

and the responsibilities which they assumed under the old. But there are two important changes. Wages are reduced an average of 13½ percent, which is the first reduction of wage-rates in the Rochester clothing market. The new agreement also contains a provision similar to the one which, as we pointed out last week, introduced a significant innovation into the Chicago agreement. Both sides may, after giving specified notice, ask for a change in wage levels either in May, 1923, or May, 1924, and the union may at the same time ask for the establishment of an unemployment insurance fund. If the Amalgamated Clothing Workers can, in the course of time and as the result of collective bargaining, induce the clothing manufacturers to set up voluntarily a system of unemployment insurance, they will have brought about by consent the recognition by one group of employers of a responsibility which may become of the utmost importance for the welfare of the American wage-earner.

The Meaning of the Russo-German Treaty

MR. HERBERT SIDEBOTHAM, an English correspondent who enjoys the confidence of the British Prime Minister, declares that in his opinion "the influence of the Russo-German Treaty will not be unwholesome." Disinterested American opinion may well agree with him. If Mr. Lloyd George's object in calling the Genoa Conference was the breaking down of the obstacles which block European appeasement, the Russo-German Treaty should help rather than hinder. Before the Conference assembled it looked as if the French Foreign Office might succeed in using it to perpetuate the political and economic isolation of Germany and as if the Russian and the English might come to regard their acquiescence in this policy as the easiest way out of their own immediate difficulties. The Russo-German Treaty has removed this danger. The present Russian government will not participate in such a conspiracy against the future peace of Europe, and British behavior, since its announcement, indicates that Great Britain also, in spite of the extent to which her policy is still dictated by French susceptibilities, shares the scruples of the Russians. The Treaty stands. The neutrals welcome it and both Great Britain and Italy are, so it appears, benevolently submissive. Germany is permitted to try and protect herself against an indefinite prolongation of the existing subordination of every other object of European politics to the execution of the judgment against her.

The pro-French interest has interpreted the Treaty as an instrument inimical to the future peace of Europe and subversive of the main object of the Genoa Conference. But in spite of the nominal punishment inflicted on the Germans for signing it, it may well prove to be a practical and necessary step towards European reunion. Europe emerged from the war subject to the complete military domination of the victorious Allies. Manifestly the military dictatorship of any one belligerent faction could not last indefinitely. Time and the exigencies of human nature in politics would transform it in one of two directions. Either the military domination of the victors would become the instrument of a united and reconciled Europe, erected on a foundation of international law, comparatively unhampered economic intercourse, freedom of expression for national cultures and general goodwill, or else the preponderance of power which the victors had captured would gradually provoke resistance and yield to a new incarnation of the old balance of power. This transformation has not yet occurred. Ever since the signing of the armistice, the political and military coalition of the Allies has remained the government of Europe. Ex-President Wilson proposed and attempted to substitute a general international government for the factional military dictatorship, but he was defeated in Paris.

The Treaty of Versailles was written less in the interest of reconciliation and reconstruction than of the continued domination of the victors. Their conduct of European affairs was not successful and something else had to be tried. The Genoa Conference is the beginning of another attempt to substitute some kind of international order and concert for this military dictatorship, but it is a more realistic and flexible attempt than that of Mr. Wilson. Mr. Lloyd George is convinced of the impossibility of continuing to govern Europe by the Supreme Council. He considers it necessary to put in its place not a world government but a concert of the European powers. He is right in considering such a concert indispensable. It seems to be the only agency which may be capable not merely of restoring and reconstructing Europe, but of saving it from economic disaster and social disintegration. He is hoping and laboring to pull out of the existing Conference the beginnings of a genuine European union, based ultimately on government by general consent.

The signing of the Russo-German Treaty will assist him in his work of substituting a concert for the present military dictatorship. Hitherto the Supreme Council has systematically talked and behaved as if Germany were a criminal whose destiny the Allies had the moral right to dictate without

asking for the consent of the German people. It has also behaved as if the Russian government was an outlaw which the rest of Europe had a right to exterminate, no matter whether the Russian people did or did not agree with the condemnation. But Germany and Russia are the two most populous and latently powerful nations of Europe; and if their governments were to be treated as criminals and outlaws, the project of organizing a European concert became a fantastic absurdity. The first step in the direction of a concert was consequently to abandon the policy of ostracism and to invite them to a conference in which they would sit, at least nominally, as the equals of the victors in the war. The next equally indispensable step was some assertion of independence and self-respect on their part, some unequivocal testimony of their refusal to be treated any longer as nations without rights, some indication that they could put forward and back up a policy of their own. It was this step which the German and Russian governments took when they signed the Treaty. They served notice on the victors in the war of their will and their ability to come back. They were willing, so they said in substance, to cooperate for the reconstruction of Europe, but if the proposed method of co-operation demanded, like the Treaty of Versailles, the continuation of compulsory subjection of their rights and interests to those of other peoples, they would make common cause against their judges and executioners.

This aggressive behavior undoubtedly implies a warning even more than a promise. It is a warning that if the Genoa Conference perpetuates under another form the dictatorship of the Supreme Council, Germany and Russia may ultimately combine to resist their masters, that they may form, if the British attempt to create a European concert fails, a new version of the old balance of power. Their gesture in plastering such a warning on the wall at a moment when the overwhelming need of Europe is a stable union of wills rather than an unstable balance of powers may look like rough politics, but if it was rough its roughness was called for by the nature of the emergency. The threat and the danger of the return of Europe to the anarchy of a new balance of power do not at present originate in the ambitions of the Russian or the German peoples, but in the evils of the existing distribution and exercise of political and economical authority in Europe. If the attempt to organize a concert fails, the victims of the present dictatorship of the Supreme Council are certain gradually to organize their protests against its tyranny into a counter-alliance, consisting chiefly of Germany and Russia. The Russo-German Treaty merely called attention to the probability

of such an occurrence, and asked France, Great Britain, Italy and the Little Entente what they would do to prevent it.

