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The Week

THE abnormally light registration in New York state is a much more sensitive register of the disposition of the American electorate at this moment than the way in which they divide between Republican and Democratic candidates. There is no tide running strong in favor either of Republicanism or Democracy, liberalism or conservatism. The voters are not moving or being moved. They are lukewarm and sluggish. They do not know their own minds and are not ready to take chances. But their immobility is not the result of satisfaction. They are uneasy. They have a foreboding that something has happened to the old balance of political and social forces which demands a radical readjustment; and they are hoping to obtain some light and leading as to what the readjustment is and how it will affect them. In the meantime they are afraid of it, and are disposed to disapprove of political and economic experimentation.

FOR the present their restlessness cannot obtain any political expression. It is so far from obtain-

ing such an expression that many years may elapse before the American electorate will have a chance to express in a vote a vital political preference. But the day will eventually come when the ineptitude of the two major parties and their inability to translate into a political program the economic and social needs of the American people will dawn upon the popular mind; and when that time does come their accumulated restlessness may well assume the form of an impatient and subversive clamor for immediate results. It is really a great misfortune from the point of view of orderly social development in the United States that progressivism in the form both of liberalism and radicalism is politically so impotent. The major parties are not being pressed, as they should be pressed, to prepare their minds for a period of quick and lively political and social alteration. They will not realize when the landslide is really approaching, and they will by stubborn and stupid opposition to unavoidable and overdue reforms make it more difficult to avoid a drastic political and social convulsion.

ONE new fact in the political situation of New York is the combination into one organization of all the radical reform groups. The new American Labor party is a reproduction in this country of the British Labor party. It is the spokesman not of catastrophic socialism which looks forward through the operation of an inexorable social law to the triumphant dictatorship of the wage-earning class, but of an ethical and political socialism which expects to attain its purposes through the support of the workers of all classes and which seeks to build up a cooperative commonwealth by an essentially educational and experimental program. Considering the existing disposition of public opinion, the new party will not poll a very formidable vote at any election in the near future; but if it can keep together, remain true to its educational and experimental program and create to carry out that program a thoroughly localized and popularized party organization, it will steadily gain in strength

and will eventually profit largely from the increasing ineptitude of the major parties.

WRITING recently from London a well-known English journalist who hitherto has supported Lloyd George, says: "Up to the time of the Genoa Conference he (Lloyd George) had an ideal, a pacific ideal, for which he worked with a courage and a skill which it was impossible not to admire. Since Genoa he has not been the same man. He has become a dangerous man. The appalling levity with which he burnt the British boats at Chanak and appealed to the Dominions for help in a hasty and careless moment of excitement was utterly unlike the old Lloyd George. It was bad diplomacy, bad taste, bad judgment, bad 'everything.'" There is, we believe, much truth in this criticism. For a few days the British Prime Minister lost his sense of political realities and talked and acted feverishly and wildly. But if this conduct of British diplomacy at a critical moment was unlike the old Lloyd George, his recent speech at Manchester indicates that some of the old Lloyd George still survives. It was a fine example of aggressive political fighting which will temporarily strengthen both the coalition and his own personal prestige. And however wildly he talked at the critical moment, he has, we believe, vindicated the necessity of his perilous and courageous decision to keep the British troops at Chanak. On that issue he can appeal with confidence to the British electorate.

UNDER the pending naval program France will spend 300,000,000 francs a year for twenty years in building up a fighting fleet. This expenditure is expected to provide 175,000 tons of battleships, 330,000 tons of cruisers and 65,000 tons of submarines, not counting small craft for coast defence. Apparently these accessions to naval tonnage fall within the limits of the Washington agreement, which France has not ratified yet and does not intend to ratify so long as the least bit of diplomatic advantage can be squeezed out of it. But that is not the point. Here is a country which is willing to perpetuate anarchy in Central Europe in order to extract a little money from Germany; which loudly proclaims its impotence to pay its just debts, but nevertheless proceeds blithely to commit itself to perfectly useless expenditures of hundreds of millions of francs annually. Perfectly useless expenditures, because there is no navy in Europe that could menace France except the British, and after the proposed additions the British navy will still be so much the stronger that in case of war the French ships would not dare to leave port. In the

circumstances the reported Washington policy of discouraging loans to Europe is wise. France and her satellites, Poland and Jugoslavia, are clearly too much addicted to pernicious waste to deserve the support of American credit in any of their public enterprises.

