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Contents

Editorial Notes.....	287
Leading Editorials	
Our Relations with Great Britain.....	290
Poltroons and Pacifists.....	292
The Nemesis of Reform.....	293
General Articles	
Force, Violence and Law..... John Dewey	295
Cezanne..... Leo D. Stein	297
The Meed of a Brute.....	298
The World's Worst Failure: (II) The Schoolmistress Rebecca West	300
Music of the Russian Ballet.. Hiram Kelly Moderwell	302
A Strike Without Disorder.....	304
Correspondence.....	306
After the Play..... F. H.	310
Books and Things..... P. L.	311
Reviews of Books	
"The Immortal Residue"..... F. H.	312
Walter Bagehot..... Harold J. Laski	313
Puritanism Made Pleasurable.....	314

SIR Edward Grey's evasive note in the Baralong case has raised feeling to a high pitch in Germany, and the dispatches hint at horrible forms of reprisal. At the time of this writing no announcement has been made as to what Germany intends to do in order to wreak vengeance, but it will undoubtedly be an extreme act which will in turn provoke the British to retaliate. When two warring powers go in for reprisals there is no point at which they can be expected to stop. What the American government ought to consider is whether something cannot be done to bring this vicious competition to an end. American interests are directly affected. The whole blockade-submarine-war zone tangle was woven originally around a doctrine of reprisal, a doctrine which means that crime must be committed in order to avenge crime. There are hints from Berlin that Germany may use the Baralong case as a sufficient pretext to renew in its most barbarous form the submarine war against commerce. In short, a spirit of ruthless retaliation may be unloosed which in one way or another will endanger the interests of all neutrals and particularly those of the United

States. It is a situation which has in it endless possibilities of evil. We earnestly hope that the President will take a hand in the business and see whether something cannot be done to prevent the spirit of retaliation from becoming inflamed as a result of this incident. Mr. Wilson has two paths before him: to let matters drift until reprisals and counter-reprisals have resulted in the injury of American citizens and the destruction of American property, and the belligerents are in a state of mind where nothing can be done with them; or to insist that the essential rights of neutrals are involved, and that the United States should be afforded an opportunity of investigating the merits of the controversy and proposing some plan of adjustment.

PRECEDENTS established by the administration's policy with respect to Mexico make it difficult for the President to deal with the existing crisis. He has been anxious to avoid armed intervention and to make American interference in Mexican affairs that of a friendly neighbor. But in carrying out this policy he has failed to understand that it would be aided rather than injured by a resolute method of dealing with disorder on or near the border. He has really encouraged Mexicans to believe that no matter what they did short of actually shooting at American citizens on American territory they were safe from molestation, and he has made border Americans fear that he was more interested in protecting Mexicans from interference than he was in safeguarding American life and property. There has been for years a condition of irritation and exasperation along the border which naturally became inflamed on the occasion of the recent massacre. Mr. Wilson should recognize the reality of the exasperation. His method of dealing with these border disturbances is the greatest hindrance and threat to the success of his general Mexican policy. The best service he can do to the cause of Mexican reconstruction is to make it understood on both sides of the border that the administration will not continue to allow anarchy

to prevail in Mexican states adjoining the territory of this country.

CARRANZA should be given to understand that the murder of eighteen Americans not far from the border has modified the attitude of this country towards his government. He will be tested by his ability to punish the real assassins and to prevent the repetition of such offences, and the penalty for failure should not be the withdrawal of American recognition, but the assumption by the United States of the work of restoring order in the part of Mexico adjacent to this country. Carranza must realize that he is confronted by an unescapable alternative. If he does not or cannot do the work it will not be left undone; it will be done without his consent. In the end it probably will have to be done without his consent, since for him to undertake it would be to strain the resources of the Carranza government and compromise the more profitable work of reconstructing the populous states to the south. The former task will be accomplished, if at all, only after prolonged delay and wholly unnecessary bloodshed. The Carranza government should be glad to turn it over to the American army, but if it is unwilling its refusal should not prevent the American government from acting. The United States should intervene only for the purpose of policing certain border states, and under promise to withdraw as soon as the existing anarchy is stamped out. Difficult and costly as the job would be, it would be more difficult and costly for Carranza than for the government of this country, because the disorderly area is more readily approached from the north than from the south. Its swift and thorough accomplishment is necessary for the peace of the border, for the security of American citizens, and in all probability for the recuperation and ultimate independence of the Mexican nation.

THE proverbial ingratitude of republics receives poignant exemplification in the explosion at the Brooklyn Navy Yard on January 15th. Of the fourteen persons who were killed or injured while repairing the E-2, nine were civilians. As the workmen's compensation law covering federal employees provides for neither medical care nor funeral expenses, these necessary outlays must be met by the injured men themselves, by their dependents, or by charity. Moreover, the maximum compensation is one year's wages, so that the widows and totally disabled workmen face the prospect of dependence on the community at the expiration of that period. As the wages of certain of the victims were only two dollars a day, it is probable that in some cases widows will receive no

more than six or seven hundred dollars for the loss of a husband. Such niggardly compensation can be duplicated under none of our state laws, and has earned for the federal statute of 1908 the title, "the worst compensation act in the world." It is high time that the House Judiciary Committee report out the Kern-McGillicuddy measure, drafted three long years ago by the American Association for Labor Legislation. The enactment of this bill would place the United States abreast of other enlightened nations in consideration for civilians killed or injured in its service.

