

WITH the signing of the Treaty of Sèvres the Allies uncorked an imp which they now heartily wish they could coax back into the bottle. For Greece, greatly to the Allies' embarrassment, is on the point of reviving her war against Turkey for the "enforcement" of the Treaty. Her finances are desperate, yet she boasts of 300,000 troops in Asia Minor held ready to clean up the Turks, who, while lacking transport and ammunition, have the double advantage of holding the inner lines and of feeling that they are fighting for their country and their lives. Since the only important action so far is the Greek occupation of Ismid—some sixty miles from Constantinople—followed immediately by its abandonment, the way lies fairly open to Constantinople, and there stirs faintly in the hearts of Russian royalist refugees a hope, based on the rumor that Brusilov leads an army in Asia Minor, that the City of the Tsar may at last fall to Russia. In which event, they say, they will "take their hats off" to Trotsky. Meanwhile, the circumstances of the evacuation of Ismid by the Greeks, who indulged in a good deal of robbery and massacre there, show the futility of the whole business. For 33,000 Greeks, fearing Turkish retaliation after the massacre, fled from Ismid. Where lies the strength of the Greek case, if the Greeks in the cities which they claim by virtue of their colonization have to depart from them en masse for fear of revenge?

THE New York Times recently published the rumor that Lenin had caused Trotsky to be arrested. Be it said to the credit of the Times, that however much it might desire to believe the rumor, it reports the news as a rumor only. The Times has gradually learned to be more cautious than it was two or three years ago, when its columns were a source-book of Russian mythology. The picture of the relations of Lenin and Trotsky as drawn month by month by the Times has been at once puzzling and exciting. On March 12th, 1918, Trotsky had been dismissed by Lenin, a month after the latter had fled to Riga (February 19th). By June 29th of the same year they were sufficiently reconciled to have fled together to the Murmansk coast. Yet on August 12th they were preparing their escape to Berlin. The next day, by a quick change of plan, they had taken refuge at Kronstadt. They lived in peace until January 9th, 1919, when Lenin was arrested because of a disagreement with Trotsky (a week later Lenin arrived at Barcelona). Again, on April 3rd, 1919, there was a "break" between them, but no arrests were made. Lenin was at liberty until September

26th, 1919, when he was overthrown and imprisoned in the Kremlin. On October 9th he was rearrested, and on October 14th he was held a prisoner by the Bolsheviki to prevent his escape. A year later he was tried for "abuse of power," but on the 2nd of last March he had fled from Moscow, where he is still. Not unnaturally this latest report finds us completely sceptical, and indeed it will be impossible to believe that either Lenin or Trotsky has arrested the other until we actually see their names on the blotter or their faces behind the bars.

The Disarmament Conference

THE United States is to take a place in the counsels of the Powers. But the United States will join in the association of Powers on its own terms. That is the obvious meaning of President Harding's initiative in proposing informally a conference on disarmament of the Principal Allied and Associated Powers to meet in Washington. It is not necessary to withhold interest from the proposal on the ground that it has not been made formally nor formally accepted. The diplomacy of the present administration is quite too cautious to admit publicly an initiative of this kind without assuring itself of the practicability of its endeavors. The other Powers must have given informal assent to President Harding's proposals. And why should they not have done so? Spokesmen for the Allied governments have often given expression to their desire to draw the United States into the international concert. In only one point does President Harding's diplomacy appear to attain results that might not have been anticipated. That is in the suggestion of a discussion of Pacific problems by the nations directly interested, including China. If Japan has consented to this—and we seem justified in assuming that she has—some of the most difficult and dangerous of international problems have been perceptibly advanced toward a solution.

