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Contents

The Week	257
Editorials	
The Subversion of Public Education.....	259
France Contra Mundum.....	262
Representation on the Reserve Board.....	264
Why Conferences Rather Than the League?...	265
General Articles	
An American Transportation System, I.....	
.....Edwin J. Clapp	267
Deported.....	Susanne K. Langer 270
Doppelgänger (Verse).....	William Rose Benét 271
The New Peace and Billie Burke.....	
.....Dorothee Raël Meirowsky	272
Lloyd George and the Ides of March.....	
.....An English Liberal	273
Geneva: Half a League Onward.....	
.....Manley O. Hudson	276
Correspondence	278
The Love for Three Oranges.....	Janet A. Fairbank 282
Beauty and the Beast.....	Stark Young 283
Country Songs.....	Padraic Colum 284
Reviews of Books	
Is Minding Behaving?.....	H. M. Kallen 285
Delos F. Wilcox on Transit.....	Emmett L. Bennett 286
The Antic Philosophers.....	Keith Preston 288
Selected Current Books.....	290

The Week

MR. LLOYD GEORGE'S speech of January 21st throws a flood of light upon the state of mind in which that statesman went to Cannes. He is profoundly stirred by the apparently hopeless slide toward disaster and chaos which is taking place in Europe and he is dedicating his abilities and energy to the task of checking the downfall and of starting Europe on a return journey towards recovery. He sees only one way of possibly accomplishing this result; and that is by "insistent meeting, discussing, reasoning and conference." "Each conference is a rung in the ladder that enables you to reach ultimate peace on earth." "Without peace there is no use having economics." What he is seeking at Genoa is, consequently, primarily a political settlement. He is summoning the nations to a meeting which he hopes will become or prepare for an ultimate constituent assembly of a new and better Europe.

THE ardor and intensity of Mr. Lloyd George's pacific revivalism do him honor. It is the most

encouraging development which has taken place for many years in that chaotic European compound of frustration, cynicism, suffering, despair, sentimentality, confusion, violence and futility. But what a damning criticism the Lloyd George of 1922 is uttering against the Lloyd George of the winter of 1918-19. The Paris Conference, which was called for the purpose of restoring peace to Europe, with whose decisions Mr. Lloyd George had much to do, and whose achievements he has so frequently defended, perpetrated a treaty of peace which has served ever since as a stimulus to dissolution and as a bar to appeasement. It possessed none of the characteristics which Mr. Lloyd George hopes to discover in the Conference at Genoa and its successors. It did not bring the nations "to the test of reason and not of force." On the contrary, the victorious conferees refused to discuss with the vanquished an instrument which was supposed to determine the latter's destiny during at least two generations. They were passing sentence and taking revenge rather than establishing peace. It was one of the most deliberate and unpardonable acts of sheer violence which a group of civilized statesmen ever committed. As an act of violence it was comparable to Germany's own offence in starting the war. Mr. Lloyd George is now trying really to appease Europe but his most serious obstacle is the ghost of his own past performances. There can be no peace and goodwill in Europe until the Treaty of Versailles is written off.

THE Washington Conference continues to confer chiefly for the purpose of reaching an agreement about Shantung which the Chinese delegation dares to accept. Such an agreement has become, as it now appears, necessary to the ratification of the Four Power Treaty by the Senate. The Democratic Senators are not unwilling in the interest of supposed party benefit to defeat the Treaty, provided they can discover some noble public interest which will be served by voting against it. They are hoping to discover it in the treatment which the

Conference metes out to China. They are preparing to prove, if they can, that the Four Power Concert will make of the United States Japan's accomplice in the Far East, and they will consider the failure of the Shantung negotiation as sufficient evidence of American subservience. They were willing themselves to ratify a treaty which would have committed the United States to the support of Japanese vested interests in Shantung, but they are now proposing to defeat a treaty because it may have the effect of temporarily conniving at a Japanese settlement in Shantung to which they by their votes have already consented. Senatorial pressure in favor of China on the American delegation is useful and desirable, but the solicitude of Democratic Senators for the liberation of Shantung is not convincing.

THERE are some Americans, ardent champions of the doctrine that things are always what they seem, who assume that whatever may be the case with the rest of Europe, the financial position of France has been improved by the substitution of Poincaré's policy for that of Briand. Poincaré stands uncompromisingly for the exaction of every gold mark Germany was forced to promise in the London agreement. Briand, it is true, never agreed to abate the French claims, but his final policy of conciliation faced in that direction. Poincaré promises a more vigorous effort at collection, which seems to mean more money for France and an improvement in French credit. But if it really meant this, French exchange ought to rise, and there ought to be a boom on the Paris Bourse. The reverse is true. The franc fell upon the triumph of Poincaré, and the Bourse sagged depressingly. The most furious sheriff can no more collect non-existent funds than can the mildest mannered one. But a furious sheriff may be popular with the creditors, until they have come to recognize that fury is a luxury for which they have to pay dear. In time the French people will have to learn that impossible claims are an insuperable obstacle to the realization of possible ones. And when they have learned this they will no longer want the services of Poincaré, or even of Briand. They will look for someone who will face the facts and insist on such a revision of the indemnity as to make it a genuine financial asset instead of a maleficent delusion.