A FIVE year moratorium for Germany covering not only cash payments but payments in kind is now proposed by Sir John Bradbury, British member of the Reparations Commission. Of course the French are outraged. They have been basing their budgets on the expectation of reparations payments, and there is no financier in sight who could make a show of a balanced budget for the next five years without them. The position is unfortunate for France. If at the close of the war, when the German financial and industrial structure was still sound, France had contented herself with moderate indemnities she could have collected them. The interest on ten billion dollars might have been squeezed out of Germany. But the French insisted on thirty billions. And while they were trying to get more than they could, Germany went to smash, financially. She can pay next to nothing, now. Give her a chance to recover her footing and Germany may pay something at the end of five years. Press her now, and she will never pay anything at all.

CHRISTIAN reformers who have hoped to convert the Christian religion into an influence making for peace on earth and goodwill to men have not received very much encouragement recently from Bishop Cannon of the Methodist Episcopal Church. At a moment when there was no demand for war on the part of the politicians, the munition makers, the soldiers and the one hundred percent Americans, it remained for some of the Christian clergy and bishops to advocate the despatch of American battleships and soldiers to the Near East. If Bishop Cannon and the Rev. Mr. Barton could have dictated the policy of the country, the American government and army would have taken over the task of driving the Turks back into Anatolia, of protecting the Christian populations of the Near East from massacre, and of setting up a political régime in that region which would keep order and satisfy the conflicting ambitions and interests of its inhabitants and neighbors. Let us be thankful that they did not. When Christians come to apply Christianity to questions of peace or war, they seem irresistibly tempted either to glorify war as the very weapon of God or else utterly to condemn participation in war whatever the circumstances. If these are the only alternatives to which the

effort to apply Christianity to politics reduces a democratic state, it will be indispensable to exclude Christianity from politics.

IN proceeding with the payment of interest on her debt to the United States England is actuated, no doubt, by the long tradition of British financial honor. But British honor has a way of proving itself good business also. If England should ever again be involved in a great war she would be able to draw upon the vast financial reserves of America as no nation which asked to be forgiven its debts could. If we exclude such remote possibilities, England still has much to gain from a policy of payment. For a generation at least American capital employed abroad will be commonly employed in conjunction with British capital. The British will be found possessed of the franchises and concessions and the diplomatic support upon which profitable exploitation in Asia, Africa and South America depend. The British will keep the promoters' and bankers' profits, which will be the richer the greater the capital fund they can draw upon. And in order to draw freely upon American capital they need just such conclusive proof of national honor and solvency as debt payment affords.

CAPTAIN PAXTON HIBBEN replies to charges made in an article entitled *The Reds in America*, appearing in various newspapers, as follows: "That I am or ever have been a 'red,' am raising or ever have attempted to raise money for the support of the Soviet Government of Russia, the Russian army, or for any other purpose whatever except for purely humanitarian relief work as well as the bulk of the remainder of the article in question are absolutely and unqualifiedly false. That I was ever a paid propagandist for the Greek royalists, for example, is absolutely false. It is characteristic of the whole article that it states that I 'copied confidential papers and documents while employed in the Consulate in Brazil, and had to assume a careful disguise in escaping from the country.' I was never in Brazil in my life, never employed in a Consulate in my life, and never assumed a disguise to do anything whatsoever." Captain Hibben has sued the *Boston Transcript*, one of the newspapers in which the article appeared, for \$100,000.

PRESIDENT HARDING'S order referring to the Tariff Commission all applications for relief under the flexible provision of the tariff law has at least the merits of a good intention. The administration of the law is to be elevated above the plane of executive whim and favor. If the President

holds unswervingly to the order, the Tariff Commission might easily become one of the most powerful economic arms of the government. It could strike profiteering in special industries by a cut of fifty percent in the tariff schedules, or by clapping an increased duty upon imported materials. It could force industrial establishments enjoying tariff favors to reveal their profits along with their costs, and clear up questions as to their efficiency of production. It may be argued that this would be an unwarranted prying into private interests. No industry which receives protection can properly demand immunity from administrative inquiry. In so far as it profits from the tariff it is living at public expense and owes the public a thorough accounting.

IT is fortunate that the protests of a few timid reactionaries did not influence the State Department to withhold a visa permitting Jean Longuet to visit this country. The object of his visit, to work toward the restoration of the international labor relations shattered by the war, is not one that ought to disturb anyone's sleep. American labor is not yet internationally minded, and M. Longuet is likely to be somewhat disappointed with the results of his tour. But so far as there are any results, they will be all to the good. Whatever moral support American labor can give to the European labor movement in its opposition to the militarism of the governments will count toward peace. It is a remarkable thing that even the most reactionary of Americans should not by this time have learned that the greatest menace to the existing order is not revolutionary propaganda but war.

