

ministration with inactivity in this department.

Not so much can be said for internal administration. The War Finance Corporation has been restored to activity and has actually made advances in aid of export aggregating over thirty-two millions of dollars. That is about the value of four days' exports, at the present rate of movement. The operations of the farm loan banks have been extended, though not sufficiently to make any marked improvement in agricultural credit. Administration activities have helped in the provision of live stock credits. The Federal Reserve banks have returned to a more liberal policy, whether as a result of government impulsion or to a general easing off in financial conditions it is impossible to determine. A plan has been propounded by President Harding for helping the railways out of their present difficulties. Whether it is a wise plan or not remains an open question. We refer our readers to an article in this issue by Garet Garrett, for an analysis of the relations involved. The Administration claims credit for the successful refunding of certain embarrassing short term notes. It might also claim credit for the exhibition of many good intentions in the way of reducing governmental expenses. Further credit is due the administration for the restoration of common sense and tolerance in the Post Office. That is about all that the Administration can show for its four months of work, on domestic questions.

Still less imposing is the record of the legislative branch. We have an emergency tariff, which so far as can be seen does not do anyone any good. We have an immigration law, the most stupid and vexatious known to modern times. The revision of the general tariff drags along dispiritedly. What is coming in the way of a tariff act is plainly no systematically contrived plan of meeting the nation's economic needs, as conceived by the protectionists, but instead a chaos of concessions to private interests. Revision of the internal revenues also drags wearily along. The Republicans know what taxes they want to abolish, but they do not know what taxes they dare to put in the place of those that are to go.

When a party returns to power after eight years in the wilderness it may fairly claim a right to a period of drift, until it can effect a working organization. But four months of drift ought to be sufficient at least to bring forward possible leaders, to exhibit at least a nucleus of policy. Four months have not done that for the Republican party.

Perhaps it is because circumstances are too kind to the Republicans. They have a big job presented to them, one whose successful execution would establish their prestige for another generation. They

could use the leverage of the Allied debts to force a restoration of normal economic relations in Europe and so give us back the customers without whom our own trade languishes. They could put our transportation industry, by land and by sea, on a sound footing, technically, whether as public or as private enterprises. They could restore hope and energy to agriculture, and win general support for the policy of progressive nationalism for which the party is assumed to stand. The Democratic opposition is hopelessly in the minority, and divided besides. There are no active factional disturbances within the Republican ranks. Public opinion is uncertain of itself, awaiting an impulse from those in power. And none is given. Yet the Republican leaders must recognize that nothing but aggressive action can hold a great party together. A policy of good intentions and inactivity ruined the party under Taft. It may ruin the party again under Harding.

## Longer Vacations

FEW things should be more popular among office workers than an argument for prolonging vacations. Judging by New York, Chicago, Boston or Philadelphia, the well-advertized idea that the big city is a splendid summer-resort has very little in it. The big American city is a suffocating place in summer. It is jaded and stale and dirty. It usually stinks. The mounting temperature propels huge mobs to the bathing beaches where they jostle one another in their fight for food and drinks and bathing lockers and bathing suits, and jumble uncomfortably together in the narrow margin of the surf. To escape from the big city in July or August is an American instinct, even if the escape is made only to a congested district around a lake or on the ocean, where the chief topic of conversation is the blood-sucking of landlord and mosquito.

Popular as the theme of longer vacations may be, it is only fair to look on the vacation as, in some measure, a dividend on personal activity. Is the man who does not work competently or faithfully entitled to as long a vacation as the man who does? Since someone has to pay for vacations, the man who produces most should have first claim. The drone has a greater aptitude for leisure than the busy bee, but his most eloquent arguments for prolonging vacations can hardly obscure the fact that if he does not work in working-time he is certainly consuming the other man's product in vacation-time. Vacations, in one aspect, are a subtraction from the resources that the working period has

accumulated. To relate the length of vacation to the value of service is not, therefore, unreasonable, especially if there can be some objective way of establishing the relation.

But vacation output ought not to be considered as cake. It is not merely a dividend on personal activity or a luxurious consumption of dividend. It is the rest period that ought to succeed the raising of a crop, and its main object is not so much to amuse its participant as to refresh and restore the soil.