GOVERNOR MILLER and President Nicholas Murray Butler might reasonably be expected to stand forth as unwavering exponents of the political principles of Alexander Hamilton. They belong, by training and temperament, in the most

conservative wing of the Hamiltonian party. But it has been known since time immemorial that principles are not so persistent as the interests underlying them. The party of Hamilton demanded a strong central government because, as they conceived it, the interests of the whole people, and especially the interests of the men of property and enterprise, were safer under a central government than under state and local control. Today it would be impossible to maintain that this is true. Washington is not so conservative as Albany. Accordingly Dr. Butler and Governor Miller are fulminating against bureaucracy and centralization, after the old Jeffersonian manner. Both agree that federal aid to education, with the accounting that it implies, is a terrible danger to the vitality of state government. Governor Miller is further gravely disturbed by the Maternity law. Better that mothers and babies die of neglect than that the federal government should get the habit of prying into the household affairs of the states. It may be hard to see a direct connection between the vitality of the states and their right to leave undone, or to do badly, things that need to be done well. But there is an important indirect connection. Whatever the federal government does has to be paid for out of taxation, and the federal government is able to place the bulk of taxation squarely upon the men of business and property, something the states are unable to do.

A COAL strike would work vast injury to miners, operators and public alike, and it will be averted if there is any industrial statesmanship in the federal administration. This is not a case in which the labor leaders are confident of success and eager for the conflict. They recognize the weakness of labor in time of depression. They are asking for increased wages and various other improvements in the position of labor, but these demands must be considered in the light of the fact that the employers are planning to cut wages. Both sides are at present engaged in an offensive-defensive propaganda campaign, in preparation for the struggle that may come in April. The consumer of coal does not see why it is necessary for the industry to throw the whole economic machinery of the country out of commission while operators and miners haggle over percentages of wages and profits. The consumer pays enough for coal to satisfy the legitimate demands of both miners and operators. But what the consumer pays seems to get lost somehow in transmission. When anthracite at the pit's mouth together with railway charges to New York costs less than one half of

the price exacted from the consumer, there must be enormous waste somewhere, or profiteering. Waste, we think, accounts for most of the margin. And until we get rid of it we shall have neither industrial peace nor cheap coal.

LORD BRYCE was more eminent as a historian, a publicist and a man of letters than he was as a statesman. He published early in life a scholarly and luminous study of the Holy Roman Empire which remained until his death his best title to intellectual distinction. But his most ambitious work was his painstaking and exhaustive analysis of American political institutions and practices which he first gave to the world about twenty-five years ago. It was a work rather of industry than insight, for Lord Bryce was not alive to the true psychological and economic explanation of many American political facts, but it remains an indispensable source book of American politics during the period from 1870 to 1890. His subsequent political career was a disappointment and his dispatch to this country as ambassador was equivalent to a retirement. His last book on democracy was more of a compilation and less of an interpretation than his *American Commonwealth*. It was remarkable chiefly because at the end of his life he had lost some of the confidence in democracy which was responsible for his original interest in the American Republic.

OPPONENTS of the birth control movement will grasp eagerly at Dr. Copeland's analysis of the birth statistics of New York. American born mothers, although sixty percent of the total number of mothers, bear forty percent of the children. The birth rate for the foreign born is 38 per thousand; for the native born, 16, and for the most typically American district, 7 per thousand. Nor can the American mothers plead the excuse of better babies, if fewer, since they lose in the first year after birth, 90 babies per thousand as compared with 43 for Scotch mothers, 58 for Swedes, 64 for Russians. There is here, as Dr. Copeland emphasizes, an important displacement of population taking place. The older immigrant stocks are yielding to the newer. Whether this means the better yielding to the worse or vice versa is a question admitting of no conclusive answer. It will, of course, be answered dogmatically enough by those who mistake their pride of race for an impartial judgment on race values. All will agree, however, that it is a deplorable thing that any group in the American population, especially a group which has had a long experience here, should find life not worth perpetuating. But as

for the birth control movement, what has that to do with it? The practice of birth control has obviously made great headway under our regime of reticence—greater headway, in fact, than in countries like Holland where it is lawful to impart birth control information. It should not be overlooked that the birth control movement has a positive as well as a negative side, as indicated in the name of one branch of the American movement, the Voluntary Parenthood League. It stands for the right of the child not to be born when life promises only disease and want, but also for its right to be born when life offers reasonable hope of happiness.

The Subversion of Public Education

THERE have long been thinkers on the continent of Europe and in England who have opposed state-conducted education. They have insisted that the state would surely use schools as a means of fixating the minds of the pupils, forming them upon the patterns of beliefs that are acceptable to political authorities. The danger is greater and the resulting outrage is worse, they hold, because pupils are of immature years and unable to protect themselves. The maintenance of liberty depends upon liberty of thought, inquiry and belief; and in preventing this liberty, state-supported education becomes the chief foe of all liberty.

Up to very recently, this view of public education has had next to no adherents in the United States. It was doctrinaire, unreal. Our public schools have had many defects but they have been genuinely public. Their office and work have been social, not political. Doubtless one set of beliefs rather than another has often been inculcated. But this was not done intentionally, of set purpose. Teachers drawn from the community have naturally reflected the views in which they were brought up, the beliefs which prevailed about them. But the influence of this fact upon teaching was unconscious and incidental. It was personal not political. It called, indeed, for care so as to select teachers who were trained to independent and critical thinking. But it afforded no basis for an accusation that the schools were agencies for propagating class ideas or beliefs favorable to vested interests.

Is this ancient and honorable state of affairs to be altered? Is the argument against state-managed schools to pass out of the region of doctrinaire theory and become a vital issue? If so,