

TOPICS OF THE DAY

THE LONDON PACT: IMMIGRATION: CAPITAL PUNISHMENT: EPIDEMIC SENTIMENTALITY: DUTCH-GARDEN NATIONALISM: AN ILLUSTRATION: THE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION.

THE London Conference, the latest antepenultimate attempt to end the Great War "to end war," ended in the London Pact. Negotiated at no small immediate sacrifice and vast prospective loss to Great Britain—for the greater glory of Mr. Ramsay MacDonald and his camouflaged Socialists—this bargain would appear to be for the benefit of all but Great Britain. Great Britain not merely forgives her debtors as they forget their debts to her, but lends them more money and support that they may have more to forget, and she more to forgive.

During the war the Allies were constantly warned against falling, at its close, into the snares that had tripped preceding post-war diplomatists. They were reminded of dreadful blunders of former negotiators of peace, and entreated to avoid their errors. The net result of all those exhortations was the Treaty of Versailles. The framers of that diplomatic *pons asinorum* have been trying ever since to mend it, with varying degrees of unsuccess. The Allies muddled into winning the war, but were "too proud" to admit the fact. They modestly sent the Germans home with the conviction that the victory was theirs. They disregarded all the teachings of history, that the only proper treatment for a viciously aggressive nation, after its defeat, is to deprive it of the power of future aggression. The Great War was undertaken to save France from Germany. It ended with France devastated and impoverished; with Germany untouched, and practically as threatening as ever. It left France unprotected, and without even a semblance of security for the future. It left her without the means of recovering from Germany the reparations which the Germans were obviously determined not to pay, if it could be avoided. The Ruhr invasion was the consequence.

Great Britain fought the war not only in France but all over Europe, Asia, and parts of Africa. She even rented her camping-grounds in France from the French Government, and paid for the damage done to them by the Germans while in her possession. She expended her treasures throughout the globe. She borrowed

money by billions of pounds, in her own name, and lent it to the Allies. She sent armies and funds to the support of all her supposed friends, and to some who were enemies in thin disguise. She kept the seas, and sacrificed her ships and her men. When Germany could resist no longer, she was permitted to retire with "the honours of war."

Thereafter, Great Britain hastened to settle her debts, including what she had borrowed for the use of other nations from a nation as much bound as she to help the Allies. The other nations declined to pay her a copper of their borrowings, or even to promise that they ever would. Since then, she has been trying to coax France out of the Ruhr by offering to forgive her debts and forego her own share of reparations. It has been anything to save Germany, whose only offence, it seems, has been the causing of all the trouble, coupled with a stubborn unwillingness to be "saved," except on her own terms. At last Germany has completely and unmistakably won the peace, let who will claim to have won the war. She has been reconstructing her armies, scarcely in secret. Economically, she is in quite as good condition as before the war, if not better. All that she lacked was ready money, of a kind that would "pass." By the London Pact she is to be supplied with that, and set up, fitter than ever to rival Great Britain in manufacturing and trade, which she will proceed to do at once, probably more successfully than before. The percentage of British trade with Germany, at the best of times in the past, was comparatively small—not as large annually as that with Australia. In the mere vague hope of recovering that trade, Germany is now to be rehabilitated, financially, at the expense of the British and American money markets.

It is a wonderful Pact, is that of London, negotiated by British and French Socialists with their German "comrades"! Germany gets the long end of it even more markedly than she did of the "Fourteen Points." But what signifies that? Lord Parmoor has won a triumph for "righteousness." Mr. Ramsay MacDonald has been provided with materials for a more sweeping Socialist victory at the polls. And the peace of Europe has been "assured"—until Germany gets quite ready to violate it, as of old, which probably will not be at a very distant date. In the meantime, there would appear to be considerable likelihood of a combination between French and German financiers and industrialists to control the iron and coal production and trade of Europe. Such an undertaking, if successful, as it would have excellent prospects of being, could not but be enormously advantageous to both France and Germany. It would be correspondingly disastrous for Great Britain, striking

at the very mainsprings of her economic and therefore of her national life.

