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The Week

PRESIDENT HARDING receives from the old administration a formidable legacy of worries and perplexities. He inherits the management of a country paralyzed by business depression and unemployment. He finds the railroads on his doorstep in a state approaching bankruptcy. Then there is an unfinished war with Germany, and something half-way between war and peace with Russia. Add a few problems, pressing for immediate solution, to the south of us and in the Pacific. On a quick solution of the questions of recognition of Mexico, the Colombian treaty and the fighting between Costa Rica and Panama depends the respect and friendship we hope South America may begin to feel for us. The new administration will have to decide soon how it will finish the negotiations already begun over the Californian anti-Japanese laws. And as to Japan's mandate over the Island of Yap, President Harding finds a difficult piece of negotiation to be done directly with the League of Nations.

THE Island of Yap is the most important single link in the Pacific communications system. It is the meeting place of five cables, from Shanghai, Yokohama, Guam, New Guinea, and the Straits and India. In other words, if the possession of Guam and the Philippines is to mean anything to the United States, Yap must not be in alien hands. It is now under the mandatory control of Japan. How it happened to get there is rather a mystery. Secretary Colby's plain-spoken note to the Council of the League charges that the mandate was assigned without the consent of the United States, in fact contrary to its desire. The United States does not want Yap for itself, but demands that it should not be controlled by any one Power. Japan already controls Yap. This is a fait accompli that no administration, Republican or Democrat, seems likely to accept.

WHAT is particularly interesting about Secretary Colby's note is that it finds the new administration, with its policy of eyes shut toward the League, heir to a sharp controversy directly with the League itself. President Harding can be relied on to think American special interests in Yap just as vital as did Secretary Colby. He cannot ignore the answer to Secretary Colby's complaint that will come back to his administration from the council of the League. He must speak directly to the League in order to protect American interests. Perhaps the League will listen to him more or less as the intention of the United States to join the League is more or less plain.

JUST as the United States is changing pilots comes a puzzling distraction in Central America. After years of dispute and foreign arbitration, Costa Rica occupies territory, in Panama, that she thinks belongs to her. In Panama men are called to the colors and constitutional liberties are abolished. It is war, if on a very small scale. What

is the United States to do? Help Panama drive out Costa Ricans from territory awarded to Costa Rica? Or, in order to bring peace, support a settlement to which Panama refuses to agree? Can the United States remain passive? Can it prevent war and not itself get into a very uncomfortable position? What effect will the danger to "safety" of the Canal have on the outcome? Colombia may get mixed up in the dispute, and our relations with Colombia are not cordial. This is a tangle that will give the Harding administration something to think about.

IN the light of past experience, Central America has reason for not feeling cordial toward us. From the point of view of any one who wants to eliminate all grievances that South America may have against the United States, the dealings of the United States with Colombia over Panama were a mistake. For nearly seven years the reparation of that mistake, in the form of a treaty under which Colombia would receive \$25,000,000 from us, has been delayed. It now appears that both President Harding and Secretary Fall are in favor of an early ratification of this treaty. They will have something of a fight on their hands with the Senators who think ratification would be an admission that President Roosevelt made a bad mistake, that our government should not go back on the creed "of my country, right or wrong" and should not confess nor repair its errors, if any there have been.

THE Oregon House of Representatives has passed, by a vote of 34 to 25, a bill that is practically the duplicate of the California bill to prohibit Japanese from owning land. The Coast seems determined to express its ideas on the Japanese subject so clearly that they cannot be forgotten or misunderstood, even if such action makes negotiations between Washington and Tokio rather difficult. The opponents of the Oregon bill apparently were anxious not to embarrass the federal government; those who were for it, though embarrassment was not their aim, voted as they did "as a spur to federal action."

IN an article in the Annals of the American Academy of Political Science, Mr. Paul Scharrenberg, secretary-treasurer of the California State Federation of Labor, goes to some pains to explain Pacific Coast labor's attitude on Japanese exclusion. Labor, he says, is opposed to Japanese immigration entirely for economic reasons, and is not influenced by any feeling of race hatred. This

may be true of Mr. Scharrenberg and other leaders; we wish it were possible to believe it equally true of the rank and file. But there seems little doubt that a strong race feeling plays its part in the matter. If Californians want the Japanese kept out solely because they lower American wage standards, why must Japanese, in so many cases, go to their own movies, their separate restaurants and schools?

