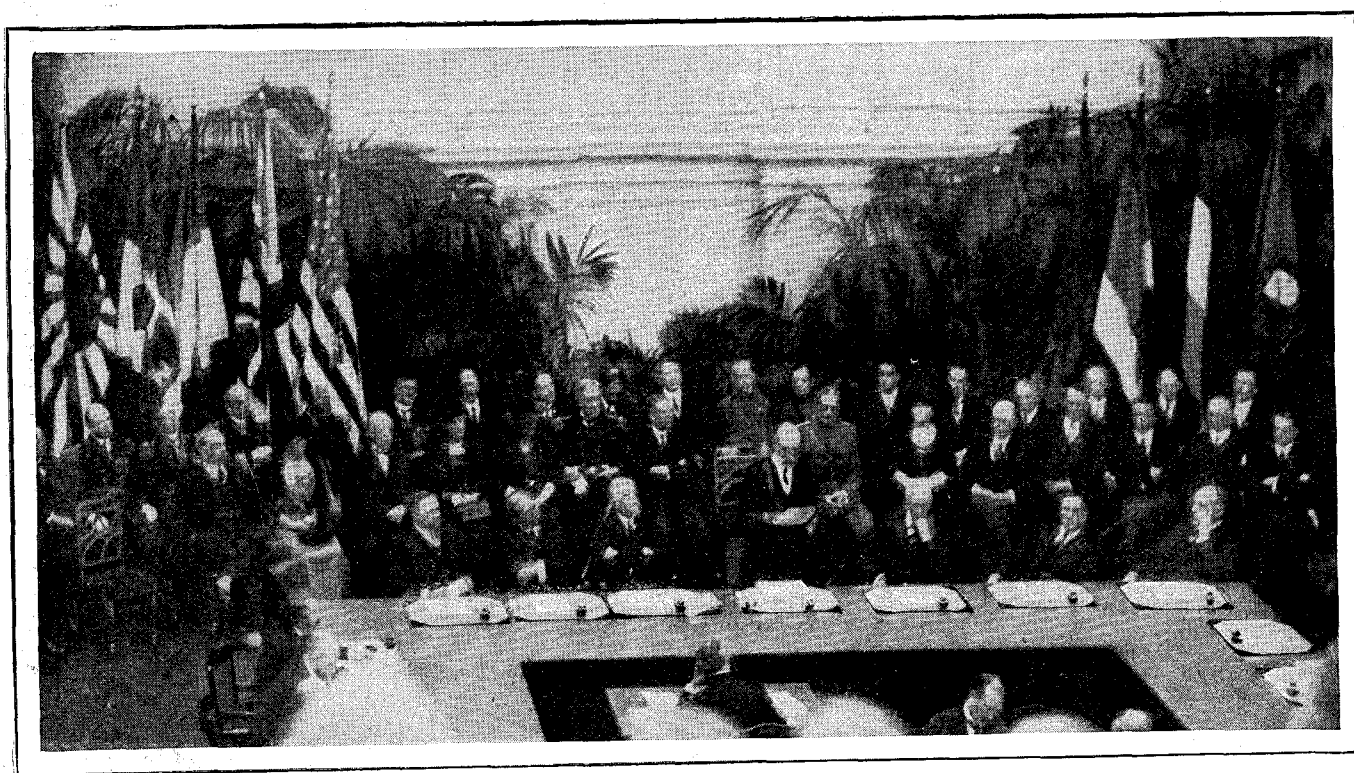


WAR: FORETHOUGHT



SECRETARY
HUGHES (RIGHT)
AND ARTHUR J.
BALFOUR, HEAD
OF THE BRITISH
DELEGATION TO
THE ARMS
CONFERENCE

International



(C) Underwood

A HISTORIC SCENE—SECRETARY HUGHES READING HIS ADDRESS BEFORE THE ARMS CONFERENCE

Secretary Hughes is seen in the right center reading his remarkable proposal for the diminution of navies. Behind him is General Pershing. Seated at the table, facing camera, at the right of Secretary Hughes (left to right): Senator Underwood of Alabama; the Hon. Elihu Root; Senator Lodge of Massachusetts—the American delegates. At Secretary Hughes's left, the Rt. Hon. Arthur James Balfour; Lord Lee; Sir Auckland Geddes—the British delegates. Seated at the left side of the table can be seen two members of the French delegation—Premier Briand and René Viviani. At the extreme right of the picture, with arms folded, is Secretary Hoover; the second man at his right is Assistant Secretary of the Navy Roosevelt. Seated behind Senator Underwood is Samuel Gompers

AND AFTERTHOUGHT



International

REFUGEES AT SAMARA BEING FED BY WORKERS OF THE FIRST
AMERICAN RELIEF ADMINISTRATION TRAIN



International

STARVING RUSSIAN CHILDREN AT SAMARA BEING EXAMINED BY
PHYSICIANS AND NURSES IN A HOSPITAL SUPPLIED BY THE
AMERICAN RELIEF ADMINISTRATION

BRIAND AND PRESENT-DAY FRANCE

BY C. H. SHERRILL

AMERICANS, especially those who have not lived in France, are apt to consider Frenchmen an unsteady, erratic folk. No American thinks this who has visited Verdun, where Pétain's immortal phrase, "They shall not pass," was indelibly painted upon France's fair scutcheon in the outpoured blood of 400,000 Frenchmen who there laid down their lives—an everlasting proof of French steadfastness! Some who are critically inclined allege that there is instability in the French system of conditioning Government control upon the retention of a majority in Parliament. The fact is that the conduct of the different Government departments in France goes uninterruptedly forward, regardless of shifting Ministries, and with less change than in Washington, where Cabinet officers are apt to alter the conduct of the departments committed to their care. French Prime Ministers change more frequently than do our Presidents, but in type they differ less than did McKinley from Roosevelt, or Cleveland from Wilson. In order to learn of French politics, let us study some of their public men, not forgetting the national limitations subject to which they must function and certainly not overlooking sundry leaders of the press, so influential in their public life.

