

the Russian democracy that the Allied peace formula will really work? But the Russian democracy must be convinced, or Germany will have to be beaten without Russian aid.

To secure a definition of the issues of the war in such a way as to meet the requirements of the Russian democracy is peculiarly the obligation of America. Like Russia, the United States expressly repudiates all purposes of national aggrandizement. Like Russia, the United States desires nothing but a just and lasting peace. America, like Russia, has a democracy capable in the end of overruling the decision of its leaders. Both democracies can be induced to put forth their full energies in the war only if the objects it is sought to win recommend themselves to the plain man as reasonable and just. We believe that the purposes of the democratic majorities in the countries allied with us are free from the taint of aggrandizement. We believe that their liberal leaders are earnestly striving to establish conditions of organized internationalism that will make a permanent peace possible. But it is important that this be made immediately clear to the Russian Republic. Justice to the Russian soldier who is expected to suffer and die demands this. It is also important that the American Republic be assured that the war will not be continued for purely national ends, after the requirements of international peace have become capable of realization. If the Russian débacle has opened the eyes of the statesmen to the necessity of securing democratic validation of their policies, it is far from certain that it will be enumerated among the untoward events of history.

## Roosevelt and Baker

SOME time last spring, when Colonel Roosevelt was asking the government's permission to raise a volunteer division for service in France, it became known that he and Secretary Baker were exchanging letters and telegrams. What would the betting have been at that time upon this correspondence? About five to two, perhaps, that its publication would exhibit the best side of neither, and heavier odds against its exhibiting the best side of both. Colonel Roosevelt was addressing a secretary whose official superior he had often attacked, in public and bitterly. Recollection of these criticisms, one would have said, could not very well be absent from the mind of either letter-writer. Nor was it easy to imagine Colonel Roosevelt never remembering, when writing to persuade a Secretary of War, that not so very long ago he was in a position to make his decisions and give his orders, leaving a mere Secretary of War free to

execute those orders or to resign. And on Secretary Baker's side, one would have supposed, the temptation would now and then grow irresistible to sound the official note, to drown out his correspondent by pulling out the authoritative stop.

The actual letters, published apparently in full in the Metropolitan Magazine for August, prove that layers of the odds above mentioned would have been all wrong. One begins to read with a fear that Colonel Roosevelt will do as he has done on some other occasions, that the accusation of falsehood, not made in this letter or the next or the next, will nevertheless appear at last. Never was fear more completely disappointed. From the beginning to the end Colonel Roosevelt calls no man a liar. The notion that any one could have been lying to him does not seem to have crossed his mind. His respect for Secretary Baker's office, manifest at the outset, turns into cordiality after Mr. Baker has called on him in Washington, and from that time on his tone never loses its warmth, not even when he is pouncing upon something which Secretary Baker has said and which gives him, as he thinks, a fresh opportunity to drive his argument home. No doubt Colonel Roosevelt is writing under self-restraint, but the effort does not show. He has the air of being unguarded and at ease, writing with the old copiousness and detail, writing to his correspondent in the single hope of changing that correspondent's mind, and not writing for the record.

A similar pleasant unguardedness marks Secretary Baker's letters. Here is no chilly official caution, no uneasiness lest he should commit himself to something, although a warier man might have thought that caution was the great lesson to be learned from a study of some other men's correspondence with Colonel Roosevelt. Secretary Baker expresses his mind frankly when he has made it up, and does not pretend to have made it up before he has in fact done so. He falls into one mistake, when he speaks of the "sentimental value" which might "attach to a representation of the United States in France by a former President of the United States." Colonel Roosevelt fastens on this use of "sentimental" for "moral," and makes a good deal of it, but by no means the most, if we take what he has done on past occasions as a standard. Why not? Probably because Colonel Roosevelt could not help noticing a trait which gives Secretary Baker's letters much of their pleasantness. They are written by a man who is not thinking, who does not have to think, of the official respect due from a Secretary of War to a former President. They are filled with a cordial first-hand awareness of Colonel Roosevelt's general size and significance, with a belief that he is trying

to do his country what he believes to be a service.