OUR attention is called by two correspondents to the arbitrary conduct of judges in refusing to grant citizenship papers to aliens. The first case was in Boston, where the fact that the applicant had claimed exemption from war service was made the ground of the refusal. At the time the man had not taken out his first papers and his claim for exemption was entirely proper. Judge J. M. Morton, Jr., by his decision set aside a distinction made by Congress. His action is praised by the local press as an example of courage. The second case is reported from Alfred, Maine, by the *Christian Science Monitor*. Chief Justice Leslie C. Cornish of the Maine Supreme Court thought that he detected "the taint of alcohol" upon the breath of an applicant for citizenship. "Are you a drinking man?" asked the court. "I am not," replied the applicant. "Have you been drinking today?" "No, sir." "Your breath smells as though you had been drinking and I will deny the application," replied the Chief Justice.

The American College

THE fundamental question before the American college today is what is it for. On the answer to that question depends the answer to the further questions, what it should teach and how it should teach it, in other words the curriculum. The answers to these questions cannot be given in abstract terms. They depend on the historical development of the college as a part of the university system, and on the relation of the college to the public for which it exists. The former took place in recent years under the impulse of science; the latter was determined by the spread of democracy.

It was scientific discovery which led to the elective system. The increase in human knowledge and the perception of the relation of that knowledge to man's survival as an individual or in society broke down the conception of college as a preparation, through certain formal requirements, for admission into the select company whose order had been perpetuated since the Renaissance. Not only was the number of things to be known increased by scientific discovery, but a new conception of the thoroughness and accuracy with which everything may be known was promoted. The increase in possible subjects of study, the ideal of specialization put forward by each, together brought the college curriculum to confusion. The professional schools which in former days had represented distinctly post graduate activity, under the impulse of specialization demanded more time for training. They found themselves in the situation of progressive nations seeking expansion, with a weak ill-governed neighbor on their borders. Naturally they entered and took possession of large portions of the college period with pre-legal and pre-medical courses. The younger and more ambitious of these schools, those of business and journalism, in some cases have remodelled the entire undergraduate curriculum to their uses, and the collegiate normal course has done much the same thing.

Meanwhile the abandonment of the aristocratic ideal in fact brought about a great increase in the number of students able to enter college, while the retention of that ideal in name constituted a powerful inducement to them to do so. The college became one of those democratic institutions, like the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel in Mr. Herford's epigram, whose function seemed to be to give exclusiveness to the masses. The new constituency of the college, however, demanded something tangible for its money. The pressure to make college contribute somehow to success in practical life, in earning a livelihood or in social usefulness, led to the introduction of technical and practical courses, such as those in domestic science, dress-making,

reporting, fiction-writing, piano-playing, acting and play-writing. Necessarily the difficulty arose of assigning credit in the same terms to units of so various a program as that to which the college student was invited. To reduce these to a common denominator was a task requiring instruments of precision which did not exist. In consequence as a means of calculating the requirement for a degree a rough system of calculation was adopted, based on the number of hours spent in class room or laboratory with an estimate of the relation of these hours to hypothetical hours of preparation. Democracy of the higher education was effectively achieved by the process of adding six credits in Plato or Milton, four in surveying or stock judging, six more in calculus, and four in botany or music, the total sum to equal one A. B.

This is the situation which is being considered and met in the various colleges in ways described in the present number of the New Republic. The remedies suggested may be summarized under three heads. The first is the simple one of limiting the free choice of the student under the elective system, and bringing about a balance between general humanistic studies on the one hand and special or professional work on the other by a system of group requirements, to promote both concentration and distribution. This plan, now of quite general adoption, is particularly explained by Professor Sherman of Illinois. He points out, however, the danger that this device practised by the indifferent student and the indifferent faculty adviser may become a merely mechanical one. The corrective is suggested by Professor Vernon in his remark that the student must elect a purpose, not a course of study.

A second plan of somewhat wide adoption is that of the survey course, to afford the student some comprehension of the field of knowledge as a whole, which may serve as a guide to his choice of interests and a background to which to relate them. The danger of the survey course is that it may become a tour through some region of knowledge, the students riding comfortably on the sight-seeing wagon with a lecturer to point out the *Sehenswürdigkeiten*. There is the further danger of exploiting such courses for profit. Open to numbers limited only by the size of the classrooms, they constitute emergency outlets for the overflow of a multitude of students and thus simplify the business problems of the college, administrative and financial. To students and college authorities they offer temptation peculiar to the easiest way. In recognition of these dangers President Burton points out that a survey course should not only cover but permeate an entire field. President Meiklejohn goes further and suggests that really