One of the persistent assumptions of modern individual management is that the "vacation" is a kind of bounty or reward on the part of the employer, a kind of philanthropic indulgence. In fear and trembling the ordinary office employee asks for an extra few days' off, even without pay. To receive a full month's vacation is regarded as bliss; and the teacher or the judge, whose routine is suspended for the whole summer, is taken as a privileged being not unlikely to be overwhelmed by the riches of his leisure.

This state of mind is largely infantile. It belongs to the period when school was the supreme restraint and drudgery, and it carries over the pupil-teacher attitude into working life. Such an attitude is a proof of immaturity; and people who are not mature will be exploited. But to the extent that so-called vacation is the proper concomitant of our working activities, a more mature attitude toward it might well be adopted, an attitude much less vague and sentimental.

The vacation period is really to be approached from the point of view of vital economics. In the right kind of accounting the factor of depreciation is fully admitted, and vacation is an allowance against human depreciation and for recuperation. To tell off-hand the amount required is impossible, but the essential point is its relation not to the luxury of idleness but to health and human resilience. If the machine is to remain resilient it must be guaranteed its rest. Hence the person who seeks vacation should not seek it simply as a dividend on personal activity. He is justified in taking the position that formal vacation is an indisputable factor of western industrialism and its compressed activities. How much vacation can the traffic bear? That is a budgetary question to be decided in each case individually. But the place of the vacation in the budget ought to be near the top. It should be taken into account as a fixed charge just as certainly as the charge for sickness, for old age, for dependents. The wages that simply keep step with the cost of living and no more are not economic wages, and the wages that ignore a recuperative vacation are not economic. To take

profits before these charges have been made is to eat up vitality.

And it is to eat up vitality without excuse. For rightly adjusted vacations pay for themselves. It is not philanthropy to give a worn-out subordinate a month's vacation, or six weeks' vacation. It is good sense. In the long run the illness period is bound to increase year by year unless the process of break-down is insured against; and it is better business by and large to enforce vacations in time than to give extended sick-leave too late.

One notable employer can be quoted to this effect. Not all of Lord Northcliffe's interviews have come safely through the wash, but the recent statement he made on vacations is durable. He said that when he began as a newspaper proprietor he had the idea that newspaper men ought to stick right to the job. He allowed his men two days' leave at the end of every two weeks. With experience, however, he has completely changed. Five days' work a week, he now considers, and long non-routine periods of travel and change keep his men at the top of their form. At the top of their form, we may believe, his enterprises do not suffer.

The newspaper man, it may be said, is a special case. He is hard-driven and high-strung, and he requires more chance to recuperate than the person engaged in a less complicated routine. This may be so, though the majority of newspaper proprietors do not seem to think so. Perhaps with newspaper workers as with the men and women who work in offices and factories, the real problem is one of industrial method. Despite Lord Northcliffe, we probably must look for the day when vacations will be determined by industrial democracy rather than submitted to the business manager's benevolent despotism.

## *The New* **REPUBLIC** *A Journal of Opinion*

PUBLISHED WEEKLY AND COPYRIGHT, 1921, IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA BY THE REPUBLIC PUBLISHING COMPANY, INC., 421 WEST TWENTY-FIRST STREET, NEW YORK, N. Y. HERBERT CROLY, PRESIDENT; ROBERT HALLOWELL, TREASURER; DANIEL MEBANE, CIRCULATION MANAGER.

### EDITORS

HERBERT CROLY      ALVIN JOHNSON  
FRANCIS HACKETT      ROBERT MORSS LOVETT  
PHILIP LITTELL

YEARLY SUBSCRIPTION FIFTY-TWO ISSUES, FIVE DOLLARS IN ADVANCE. SINGLE COPIES FIFTEEN CENTS. CANADIAN SUBSCRIPTION FIVE DOLLARS AND FIFTY CENTS PER YEAR IN ADVANCE. FOREIGN SUBSCRIPTIONS, FOR COUNTRIES IN THE POSTAL UNION, SIX DOLLARS PER YEAR IN ADVANCE; REMITTANCE TO BE MADE BY INTERNATIONAL POSTAL MONEY ORDER.