THERE can be no doubt that what Canada needs most, at present, is an increase of population. We have made costly preparations for it. If it does not come, not only will those preparations have been made in vain, but the burden of them will long impede our progress and adversely affect our fortunes. It was on the assumption that the flow of immigrants was to continue, as it had set in at the beginning of 1900, that our vast railway undertakings were entered upon. The Canadian Pacific, the Grand Trunk and the Intercolonial Railways were sufficient for our immediate wants at that time. It was to attract and serve still wider and deeper expected currents of new settlement that the Grand Trunk Pacific and the Canadian Transcontinental were projected, and the Canadian Northern encouraged and helped to extend its range. Now the Dominion has these systems directly on its political hands, and with them the old Grand Trunk as well as the Intercolonial—a truly vast commitment, never contemplated by the people of Canada, for the successful discharge of which their present numbers are far from adequate. Hence the imperative necessity of inducing settlement from the outside, on a large scale. Unless such settlement can be provided, it will be necessary before long to scrap some of our railways if we are not to faint under their oppressive weight. Either that or near—if not absolute—bankruptcy must apparently be faced.

How to attract the necessary settlers is becoming an increasingly difficult problem. The Northwest is no longer a new land, with the attractions of mystery and adventure, and the prospects of speedy fortune-making. There is no longer any glamour surrounding the hardships and disappointments of prairie pioneering. The conditions to be encountered and endured are now a matter of knowledge, and not of vague conjecture coloured by hope or imagination. The sordid and sometimes painful realities are all too well known and even exaggerated. In a word, the new western provinces have already become old in the same sense in which the eastern provinces are old. They have a fixed and largely native population, by whom the newcomer is regarded as a mere "immigrant" in the usual contemptuous sense of that word among "old timers." His ways are not the ways of the settled population, and are therefore to be despised. This is an additional point of repulsion and discontent to the new immigrant; and he often takes as serious account of it as of material drawbacks. The class of

people who are deserting the countrysides of Great Britain for its towns and cities are not likely to be attracted in large numbers to the wider solitudes and more scattered and less sociable agricultural communities of the West.

In these circumstances, might it not be well to reconsider, and if necessary reverse, the immigration policy of the Dominion? For years that policy has been directed to the planting of settlers on the prairies. In furtherance of it, population has even been enticed away from the older provinces. The population of those provinces has been further drawn upon by the attractions of the United States, and has become practically stationary when not retrogressive. Would it not be a more promising policy in future to strive for the refilling of the vacancies in the East, with a view to ultimate overflow into the West, instead of trying to induce immigration exclusively to the West? The social as well as the natural conditions of Eastern Canada are much more closely analogous to those of Northern Europe, and of the British Islands in particular, than are those of the Northwest. New settlers would be much more likely to be contented and prosperous in more than in less familiar surroundings. The matter is well worth considering carefully. Lands are relatively cheaper now in the East than in the West, and improvements are more easily and cheaply made. The climate is milder, and the cost of living less. The surroundings are much more attractive. Markets are more accessible and better. Occupations, including farming, are much more varied. At any rate, it is only fair that the East should have its immigration innings. The West has been at bat quite long enough. It can no longer keep its wickets, and is in danger of queering the pitch for all Canada.

THE question of capital punishment as a legal sanction is being widely discussed at present. It was raised a short time ago in connection with the Muir execution in Quebec Province, and is up again with regard to the Chicago murderers. There would not seem to be much room for difference of opinion concerning it, nor would there appear to be any real difference of sane and enlightened opinion. On the one side is "sympathy," regardless of antecedents and consequences. On the other is conviction, founded on knowledge and experience. On the one side is maudlin consideration for criminal life and feelings; on the other, care for and a desire to shield innocent life and protect its rights against criminals. Hanging may be "the worst possible use to put a man to," but it has been found to be at least a useful use. Being murder-

ed is a still worse use to have a man put to; and it has nothing at all to commend it. So, if hanging can be made the means of saving useful and deserving lives, it can hardly be said to be unserviceable to a community, or a legal practice to be misrepresented as putting a man to a bad use. That capital punishment has that effect, all experience and all statistics clearly not only indicate but prove.

Only one important country in the world can be said to have really abolished capital punishment. That country is Italy. Nowhere in the world has murder been more rife than in Italy, in spite of the fact that there a punishment for murder has been provided which is far worse than the death penalty and much more inhuman. It is strictly and literally solitary confinement, absolutely without possibility or hope of escape or amelioration. There can be no pardon, no mitigation of the sentence of life-imprisonment for murder. "Solitary imprisonment" in Italy means exactly what it says. The victim of it is shut in a cell, apart from human companionship, even that of his guards, without reading matter, work, or other means of diversion. He stays in that cell until he is privileged to leave it either for the grave or as a maniac. It is said that insanity usually supervenes after two or three years. It is generally admitted that torturing a man to death is a much worse offence than killing him outright. Torture of the most acute kind, of both mind and body, is what Italy has substituted for capital punishment.

