

Constantinople. They will have all the advantages of a trust controlling the trade with the Middle East, but the disadvantage of being unable or of refusing to use the natural overland route from Constantinople to the North Sea. Constantinople in the hands of Russia would be a point at which the trade of the overland route was trans-shipped to the Mediterranean route in order to avoid benefiting the tracks of Central Europe, instead of being the most important junction on the direct route between the Middle East and the Atlantic coast.

The disadvantage to the Central Powers is obvious. They will not receive their natural proportion of carrying trade and will not be able to trade except on sufferance with the Middle East. The result to the Allies, and ultimately the disadvantage to neutrals, will be that they will become a conspiracy in restraint of trade.

It may well be doubted whether there can be any permanence in such a situation. The truth is that each route has its advantages and that the general good of all nations, including America, demands the development of the new trade route by international coöperation, and in combination rather than in competition with the Suez Canal. Neither party in the present war can really exploit the overland route to its full capacity except with the coöperation of the other. If the Central Powers win, they cannot afford to have no dealings with British India. If the Allies win, they cannot use the route to real advantage without its continuation through the territory of the Central Powers. If a policy of economic war is to be pursued, it must lead to further military wars in the future in which the Central Powers will look forward to the conquest of British India, and the Allies to the complete destruction of Germany. Only the criminally insane can regard such a possibility as tolerable.

Moreover, America is far more closely involved than might appear. It would be an exaggeration to say that the struggle for the Near East and the overland route to the Middle East produced the present war. But it was a great factor in so doing, and without it there would probably have been no war. Therefore, it is clear that the struggle for a new trade line parallel in part to the Suez route may produce a great war. But unless an economic as well as a political peace be made, these two parallel routes will be prolonged across the Atlantic. The British line will go to Halifax. The present diversion of sailings has more than a temporary significance, for it ought not to be forgotten that some at least of the present British government have always been the exponents of the policy of a Zollverein for the British Empire. The German line will go to the

United States. There is already in existence a prolongation of both these Atlantic lines across the North American continent which link them up with the Far East.

If economic war is to continue, these great world trade routes will act as induction coils, generating ill feeling throughout their whole length. The possibility is not one which we can afford to regard complacently, and the efforts of our diplomats ought to be directed to securing economic even more than military peace.

K. POOL.

## Much Ado About Lawson

HOWEVER seriously the country took the "peace leak," the investigation instituted by the House Committee on Rules has not been a dignified performance. It is interesting not because it attracted widespread attention, or because the Secretary of State was subpoenaed as a witness, but because it has revealed dramatically to the country the character of a congressional investigation. The string of useless questions, the mock gravity of the investigators, their failure to realize what they were investigating—these characteristics, common to all committee hearings of Congress, have been shown through the magnifying glass of public attention.

On the first day of the hearings perhaps five hundred people went to see "Tom" Lawson. They went as they might go to a circus, crowding around the witness, standing on chairs in the background. The investigating committee, fully aware of the part it was playing, sat behind a long table on a platform at one end of the room. Since the audience was forbidden to smoke, most of the committeemen puffed large cigars. Each had a yellow tablet before him, on which he wrote anxiously the testimony which did not seem to bear directly upon the case. "The peace note was sent to all belligerent and neutral nations," said Secretary Lansing. Each committeeman worked earnestly at his yellow pad. "It would not have been courteous to divulge the contents of the note before it had been delivered to the foreign powers." Scratch—scratch—scratch—went the pencils. It was a perpetual game of hide-and-seek, with the investigators always behind and constantly losing ground. Now and then they stopped in bewilderment and took a fresh start. No one would read the notes they made. Probably they would be unable to read them themselves. But the congressional hearing, especially if it is well attended, demands a great show of deliberation on the part of the usually unimportant congressman, now become a leading figure in the play.