Its signature undoubtedly increases the danger of some drastic action on the part of the French government. The French politicians and generals are the chief supporters and beneficiaries of the prevailing dictatorship. They will do their best to perpetuate it, and their policy with respect to the Genoa Conference has kept that end steadily in view. But they realize the force of the demand among their allies for some measure of European reunion, and they do not dare openly to oppose it. The position of France is precarious. She depends upon her allies for support in maintaining a dictatorship in which they are coming less and less to believe, and this increasing alienation of her associates provokes her politicians to talk about adopting complete freedom of action. M. Poincaré threatens to break away and to fall back on the French army as the sufficient instrument of French national policy.

The fact is that the French politicians are really concerned more with the prestige of France than with the realistic adjustment of French interests to those of the other European peoples. Whatever else happens, the French nation must, they think, continue to occupy the centre of the European stage. Unfortunately, however, some of the other leading characters are always intruding and crowding her into the wings. French prestige suffered severely at Washington. As a consequence of the obstructive nature of French policy, it is suffering still more at Genoa. The reappearance of Germany and Russia as positive influences in moulding European policy and the adoption by them of an independent combined policy is peculiarly alarming to French susceptibilities. French statesmen would regard the recovery of Germany and Russia and an alliance between them as the most dangerous possible menace to everything that France has gained from the war. The remoteness of the menace and the present military impotence of the two protesting countries will not persuade them to submit to it patiently. During the next few weeks or months they will seek to prevent any further independent self-assertion on the part of the outcast nations.

Whether the demonstration will include the execution of some of the "sanctions" as a penalty for German default under the Treaty, we shall not presume to predict. But if the French government should seek to vindicate its prestige by a military demonstration which would further embroil and disconcert Europe, the other European nations should not try to buy it off by any substantial concessions. Sooner or later, if they

honestly propose to form a European union, they will have to call the French bluff; and the time is coming when the failure to call it will wreck for many years the possibility of European reconstruction. It is the peculiar advantage of conferences, such as the one now assembled at Genoa, that they expose, emphasize and advertise unpalatable but irrepressible aspects of an obscure and complicated political situation. They reveal the hollowness of the subterfuges which the politicians have used as a means of escape from their immediate difficulties and which so frequently crystallize into stubborn popular illusions. The New York Herald is right. "The Genoa Conference has justified its existence. Its justification is the awakening the world gets from the dramatically executed Russo-German Treaty. It flashes a picture on the sky which makes men think and shakes them from the lethargy of dull prejudice and easy-going indifference. It brings them to a realization that a very human handling of the problem with a broad wise consideration is the only course that will make for lasting peace and a readjusted revitalized Europe."

Ferment in the Colleges

ACCORDING to the prevailing scheme in our institutions of higher learning the officially recognized interests of the students fall into two categories. The first of these consists of the "student activities," frequently designated in the college press simply as "activities." Athletics, class politics, debating and musical clubs, the conduct of the honor system, are typical "activities." The other category of interests has never, to our knowledge, been officially christened, but we suggest as most appropriate the name of "student passivities," or "passivities," for short. This category includes everything that has to do with the curriculum. How many years a student must spend in college, what courses shall be "required," and what they shall contain, how far election of courses shall be free and how far controlled by an advisor—all such concerns have by general consent been left to the governance of the Faculty. And the Faculty likes the arrangement. The Faculty stands in the position of a producer of utilities; the students are the consumers. And what do producers consider more fitting than that the consumer should leave to their discretion all questions of quantity, quality, and price?

Recently, however, there has appeared to be something like a ferment working in the colleges. At first only sporadic voices were heard challenging the eternal fitness of the division of interests

between activities and passivities. The challengers were usually avoided, as cranks, by the majority of well disciplined students. These students did not believe that you could change student nature. They believed that it was of the nature of the student to present himself as raw material at the college gates, to be milled and sifted and done up in a neat parchment package according to the technical rules laid down by wise men long since dead and administered by other wise men not dead yet. But the number of challengers has grown persistently. The New York University News has compiled an "Intercollegiate Platform," a sort of students' constitution, from "planks" composed by college editors in representative institutions. And while most of these planks pertain to the traditional "activities," four editors, representing Princeton, Yale, Boston and Amherst, turn their attention upon the curriculum. The Princeton representative asks for increased emphasis upon the humanities. The Yale representative would "preserve the college from the cultural blight which inevitably follows the growth of economics and similar studies." The representative of Boston asks for "curriculums more closely adapted to the practical needs of life"; the Amherst representative yearns for "a conscious effort to face the social, political and economic problems of reconstruction which our generation must solve."

These are stirrings, or perhaps better, growing pains. For a maturer performance we turn to Barnard College, where, under the opaque shadow of Columbia University, a really spirited student life is taking shape. A student curricular committee, created by the Student Council with the consent of the undergraduate body, has reviewed thoroughly the present curriculum and has presented to the Faculty a report which has, we believe, been laid on the table. But that is, we hope, not the end of the matter, as the report is too live to lie forever gathering dust.

What the curricular committee desires is a complete break with the traditional courses that make the Freshman and Sophomore years practically a continuation of the high school, and the substitution of broader studies that may serve to orient the student in the world of adult thought. The Freshman year, as the committee would reorganize it, would offer a solid course on the history of mankind "designed to bring out the chief aspects of man's relation to his environment by tracing present conditions and tendencies to historic processes"; it would offer a course giving an introduction to human biology and psychology; a course on general mathematical analysis; a course on English literature, "presenting literature as an aspect of life"; and a course on the technique of expression,