The abolition of capital punishment has been experimented with at various times in different American States. Murder has invariably had a startling increase in the experimenting States, and in most the abolition has sooner or later had to be repealed. As a matter of legal practice, capital punishment—except by lynch-law—is, if not done away with, being successfully avoided all over the United States. Not one murderer in a hundred in that country is ever executed, or runs much risk of being executed. Behold the splendid results in lynchings, and a murder roll which includes annually almost as many men, women and children as the United States armies lost in the great war! Compare the safety of human life in Great Britain with its perils in the United States, or the yearly murder list in London with that in New York or Chicago. Let Canadians in particular compare their murder records with those of their neighbours, and shrink from the pleadings of ignorant and silly sentimentalists who would entice them into assimilating their juridical practices to those of the United States.

It is not to be ignored that Canada is in danger from the sickly sentimentalists whose cries are constantly assailing our ears. They

are corrupting juries; they are influencing weak-kneed judges; they are perverting the public mind, and making convictions for any kind of crime, particularly for murder, more difficult and less certain of attainment. They are interfering with the fulfilment of sentences. This cannot be permitted to go much further without its inevitable consequences becoming unmistakably manifest. If we cannot maintain our British back-bone with regard to crime and criminals, we must be content to see Justice in our midst become as spineless and wobbly as she is supposed to be blind. The more wobbly she grows in the United States, the less blind does she appear to be. She is displaying indications of becoming similarly affected in Canada. We have witnessed some very glaring suggestions of late of a tendency to apply one sort of treatment to the rich or powerful, and another to the poor and friendless. This should be nipped in the bud. It simply "isn't done" in Great Britain—not even in petty matters. Horatio Bottomley, rich, popular, and of venerable age, is serving out in full a seven years' sentence for swindling, which is likely to cover his remaining life-time. His state of "health" was not particularly enquired into. No ticket of leave has been, or will be, provided for him. Viscount Curzon, a conspicuous member of the British parliament, was brought up a few weeks ago in a London court for unlawful motor-car driving. Although he had done no actual damage, he was not only fined to a tune which would make the richest "speeder" in Canada gasp and stare, but he was deprived of his license and forbidden to drive a car for nine months. When are we going to get our courage up to such a sticking point in this boasted British land of ours? Instead of trying to get our courage up to administering justice with impartial firmness, we are in serious danger of permitting it to sink to the American level, through listening with patience and toleration to the tender-hearted "old women of both sexes," who are pleading for the safety and happiness of "the poor, oppressed criminals," in total disregard of their actual and prospective victims.

SENTIMENTALITY, the legitimate offspring of Imbecility, is the monster of our time. The world is being made so "safe for democracy" that it is becoming extremely, dangerous, as well as uncomfortable, for its ordinary inhabitants. Traditions and principles are obsolete or obsolescent. They are being replaced by "cries" and catch-phrases. Traditions embody the spirit of a race. Therefore, away with them. A principle is a rule of life, founded on experience. Shall it be permitted to stand