The cross-examination of the Secretary of State was an important matter. Every examiner was certain to be quoted all over the country if he asked questions enough. In that respect the hearing was unusual. But in the nature of the questions asked, and the complete stupidity which each examiner confused with the proper judicial attitude, there was nothing to distinguish this cross-examination from those that have been held on military training, federal incorporation and other matters. Mr. Lansing began his testimony with a matter-of-fact account of the note's history. It had been received from the White House at four o'clock on Tuesday afternoon. The Secretary had called in Solicitor Polk and Mr. Woolsey, the chief law adviser attached to his office. After they had discussed the method of despatching the note it was turned over to the telegraphers. It was decided to make the note public on Thursday, allowing two days for it to reach the far-away countries.

This ended Mr. Lansing's direct testimony, and the cross-examination began. Mr. Henry, chairman of the committee, asked Mr. Lansing what time the note had been received from the White House. Mr. Lansing replied at four o'clock on Tuesday afternoon. Mr. Henry inquired who had been called in to discuss the method of its dispatch. Mr. Lansing replied that he had called in Solicitor Polk and Mr. Woolsey, the chief law adviser attached to his office. Mr. Henry continued conscientiously until, amid much note-taking, he had made a complete aura of Mr. Lansing's direct testimony. This concluded his cross-examination, and gave the floor to Mr. Campbell, who had been fugging at the leash. Mr. Campbell, now the center of all eyes, sprang into the breach. At what time, if you please, did Mr. Lansing receive the note from the White House? Who did he call in to discuss the method of its dispatch? And all this time the official stenographer was actually taking down a record of the proceedings.

By the time the thimble had got around to Mr. Chipperfield, at the right end of the table, new facts had been brought to light. It developed that Mr. Lansing had a confidential clerk—a Mr. R. C. Sweet. New scratching of pencils. R. C. or R. B.? General craning of necks over neighbors' pads. It also developed that Mr. Polk had a confidential clerk and that Mr. Woolsey had a confidential clerk. Furthermore, the note had been sent to forty-three belligerent and neutral nations. "Can you," asked Mr. Chipperfield, "give an idea as to the location of these countries without naming them?" And that also was recorded by the official stenographer. "They are in Europe, South America, Central America, Asia and Africa," said Mr. Lansing. A fresh outburst of note-taking.

"Each of these foreign Powers has the ability to de-code our secret dispatches?" asked Mr. Chipperfield.

"They are de-coded by our own diplomatic officials," replied Mr. Lansing.

"It amounts to the same thing," said Mr. Chipperfield thoughtfully.

And that, too, the stenographer put down in his book.

The questions did not always come so spontaneously. Now and then the gentleman who held the thimble was nudged by his neighbor and a whispered consultation took place. It was like a football team with its signals crossed. Apparently it did not disconcert Mr. Lansing, but it was at least embarrassing for the onlookers. Then the query would come: What time, Mr. Secretary, did you receive the note from the White House?

The investigation had its high spots, however. Toward the end of Mr. Lansing's testimony, Mr. Chipperfield, who had been asking the Secretary whom he had called in to discuss the method of despatching the note, took a new tack. "What time were the notes delivered in the foreign countries?" he asked.

"There were forty-three of them," replied Mr. Lansing. "It would be impossible to say what time they were delivered."

"Approximately what time?"

"I couldn't say."

"The day, then, Mr. Secretary?"

"The eighteenth."

At this point Mr. Chipperfield took on stature. One might have thought he was about to cut the Gordian knot. Amid a silence that was chilling he leaned forward impressively and asked:

"Of December?"

One can never be too careful about the months—and the stenographer put down another question to Mr. Chipperfield's credit.

Five or six years ago there was a play in New York called "The Pink Lady." What plot it had concerned a merchant who had lost a rare bowl, and now offered the hand of his daughter as a reward to the finder. An applicant appeared.

"You have found my bowl?" asked the merchant.

"I believe I have."

"Describe it," said the merchant.

"Well, it is elliptical—and the four seasons are painted on its sides."

"Ah! but can you name them?" demanded the merchant.

"Spring," said the young man with a good deal of care, "summer, fall and winter."

