

ing down our imaginative powers with a mountainous load of arithmetical items. The Committee on Banking and Currency of the House of Representatives has published (H. R. 8,404) a pamphlet in which the course of each important foreign currency, from November, 1918, to July, 1921, is luminously charted. If every citizen would give it a few moments of study we should have the basis of an informed public opinion on the most pressing business problem of the time.

ONCE more the present administration of New York has arbitrarily withdrawn the right of assembly. A group of citizens had engaged the Town Hall for the evening of November 13th, for the purpose of hearing a distinguished English publicist and others discuss the subject of birth control. Under orders from police headquarters the speakers were not allowed to enter the hall, and when after a considerable time it was opened to them they were forbidden to speak, hustled from the platform, and haled before a police magistrate on the charge of disorderly conduct. Such disorder as occurred was of course excited by the police themselves. Apparently the battle for free speech on birth control, so bravely won by Margaret Sanger, has to be fought over again. The New York papers generally attribute the present interference with civic rights to the Roman Catholic Archbishop Patrick J. Hayes. It is hoped that sponsors for the meeting will take steps to make public the secret influence in response to which the police acted, and further to make their behavior a case of civil suit for false arrest.

OF late years in the United States the relations between organizations of workers in the clothing trades and the manufacturers have constituted one of the most hopeful chapters of industrial progress. Under wise leadership, with the assistance of public opinion, and with some support from enlightened employers, labor has secured a higher standard of living and working conditions and has contributed to the organization and stabilization of the whole industry. The preservation of these results, however, is at the cost of constant vigilance and occasional warfare. To this end 55,000 workers of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union in New York walked out on Monday, November 14th.

THE case between the Union and the Manufacturers' Association is this. In June 1919 an agreement was signed between these two bodies covering wages and hours of labor, to run until June,

1922. This agreement was abrogated by the Manufacturers' Association in 1920, but after ten months of discord a joint commission was instituted in June 1921 to study conditions and report on November 1, 1921. Without waiting for this report the Manufacturers' Association on October 25th promulgated new conditions of employment involving the introduction of piece work and an increase of working hours from 44 to 49 per week. Technically the manufacturers are in the wrong. Fundamentally, the issue is clear and simple, with the usual three parties interested, the employer, the workers and the public. The employers declare that the week of 44 hours has reduced production, raised prices and diminished business. The piece work system is in their view necessary to incentive and initiative, "both sacred heritages of Americanism," and it alone "can restore these privileges to the operatives." The workers declare that piece work means the sweating system with inhuman "speeding-up" of men and women, and that they will never voluntarily return to it. The public has to make up its mind whether it will pay higher prices for clothing in order that the workers may enjoy a higher standard of living. Undoubtedly the manufacturers in this industry as in others are counting on the public demand for lower prices to break the resistance of the workers and perhaps to demolish the union itself. Hitherto the workers in the garment trades have won their victories largely by reason of public support. That support should be stronger than ever in view of the indefensible tactics of the manufacturers who are guilty of the unpardonable industrial sin of wishing a strike.

The Atmosphere of Achievement

THE Secretary of State, Mr. Charles Evans Hughes, has justified the confidence of his friends and well-wishers by starting the Conference off with a bold and a deep plunge into the waters of disarmament. In order sharply to distinguish the present Conference from its abortive predecessors, he was bound at the very beginning to bring forward a definite proposal which would prove beyond question the good faith of his own government and which would give reality to the subsequent deliberations of the Conference. This he has done emphatically, abundantly, and we hope, triumphantly. He proposes a naval holiday for ten years, and the destruction of sixty-six capital ships, either built, partly built or planned, with a tonnage of 1,878,043. He would retain some fifty

capital ships with a tonnage of approximately 1,400,000, as a comparatively permanent "naval force." Of the tonnage which he would scrap the United States abandons 845,000 tons, the British 583,000 tons and the Japanese 449,000 tons. Thus superficially at least the American government has suggested a program of reduction which is more expensive for itself than for either of its two competitors.

Not being naval experts we cannot pretend to pass upon the technical issues which are raised by this plan of reduction. It looks fair enough to the three major naval powers, but we cannot be sure that it is fair. There may be some force in the contention of the British critics of the plan. In their opinion the proposed method of limitation is more favorable to the United States and Japan than it is to the British Empire. The specific objections, however, with which they have supported this contention up to date do not look formidable. In fastening upon the proposed scale of limitation Mr. Hughes has employed an obvious and for his present purpose a perfectly sound principle. He suggests the reduction of the fleets of the three naval powers to a size which is intended to make them sufficient for defence, but insufficient for an offensive strategy. With the smaller tonnage remaining at their disposal Great Britain, the United States and Japan are supposed to be invulnerable against attack, but too weak themselves to attack anybody else. Mr. Hughes evidently hopes and expects in this way to do away with suspicions and apprehensions which complicate the discussion of the political differences among the three governments.

But the application of this principle does work a much more radical alteration in the traditional position of the British fleet than it does in the position of the Japanese and American fleets. The British fleet is supposed to remain sufficiently strong to dominate the European Atlantic, but the British Empire is scattered all over the world. The British fleet will not be strong enough to protect the British lines of communication with India, Canada, Australia and China. The Empire becomes consequently under this arrangement vulnerable to an extent which Japan and the United States are not. The British fleet ceases to be Mistress of the Seas. In effect it surrenders the Mediterranean to France and Italy, the American waters to the United States, and the Far East to Japan. The security of the British Empire will depend less upon its own naval strength than upon the ability of the British government to keep the peace with France, the United States and Japan. The policing of the chief bodies of water is, un-

der the proposed arrangement, practically divided up among Great Britain, the United States, Japan and the two chief Mediterranean nations; and any one of these other naval powers can cut one or more of the British lines of communication.

