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The Week

HAVE Poland and Russia signed an armistice? What a few weeks ago seemed impossible, with Pilsudski urging an "advance to the complete destruction of the enemy," and Trotsky calling on Russia to face a winter campaign, may at last be accomplished. Of the two, Poland is plainly victorious, and she has the best of what was quite frankly a bargain. But any peace with Poland would also be a victory for Moscow. The Russians have given in to the Polish demand for a boundary far to the east of the line set by the Allies; for several million more White Russians, Ukrainians and Jews to rule over and digest if possible; and a freakish "corridor" running east of Lithuania to the Baltic. If the Bolsheviki thus find themselves separated from Lithuania and lose much purely Russian territory, they gain enormously, as peace with Poland would leave General Baron Wrangel their last external foe.

FOR a humiliating peace with Poland seems a price not too dear to pay for what the Soviet leaders must consider a vitally necessary offensive

against Wrangel. The Baron's position is not comfortable. If it is true that Wrangel's bandit partner, Makhno, has deserted to the Reds, it may well be because he sees signs of reinforcements coming from the Polish front, and wishes to be found moving in the same direction as the Red tide when it arrives. Nevertheless Wrangel is a real menace to Soviet power. The French have sent him General Weygand, the savior of Warsaw. His line, which has been steadily moving northward, now extends roughly from Kiev to Rostov through Kharkov, cutting through a good part of the Donets coal field. Coal is a vital prop of Bolshevik supremacy. But they have other enemies! Hunger and typhus are as efficient as ever. And rumors of strikes, revolts, peace demonstrations; a reported rising of Social-Revolutionaries at Nizhni-Novgorod hint at dark reasons why peace with Poland must be made in haste.

WITH the Polish peace Soviet Russia will gain something else much more valuable, for on her settlement with the Poles awaits the signing of a trade agreement with Great Britain. The prospects are bright for an early signature, perhaps within a month. British official pressure had its share in making the Poles yearn for peace, for there was some \$20,000,000 worth of signed contracts in the background. The agreement as reported to the Tribune by Arthur Draper in London is not one-sided. It is supposed in Great Britain to be a purely commercial one. That it means more than mere trade is plain from a reading of its terms, which include removal of all obstacles in the way of a resumption of trade; extension of all facilities to British and Russian merchants; appointment of trade representatives and official agents to visé passports; post, telegraph and wireless privileges for each country; the acknowledgement of passports as legal documents; recognition by Soviet Russia of Tsarist debts to Brit-

ish subjects, agreement by Great Britain not to attach gold securities exported from Russia in payment for imports. How far does such an arrangement fall short of "recognition"?

PROFESSOR ZEIDLER, head of the Petrograd Red Cross, has escaped to Finland and tells "of the agony of a dying city": "Petrograd is facing a dreadful phantom of epidemics. Thousands are already dying every month of spotted, abdominal and intermittent typhus; dysentery, Spanish influenza, smallpox, pulmonary diseases, hunger and exhaustion. . . . The healthy people of Petrograd have puffed faces and baggy eyes . . . The hospitals are overflowing with dropsy victims, mostly women, elderly men and children. . . . Almost all the operations result in complications such as pneumonia and ulcers. . . . Medical supplies are very scarce . . . there are only two thermometers for 150 patients . . . the manufacture of 30,000 coffins a month is insufficient. . . ." The headlines fling this raw piece of horror at us without comment. Readers will shudder at it much or little, according to political temperament. And there will be some too, of course, to note with a ghoulish satisfaction this latest proof of the "fallacy of Bolshevism." There is another way of looking at it: a government—it is our own—that has placed a blockade on the shipment of medical supplies to a country where there is such suffering as Prof. Zeidler describes is guilty of the cruellest act ever committed in the name of the American people.

WHAT is Austria to do? She is a capital without a country, starving, hopeless and unemployed. Union with Hungary would be a partnership of beggars. The other Danubian nations surround her with an iron ring of hatred. President Seitz sees that fusion with Germany is the only possible thing left for his country to do, and the Austrian Assembly has arranged for a plebiscite as the first step. There can be small doubt as to the result of this. After that, the way is blocked by France, who, moved more by fear of Germany than any very deep hatred for Austria, will protest to the Council of Ambassadors against what seems to her a violation of the spirit of the treaties of Versailles and St. Germain. And France is right: to allow a people branded with the label of "enemy" to take the one possible road to economic recovery is indeed a violation of the spirit of the Treaty of Versailles.

