

and aggression, neutrality is a dereliction of duty. It may be impossible—I think it is—to apply that doctrine literally to-day, in a war that involved great and small by a series of automatic reactions, a product and expression of the previous international chaos. But for the future, when the world has built up its international organization, it is clear that there can be no neutrals. It may not be necessary—if wars must be fought, with the assent of a League of Nations, to repress aggression—that every civilized state should take its share as an active belligerent. But if we can create this League, and the League is at grips with a defiant and aggressive Power which has refused the processes of conciliation, it certainly follows that no civilized state which adheres to the League can stand aloof and claim the privileges of a neutral. One hopes, indeed, that the embargo may go far to render actual warfare obsolete, though it could rarely be enforced without the sanction of armed force in readiness. “You have abolished non-combatants and private merchants and neutrals,” I hear the reader exclaim, “What will you abolish next?” We shall abolish war.

“This is exactly,” the critical reader replies, “what might have been expected from British hypocrisy. You erect yourselves into the self-appointed defenders of civilization, in order that you may claim for yourselves an exercise of power which is a menace to any civilized society of nations.” We must guard against that misinterpretation. Sea-power, available to the fullest limit consistent with humanity, will be an indispensable arm for any league of nations. But there must be no risk that it will be used at the unchecked discretion of any single Power. If it is reserved for an annihilating use in war, it certainly must not be abused in peace to hamper the legitimate colonial expansion of other peoples, or to back a monopoly in trade. If we mean to maintain—as I do not doubt we do—our relative supremacy at sea, we must clear our colonial and economic policy of any objections on these scores. But also there must be no loophole left which would permit the use of the tremendous engine of the embargo for the self-regarding purposes of a single Power. The logic of the modern evolution of war and internationalism leads straight to this conclusion—that the progressives who used to dream, with Franklin and Paine and Cobden, of disarming and limiting sea-power, should strive instead to harness it to the chariot of international order. The embargo, in that, should be retained as the inevitable defense of civilization, but on the understanding that it may be used only in wars sanctioned by the League, and only by the express order of the League. Theoretically there ought to be no other

wars, and no loyal member of the League, if it can be created, will contemplate other wars. None the less they may come. Both parties to a dispute may refuse the processes of conciliation, or reject its awards. In that case both are offenders and technically aggressors, and the League as such is disinterested in their private, egoistic strife. Against both of them, in the interests of neutrals—for in this case neutrality is a duty—civilization ought to maintain the stiffest reading of neutral rights, regarding their struggle as a nuisance and a negation of order. It would recognize no blockades or war zones or embargoes imposed by these broilers in such a war, and would use its forces, if need be, to maintain “the freedom of the seas.”

If this conception can be developed, it would lead us to a revision of the law of war at sea in three chapters, of which the first would impose rules of humanity applicable in all wars, the second prescribe rules to secure the immunity of innocent trade in private and unauthorized wars, and the third define the conditions for the enforcement of a formal embargo by the whole league of law-abiding states. By this distinction (it is as yet only an individual suggestion) if the League can be founded, the traditional American principle of the inviolability of neutral trade in war may be reconciled with the British objection to the emasculation of sea-power. But we are far as yet from the consideration of these problems. The familiar sound of a Zeppelin's propeller overhead interrupted me midway in this article. I watched the descent of the glowing monster, and thousands of normally kind men and women cheered and sang while its crew was burned alive in mid-air. We shall move slowly into the era of law.

H. N. BRAILSFORD.

London, October.

CORRESPONDENCE

Jumping to Conclusions

SIR: I have read with interest your article in your last issue, wherein you ask in substance for the reelection of Mr. Wilson on the general proposition that during the next few years there are bound to come great occasions calling for very sudden decisions, and that Mr. Wilson has a more nimble mind and is more prompt to jump to conclusions than his opponent. I earnestly hope that Mr. Hughes will indeed, as President, show a less pronounced ability to act first and then study the evidence afterward to see whether his action has not been disastrous or foolish. For example:

I. Almost immediately after his inauguration Mr. Wilson committed himself to a Mexican policy which I have heard a person close to his administration describe very recently as “heedless and headstrong” and not founded on any real knowledge of the Mexican problem. This

policy is a millstone around the necks of the Democratic managers to-day, as in their confidential moments divers will tell you.

2. Mr. Wilson jumped to the conclusion that the army and navy were all right, and publicly derided the men who told him otherwise. He has been compelled to eat his words before the entire country.

3. Mr. Wilson immediately after the outrage of Belgium ordered his countrymen to remain "neutral in thought." No mandate of an American President has ever gone so generally and so righteously unheeded.

4. Mr. Wilson immediately after the Lusitania tragedy announced himself as the man "too proud to fight." He has made many weary and awkward efforts to explain away the force of that most disastrous utterance, which is to-day doing him more harm than all the invectives of his most furious critics.

5. Mr. Wilson capitulated to the demands of an importunate labor body without even the fair pretense of examining whether their demands were just or outrageous. To-day he is standing desperately on the defensive in all his efforts to convince the business men of the country and a very large part of the labor element that he is not their hidden adversary but their sincere friend.

