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## The Week

EUROPEAN affairs enter a new phase which may be the beginning of a general reshuffling of the diplomatic cards. The new phase is marked by the action of France in breaking away from the entente with Britain. The incidents which signalize France's determination to go in alone were the recognition of Wrangel as Russia, her withdrawal from the peace negotiations at London, her advice to the Poles that they disregard Lloyd George, Giottiti and Wilson and advance beyond the frontier assigned by the Peace Conference. Between Britain and Italy on the one hand and France on the other, it is no longer a question of "divergence"; there is a direct and absolute contradiction of policy. They sit on opposite sides of the table in the councils of Europe. The decision of France was taken by M. Millerand and his cabinet without warning to Mr. Lloyd George. So surprised was he at the news that he at first refused to credit it, and stated in the House of Commons that there must have been some mistake. France had delib-

erately gambled on the attempt to impose her own will upon Europe, and to break away from Britain and Italy. Apparently the French government has the support of its own public, the socialists alone excepted. The opposition of British opinion to France is almost as unanimous. "It was evident to everybody," says the New Europe of August 19th, "that the Wrangel recognition was a calculated stroke delivered in reply to Mr. Lloyd George's Russo-Polish policy. It was an act of flagrant disloyalty and the moment of its committal gives it an unenviable eminence among all the crooked things that have been done by both governments in their Russian policy."

FOR all sorts of reasons the prospects of Europe turn upon the French program. It is in many ways the most daring scheme that has been set in motion since Pan-Germanism was at its zenith. Consider the scope and risks of the French ambition. There are on the continent, besides herself, four great Powers—Britain, Italy, Germany and Russia. France chooses a rupture of the Entente with Britain and Italy, and the active and permanent enmity of the Teutons and the Slavs. She risks the non-support of the maritime Powers and the hatred of the two chief land Powers. Towards Germany she remains irreconcilably vindictive, coupling an insistence upon the whole Treaty of Versailles with a threat to occupy at any moment the Ruhr coal fields on which German economic life so largely depends. Towards the Russian people France remains the cruelest of enemies, prepared to subsidize civil war, instigate mercenary armies, and maintain the blockade. What forces does France draw upon? Primarily on her own army and her own military genius, operating however upon the shakiest kind of swollen debt and wild cat finance; and secondarily, upon a complicated network of petty alliances extending to Warsaw, Budapest and Bucharest. These alliances in eastern Europe are in every case alliances with the

governments wholly landlord, profiteer and bu-reaucrat in texture. No one of the governments, whether in Poland, Hungary or Rumania, rests on the kind of consent which offers any assurance to a political strategist who looks ahead a few years.

FRANCE certainly carries a big stick, but she does not speak softly; she takes her own part, but she seems to fear neither God nor the revulsion of men. Yet she has reason to fear. Suppose she succeeds for a while in reducing Germany to servitude and Russia to a dictatorship of the Right, in securing her own dominion on the continent as overlord by the petty states of Europe. What then? What can be the consequence of a common hostility of the Teutonic and Slavonic peoples, except in the end common action on their part to throw off an intolerable yoke? The nightmare of a militant Russo-German alliance becomes daily a more sinister prophecy, as France teaches the people of Europe that force alone is the solvent. France has only to convince all of Germany that the Treaty of Versailles will be enforced in all its rigor, which means occupation of the Ruhr and the loss of Silesia, to destroy the final resistance of those Germans who look to the West rather than to the East for salvation. Let it be known that the barrier of the Rhine is all bayonet and threat, and western-minded Germany must go down before the easterners, communist or junker. It will not matter greatly which.

IN an admirable discussion of German conditions, Mr. Paul Cravath says: "If the impressions I have formed are correct, the fate of Germany is in large measure in the hands of the Allied nations and the United States. In the camp of her enemies there is now a struggle between two conflicting policies—one a policy of destruction, the other a policy of cooperation." He goes on to say that the latter policy is today accepted by public opinion in Great Britain and Italy. He hopes that it will be by France and the United States. Now the difference of policy towards Germany is paralleled by a difference of policy towards Russia. The constructive forces of the world favor peace with Russia and Germany; the destructive ones favor continued hostility. The United States, without perhaps quite knowing what it is doing, is aligned with the forces of disorder.

IT is perhaps a bit too flattering to say that the President is aligned with anybody on anything. His latest utterance ex cathedra on the subject of Russia has now had a chance to echo around the world. In England apparently nobody paid much attention

to it, knowing that the President could not and would not act on the implications it contained. Italy sent her compliments and continued to do just what the President said should not be done. France sent a bouquet of flowers, and then showed her opinion of the views presented by recognizing Wrangel and advising the Poles to ignore Mr. Wilson. And finally, the Poles told the President how deeply they admired him, but that so far as his advice went, they weren't taking it for the present, thank you. All this we are informed by the State Department is to be viewed in the large. Well, viewed in the large, it simply means that the diplomatic career of this administration is finished. Its threats and its promises are meaningless, and its opinions, spun in solitude out of the inner recesses of pure ego, no longer count in the calculations of European politics.