WHAT brought the seizure of Italian factories to an end was agreement by the government that

a joint commission of employers and workmen should draw up plans, afterwards to be made law, for the "syndical control" of Italian industries. There was no very clear indication at the time of the exact limits of the phrase. For these words, so hateful in employers' ears, might well lose much of their meaning by the time a joint commission and an act of Parliament had defined them. But the details of the settlement, as proposed by the commission of workmen appointed to make concrete proposals to the government, seems plain-spoken enough. Their program includes "control," by the Workmen's Council in each factory, of the purchase of raw materials; control of all goods unloaded, price-fixing of the finished product; "control" of the general expenses of the company; the decision as to when new machinery is necessary. "Control" in English means more than the Italian "controllo," which is hardly more than "supervision." But whether the men aim at "control," or "supervision" and whether the victorious armistice will lead to a peace as easily achieved are questions of small concern. The real significance of these demands is their emphasis not only on wages and working conditions, but upon production. The workmen look upon themselves no longer as employees, but as producers.

GOVERNOR COX in a recent speech made a statement that he cannot have considered very deeply. The League, he promised, provides for disarmament. Unfortunately for Gov. Cox and the rest of the world, it does not. The President fell into the same error last year in a California speech. The council of the League, according to Article 8, "shall formulate plans for such reduction (of armaments) for the consideration and action of the several governments," which may then act on the matter exactly as they please. And what is the pleasure of two of the nations that count most in the League? France, for one, has laid plans for a larger army than ever. And by turning back to its statement of August 26th, Gov. Cox will see that the Department of the Navy points with pride to 1923 as the year when, on present construction schedules, our navy will surpass Great Britain's. The rest of the world follows suit. For Gov. Cox to assert that the League "provides" for disarmament when in fact "consideration" is the limit of its action, is imitation on his part of the tactics of trickery he complains of in his opponents. The disarmament clause of the League of Nations is a specimen of that fine verbal frontage over disagreeable facts which is the essence of the Treaty.

THE country's railways are the country's nerves; their sickness is its paralysis. And so far, what do the candidates' contributions to the subject amount to? Senator Harding calls the Esch-Cummins law "a new charter of freedom" for labor—when all sections of labor unite in execration of it. Beyond this, and a general feeling of satisfaction, he is completely vague. Governor Cox is a shade less nebulous. He thinks of the railroads as in "an experimental stage," but does not indicate what part in the experiment he intends to play. He too is completely vague. Both candidates not only fail to meet this issue, they do not seem soon to realize its existence; they seem, indeed, blind to a problem that has already shaken the nation severely, and will shake it again. Here is a problem beside which most of the booming, empty slogans that compose this campaign seem trivial.

THE results of the census present Congress with both an opportunity and a temptation. The membership of the House must be changed. It is now 435. A reapportionment according to the present ratio would increase the number to nearly 490. Already our Congress is sufficiently unwieldy, and functions badly enough without the addition of fifty new members to join their oratory to the legislative babel. And great ingenuity would be necessary to devise places for them on new and useless committees. A reapportionment is indeed necessary, but the ratio should be revised downward. Any really public-spirited and self-conscious Congress would long ago have attended to its depopulation. Uncle Joe Cannon believes in a shrinkage; Champ Clark favors a reduction to 300. And even Senator Boies Penrose, whose career is founded on a deep respect for the mechanics of representative government as it exists today, goes so far as to admit that "there are a considerable number of members of Congress who seem superfluous."

THERE are two ways for manufacturers to deal with a stubborn public's refusal to buy at present high prices. One is to cut the prices. The other, which seems to be gaining popularity, is to shut down your factory and wait for better days. This method is now being used by New England textile companies on a considerable scale. Many mills at Lowell, Lawrence, Manchester, took advantage of Columbus Day to close their doors for two days; for several weeks New Bedford mills have been running on a four-day basis, while two cloth and two yarn mills there, employing some four thousand hands, will close for a week. The movement is not restricted to textiles: the Bullard Machine Tool

Co. of Bridgeport will close for two weeks. Thousands of men and women will be thrown out of work. The 3,500 employees of the Lawrence Manufacturing Co. at Lowell, having risen to the occasion of a threatened shut-down by offering to accept a cut in wages, are told that there is no market for the company's goods at present high prices. Such shut-downs, in the light of a national economy, are purely selfish. Furthermore, at this time when production of essentials is vitally necessary, and must be continued if a vicious circle of inflation is to be broken, nothing can more quickly destroy confidence in the responsibility of capitalistic management, nor lay American industry open to deeper suspicion on the part of both public and employee, than such a wilful withdrawal of the power to produce.