What progress is such a conference likely to make toward actual limitation of armaments? It is not an unduly pessimistic view that if the conference were aiming at immediate disarmament alone the auspices are not so favorable as those of a conference confining itself, as by the terms of the Borah resolution, to the discussion of naval limitation by America, England and Japan. Such a conference would have had a perfectly definite and intelligible object, and one which ought to be feasible if the nations are rationally governed. The three nations are today so balanced in naval

power that no one of them could safely attack another without the aid of the third: and the diplomatic status, together with the whole underlying network of economic and social relations, makes it inconceivable that any two could combine to attack the third. If the United States greatly increases her navy, it follows inevitably that Japan and England will increase their navies, until the relative weights are about what they are now, unless, of course, bankruptcy supervenes to reconcile one nation or another to a condition of defencelessness. It follows that from a nationalistic as well as from a cosmopolitan point of view such a competition in armaments is sheer waste. There was fair ground for hoping that a conference of these three Powers alone might arrive at an intelligent agreement. But President Harding's invitation includes France and Italy as well, and embraces land as well as naval armament. Reduction of land forces, however, is regarded as impracticable by France, probably by Italy as well. And if any of the three naval Powers wishes to proceed to build up its armaments unhampered by international agreements, it has only to couple limitation of naval armaments with limitation of land armaments.

Thus by broadening the scope of the disarmament discussion President Harding has assumed the risk of its failure to reach positive results. And that we regard as a grave matter, especially at this time, when financial pressure would increase the chance of results. But we are ready to admit that there is another side to the question. Disarmament is desirable for the relief it would afford from financial burdens, but above all because it would reduce the danger of war. That danger, however, can never be eliminated so long as the underlying political relations of nations remain unsettled. Before the war, when England and Germany were pursuing conflicting ambitions in the Near East, there was much talk of a naval holiday. The two countries were admittedly building against each other, to the great disadvantage of both treasuries. But every movement for limitation made by either side was looked upon with suspicion by the other side. It is easy to agree not to build, and then build secretly. The British believed that the Germans would do just that, and the Germans had the same belief concerning the British. The United States today has interests, especially in the matter of China, that openly conflict with those of Japan. An agreement on armaments that left this fundamental conflict unadjusted, would not necessarily reduce the danger of war. Indeed, it might even increase the danger, if it gave rise to suspicions of bad faith.

President Harding, in coupling a discussion of the political problems of the Far East with the problem of disarmament in that quarter, has accepted the risk of a conference that leads nowhere, but it cannot be said that he is not playing for a stake that is worth risks. If the conference succeeds, the peace of the Pacific will rest on a much firmer basis than on a disarmament agreement alone. In the case of Europe no such combination of purposes is attempted. Yet the fact that France and Italy are to participate makes it fairly certain that the scope of the inquiry will broaden out to political affairs. It is idle to discuss disarmament with France without discussing the problem of Germany, or to discuss it with Italy without considering the facts of a Balkanized Europe. Nor can these be discussed without bringing out the relations of European reconstruction and international finance, and without indicating the opportunities and obligations of the United States in the restoration of Europe.

Among liberal commentators on the Peace of Versailles it is a favorite saying that the whole peace would have been much better if the conference had been held at Washington. Not only that: America would have understood much better what was going on, and would have been more likely to join in enforcing the peace. The conference on armaments may in some measure undo the mischief that was done at Versailles. It may have no other immediate result than an airing of opposing views. But it can not fail to lay a basis for a more sympathetic understanding between America and her late associates in the war, and thus smooth the way for full American participation in the international effort to establish a more pacific order in world affairs.

The Case for Amnesty

ONE generally expected result of the official termination of the war is the release of the prisoners under the Espionage and Draft acts. There are about two hundred of such prisoners, of whom one hundred and thirty-one are I. W. W.'s. Among the others are Socialists, of whom Eugene V. Debs and Joseph W. Caldwell are most prominent; Reverend William Madison Hicks, a religious objector; the Russians arrested for distributing the Soviet constitution in December, 1918, and Tom Welsh, convicted under the Trading with the Enemy act for bringing into the country a letter having to do with the Irish revolution. The small number and miscellaneous character of these prisoners, and the obscurity of most of them,