in the path of the personal prepossessions of cranks, expressed in a popular "cry," with an "organization" behind it? Neither traditions nor principles can be mobilized at a moment's notice. Let them give place, then, to the demagogue, his howling followers, and their charming "sentiments" touching liberty, equality, fraternity and plenty—especially plenty—for *themselves*, regardless of the rest of us. Liberty, above all things, we must have—liberty to shout and "organize" and smash old institutions at will, in order that we may be *free* to submit to the uncontrolled despotism of some self-appointed "leader." Equality, too, is essential, not only to our happiness but to our well-being. Do we not see its blessings clearly illustrated in the pack of hounds which rushes on at the huntsman's halloo, every individual composing it just as good a dog as his fellow, although the stronger and more intelligent always forge ahead, while the weaker, lazier or duller fall behind? And fraternity, how can it be dispensed with? What would a pack of hungry wolves be without it? How would it get its maimed or fallen members decently devoured, and nice social sanitation provided, but for the "fraternity" which glows in its "organized" heart and leaps so readily to its "organized" mouth? But *Plenty*, that is the main thing. Why should we not all have abundance of goods, and become happy and contented by the simple process of doing as little as possible, and dividing up among us the surplus produce of those who are willing to do and save more than we? These are the mental conditions that indicate why the present-day world had become so "safe for democracy," if otherwise unpleasant, and why traditions and principles have "gone out," and "uplifting" has come in. Nothing that savours of history, continuity or stability, is longer to be respected. The only use to which it may hereafter be put is to teach us what not to do. Did not our forefathers, through all their ages of known and unknown history, devote themselves to learning how and what to do, and how it could best be done? Did they not embody the results of their experience and their painfully acquired knowledge in their institutions and ways of life? Did they not steadily degenerate by this means from their "golden age" in trees and caves to their deplorable later stage of savagery? Then what should their history and their traditions teach us, if not to avoid their course and reverse all their proceedings? Whatever they have established becomes naturally suspect in our eyes, and to be eradicated or reversed. To eradicate means to uproot. To reverse means to up-end. Therefore let us to the work of pulling up the tree of so-called civilization and standing it on its head, with its

roots in the air, that they may reach towards some dream-heaven, instead of burying themselves in the base, practical earth. Let us go hard at the task of tearing down, without an idea of how we are going to rebuild. It should suffice us that some crude, self-appointed "uplifter" says a thing is wrong, and that he knows how to right it, for us to take him at his word and do his destructive bidding. If his plan should prove abortive, we can try another, disregarding all former experience and all knowledge but that to be acquired by ourselves. Rome may not have been built in a day, nor the universe fashioned in a week. But that does not mean that we could not immediately reconstruct the one or remodel the other if we were to try. Therefore, let us try. If we should not succeed in making a spoon, we need have no fear that we shall not at least spoil a horn.

THERE is perhaps no better known couplet in American verse than Longfellow's

Be not like dumb, driven cattle,
Be a hero in the strife.

There is certainly no advice more uniformly repudiated and disregarded by the American people. Never has there been a more crushing tyranny than that of so-called "public opinion" in the United States. What the unwashed mob thinks, everybody must think, or be socially scorned and pelted. In most parts of the Union, it is actually dangerous, physically, to disagree openly, much more to speak out against "public opinion." And "public opinion" is created by the rabble, inspired by demagogues or cranks. It is not surprising, then, to find even such a magazine as *The World's Work*, of New York, which claims to be the very highest of its class in the United States, assailing the French-Canadians settled in New England with extreme virulence, simply because they prefer and dare to lead their own lives, in their own way, in their new surroundings, instead of conforming in all respects to the habits and thoughts of their neighbours. The *World's Work* writer calls them "fifty-fifty Americans," to indicate his contempt for all who are not "100 per cent. Americans," which is the supreme human standard in the United States, and signifies as distant removal as possible from ordinarily cherished individual freedom of mind and action. The *World's Work* writer says:

The French-Canadian desires to be an American, and at the same time to remain a French-Canadian. He is unwilling to assimilate his culture to that of the prevailing group, and does

not hesitate to rationalize his position by maintaining that his own culture is superior—indeed, is sacred. All immigrants suffer necessarily to a greater or less degree from conflicting loyalties; but with the French-Canadian in New England the situation is particularly acute. Schooled and encouraged by their success in preserving themselves a nation apart in Canada, they come to the United States with the same ideals. Quebec is said to be a bit of mediaeval France, transplanted to the banks of the St. Lawrence and left to vegetate till the twentieth century; the French-Canadian group in New England is simply an offshoot from the same stem once more transplanted.

Could there be a more telling indictment, that is, more telling against the indicter? Fancy the atrocity of the crime of being willing to become a faithful and useful American citizen and yet desiring to retain one's national and family characteristics, besides venturing to cling to race traditions and religious practices! It is a pity the writer did not enlarge on the "culture" of the "prevailing group" in which the French-Canadian emigrant ordinarily finds himself in New England. His doing so might have given us a more definite idea of the heinousness of the French-Canadian's conduct, and of the punishment which he is bringing on himself and should be made to feel still more severely, by his disregard of the "cultural" opportunities of his surroundings. His surroundings, it is unnecessary to say, are likely to be those of manufacturing towns populated by non-assorted foreigners from all parts of the world, who, it would appear, have been kicked and cuffed into "100 per cent. Americanism" because they were willing to be "like dumb driven cattle," and were far from being of the stuff of which a "hero in the strife" is made. It is for being of this stuff that the *World's Work* writer is attacking the French-Canadians, in the hope of converting them into "dumb driven cattle" of the approved, national pattern.

