

Senator will dare to vote against a treaty which the intelligence and welfare of the country demand, in order to satisfy a private whim, a personal quarrel, or a desire to promote party revenge or party advantage.

DRAMATIC DECENCY

HISTORY is all bunk!" So Henry Ford is alleged to have exclaimed. It is doubtless true that some historical records contain a good deal of what the father of the flivver picturesquely calls "bunk." Nevertheless history sometimes throws a good deal of useful illumination on sensational events of current life that the Henry Ford type of American regards as being wholly unprecedented.

Take the present outcry about the theater, for example. On the one hand, there are those who think that vulgar and indecent plays are a totally new symptom of degenerate social morals and that the cure is a suppression or censorship of the theater; on the other are those who denounce all protests against public indecency, especially when made by the Church, as professional and pious Puritanism if not hypocrisy.

Now it is a curious and enlightening fact of history that this dramatic and social phenomenon which is exciting the newspapers of New York into their blackest and scariest headlines is almost an exact repetition of what occurred on the English stage and in London society after the restoration of Charles II. The reaction against the austerities of the Puritans resulted in a wave of libertinism in England which fairly engulfed the theater in a torrent of obscenity. The names of two notorious, if gifted, playwrights will always be associated with this period of dissolute English dramatic art—Wycherly and Congreve. Both of them were university men. Wycherly was a product of Oxford, Congreve of the University of Dublin. Wycherly was essentially a shallow character, but Congreve was a scholar and a man of letters. He succumbed, however, to the general laxity of the time. He wrote, wittily it is true, what he thought the public wanted—the usual excuse of the managers and authors who, for money or applause, put on the stage what appeals not to the best but to the worst in man, because that is the easiest way to win publicity and swell the receipts of the box-office. The smaller fry imitated them.

The result was that the stench of the stage became too strong even for the easy-going public accustomed to the moral standards of the Court of King Charles. A clergyman of the Church of

England, a sturdy royalist, very far from a Puritan in theology or politics, took up the cudgels in defense of decency. This was the Rev. Jeremy Collier, of Cambridge, and his book "A Short View of the Profaneness and Immorality of the English Stage" created a great sensation in the literary world. The attack was not allowed to pass unheeded. Congreve, Wycherly, Vanbrugh, and even Dryden, flew to the defense of the theater. But Collier was too much for them. His invective and his wit as well as his proofs sent them scurrying to their dugouts. "The nation," says Macaulay, whose delightful essay on the Comic Dramatists of that period tells the story, "was on the side of Collier. . . . A great and rapid reform in almost all the departments of our lighter literature was the effect of his labors. A new race of wits and poets arose, who generally treated with reverence the great ties which bind society together."

Has not Macaulay in that phrase hit upon the real standard by which the stage should be judged? Gayety, lightness, humor, laughter, beauty, ridicule, satire, all have their place in comedy, but those playwrights and actors and managers who deliberately set out to destroy reverence for the great ties that bind society together—and of these the tie of sex is the greatest—are really enemies of society.

KEEPING FAITH IN NAVAL ARMAMENT

IF we are going to reduce our Navy, let us do so in an orderly and reasonable manner. By the negotiation of the treaty limiting the naval armament of the United States and four other naval Powers, the American Government has adopted a policy which is reasonable and intelligible. We have gained the consent of other nations to stop the competition in building capital ships, and have, after a thorough discussion with the representatives of these other Powers, come to an understanding as to the ratio between the respective naval forces. The people of the United States are obviously in favor of this arrangement. If that ratio is to stand, it is necessary for Congress to provide the funds for the maintenance of the ships we retain and the men to man them.

To cripple our Navy still further, without reference to what other countries are doing and in disregard of a carefully considered policy, would be monstrous folly.

The Appropriations Committee of the House of Representatives has a subcommittee which has been considering

the estimates for the Navy Department. This sub-committee has made estimates which would destroy the efficiency of the American Navy even more effectually than defeat in battle. Instead of providing the ratio agreed upon in the Armament Conference, this sub-committee would reduce the effectiveness of our Navy below that of Japan's. Against any such action the whole country should rise in protest. We owe it to Japan that we do not exceed the ratio agreed upon. But we owe quite as much to ourselves that we do not fall below it. Let Congress beware how it breaks faith with the American people.

"A DARK INDUSTRY"

NO avenue of compromise or conciliation has opened up in the dispute between bituminous coal operators and miners, up to this time of writing, March 21. The contracts under which mining in both anthracite and bituminous fields is carried on expire on March 31; anthracite operators and unions have been in conference, but no agreement has been reached. An article by Mr. Helm on another page reviews recent coal history.

Secretary Davis, of the Department of Labor, has used every effort to bring the opposing forces in the soft-coal industry together, but in vain. He reports that John L. Lewis, head of the United Mine Workers, has assured him of the willingness of the miners' union to open negotiations for a new National wage contract. Secretary Davis, in an address, laments the lack of power on the part of the Government to avert the strike, says that there remains only the power of public opinion, urges the collection and publication of complete information about the coal industry, and adds: "I call coal mining a dark industry. They work in dark mines, their product is dark, and they have so many dark secrets on both sides that a new one is nothing to be surprised about."

Congress has shown itself unwilling to consider seriously the bills proposed by Senators Calder, Frelinghuysen, and Kenyon—bills which laid stress on this need of public knowledge of the complete facts, attempted to regulate the industry in its seasonal aspects, and (in the Kenyon bill) proposed such a Coal Labor Board as would correspond with the existing Railway Labor Board. If such a Coal Board existed to-day, there would be at least a medium for bringing the contesting elements into conference and a sure method of directing public censure against either party that refused reasonable suggestions of arbitration.