WHEN Mr. Wilson wrote the Palmer letter, in February, 1913, he did not foresee that President Wilson could ever consider making such an appointment as that of Mr. Joseph Johnson to succeed Mr. Morgan as Postmaster of New York. "It is intolerable," Mr. Wilson said in that letter, "that any President should be permitted to determine who should succeed him—himself or another—by patronage or coercion, or by any sort of control of the machinery by which delegates to the nominating convention are chosen." Mr. Johnson's appointment, if the President really makes it, will be exactly such an attempt to better his chances of a second term by the use of patronage. That will be the real motive, the motive but for whose controlling power the appointment would never even have been considered. Any other explanation which may come from the White House will be an afterthought, a piece of window-dressing, a futile attempt to deceive the public, a bit of self-deception perhaps not so futile. If absolute candor were our national habit in public life President Wilson would say: "I am going to appoint Mr. Johnson because I want Tammany to help me to renomination and reelection. I regard this help as more important than good administration of the New York post-office." Of course the public would hate such candor. Of course the public would call the President a shocking cynic. But if cynical candor were the inviolable rule, appointments like Mr. Johnson's would never be made.

MR. WILSON'S enemies are so bitter and vindictive that their intemperate hostilities will certainly react in the President's favor. In their eyes even his achievements become malignant sins. Recently he succeeded in obtaining from Germany a practically complete acknowledgment that the use of the submarine as a commerce destroyer afforded no excuse for a modification of the law of visit and search; and since the acknowledgment there has been a cessation of illegal and murderous submarine activity in the Mediterranean. If the President had not succeeded in obtaining these results he would have been flayed for the supineness of

his diplomacy and for his inability to make the Central Powers respect the lives of non-combatants, yet his success constitutes a worse crime than his failure would have done. He has allowed himself to be entrapped by the wily Germans into an agreement the result of which will certainly be to embroil the relations between the United States and Great Britain. Now that the outstanding account with Germany has been practically settled, the American government will have no excuse but to press its grievances against the British maritime policy. Considering the existing temper of Congress and the irritability of British public opinion, emphatic reiteration of these grievances may provoke a dangerous quarrel. Thus Mr. Wilson's diplomacy will have the result of keeping American relations cordial with the Powers that represent a policy of aggressive militarism, while at the same time it has nourished an explosive controversy with the Powers that are fighting for human liberty.

CRITICISMS such as the foregoing need not be feared by the President, because, apart from being prompted by a manifest anti-Wilson obsession, they are based upon an unpopular and vicious assumption. This particular condemnation could have been avoided only by using any grievances of the United States against Germany as pretexts for going to war with the Central Powers. It is the outcry of men who are dissatisfied because Mr. Wilson's diplomacy has been pacific. Their pretended fear that the man who has sought so earnestly to keep the country out of war with Germany will do something to get us into war or even into serious trouble with the Allies is ridiculous. Mr. Wilson is just as likely to embroil us in war with Great Britain as he is to embroil the rest of the country in a war with the state of Virginia. Inasmuch as the policy of the United States is that of a neutral he must assert the rights of American citizens against their violation by all belligerents, but he is free to select his own methods of assertion. And however much individual Congressmen may talk for the benefit of their constituents, Congress as a whole will have neither the inclination nor the gumption to actively interfere. The country is satisfied with its present position of being the legal accomplice of the Allied Powers. If the German Foreign Office expects that the government which did not go to war over the *Lusitania* will do anything more than make a verbal protest against the British embargo it has been betrayed into a serious error. Any attempt on its part to bring pressure to bear on the American government to insist more vigorously on the rights of American citizens under international law could be met by a hint to mind its own business.

WHATEVER motives and expectations the Germans may have had in reaching an agreement with the United States, their compliance will not alter American policy in respect to Great Britain. Our government will not consent to the abatement of the rights of American citizens under the law of nations; but on the other hand, even if British maritime policy continues to be illegal, even if it becomes more drastic and costly, we shall do nothing to enforce those rights except to keep an unequivocal declaration in their favor on the written record. Such a course may seem weak and ineffective. It would be weak and ineffective against any Power except Great Britain, but we should pay Great Britain the compliment of using only civilized weapons against her. Mr. Wilson's use of verbal weapons in carrying on a controversy, doubtful as it may be in the case of other nations, is precisely adapted to the relationship existing between the United States and the United Kingdom. The two countries have many differences of interest and opinion, but the notion of making them an excuse for war is inconceivable. If Americans have a grievance against Great Britain they do not propose to go to war about it any more than they propose to go to war about British indifference to neutral obligations during the Civil War. They are content to declare their grievances and to rest assured that if their case is good the British nation will eventually recognize its validity. When the war is over all the fundamental questions relating to maritime belligerency will come up for reconsideration, not only between the British and American governments but at an international conference. Our differences can be fought out with Great Britain at that time, and under conditions which will permit the most thoroughgoing discussion of the proper functions of sea power in a community of nations, and the desirable limits of its exercise. They will not be fought out any sooner nor in any other way.