MR. HARDING told his troubles to the Marines from the porch at Marion. He said quite justly that sensational charges were no substitute for the discussion of issues. The country was in a mood to think about real things, and here was Governor Cox raising the roof about Mr. Hays and Mr. Upham. Mr. Harding's complaint is sound—the country would like to hear about real things and Mr. Harding has a free field. But Mr. Harding is an angel, and fears to tread where fools rush in. So Governor Cox talks slush fund, and Mr. Harding pitches a ball and is reminiscent about his cornet.

THERE are, roughly speaking, three ways of meeting a problem like Garyism in the steel industry. You can deny the existence of the problem, call all who discuss it bad names, fight to the bitter end against reform, and cap the climax by describing yourself as "constructive" or "American." This is just what Iron Age, organ of the steel industry, does in response to the report of the Interchurch World Movement. Or if you are a wage earner you can conclude that Judge Gary like the Kaiser will listen to no argument but force, and you prepare for another, a larger, a more terrible strike. Or you can do what the chairman and vice-chairman of the Interchurch Commission—Bishop McConnell and Dr. Poling are doing. You can appeal to public opinion, and ask for proof that will forever confound the Bolsheviks—proof that democracy has a conscience and a will, and can act.

SUCH an appeal would, however, be of little value if it asked every man to form a definite judgment about the way steel ought to be made. Bishop McConnell and Dr. Poling are too experienced in

racy to make that mistake. They stand on unimpeachable ground, for their whole argument is this: Sooner or later there will be another strike in the steel industry. The A. F. of L. started to organize on August 3rd. Two weeks later a new association of steel manufacturers was organized to counter. The mobilization has begun. Shall there be a strike, or shall there be an open conference to avoid it? It is proved, and nowhere denied, that the United States Steel Corporation is a no-conference industry. The first step to peace is to make it a conference industry. When it is a conference industry Judge Gary can discuss with his employees how extensive is the twelve hour day and the seven day week, and whether they are necessary, what wages are and whether they are just, whether there is a spy system and whether it is American. Those are questions for the steel industry as a whole to discuss in open conference at the bar of public opinion.

**BUT** public opinion is itself at the bar of civilized man. For Bishop McConnell and Dr. Poling have raised a question more searching even than those issues which confront Judge Gary and Mr. Foster. The question is, as they put it:

Can our democratic society be moved to do industrial justice without the pressure of crisis itself?

Can we insist on conference now while there is a truce, or are we too timid, too lazy, too haphazard to care about the steel industry until there are headlines announcing a new strike? That is a question which tests to its very foundations the sincerity and the purpose of all of us who talk at large about industrial peace, harmony, and the superiority of democratic over all other forms of government. If we mean what those words say, we shall listen to this eloquent appeal, and press the federal government to inaugurate a conference in the steel industry.

**TO** comment about the labor troubles in Italy on the information available would be to guess without evidence. The reports seem to show that for various reasons, among them a shortage of coal, the employers in the metal trades tried to close down factories last week. This constituted a "lockout" of the men. They replied by locking themselves in the factories, and they are attempting to operate them. The General Federation of Labor supports the men, apparently not in a revolutionary sense, but to assist them in reaching an adjustment. The government seems thus far to have kept its head by holding its hand. This is a courageous, though no doubt a somewhat risky policy, but if it succeeds the chances of a construc-

tive settlement will be the better for it. Whether the disturbance has a larger significance is pure surmise until we know what we do not know now, namely whether in the key industries the class division is as unbridgeable as it always is before revolution makes its appearance. Are the Italian employers Garyized? Are the Italian authorities Palmerized? Or is the moderate spirit and constructive decency exhibited by Nitti and Giolitti in foreign affairs dominant in the governing classes of Italy?

## The Re-Settlement of Eastern Europe

**T**HE American newspapers have throughout the summer given a great deal of space to the vicissitudes of the Polish war. They have awakened more interest in it than in any other one political and military issue they have dealt with since the armistice. Yet in spite of the volume of Polish news, few American readers understand or have had the opportunity of understanding how serious the Polish crisis, particularly in its last phase, looks to a well-informed Frenchman or Englishman. For as the European sees it, the question of war or peace between Russia and Poland has come to involve, not merely the drawing of a boundary between two neighboring countries or even the cessation of a conflict which was ruining and mutilating many millions of people, but the authority of the Peace of Versailles, the future political understanding between France and Great Britain and the economic and social welfare of the whole of Europe.

The Peace of Versailles contains, of course, an extraordinarily complicated compromise among a great variety of political, economic and social forces, but the Central European settlement which it proposes rests upon a comparatively simple political idea and upon the triumph of an obvious, but unprecedented combination of military and naval force. Since the victory of Germany in 1871 the effective control of continental European politics had resided in the three military empires of Russia, Germany and Austria-Hungary, each of which included within its borders a larger or smaller number of insubordinate subject peoples and depended for its security upon more or less flagrant violation of the principle of nationality. If they could have worked together their joint decisions would have ruled Europe, no matter how much the western Powers may have disliked their empire. But fortunately for Europe they could not agree. The Russian Empire joined with France and later