESIA

BY MERMEIX

*[This author, whose book upon the Peace Conference is remarkably well documented, and who appears to have access to reliable inside sources of information, has just made public that portion of the discussion at several sessions of the 'Council of Three' which related to Upper Silesia. The text is taken from the memoranda made by the interpreters who were present.]*

From *Le Figaro*, July 11  
(PARIS LIBERAL NATIONALIST DAILY)

LLOYD GEORGE proposed that a plebiscite be taken, concluding his argument in its favor with these words: 'I am convinced that the popular vote will be favorable to Poland.'

*Clemenceau.* — So far as Poland is concerned, there is, first of all, an historical crime to be atoned; but there is also the need of creating a barrier between Germany and Russia. You can read the interview just given by Mr. Erzberger. He demands that Poland be as feeble as possible, since it separates Germany from Russia. He adds that, when Germany and Russia come to terms, Germany can attack France with better promise of success than in 1914. Is that what you want? Germany, mistress of Russia, means that our dead have died for nothing. That is all I want to say on the subject just now.

*Wilson.* — A plebiscite in Upper Silesia seems to me a difficult undertaking. It will be necessary first to expel the German officials.

*Lloyd George.* — Do you mean the petty officials?

*Wilson.* — No, I mean those who have charge of the general administration.

*Clemenceau.* — Don't forget, however, that the central government appoints the mayors in Germany.

*Lloyd George.* — I agree that the prin-

cipal German officials should leave the country before the vote is taken.

*Wilson.* — Yes, but more than that. Fifteen or twenty great German capitalists own Upper Silesia.

*Clemenceau.* — That's true, too — particularly Henckel, of Donnersmark.

*Wilson.* — A free and uninfluenced plebiscite would be an impossibility, according to my advisers, in a country which has been so long under an alien government, and which would be in constant fear of reprisals unless the Germans were evicted.

*Lloyd George.* — However, in spite of that fear, the Poles won the elections of 1907. My advisers, and I personally, believe a plebiscite would be favorable for Poland. They think that such a plebiscite would prevent the Germans from laying claim to the country later.

*Wilson.* — There is no strong public sentiment in Germany in favor of retaining Upper Silesia. It is entirely an affair of the big capitalists.

*Lloyd George.* — However, the German government is controlled by the Socialists, and they are the ones who protest.

*Wilson.* — Yes, but at the instance of the capitalists. I repeat, an uninfluenced vote is impossible.

*Lloyd George.* — Very well. We can occupy the territory during the election.

*Wilson.* — They will say we are exercising military pressure.

*Clemenceau.* — Whatever happens, the Germans will continue to protest.

*Lloyd George.* — A vote will be no less valuable on that account. Moreover, how can the Germans intimidate the laborers who oppose them? We have had cases like that in Wales, and we have beaten the big mine-owners.

*Wilson.* — You are comparing things which are not comparable.

*Lloyd George.* — I repeat that the elections have been favorable to the Poles in the whole district we have in mind.

*Wilson.* — Those were local elections not a plebiscite to determine the country's nationality.

*Clemenceau.* — We have not promised that a popular vote will be taken in this region.

*Wilson.* — But now, what would your plan be in detail?

*Lloyd George.* — The same as for East Prussia.

*Wilson.* — And if the Germans refuse to obey the decision of the League of Nations?

*Clemenceau.* — You will ask them to promise. They will promise, but they will not keep their promise. Is that what you wish?

*Lloyd George.* — I do not exclude the hypothesis that we may have to place troops in the plebiscite zone.

*Wilson.* — I wish to point out again that Germany will charge us with using military compulsion.

*Lloyd George.* — One division will be enough.

*Wilson.* — And it will be enough to lay us open to the accusation I have just mentioned.

*Lloyd George.* — I want peace. I know from other sources that the question of Silesia is of the utmost importance for Germany. I prefer to send one division to Silesia rather than a whole army to Berlin.

*Clemenceau.* — Who tells you that will be the alternative?

*Lloyd George.* — So far as a free election goes, that is our business. If Germany should resist the enforcement of a plebiscite favorable to Poland, the British army would march on Berlin with enthusiasm. That is what I want. I must have the English people behind me if there are new difficulties.

*Wilson.* — Your intentions are excellent. But if we send troops, we shall be accused of exercising military pressure.