These are the masterpieces of that nimble genius which *THE NEW REPUBLIC* would fain see continued in power. If Mr. Wilson should be reelected the guardian angel that protects "children, drunkards and the people of the United States" may well weary at last of the third part of his duty.

WILLIAM STEARNS DAVIS.

Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Foreign Policy the Issue

SIR: As a reader of your excellent paper and a supporter of the candidacy of Mr. Hughes, I really must object to Mr. Usher's statement of "The Case For Hughes." Aside from the remarkable proposition that the President does not control his own administration, a proposition which even Bryce and the gentleman with the Russian name could not make anybody believe, if they would, and aside from the very unfortunate taste of the personal attack on Mr. Wilson, the article, like Mr. Lippmann's on "The Case for Wilson," misses the real issue.

It is Mr. Roosevelt who sees true in this campaign. As I see the argument, it has resolved itself to this: On Mr. Wilson's side, his whole record is set forth, coupled even with that of the Democratic party since its origin, as the "issue." On the whole of the record, with emphasis on the domestic policy, we are to judge. Mr. Wilson's whole administration, taken all in all, is to be the deciding fact for the voter. On the other hand, Mr. Roosevelt makes the great prime issue not the whole record *in toto*, but one part of it, the central part. This, he thinks, is the foreign policy. He feels very deeply that this foreign policy is, at just this time, of such tremendous consequence as altogether to overwhelm the other parts of the general policy of the administration. The "issue" is just one of approving or utterly disapproving the present foreign policy, by passing a vote of confidence, or a vote of censure, putting in power the opposition. Who is leader of the opposition, or "what he would do," is not germane, provided he is himself guiltless, and represents the censure.

The question, then, becomes one of approving or disapproving Mr. Wilson's foreign policy. For myself, I very heartily join in Mr. Roosevelt's disapproval, shared,

apparently, by Mr. Lippmann. So I shall vote to throw out the "government," and put in the "opposition," on this one particular question, and I shall neglect every other consideration whatever, such as the general character, in history or in the pursuit of the two parties, or Mr. Wilson's attitude toward "business," or the tariff, or anything else except just foreign policy. As to Mr. Hughes, his campaign is colorless, so far as he himself is concerned; but his past record in public life is vigorous and positive, and as Mr. Taft says, his acts have carried out his words. So he may be accepted to represent the censure on the government. For once we must approximate the procedure at an English general election, sustaining or disapproving the administration on one particular issue. To "defeat Wilson" is thus indeed the real issue.

ROGER LAFFARTY.

Cleveland, Ohio.

Denies the Experiment

SIR: As an independent voter, I have been interested by your defense of Mr. Wilson's course in the recent eight-hour work and wages controversy. Particularly adroit is your late position, that, in view of the 600,000 railway stockholders as against 400,000 members of the Brotherhoods, Mr. Wilson's act in recommending the eight-hour law "was one riot of cowardice but of reckless daring." It occurs to me, however, that that situation hardly rebuts the accusation that Mr. Wilson was thinking of votes. That his course has had the effect of turning in his favor many thousands of labor votes, besides those of the Brotherhoods, is commonsense. Two concrete results are, however, noticeable: the appeal by Samuel Gompers to all labor to vote for Wilson because of the latter's aid to labor even though to but one part thereof; and, the hostile attitude of the several audiences Mr. Hughes has addressed, composed of workmen receiving no legislative benefit from Mr. Wilson's conduct. The conclusion is inescapable, I think, that although the President may have alienated several hundred thousand votes of the railway stockholders, he has won the several million votes of the laboring men of the country.

The most sagacious argument, however, which you have outlined, refers to the value of Mr. Wilson's legislation—may I call it that—as an empirical demonstration; that is, that the only way to discover whether the Adamson law is right or wrong is by a six-months trial. If Mr. Wilson had been actuated by your breadth of mind, I could follow him, but he spoils your otherwise able argument by himself reaching the very conclusion which you say needs six months to reach. He told an audience at Shadow Lawn that the reason the Adamson law was enacted was because it was "right." As nearly as I can make out, then, the investigative committee provided for, was to be a sop to the railways. If, as Mr. Wilson says, the Adamson law is right, what possible reason is there for investigating its results? We are driven to the conclusion that either Mr. Wilson is not as confident in his own mind as he is in public of the justice of the Adamson law, or else the investigative committee's report will have no effect one way or the other on its future. We have no guaranty from Mr. Wilson that, if continued in office, he will see to the repeal of the law if the committee finds it unjust to the railroads. Your presumption that the law would be repealed under such circumstances does not seem warranted.

PHILIP LOWRY.

Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Books and Things

NEITHER from his rather unusual name, which is Mullinub, nor from his good average face, which is red and round and optimistic, would you be likely to guess his tastes, which are all for cubism in plastic art, and in verse for Mallarmé and Edward Lear.

So you will readily understand that I, who have long known his likings, was surprised when he greeted me the other day with these words: "This campaign that Hughes is making is rather disappointing." Shielding my eyes from the pictures which ruin his walls I determined to improve the occasion. In a man like Mullinub serious interests should be encouraged.