ALONG with this general movement of shut-downs comes its familiar accompaniment of employers manoeuvring to regain strategic positions in regard to labor that were lost in the universal labor shortage of the last few years. Men are being laid off all around. Several of the large railroads operating from Chicago have considerably reduced their payroll. For the first time in many months employment agencies are beginning to report more men than jobs to be found for them. The U. S. Steel Corporation, which is doing its best to catch up on unfilled orders for over 10,000,000 tons, aims to cut its working force and maintain production all at once. Twenty-five hundred men have been laid off in steel mills at East Chicago, Gary and Indiana Harbor without reducing the output. This is called "deflation" of labor by steel officials, who point to gangs of twenty-five men doing the work that thirty used to do. There is a well-defined movement among New York clothing manufacturers to force a return to the piece-work system, and employers here and there are restless, aggressive; planning, threatening a return to the status quo; their ancient war cry is raised again—in Illinois, where the Manufacturers' Association is laying the foundation for a "compact open-shop campaign throughout the state."

IMMIGRATION to this country is now proceeding on a pre-war scale, promising to reach the total of over a million within the next year. In the past this flood of workmen, artisans, peasants from countries in every stage of civilization, from countries with well advanced labor organizations, as well as countries with no organization of labor at all, poured into American industries where trade union organization had been already achieved. The American Federation of Labor regarded them

as a grave menace, and has been and still is strongly determined on restriction. But the war and the economic earthquakes in Europe since the war have given large numbers of these peasants a social consciousness, sometimes even very definite ideas of organization, which they lacked before. A few of the latest arrivals are reported to have ideas far in advance of fellow-countrymen who have been years in the United States. That the American Federation of Labor may find many of the new immigrants open to organization is likely. But the Federation may also have cause to object to some of them—future arrivals from Italy and Russia for instance—on the score of a “radicalism” just as “dangerous” to itself as the sheep-like docility and ignorance of the immigrants of former days.

NOT long ago the editor of the New York World declared: “The barrier of propaganda must be broken down. The competent, independent investigating reporter must come back to his own. This is vital.” How much of the independent investigating reporter was there in a special cable featured on the first page of last Monday’s World, under the headline, “Odessa Has ‘Free Love’ Weeks”? According to this dispatch: “Nationalization of women [in Odessa] is conducted systematically by young Jewish Commissaries. Each month, from May to August, certain weeks were fixed and officially proclaimed ‘free love’ weeks.” Certainly the editors of the World must know the effect which the nationalization story has had upon American opinion of the whole Russian race. Certainly they must know, too, that earlier versions of the story have been denied by the British paper which first published them, and by various American observers. Ought the World, before publishing such a dispatch, have the word of an “independent investigating reporter”? Or can it afford to rely, as it does in the present instance, upon what some unnamed officer in General Wrangel’s army tells some unnamed reporter—not of the World, but of the London Daily Telegraph?

THERE are only some 175 political prisoners still in jail, and since, as “felons,” they cannot vote, Senator Harding is running no political risk to himself when he declares that “a general grant of amnesty to political prisoners is no more justified than a general grant of amnesty to yeggmen.” This phrase takes its place as perhaps one of the few islands of unmistakable meaning in seas of ambiguity. It has a harsh ring too, it does not sound like “Uncle Warren”; it suggests a Senator Harding not at all incapable of bursts of hostility and passion. Argument with the Senator on a

point made in this mood would be useless. The Senator goes on to declare that “the thief, or any ordinary criminal, is surely less a menace to those things we hold dear than the man or woman who conspires to destroy our American institutions.” Does Senator Harding realize how many of these men are in jail for having upheld just those institutions that Thomas Jefferson and others wrote into the constitution as the cornerstone of our liberty, the rights of free speech and free belief?

League, Treaty and the Coming Realignment

EVERY one ought to secure the Atlantic Monthly for October in order to read Mr. Raymond Fosdick’s article on The League as an Instrument of Liberalism. He will find there an argument which requires the most sympathetic consideration by those whose attitude on the settlement at Paris is roughly that represented in these pages.

Mr. Fosdick, until recently Under-Secretary of the League of Nations, begins by admitting the case against the settlement—against Shantung, the Saar, the Tyrol, German Bohemia, the Hungarian dismemberment, and the reparation clauses. Of these clauses he writes that they

represent a deliberate attempt to strangle the industrial and economic life of Central Europe, reducing her to servitude for a generation. They leave *the hundred million people* of the beaten races, including Magyars and Bulgars, *with no real hope for the future except through revenge, and no inducement to become willing members of a new system of peace.*

If this is true of the settlement in Central Europe, and in our judgment it is true, there is at least a prima facie case of the first magnitude against the underwriting by America of this settlement. But the candor which induced Mr. Fosdick to indict the Central European settlement must lead him further. The Shantung clauses add several hundred million Chinese to the hundred million Central Europeans who have “no inducement to become willing members of a new system of peace.” If you add to these the people of Russia who are equally the victims of the Paris conference and of its central idea, and then add the peoples of the Near East who are already in revolt—you must contemplate enormous populations all the way from the Rhine to the Pacific Ocean, from the Arctic to Arabia, who under the terms of the settlement see “no real hope for the future except through revenge.”

These are the fundamental facts of the inter-