SENATOR BORAH'S resolution for a conference on naval reduction between America, Great Britain and Japan may or may not be passed. President Harding favors it, but certainly very mildly. His attitude is more one of hope than of effort. He has told Republican leaders that he favors the Naval Appropriations bill—carrying half a billion for maintenance and increase of the navy during the next fiscal year—as reported out by the Senate Naval Affairs Committee. At bottom he believes in a big navy. So does his Secretary. Press accounts rather naively describe how the President-elect and Secretary Denby "discovered" they held the same fundamental beliefs in regard to the navy. And Mr. Denby wants our navy to be the "equal of any other."

NO matter what happens, one is glad that Mr. Palmer has gone. But he was not the only villain—if indeed he was not rather less a villain than a personification of hysteria and intolerance. He is gone, but the evil he did lives after him, in the minds of a good many officials and detectives who have seen the government break its own laws and remain unpunished. Precedents have been established by which the agents of "law" can treat unpopular individuals with no regard for law and not suffer for it. Senator Borah has made a brave attempt to destroy such precedents. He may succeed, but the minds of legislators are not very sensitive to this kind of injustice. Senator Borah's bill threatens with severe punishment federal officers who make searches or seizures without warrant, or who injure or oppress "any person in the free exercise of any right guaranteed to him by the Constitution or laws of the United States." In other words, the bill is a warning to federal officials who forget that they are the instruments of orderly government.

THERE seems to be little doubt that the new administration will sweep all Democrats from office, high or low, as thoroughly as possible, to make room for Republicans maddened by the job-hunger of eight long years. Even the second and

third class postmasterships, which were included in the Civil Service by an executive order of 1917, are in danger of becoming legal spoils once more. President Harding is considering the matter, and one can easily imagine the pressure that is being put upon him to revoke the order. Can he resist it? If he was incapable of resisting the temptation to put Daugherty and Fall in his cabinet, will he listen to the Republicans who oppose any paring away of the Civil Service system rather than to those who put party loyalty before national efficiency?

WE are told again and again that commercial relations with Soviet Russia, aside from being vicious in principle, would be impossible in practice. This view does not prevail in England. The London New Statesmen says that a British firm of the highest standing, Armstrong, Whitworth and Co., has signed a contract with the Russian government for repairing a large number of locomotives. As soon as the British-Russian trade agreement is signed, the contract comes into effect, and Armstrong, Whitworth and Co. will immediately begin shipping Russian locomotives via the river Tyne at the rate of "over twenty a week." The contract is expected to run for several years. If ancient and respectable British firms are so far from sceptical as to the profits to be had in doing business with the Bolsheviks, American firms are in essentially the same position, and can safely follow their example.

ANY brief sketch of the complicated question of New York's transit problem is bound to be inadequate. Stated in its baldest terms, it is something like this: The traction companies in past years were mismanaged and it is now quite true that they face the alternative of bankruptcy or a higher fare. Thanks largely to the efforts of the Tammany administration, there seems little doubt that most New Yorkers bitterly oppose a higher fare and see no need for one. Governor Miller's bill, providing for state regulation of city transit, and for a commission authorized to change the fare, has helped to crystallize the issue into a simple one of the "people" against the interests, the present five-cent fare versus an eight-cent fare and more "robbery" by the "corporations." The real perplexities, the possibility of a nearly bankrupt corporation's paying for past sins, and the alternative of the nightmare of municipal ownership of a city still subject to the rule of Tammany, are left in the background, and all that appears is an issue artificially clear enough and popular enough to be

one on which there is a possibility that Mayor Hylan may be reelected.

AND now Senator Johnson, a Republican, from California, has come to join the Mayor of New York, a Democrat, in fighting a Republican governor's transit bill. It is an analogue of an old cause of Senator Johnson's in which he fought victoriously in California, against the railroads and again against San Francisco's street car companies. A number of motives have been ascribed for this invasion. Whatever Senator Johnson's motives may really be for this unprecedented interference in an apparently local fight, one of them can be guessed at. Senator Johnson's reading of the future tells him that within the next four years will be renewed, on a nation-wide scale, the old fight of the people versus the special interests, and that he might as well be the first to reoccupy this former battle ground of the progressives.