All this is true and from the British point of view not at all agreeable. Yet it merely stabilizes a condition which has for many years gradually been coming into existence. The British Empire turned over the Mediterranean to France and Italy and the Far Eastern waters to Japan a long time ago. It is not able and cannot afford to protect all its lines of communication against every possible enemy. Under the proposed plan of reduction the British and American fleets would possess an overwhelming preponderance in the Atlantic and would divide between them the maritime supremacy which Great Britain alone possessed during the 19th century. An understanding with the United States would be the chief condition of the safety of the British Empire, but once such an understanding was reached, it would again become as safe as such an exposed and delicately balanced political structure can be.

If Mr. Hughes' plan is adopted Japan is left wholly secure against an attack from either the United States or Great Britain. She would even be secure against a combination of the British and American fleets. Without a naval base in the Far Eastern waters, in spite of their superiority in tonnage, they could not keep afloat for long in the neighborhood of Japan. On the other hand, Japan could not with the same impunity as she can at present dispatch a fleet and an army to capture Hong Kong or the Philippines. The fleets of the United States and Great Britain together would be four times as large as hers and even in the absence of a naval base they could make it difficult for the Japanese fleet to protect lines of communication with armies which had captured enemy strongholds so remote as Manila or Hong Kong.

The effect of Mr. Hughes' disarmament proposals upon the subsequent political deliberations of the Conference is clear and should be beneficial. It should certainly assuage the Japanese fear of a successful naval expedition into their home waters by the United States or even by the two English speaking countries combined. Japan is rendered safe against military coercion. Even if she refuses to modify her Chinese policy the American government nevertheless proposes to make itself powerless to break down her opposition by force. Any reforms in China will have to take place with Japanese consent and must come from the moral and political isolation which in the event of a re-

fusal the American government may be able to fasten on an unregenerate imperialist Japan.

In any event Mr. Hughes' leadership on the opening day of the Conference has begun by creating an atmosphere in which a great and enduring work of pacific statesmanship can be accomplished. It is an atmosphere of confidence, of good faith, of decisive action, and of hope for the future. Mr. Hughes will doubtless soon follow the announcement of his plan to limit armaments with an equally candid, definite, and drastic proposal to safeguard and emancipate China. This is much the most difficult half of his work—the half in which only a partial success is possible. But he is certainly marching on the road which leads on to the largest practicable measure of achievement. The American public is rightly coming to have more and more confidence in him and to expect of him great things. If only the British will go along, as we think they will, the final result of the Conference may better even the considerable expectations which have already been created.

Armistice Day: Lest We Forget

NOVEMBER ELEVENTH may well be remembered so long as mankind finds instruction in history. It marks one of the most stupendous achievements, and one of the most stupendous failures in human experience. On November Eleventh the work of the soldier was completed and the work of the diplomat was begun. And just as there are no words that can characterize adequately the endurance, the heroism and the devotion of the millions of men who offered their lives and all that life contained in order that victory might be won and mankind freed from the curse of militarism and war, so there are no words that can characterize adequately the fatuousness and greed of the diplomats who gave us, instead of a free and peaceful world, a chaos of disorder and intrigue and bankruptcy from which relief can come only slowly, after endless sufferings, many minor wars and grave risk of another great war to shatter what still remains firm in civilization.

If we wish to measure the achievement of the soldiers, we must estimate in its true proportions the power which they overthrew. It was perhaps necessary, in time of war, to create in the minds of the Allied peoples and of their friends not yet participating in the war, the impression that the enemy, from the outset, was overmatched. The German soldier, we were propagandized into believing, was overtrained, underindividualized, fit only for the mass action which is fatal under mod-

ern conditions of warfare. He was commanded by gray-bearded generals, stiff-mindedly bent on fighting the war in the manner of 1870. Magnificently equipped at the outset, the German army might inflict terrible initial losses upon the neighboring peoples who had counted too confidently on an unbroken peace. But in the end the dash and gallantry of the French, the fatalistic valor of the Russians, the doggedness of the English, the buoyancy of the Italians would shatter and destroy the German military power. We were all led to believe something of the kind in the early years of the war. But now every one knows that this was all romance and propaganda. The German military machine was tremendously efficient and formidable. The utmost of which the European allies were capable was to hold the balance even, denying victory to the Germans, but not winning it for themselves. The breakdown of Germany, so often confidently predicted, had to await the entry into the war of the United States and the development of American military power. If the United States had remained aloof the war would have ended in a draw, and a draw not altogether favorable to the Allies. This is not to countenance the stupid chauvinism of the boast that "we won the war." The scales were tottering in balance; America leapt into one of them and weighed it to the ground. That was her service and her responsibility.

America performed her service well. How did she acquit herself in the matter of her responsibility? Before the war ended, it appeared that she would acquit herself well. For America, through the words of President Wilson, gave definite promise of a settlement after the war under which there was hope that the era of aggressive warfare might be closed. No annexation of unwilling provinces to rankle until new wars should arise to recover them and create new wrongs. No punitive indemnities, enslaving whole generations and involving the menace to peace of an indefinite military occupation. A peace of justice, and the cooperation of victor and vanquished to build a new world.

Such was the peace America contemplated. Her associates had contemplated a very different one, to be sure. What the Allied powers contemplated has been known to all the world, ever since the publication of the Secret Treaties. Why should it ever have been assumed that America's openly announced peace plans should be any more binding than the secret aims of her associates in the war? Why should anyone have expected anything better than a settlement written in the spirit of the Secret Treaties, modified in certain details, perhaps, by