

# The New REPUBLIC

*A Journal of Opinion*

VOLUME XVII

New York, Saturday, January, 25, 1919

Number 221

## Contents

Editorial Notes.....	353
Leading Editorials	
Conciliation for Russia?.....	355
Woman's Work After the War.....	358
Prohibition as a Warning.....	359
Shipping Control After the Peace.....	361
General Articles	
Roosevelt Now.....William Hard	363
The New British Parliament.....Sidney Webb	364
The Paderewski Adventure.....Albert C. Barnes	367
Billy and the World War.....Florence Woolston	369
Bundles.....	371
Shut In (Verse).....Hazel Hall	373
Correspondence.....	374
Books and Things.....P. L.	376
After the Play.....Q. K.	377
Reviews of Books	
Arcadian England.....H. J. L.	378
Baedeker Describes Parnassus.....Conrad Aiken	379
A Biologist on War.....	380
New Paths for Cities.....Charles A. Beard	381

NOT very much in the current news from Paris can be considered encouraging, but one extremely satisfactory development of the utmost importance seems to be taking place. There is an increasingly close cooperation between the British and American governments. They appear to act together in relation to the great majority of the questions about which grave differences of opinion have arisen. If this development persists and the present tendency to cooperation is confirmed, liberal opinion in this country will have reason to feel profoundly relieved. British assistance is indispensable to President Wilson. Without it he will not only be powerless in Europe but he will have a much more difficult time in persuading his own country to support him. United the two nations can gradually overcome even the stiffest opposition of the Continental European Powers. Divided the two nations will be impotent to prevent the annexationist ambitions of their continental allies from corrupting the treaty of peace and impairing the vitality of any League of Nations which may be constituted as a result of the Peace Con-

ference. The whole cause of international cooperation in the future hangs on their ability to do away with minor differences for the sake of their common interest in a demilitarized world, whose system of public law is reenforced by sea power—and whose principles derive from the utmost freedom of marine communication. Yet this common interest, powerful as it is, will not bring about an agreement unless it is supplemented by a willingness on both sides to sacrifice something for the sake of agreement and by a clear understanding of the interdependence of the two nations and the supplementary character of their vital interests. The disposition to accept the necessary sacrifices and to contrive an agreement exists, we believe, to a larger extent in Great Britain than in this country, and that fact imposes a heavy responsibility on all Americans to understand how far the whole cause of international cooperation depends upon cooperation between the English speaking peoples.

OPEN covenants, openly arrived at, won a partial victory through the determined efforts of the American and Allied press. We shall not need to sit in darkness only occasionally relieved by the dim flashes of such official communiqués as we are now receiving. But the victory was only partial. At the meetings to which the press representatives will have access, not much is likely to happen beyond the final acceptance of agreements arrived at by hidden processes in secret sessions. There is here a violation of the spirit of the first of the President's fourteen points, but it is difficult to see how it could have been otherwise. The diplomats will naturally follow the time honored custom of beginning with the most immoderate, outrageous demands, with the expectation that thereby they will be more likely to get the less they really want, or the still less they ought to have. Now, with the public opinion of the world in its present condition of super-excitability, would the diplomats care to expose their pre-

liminary bargaining demands in the full light of day? Never; and the requirement of full publicity would drive the preliminary negotiations out of the conference and into the cabinets or salons. About all that we can reasonably expect is that every stage in the process of negotiation should be minutely recorded, with the understanding that when political stability has been restored the records will be made public. That would be something of a check upon exaggerated claims. The proposal would meet resistance, but not the desperate resistance that would be evoked by the proposal to feed out to the peoples day by day the evidence that diplomats are the same crafty and designing animals we have believed them and they have always been.

WHEN Marshal Foch told the American correspondents that France needed and would demand a Rhine frontier between herself and Germany, he was giving expression, not to a political object which came into existence as the result of recent German aggression, but the most persistent of the territorial ambitions of France. The declared purpose for which French armies fought both during the wars of Louis XIV and of the French Revolution was the so-called "natural boundaries" of France, viz., the Rhine, the Alps and the Pyrenees. If the French government does demand the incorporation of a Rhine frontier in the treaty of peace, it will be attempting to appropriate, as the result of American and British assistance, the military control of a slice of German territory which French armies at a time when France was the dominant military power on the Continent sought in vain to conquer. It is inconceivable that the attempt will succeed. It would be repeating the inexcusable mistake which Bismarck committed when he took Metz so as to obtain an advantage over France in the next war. It would be pursuing the suicidal policy of providing safeguards against an attack from Germany which would themselves constitute an inevitable provocation for the attack. The result would be the thorough-going and the permanent militarization of Europe. It may be impossible to prevent this consolidation of military rule in Europe, but if it is impossible, one result seems certain. The American army which President Wilson brings back with him from France will never be used to defend a Rhine frontier purchased by the future subordination of millions of Germans to French military law. France will have to choose between a strategic frontier which divides the Germans west of the Rhine from their fellow countrymen and American assistance in guaranteeing the future security of France and other European peoples.

TAKEN at its face value President Poincaré's address is extremely conciliatory toward the policies for which America stands in the Peace Conference. The French President alludes to the fourteen propositions "unanimously adopted by the great Allied Powers" and calls upon the peace congress to establish a general League of Nations "which will be the supreme guaranty against any fresh assault upon the rights of peoples." He subscribes to the view that "the time is no more when diplomats could meet to redraw with authority the map of the empires on the corner of a table." "Justice," he says, "banishes the dream of conquest and imperialism, contempt for national will, the arbitrary exchange of provinces between states." The rights of peoples great or small are to be respected, as also the rights of ethnical and religious minorities. President Poincaré demands restitution and reparation for the peoples and individuals who have been despoiled and maltreated, but in the name of justice, not for the sake of crushing a hated enemy. So far as appears on the surface, there is no particular in which the aims of President Poincaré differ from those of President Wilson.