WHEN the London conference began, everything pointed to the probability of a revision of the Treaty of Sèvres. The Turks, whether from Constantinople or Angora, were naturally for it. So were the French, owing to the fact that their position in Cilicia was uncomfortable, and they desired some arrangement whereby the pressure of the Turkish Nationalist forces would cease. Great Britain opposed revision, but not very obstinately. And the Greeks, Constantinists no less than Venizelists, wanted no change made in the treaty. They argued that if as a result of the embargo on Greek loans that followed the return of the king their financial position was poor, their military position was excellent, and they offered to attack the Turks in the Smyrna sector and drive them as far as Angora if necessary. At first the Turks themselves presented extreme demands, for the boundaries of 1913, which meant the return to them of all Thrace and Smyrna. Naturally they did not actually expect this bit of diplomatic strategy to be taken seriously. For they finally consented to something considerably less: a commission of investigation will try to find out, possibly by means of a plebiscite, whether Smyrna and Thrace should or should not be returned to Turkey. The Greeks make a show of resistance to a plan that is not much less than a revision of the Treaty. They know that since the return of Constantine they can expect little gratitude from the Allies. The decision, then, is a revision, but not a settlement. For until it is determined who Smyrna and Thrace are to belong to, the solution of the Near East tangle is only postponed.

The Return of the Republicans

IT is like a town with two theaters. At one they have been playing a heavy tragedy for such a long time that every man, woman and child in the place knows the piece by heart. At the other a variety show is billed; the management promises the return of some old favorites, positively last farewell performances, and a novelty or two. Unable to endure seeing the tragedy again, the townspeople turn out as never before for the first night at the other theater. They buy their tickets, they settle themselves in no unkindly spirit in the rather comfortable seats, they wait without impatience for the lifting of the curtain. They feel they have done their part. Now will the management please do its part. The first act, whatever it is, they will applaud. That is the custom at first nights. But after that the audience is prepared to wait and see.

The management, they know, has had an awful time making up the program. Most of the actors had to be chosen because somebody was the friend of the manager, or a cousin of the spot light man, or an old chum of the walking delegate of the stagehands' union. Two real stars were picked. But although there had been some talk of giving the show a plot, that was soon abandoned, for nobody could be found to write the scenario. And so with muttering and mumbling behind the scenes, and with the manager's heart in his boots, the show begins.

Sixteen million people voted Republican last November. What did they vote for? They voted to give a small group of men the power to govern this country for four years. The choice which these voters had to accept was made for them by perhaps a dozen men, each of whom represented a portion of the thousand delegates who assembled and perspired in the Coliseum at Chicago. These thousand delegates represented about one hundred thousand active Republican workers. And these one hundred thousand represented a solid forty per cent of the men's vote, and at that time an incalculable percentage of the women's. These forty per cent were men, who, though they have political opinions, never have had, and are convinced that they never will have, any opinion so strong that it would prevent them from voting a straight ticket. And so, because this forty per cent is wholly dependable, the one hundred thousand party workers can deliver them, through the thousand delegates, to the masters of the party.

Within certain limits, the masters of the party have a free hand. As long as they can prevent the twenty per cent of independent, self-

governing voters from turning to the other party in a body, they can remain in power. And that will satisfy the thousand delegates, the one hundred thousand party workers, and the forty per cent regulars.

Yet these self-governing voters, the twenty per cent, need watching. For they have a habit of becoming interested in issues that concern the great mass of the people, and the capacity at times of finding leaders within the party, or on the edge of it, who can organize their vote and make it count. The nightmare of the regulars is that some fine day, through the use of the primary and the unwillingness of the women to stand in line, these people will possess themselves of the Republican name. And then the regular forty per cent will remain loyal to them instead of to the men who now run the show. The fear of Johnson, the fear of Borah, the fear of Hoover, the fear of the League of Women Voters, is clearly written all over the triumphant countenances of the incoming politicians.

These are crude terms, to be sure, in which to discuss what happens on March fourth. But as you contemplate Mr. Harding and his closest advisers, in what other terms should the affair be discussed? The words would stick in your throat if you began to talk about the return of the party of Hamilton and Lincoln and Roosevelt, Americanism, nationalism and the rest. There is no more relation between these phrases and what is about to happen than there is between the policies of Queen Elizabeth and Mary Pickford's opinion on the depreciation of the German mark.

But while the return of the Republicans means the return of a certain group of politicians, these men have certain ideas and certain connections which will determine their attitude to public affairs. Their opinions were formed in their youth. Consequently they believe that this country was built up by the aggressive, irresistible captains of industry, free from interference at home, and protected against competition from abroad. They believe in these men, and what these men believe. They do not believe merely, as every one must, that these men did a necessary pioneering work in a new and undeveloped country; they believe that nothing has happened that calls for a new type of industrial leadership.

Though the country's position has changed from that of a debtor to a creditor, from a country dependent on an excess of exports to one requiring an excess of imports, they have changed none of their ideas on the tariff. They believe in sending as many goods out of the country as possible, and in letting as few in as possible. They