ENTERED AS SECOND CLASS MATTER, NOVEMBER 6, 1914, AT THE POST OFFICE AT NEW YORK, N. Y., UNDER THE ACT OF MARCH 3, 1879.

## Disarmament and the East

THE two halves of President Harding's proposal move us in the Old World in very different ways. The response to both is cordial and affirmative, but that does not prevent us from realizing that one of the two conferences is serious politics, and the other is not. The Far Eastern conference may succeed or it may fail: it may greatly improve Anglo-American relations, or it may destroy the hope of improvement, but whatever its issue, it is, at any rate, a frank invitation to face realities. It is based on the sound commonplace that policy governs armaments. That maxim the other conference ignores, and few of us expect that it can have any positive result, good or bad. To be sure, if the three chief Far Eastern Powers, who are also the three chief naval Powers, should reach an agreement to limit or reduce their fleets, the general conference may extend it to the world at large. That would be merely a matter of drawing inferences and adapting formulae. "The sea is one," as the experts say, and a Far Eastern naval agreement would involve, would even potentially be a world-wide naval agreement. France, with her naval ambitions consigned long ago to the safe-keeping of her historians, and Italy, with her pressing need for economy, would be glad to counter-sign any pact to check the growth of naval armaments.

The difficulty is on land. The settlement of Paris created a definite European system, based upon certain alliances and antagonisms. That system, inherently untenable and unstable, has its inevitable expression in the conscript armies of the Allies which have survived the peace. The physiognomy of Europe is fixed by the twitching nerves that betray the universal suspicion. Here are the French on the Rhine, restlessly seeking occasions to push forward, under the pretext of "sanctions" for breaches of an impossible Treaty, destined to be broken again and again. The Poles, spilling their surplus armies across a frontier that cannot hold them, now into Vilna and again into Upper Silesia, spend the intervals between these adventures in predicting the renewal of their Russian war. The "Little Entente" masses its forces to prevent the return of a Habsburg to Hungary, probes the depths of intrigue to discover whether the ex-Emperor enjoys French backing, and shudders as it notes how imperfectly its own recent accessions of territory are cemented to its centres. As I write, the diplomatic seismograph records a tremor from Sofia, and the official inspirers of the

press half reveal and half conceal some supposed Bulgarian plot for the recovery of Thrace. The British fleet is massed to prevent the approach of Turkish armies to Constantinople, while the Greeks pursue their offensive in Asia Minor. One accords to the suggestion that Europe should disarm, the tribute of a sigh, but one knows too well that this aspiration can be realized only when the political settlement itself is revised.

That is no part of Mr. Harding's plan. Indeed, the invitation itself, confined as it is to the principal Allied and Associated Powers, tacitly perpetuates the system of Versailles. It would be easy to sketch in advance the speech which M. Briand will make to the conference. It will open with a moving picture of the anguish of invaded France. It will remind America and Great Britain that the "guarantee" treaties of alliance have never been ratified. It will dwell on the moderation of M. Clemenceau in renouncing the Rhine frontier. It will conclude with a declaration that France, left to her own defensive resources, must keep them at their present level, as an insurance against fresh invasions. The speech will sound plausible only to those who forget that French armies hold the bridge-head of the Rhine, ready to pour their troops at any moment into an unresisting Germany, that her peace establishment is now eight times that of her beaten foe, who lacks moreover a general staff, big guns, air-craft and organized reserves, and finally that Poland, with an army that outnumbers Germany's by six to one, stands ready to back her French ally in the East. French armaments are of course defensive. They defend her continental hegemony.

One asks why it is that Germany and Russia are excluded from the conference. Has Russia, with the Japanese camped in Vladivostok, no concern in the peace of the Pacific? Is she to be disarmed as Germany was, by dictation? If so, she must first be beaten. But if she is not disarmed, how can her neighbors be ordered to disarm? Again, has not Germany, precisely because she is disarmed, a right to ask the conference to consider her position between the overwhelming armies of her neighbors? But there are broader reasons why no conference which concerns itself with disarmament alone, can hope to succeed. Armaments have a purpose. Call it, as you please, defence or the realization of proper ambitions. One cannot propose disarmament without providing the alternative process, by which wrongs are to be righted and just ambitions