Of course the most ticklish parts of the correspondence are the Colonel's remarks about his war record, and the Secretary's replies. But if the Colonel does praise himself he does so with a special purpose, and with a heartiness which is merely one instance of a general disposition to see the performance of the United States in the war with Spain as several sizes larger than life. Secretary Baker's nearest approach to impatience is when he reminds the Colonel that this record is on file in the War Department. But the Secretary never reaches impatience. Colonel Roosevelt seldom reaches it. Neither shows signs of making an effort to keep impatience under control. Each must have been trying to the other, but of this the letters leave no record. Their correspondence is almost genial, and more than almost creditable to both, an exchange of letters between a man of rather generous nature and a man who cannot believe he will fail to persuade.

## The Permanent Food Problem

**F**IVE factors have to be reckoned with in our war policies about food so far as they are directed to a permanent improvement of the situation and not merely to meeting temporary war emergencies. Two of the most important, land and labor, are so bound up with general social problems that they cannot be isolated as distinctly agricultural questions. Although the war ought to give a great impetus to a consideration of these questions in their larger aspects, it cannot be said that much which is significant has yet occurred. So far as the relation of the better social control of land to the food problem is concerned, the single-taxers are on the job, as usual, but seem to have a monopoly of the agitation. The situation in respect to a far-seeing policy for labor appears almost equally dead intellectually. Of course, the needs of the war with respect to soldiers to be drafted and workers to be left are acute and compel serious consideration. The dangers of relaxing such standards as have been painfully achieved are conspicuous enough to secure active attention. But up to the present it appears to be tacitly assumed that the United States will not face in the future any crisis of unemployment. Or rather, perhaps, it is assumed that it must do so as matter of course, that the crisis must take us unawares and unprepared in the future as in the past, and that it is out of the question to take advantage of the machinery of registration and organization evolved from war necessities to achieve permanent agencies of supervision, publicity and distribution for increasing the

mobility of labor to prevent the recurrence of congested unemployment. Perhaps the problems growing out of the efficient return to steady employment of the forces released from army service when peace comes will later compel a foresighted planning which does not as yet show any signs of existence. It certainly will argue badly for our intellectual competency in social matters if the entire war period passes with exclusive preoccupation with the labor problems of the moment. If the time is reached when constructive planning for a more effective and constant distribution of the supply of labor is actively undertaken, it will be found that the relation of farm to factory labor is a problem of constantly increasing intensity.

The other three factors are food storage, transportation and marketing. They are capable, relatively at least, of isolation. In discussions of methods for increasing farm productivity, the question of storage receives little popular attention, and yet it is the key to any successful approach. Everyone hears and wonders about the stories of rotting fruits, ungathered and undug vegetables. Few realize that the explanation is the lack of the farmer's control of carrying facilities, both in capital to hold goods against delayed marketing and in the physical facilities of storage. Consequently the alternative to enormous waste is selling at a price fixed by the seasonal glut, a price which would only add to loss already incurred. So widespread is the lack of elementary knowledge on this subject that many seem to think that the farmer's animus against the middleman is directed against the retail dealer. Of course the middleman whom the farmer has in mind is the speculative intermediary whose control of capital, elevators, warehouses and cold storage plants is such that he forces the farmer to sell at the price fixed by a glut of perishable commodities while he sells to the consumer at a price fixed by persistent need distributed over a long period—this at the best, leaving out of account all the opportunities furnished by the existing mechanism for "carrying" agricultural commodities—Boards of Trade for grain, butter, eggs and vegetables—for artificial manipulations.

Just the rôles to be played respectively by state-aided collective action and by voluntary coöperation cannot be foretold. It is reasonably certain, however, that in many localities private coöperation cannot be obtained without at least a preliminary boost from governmental action, proceeding from township, county or state according to conditions. The producer and shipper in all lines except farming has at his command some economic mechanism which enables him to assume the burden of carrying goods from the beginning of production over the long interval up to sale to the final