SUNDAY, January twenty-third, is child-labor day, an anniversary on which we remind ourselves that the great tragedy of childhood destroyed continues in the United States. Child labor is not the only evil of our callousness and apathy and greed, but it is by all odds the most obviously horrible. It is one evil which no decent person would dare to defend in public. Yet it survives with only slight modification to haunt us and mock us, to make our boasts sound silly and our complacency odious. For child labor is no visitation of nature. It is not an earthquake or a plague against which men can do nothing but meet on a Sunday and utter lamentations. It is something that can be remedied if only there is the will and intelligence to do it. The intelligence exists in the form of the National Child

Labor Committee under the leadership of Mr. Owen R. Lovejoy. The program of action exists, and it is a moderate enough program:

1. 14-year limit for common gainful occupations
2. 14-year limit for boys, 18-year limit for girls in street trades
3. 16-year limit for dangerous occupations
4. 21-year limit for night messengers
5. 8-hour day under 16
6. Prohibition of night work under 16
7. Requirement of work-permits under 16 based on documentary proof of age, completion of 6th grade, physical fitness.

But the will to enact and enforce this program has yet to make itself felt.

THE recuperative power of the Russian armies is amazing, and as the war continues German fear of the Slav peril becomes more and more comprehensible. Last summer no one expected a Russian offensive until the spring, and few expected it then; but already General Ivanoff has launched a general attack on the Austrian lines, and now the Grand Duke Nicholas is advancing along the whole length of the Caucasus front, not to mention the campaign in Persia. In all likelihood the object of the Caucasus movement is to prevent the reinforcement of the Mesopotamian army from the north, and a retreat of "several kilometers" reported from Constantinople proves that the Russians have found a weak point in the Turkish lines in the Arasa River zone. One wonders where the Russian soldiers come from, but above all one admires the Russian spirit. Few people doubt now that the battle of the Marne was won by a Russian sacrifice at Tannenberg, and to-day, in order to try to save Townshend's ridiculously inferior force at Kut on the Tigris, the Grand Duke drives on through mountain snowdrifts, and sacrifices his mujiks in the roadless fastnesses of the Caucasus. No money, no loans, can ever pay the debt which France, England and Italy owe to Russia. It has become a common thing in this country to laugh at the Russian "steam-roller," but they are not laughing in Berlin.

SOME of the Englishmen who lecture in the United States are interesting because of what they have to say, others because of what they are, others for both reasons, others for neither. Nobody who has read Mr. Masefield's little book on Shakespeare expects ideas from him. He will draw large audiences because he is John Masefield, because he has made narrative in verse live again for thousands of readers. He has painted the sea in its terribleness and beauty, and the kind of Englishmen whom the sea has been calling for hundreds of years. He has revealed himself as almost equally a lover of the

English countryside and of the rough words he hears there, as a shy, gentle, meditative, unthinking man, hating cruelty, liking a good fight and quite willing to do his share of the fighting. The best war poem published in English since the great war began is his "August, 1914." For no other living poet do so many American readers feel such a personal affection.

Our Relations With Great Britain

BRITISH discontent with the war policy of the American government has received a considerate and good-tempered expression in the *Round Table*. The American government is criticized for having protested against the British embargo and for having insisted on the letter of our neutral rights to trade with Germany and with other neutrals. We have, according to our critic, missed an opportunity of lending American moral and material support to a group of belligerents who are fighting for the security of political ideals essentially democratic and unmistakably American. Without actually going to war with Germany we could have refused to assert the neutral rights which were a source of embarrassment to Great Britain in her blockade of German commerce, and consented to the suppression of trade with Germany and her neutral neighbors. By so doing we would have removed from American neutrality the taint and stigma of a merely selfish and irresponsible nationalism.

THE NEW REPUBLIC agrees with part of this criticism of American policy. The government and the dominant element in public opinion have ignored international interests of vital importance to the American nation. Germany should have been given to understand from the start that by involving an innocent and inoffensive people like the Belgians in the ruin of the war she had made neutral indifference abhorrent to right-minded men. In order to give expression to that abhorrence without going to war, the United States might have declared an embargo on all American trade with Germany, direct or indirect, until Belgium was evacuated and the Belgians indemnified. Such a method of increasing the penalties incurred by any Power which commits an international outrage is justifiable, and in this particular case would have been highly effective. But the opportunity to adopt it was neglected, and while the failure is much to be regretted, it is partly excused by a time-honored and precious national tradition of non-interference in European politics.

What the *Round Table* wants the American gov-