NOT much light is reflected from the exchange of courtesies represented by President Wilson's speech nominating Clemenceau as Chairman of the Peace Conference, and by the French Premier's reply. President Wilson, according to his custom, laid stress upon the fundamental harmonies of the case. He assured the world that Clemenceau's purpose "is set toward the goal of achievement toward which all our faces are turned." Clemenceau was no less accommodating. "The program of this conference has been laid down by President Wilson. It is no longer the peace of a more or less vast territory, no longer the peace of continents; it is the peace of nations that is to be made." There is no sacrifice Clemenceau is not ready to make for the League of Nations, but "on the condition that we endeavor impartially to conciliate interests, apparently contradictory, on the higher plane of a greater, happier and better humanity." In plain English, Clemenceau means to differ in the beginning, if need be, but agree in the end.

ALUCID and well informed English correspondent interprets the result of the British elections as a verdict in retrospect upon the conduct during the war of parties and political leaders. The electors made up their minds whom they wanted to punish and whom they wanted to approve. They defeated Snowden, Macdonald, Asquith and Runciman, whereas they gave huge majorities to labor leaders such as J. H. Thomas. He regards the result, consequently, not as a ca-

lamity for democracy nor as a symptom that the extension of the suffrage has launched England on a system of veiled autocracy. The electorate was trying to express real preferences, but its attempt partly miscarried because the mind of the country was travelling, as it had throughout the war, from three to six months behind the march of events. Yet this inability of the British voters to keep up with the events when events are moving with such rapidity is in itself a grave calamity. They will soon wake up with a start to the new situation—and will discover how completely their present state of mind is misrepresented by a predominatingly Unionist House of Commons. What happens then will depend on the Prime Minister; but in the opinion of our correspondent, Lloyd George is improved by his success and nothing more will be heard of the odious pledges and promises which disgraced the election. Those pledges have, however, already contributed substantially to the misery and uncertainty of Central Europe; Germany is fast moving down hill. The continuance of the blockade without any provision for the supply of raw materials, the delay in despatching foodstuffs, are accelerating the pace. To read the German newspapers is like watching a man sliding down a precipice and clutching desperately at the soil as he slips by.

THE German elections show clearly that Bolshevism is not yet deeply rooted or widely distributed in the German population. The moderates have won practically everything. The Majority Socialists and the German Democrats will be able between them to control the constituent assembly and establish the kind of government they choose, and that means a democratic government not differing widely from the western models. There is only one hope for the extremists, whether Socialists of the Spartacus group or Junkers and Pan Germanists, and that lies in a new revolution. No doubt they will try to organize such a revolution, but they have small prospects of success if the Allied governments permit the adequate provisioning of Germany and the restoration of industrial activity. That is the crux of the whole matter. Do the Allies wish order to be reestablished in Germany? They can have their wish granted, so much the elections prove. But with order reestablished will not Germany soon become a formidable commercial competitor? Undoubtedly. The Allied nations have their choice between a Germany rent by successive revolutions and generating a Bolshevik menace for the whole world, and a prosperous Germany quite able to fight for her share in the world's trade. One or the other; which shall it be?

“IT must be remembered that most of the ‘news’ printed about Bolshevism came, not from Russia, but from the enemies of the Bolsheviks, and most of it was false. But it is true that if you keep a man restrained, oppressed, censor and spy upon him, threaten him with personal violence, and then suddenly set him free, he will run wild. He will become drunk with freedom, and this is exactly what has happened in Russia.” Guess the origin of this “palliation of Bolshevik crime.” The *Novy Mir*, organ of Bolshevism in America? The *Liberator*? No; an interview with Manuel Komroff, just back from Russia, published in the *New York Times Magazine* of January 19. From the point of view of the *Times* those heresies are partly redeemed by the fact that Komroff is still for intervention to save Russia from Bolshevism and worse—for there is something worse, in his opinion, syndicalism and anarchism.

THAT the Paderewski group is exercising blanket control over news issuing from Poland is apparent from the nature of the reports that reach us. They are uniformly innocuous blarney concerning the new ruler or insidious representations concerning the opposition. Not even plain and unmistakable lying is beneath the dignity of the information bureau of the new regime. A dispatch points with confidence to the approaching prosperity of a free Poland under the new cabinet, quotes gravely a proposition by the imposed premier for a monument of Colonel House in every town and village of the reorganized state, and contrives to shelve Pilsudski and discredit the socialists in one brief, false, deprecatory, concluding paragraph: “His (Paderewski’s) greatest task was to handle General Joseph Pilsudski, the military head of the country, who wished to permit M. Paderewski to form a new ministry, but was afraid of precipitating a civil war because of the threats of the socialists.”

## Conciliation for Russia?

THE recent proposal by the British government of a more conciliatory policy towards Soviet Russia is an amazing and an encouraging fact. It is amazing because until recently all the official statements about Russia dished up both by the British Foreign Office and the American State Department accused the Soviet Republic of being essentially and exclusively a criminal conspiracy against human liberty and progress. A large part of British and American public opinion accepted this indictment as literally true. It was astonished and bewildered by the attempt to conciliate a government which had been alleged to be