An unusually typical Prime Minister even in Paris the unchanging is Aristide Briand. For the sixth time Briand last came into power as Prime Minister January 16, 1921. Only once had he actually been forced from office by adverse Parliamentary votes, on all the other occasions resigning because the time seemed inopportune for carrying forward his policy of government. As Prime Minister he has held various portfolios, generally that of the Interior, only twice that of Foreign Affairs. It is easier to understand this astute politician if one learns that, when cares of office permit brief holidays, he spends them fishing at a little place he owns in the department of the Eure, not far from Paris. An enthusiastic follower of Izaak Walton's sport and a Frenchman! This combination means that one starting with all the quick perceptions of a Latin is further equipped with that infinite patience without which the wielder of rod and line becomes an impossibility. Observe him from this angle, and the reasons for Briand's political success begin to unfold themselves.

One day in June, 1921, while I was lunching with him at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, his official residence, he interrupted his amazing flow of anecdote, gleaned during years of public life, to ask if I still preferred to think of him more as a fisherman than as a Prime Minister. The answer was easy, for it was upon the very next day that

Lord Curzon, head of the British Foreign Office, was arriving in Paris to see Briand after he had repeatedly invited the Frenchman to come to London or Folkstone, or even Boulogne! Briand, with a fisherman's patience, having announced to England France's policy on certain matters, had simply waited. Nor does this fisherman always sit on the bank, for when, a month later, his enemies sought to overthrow him in the Chambre des Députés by attacking a high functionary of his, the Foreign Office, he waded out into the political rapids, vigorously defended the man, and offered to resign if the Deputies disapproved of such defense. And all this turmoil was about a telegram sent before Briand had last become Minister—some one else's political baby left on his doorstep, as it were! There you have the man, alert-minded like all Latins, logical as is the average Frenchman, quickly daring, but all this against a background of untiring patience.

The French themselves do not seem to realize the significant change that has come over their position as a Continental Power, thanks to Briand. When he last became Prime Minister, they were England's "splendid second," to borrow a phrase of Kaiser Wilhelm's anent Austria. Now we see, not only Lord Curzon coming to Paris instead of Briand going to England, but also many other European leaders, such as Benes, Take Jonescu, Pashich, and, last of all, the Greek Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, all acknowledging by their visits the prestige attained by the French capital.

It is said by some critics that the French parliamentary system tends to develop opportunists. Well, here is one of the best of them, for his opportunism is based on the sound and practiced philosophy of one as willing to resign office as he has been to undertake its responsibilities. The only dangerous opportunist is the one eager for office or unwilling to leave it. Briand began his political career as an advanced Socialist. He was a workingman, a toiler with his hands, but his fiery political speeches so delighted his fellows that they pushed him on and upward as their adored representative. That diplomat of long training, Count Wrangel, while Swedish Minister for Foreign Affairs, once remarked to me that when a Socialist mounted high enough to view the world from a first-floor balcony it became for him quite different from that same world seen from the curbstone! The responsibilities of office necessarily broadened and refined the Socialist Briand. The once carelessly garbed workingman has become as well and quietly dressed as the most fastidious Londoner. His hair, however, remains longer than conven-

tion demands, but the dark shock, slightly gray at the sides, adds to the appearance of strength given by powerful shoulders. But the feature lingering longest in memory is the unwavering gaze of his intense blue eyes. Most great men have a keen gaze because they have no time for casual glances, and Briand is like other great men in this respect. For great man he has proved himself to be, and that too on frequent occasions, notably when, as Prime Minister in 1910, he, a Socialist, defeated the Socialist railway strike by the bold expedient of summoning the strikers to military duty and then assigning them to service on the very railways they planned to desert. France first and Socialism second was then his idea, and so it has always been throughout his political career—France first and his own projects second, even when that meant resignation from high office, as it often did.

Briand has a very pleasant sense of humor. When at the famous March, 1921, meeting in London, Lloyd George, expecting a reasonable indemnity suggestion from the German delegate, Dr. Simons, found that, on the contrary, he seemed to be putting the blame for the war on the Allies, and almost to ask an apology from them to the poor overburdened Germans, the British Prime Minister penciled a brief note to Briand, "In five minutes' time you will hear that it is we who owe money to the Germans." Briand said nothing, but took out his watch and placed it on the table before him. At the end of exactly five minutes he pushed the watch over to Lloyd George with a paper on which he had written, "Give it to him, and give him your shirt along with it."

Even sentiment, so potent a factor with all Latins, never prevents Briand's sense of humor from functioning. One day during the war Briand, then Prime Minister, after lunching at a restaurant on the Rue Royale with Lloyd George, set out on foot with him for the Foreign Office. On their way through the Place de la Concorde, they stopped before the statue of Strasbourg, draped in crape and covered with banners and flowers by devoted Alsations. Said Lloyd George, with much emotion, "I can never see that statue in its trappings of woe without an unspeakable sadness coming over me." Briand grasped his hand, saying, "Rest assured that when this war ends we will remove those sad draperies." The distinguished Briton became thoughtful for a moment and then continued: "Perhaps if some day after the war I should see in Berlin a statue of the German left bank of the Rhine similarly draped with mourning, I would feel the same emotion." "Ah," replied Briand, "learn to control your emotions, lest you should also come upon