One hopeful trend in recent industrial

contests has been the sharpening of public feeling as to the binding force of contracts. Quick public condemnation now falls upon either party, union or employers, which repudiates a contract. This is noticeable in press comments on the Pittsburgh Coal-Producers' Association's refusal to confer with the miners. With others in the central competitive bituminous field, that Association agreed with the United Mine Workers to meet in conference before April 1, 1922, for the renewal of contracts. Secretary Davis said as to this: "That agreement was made, and both sides should meet to discuss a new wage scale. I say to both of them, 'You made the agreement, and you should stand by it.'" The New York "World" comments:

Repudiation of labor agreements is something in which employers more than labor unions cannot afford to indulge. It is likely to become a particularly dangerous business for owners and operators of coal mines. Private possession of so limited and vital a store of natural wealth is heavily affected with a public interest. Its responsibility is not confined to God Almighty, as the late Mr. Baer had it, but extends to the Government and people of the Nation, and it will not be permitted to dodge that responsibility.

The coal consumer, and especially the industrial consumer, will bear a large share in the vast money loss that must follow a prolonged strike. Even if he does not pay more for his coal, he will just as surely suffer loss, because the price will not fall, as it should normally do, under the present over-production.

The report of an investigation made by F. G. Tryon and W. F. McKenney, of the United States Geological Survey, published in a coal number of the "Survey Graphic," describes the over-development as a by-product of uncontrolled competition. These investigators assert that soft-coal miners worked in 1921 an average of only three days a week. The official estimates of the Geological Survey state that in one week of March over four million more tons were mined than in the same week of the previous year, and that the excessive production has been going on in both soft and hard coal since this year began. The operators, therefore, are well prepared to stand a strike—and the consumer will pay the cost! The ability of the workers to carry on the fight rests on their accumulated funds, said to be several million dollars. As some one has said, they must "live off their own fat." They are asking for higher wages, a demand which runs just contrary to the public belief that in all our industries wages must recede to meet lower cost of living.

Why are the miners willing to enter what seems to be an unequal and losing fight? First, they say, because operators have refused to meet them; secondly, because, as they aver, they never did receive as large war increases in wages as men in other industries and therefore wages should not now be cut down—probably they would in the end accept some reduction; third, and perhaps most urgent of all, they want to standardize the work—they would like to have, say, 300 six-hour-days' work rather than 215

eight-hour-days' work. Short periods of hard work and high pay, followed by long idleness, are not good for men who must provide food for their families for 365 days a year; Lewis says 200,000 miners are out to-day.

On the other hand, operators quote the high earnings of non-union miners, who in some instances made \$700 a month, and the fact that the mines are overstocked with labor, and argue that the over-production of coal shows that if labor costs increase many mines and groups of mines must go to the wall.

If a tieup of the coal industry comes about, there is a probability that the President, with Secretaries Davis and Hoover, will form a commission to bring about arbitration, as President Roosevelt did in the anthracite strike of 1902. They will also plan to keep the mines open and the railways operating and supplied with fuel, as well as essential industries and householders. It will be remembered that President Roosevelt, after he had met with success in his effort with John Mitchell and others to make peace, stated that, if necessary, he would have taken military control of the mines and got the coal to the consumer.

Whenever, as now, industry and the common welfare are threatened by Nation-wide industrial warfare, the people are forced to recognize the wrong and folly of settling disputes by destroying wealth and clogging the wheels of industrial life. We hope that the present clash will startle us all to indignation that will insist on a common-sense way of dealing with labor troubles.

THE CRUCIFIERS

BY LYMAN ABBOTT

V—THE CALLOUS PROFITEERS

OF all the cruel punishments of a barbaric age, crucifixion was the most barbarous. It possessed a bad pre-eminence of cruelty in an age when fashionable audiences crowded the vast amphitheater to applaud the fearful horror of gladiatorial combats and fair women gave the death signal and feasted their sanguinary eyes on the ebbing life of the defeated. It was in this age that Cicero called crucifixion a punishment most inhuman and shocking, and wrote of it that it should be removed from the eyes and ears and the very thought of men. Too horrible for a Roman citizen, no freeman might be subjected to it. It was reserved, with rare exceptions, for slaves and foreigners.

Upon this Gentile cruelty the Jew looked with special horror. The cross,

like the eagle, was a sign of national degradation. Its infliction by the Romans was a badge of Israel's servitude. The ancient law of Moses affixed a peculiar curse to it. To crucify even a corpse was to submit it to the greatest possible indignity. Thus the agony of pain was intensified by the agony of its peculiar shame.

The physical anguish of the cross was that of a lingering death. The victim's life was wrested from him in a fierce but predetermined battle, that lasted always many hours, often several days. Every moment of this hopeless contest added new agony to an anguish at first almost unendurable. Yet no vital organ was directly touched, and the stubborn life surrendered to his invincible foe only after a long and protracted siege. Even the pitiless, stolid Roman endured

not long the sight of sufferings at once so protracted and so intense. Rarely was the criminal suffered to die by the mere infliction of the cross. A thrust with the spear or a blow with the club at length put an end to tortures which wearied even the patience of spectators.

Jesus endured the consuming tortures of the cross for nearly six hours; then nature gave way. Exhausted by the week of conflict in the Temple, by the draft upon his sympathies in the growing perplexity of his disciples, by his foresight of their shattered hopes and their impending grief, by his futile efforts to save Judas Iscariot, by his farewell supper and his night of watching, by his anguished prayer that he might not misunderstand and so fail to fulfill his Father's will, by his trial experi-