I have forgotten whether the old merchant ever recovered his bowl, but I remember that he gave

away his daughter. He may still be playing the small cities of the West. "The Pink Lady" was a great success. But if he is without employment he might come to Washington. He had a true eye for Congressional investigation.

CHARLES MERZ.

## Odilon Redon

WITH the passing of this rare artist during the late summer months, we are conscious of the silencing of one of the foremost lyricists in painting, one of the most delicate spirits among those who have painted pictures so thoroughly replete with charm, pictures of such real distinction and merit. For of true charm, of true grace, of true melodic, Redon was certainly the master. I think no one has coveted the vision so much as, certainly no more than, has this artist, possessed of the love of all that is dreamlike and fleeting in the more transitory aspect of earthly things. No one has ever felt more that fleeting treasure abiding in the moment, no one has been more jealous of the bounty contained in the single glancing of the eye upward to infinity or downward among the minuter fragments at his feet.

It would seem as if Redon had surely walked amid gardens, so much of the morning is in each of his fragile works. There seems always to be hovering in them the breath of those recently spent dawns of which he was the eager spectator, never quite the full sunlight of the later day. Essentially he was the worshiper of the lip of flower, of dust upon the moth wing, of the throat of young girl, or brow of young boy, of the sudden flight of bird, the soft going of light clouds in a windless sky. These were the gentle stimulants to his most virile expression. Nor did his pictures ever contain more; they never struggled beyond the quality of legend, at least as I know them. He knew the loveliness in a profile, he saw always the evanescences of light upon light and purposeless things. The action or incident in his pictures was never more than the touch of some fair hand gently and exquisitely brushing some swinging flower. He desired implicitly to believe in the immortality of beauty, that things or entities once they were beautiful could never die, at least for him. I followed faithfully for a time these fine fragments in those corners of Paris where they could be found, and there was always sure to be in them, always and ever that perfect sense of all that is melodic in the universe.

I do not know much of his early career as an artist. I have read passages from letters which he wrote not so long ago, in which he recounts

with tenderness the dream life of his childhood, how he used to stand in the field for hours or lie quietly upon some cool hill shaded with young leaves, watching the clouds transforming themselves into wing shapes and flower shapes, staining his fancy with the magic of their delicate color and form—indeed, it would seem as if all things had for him been born somewhere in the clouds and had condescended to an earthward existence for a brief space, the better to show their rarity of grace for the interval. Although obviously rendered from the object, they were still-lives which seemed to take on a kind of cloud life during the very process of his creation. They paid tribute to that simple and unaffected statement of his—"I have fashioned an art after myself." Neither do I know just how long he was the engraver and just how long he was the painter—it is evident everywhere that his line is the line of the fastidious artist on steel and stone.

Beyond these excessively frail renderings of his whether in oil or in pastel, I do not know him, but I am thinking always in the presence of them that he listened very attentively and with more than a common ear to the great masters in music, absorbing at every chance all that was in them for him. He had in his spirit the classical outline of music, with nothing directly revolutionary, no sign of what we call revolt other than the strict adherence to personal relationship, no other prejudice than the artist's reaction against all that is not really refined in art, with but one consuming ardor, and that to render with extreme tranquillity everything delicate and lovely in passing things. There is never anything in his pictures outside the conventional logic of beauty, and if they are at all times ineffably sweet, it is only because Redon himself was like them, joyfully living out the days because they were for him ineffably sweet, too. Most of all it is Redon who has rendered with exceptional elegance and extreme artistry, the fragment.

It is in his pictures, replete with exquisiteness, that one finds the true analogy to lyric poetry. This lyricism makes them seem mostly Greek—often I have thought them Persian, sometimes again, Indian; certainly he learned something from the Chinese in their porcelains and in their embroidery. I am sure he has been fond of these outer influences, these Oriental suggestions which were for him the spiritual equivalent from the past for his spontaneous ideas, for he, too, had much of all this magic, as he had much of the hypnotic quality of jewelry and precious stones in all his so delicate pictures, firelike in their subtle brilliancy. They have always seemed to contain this suggestion for me: flowers that seemed to be