"You say well," I began. "There has been no disappointment like Mr. Hughes's campaign in my time. The hope which I took with me to his notification meeting died there before the evening was over. It did not want to die. Fed on rumors and hearsay for dessert, with faith and my desires as its staple food, it had grown marvellously throughout its short life. It was conceived when Mr. Hughes's success at Chicago began to look certain, it was born on the day of his nomination, it died before he had finished his first speech. For I had hoped that Mr. Hughes, supplied by God or nature with a stronger brain than any other Republican possibility except Mr. Root, would tell me quite plainly what ought to have been the conduct of the United States since the outbreak of the war, would outline in large firm strokes an American policy, would separate the risks avoided by such a policy from those other risks which he would be willing to face and for which it was our business to prepare.

"Yes, I acknowledge that I had such a hope. I did imagine once upon a time that Mr. Hughes was a stilled fountain of pure wisdom, eager for a chance to play. Like many hundred thousand Americans I had been perplexed in the extreme by the war. I longed for a leader who could see our American goal, our way to it, and the difficulties and dangers on our way. Well, Mr. Hughes has been doing his best to convince us all that such a picture had not the merit of likeness. It was the work of a painter who had dipped his brush in his wishes. Call no man wise until he has broken silence."

Mullinub's face, while I was speaking my piece, changed from surprise, which it expresses easily, to disappointment, which it expresses with effort and in spite of obstacles.

"I don't understand what you're driving at," he said. "What do you expect from a campaign, anyway?"

"As a citizen," I answered with dignity, "I either want a campaign to result in the doing of certain things or else I want it to teach me what things I want done."

"Oh," said Mullinub. "I get you. So you are still at that stage of development? Perhaps I was just as bad before I grew up. Nowadays I am interested in campaigning as a fine art. Absolute music, absolute painting, absolute poetry, absolute campaigning—these are the things I go in for. In each of these arts I seek the master who can reduce the irrelevant and impertinent interest, the illustrative, representative, informing, practical element, to a minimum. The greatest master would abolish it altogether.

"It was years ago that I had my first glimpse of an ideal toward which many candidates strove but which no candidate ever quite attained. It was then that I conceived my white and pure and stainless ideal, then that I first imagined a candidate who would take the stump and

stay on it without saying anything about any subject upon which his opinion could conceivably be an occasion of curiosity to any son or daughter of woman.

"Mr. McKinley in his first campaign might have reached this ideal. I still believe he was capable, if only he had had the right trainers and backers, of penetrating deep into the autumn months of 1896 without uttering the word gold—of avoiding this word for as many weeks as Mr. Hughes succeeded in avoiding the word Lusitania. But it was not to be. The gods couldn't see it. Mr. McKinley's trainers and backers would not let him be silent. He passed into the White House with one great possibility of his nature unfulfilled.

"But at Carnegie Hall, where I went sadly, reluctantly, in obedience to major force, I was thrilled by Mr. Hughes's speech. Perhaps I had found my absolute campaigner after all these years of waiting. With trembling hands I took out my watch and timed the speaker. Half an hour of Mexico, untainted by any attempt at a clear statement of what he would have done if he had been President. Glorious! Ten minutes about the European war, and never a ray of light. Superb! My heart beat wildly. Perhaps here, before my eyes, where they had never expected to find him, was a candidate who could go through a campaign without saying anything at all!

"It seemed too good to be true and it was too good to be quite true. At the very end of the evening came his fall. He spoke of woman suffrage in words which though not unforgivably clear could nevertheless mean only one thing. Too bad, too bad. And he might so easily have said even upon this subject something that would not have damaged his record for noncommittalness. He might have said, preserving the same attitude toward woman suffrage that he has taken and kept toward so many other questions, that women were entitled both to all their existing legal rights and also to such other rights as might hereafter be given them by either state or federal action.

"In what Mr. Hughes has said about the tariff he has been equally untrue to his highest or most noncommittal self. And he could so easily have been true. He had only to say that our tariff laws ought to be framed with wisdom and enforced with firmness, to repeat this over and over, and to say no more about it.

"Still, although he has not attained my ideal, his silence upon the important questions of the campaign has been gratifying, very gratifying. Perhaps he comes as near to being the ideal campaigner, the candidate who says exactly nothing, as imperfect man can come in this imperfect world. I do not count, as things which spoil the technique of silence, what Mr. Hughes has said about President Wilson's appointments to the civil and diplomatic service. While the European war is on, while so many of my inartistic and practical fellow-countrymen are both dissatisfied with our national conduct and unable to say what it ought to have been, discussion of the Durand case, like discussion of the Brown, Jones and Robinson cases, is really a form of silence."

"Then why are you disappointed?" I asked. "He has had least to say about the most important subjects."

"Because of his slip about the Lusitania. He ought not to have been so definite. He spoke against his will, I admit, and after a wonderful delay, beautifully sustained. But I hope he won't do it again. Somebody in the crowd that heard him is said to have shouted 'you said something!' These words must have made him realize, in bitterness, that he had fallen short of his ideal."

P. L.