*Clemenceau.* — I have listened to you two with great attention. My personal objections are these. You want to avoid difficulties, and are making them worse. A plebiscite — is that a panacea? Not in Germany, where liberty has never existed. To hold a popular election, and then get out and leave the rest to take care of itself, would be very fine; but it would be a crime against Poland. If we garrison a plebiscite zone with our troops, Germany will say we have exerted pressure, and you know what the result will be. Inside of six months or a year, you will have all the embarrassments of war in a nominal state of peace, and the situation will probably be worse than it is to-day. You say, Mr. Lloyd George, that you do not want to march on Berlin. Neither do I. If we have sacrificed the lives of millions of soldiers, it was to preserve our existence. You say you want to know what Upper Silesia really wants. I reply, that, when Germany holds the country, Upper Silesia cannot tell us what it does want; and that if the Allies take charge of the country, the Germans will claim that the election is not a fair one. You want to appease where the simplest and wisest thing is to say no. We honestly believe we are drafting a just treaty. Let us stick to that. Your popular vote and occupation will be only a seed-bed for future controversies, and perhaps for future

battles. In a word, it will have an effect precisely the opposite of what you wish.

*Lloyd George.* — But if you fear Germany's opposition, you are much surer to have that if no popular vote is taken; and we must recognize that, from the legal point of view, Germany's case will be much stronger than it would be otherwise.

*Wilson.* — We said in drafting the bases of our peace, that Poland would receive all provinces indisputably Polish.

*Lloyd George.* — But the Germans say that this is not true of Upper Silesia.

*Clemenceau.* — How is that? You know perfectly well that German statistics themselves made Upper Silesia Polish by a large majority.

*Wilson.* — We must come to some decision. We might consent to a popular vote controlled by an inter-Allied commission. We may declare in advance that the plebiscite will be vetoed if the commission reports to us that pressure has been used.

*Lloyd George.* — I want to avoid a conflict. The Germans of Upper Silesia consider the Poles an inferior race,

whom they despise. If you put Germans under Polish rule, you are breeding trouble.

*Clemenceau.* — You may be sure you are going to have trouble anyway, either now or later, whether you have a plebiscite or do not have it.

*Lloyd George.* — I do not agree on that point.

*Clemenceau.* — The future will tell. But I beg you not to forget what I have just said.

*Wilson.* — I believe we ought to have a plebiscite; but not earlier than within a year, and not later than within two years. Professor Lord is informed by an American who has studied the situation on the ground, that all classes of the population want a popular vote. But Mr. Lord is personally opposed to it.

*Clemenceau.* — I have nothing to add to what I have already said. But I continue in my opinion that a popular vote is a mistake. Since I am a minority, I must bow to your decision. I still believe, however, that we are courting trouble in Upper Silesia, and that it would be better to settle the thing off-hand.

# THE AMERICAN NOTE IN MUSIC

BY CARL ENGEL

*[Mr. Engel is a young American composer, in whose music an almost classical feeling is united with a highly individual sense of tone-color. His output is comparatively small, and his published works are confined to music for the piano, violin, and voice. An English critic recently wrote, 'The work of Engel is proof that America has young composers of the greatest promise.']*

From *The Chesterian*, May  
(ENGLISH MUSICAL MONTHLY)

THERE is such a thing as an American note in music; only, for the present at least, you must not seek it in the symphonies and grand operas made in America. Those articles of bric-à-brac still bear the trademark of an older china shop which goes on 'doing business as before,' because the providential bull, after each of his not infrequent visits, obligingly strews new *isms* on the ruins of the one he tossed and gored.

America is not lacking in native composers of real worth and high technical proficiency. The most advanced among them, Charles T. Griffes, died too young to fulfill all the promise of his great talent. Music is being written to-day in the United States, which commands attention, not because it happens to be American-made, but because it is fine music. Nevertheless, it is almost entirely unmarked by national or racial traits. The work of American composers has, these many years, ignored the inventiveness and daring so splendidly exemplified in nearly everything else that American force and ingenuity have created or reshaped. Originality, in the sense in which Whitman, Poe, and Whistler possessed it; boldness, such as American architects have shown, not to mention industrial and scientific pioneers — these qualities are yet to find a way into the art-

music of America. Ornstein must needs be counted out, as must Bloch and Salzedo. Among the native-born, few seem to walk ways of their own. A certain symphony, intended to depict in four movements the cardinal points of American landscape and character, might — as far as musical distinctiveness goes — be titled 'Everywhere and Nowhere.' The opera of an ardent demonstrator in American-Indian folklore, honored, for patriotic reasons, by a performance at the Metropolitan, is daubed all over with blotches of warranted-not-to-fade Sioux and Chippewa, in order to give the music 'native color.' And yet these works are representative American music!

They are representative because they typify the two main sources from which the unoriginality of so much American music has sprung. One was the influence of Europe. That was natural and, to a certain degree, unavoidable. It went with the training of American music-students in Paris or in Munich. But the case is more serious and quite humiliating, when we consider the second, namely, the musical 'borrowing' from the black man and the red, and when we see musicians applying the curling-iron or the war-paint to their tunes, by which processes they pretend to give us American music, which, in reality, but apes the merely tolerated