In Canada, under British freedom and sane British direction, we find it a pleasant thing and one becoming well that nationalities should preserve their characteristics and their distinctions of every kind, provided only that their representatives are good Canadians. We cherish our Acadians. We would not change Quebec Province if we could. We feel and know that the Dominion is enriched instead of being made poorer by its individuality. It has been one of the chief means of preserving us from the flat, depressing, "100 per cent." sameness of the Americans. We have been taught many things by Quebec. We have many more to learn from her; and not the least valuable of her lessons, unostentatiously given, are those in intelligent citizenship, not under mob domination in thought or

deed. The Dominion, we all intuitively feel, would be a much poorer country were it not for Quebec, which connects so appropriately the past and the present, the distant and the near.

As to Quebec's being "a bit of mediaeval France," the *World's Work's* writer had better make enquiries before being sure. Montreal is rapidly outstripping Boston. Town for town, village for village and countryside for countryside, Quebec Province has no need to fear comparison in any respect with any part, or the whole, of New England. The United States have made New Orleans and its surroundings "100 per cent. American." If they consider that a triumph, no one else does. Should they succeed in bullying and intimidating their New England French-Canadian immigrants into a similar state of abjection and commonplaceness, they will again be the ultimate, serious losers. Dutch-garden nationalism is a poor product.

NO more convincing illustration of what so-called "public opinion" in the United States signifies and leads to could be desired than that supplied by a recent writer in a leading New York journal. His subject was "The Teaching of Latin." He opened it with the assertion that "more time and money are being wasted in our educational institutions on Latin than on any other subject." That may well be true, in view of the methods of teaching Latin in vogue in certain American colleges and universities. This, however, is not the present point. The writer went on to say:

There is a really tremendous trend in this country at present towards religious instruction. But Latin literature, with the possible exception of a bit of Seneca, is not merely pagan; it is what the populace would regard as immoral, if the populace knew what it was all about. If Horace, who is more taught in our higher schools than is Longfellow, were living in, say Emporia, to-day, the good citizens of that city would say—We admire your art, but *we will have to ask you to move on or modify your morals.*

Here is the essence and source of American "public opinion" in a nutshell! Emporia, "Main Street" and "Liberty" for ever! Imagine the dreadful, less than "100 per cent. Americanism" of Horace's being given precedence over Longfellow in "our higher schools"! But there need be no doubt that "the good citizens of Emporia" would "move on" Horace or Vergil or even Caesar if any of these writers were found expressing ideas not acceptable to "the populace" of that burgh, whether "the populace" knew or did not know why those ideas were not acceptable to them, or what they

meant, except in so far as they were instructed by some "Mothers' Club" or similar organization.

IN a month from the time the October *Dalhousie Review* reaches most of its subscribers, the American Presidential election of 1924 will have been decided. As all know, it is to be a three-cornered affair, a sort of political isosceles triangle, with two long, equal sides and a short one subtending a very acute angle. The figure represents the circumstances in all respects. The acuteness of the subtending angle marks the smallness of the distance separating the two older parties, and at the same time indicates the limited extent of the new. As a matter of what appears to outsiders to be fact, the difference between Republicans and Democrats in the Presidential contest is practically identical with the etymological distinction between tweedle-dum and tweedle-dee. One would search their respective announcements of policy in vain for enlightenment as to material differences of opinion on any important public question.

The Republicans promise to maintain a high tariff. The Democrats undertake not to meddle with it. Both are ardently in favour of law enforcement—law, of course, being understood to be the Volstead Law, which stands about as much chance of being practically enforced by either or both as does the Eighth Commandment of the Decalogue of being observed in the election committees of either. Neither has any sympathy with the League of Nations, or, if it has, dares to say so. Both shrank coyly from facing the Ku-Klux-Klan. Both made faces at it behind its back. The Republican party, although not noticeably of more "high brow" character than the Democratic, is conspicuously crowned with a "Teapot Dome." But that is not troubling its adherents, because—thanks to the timely demise of the late President Harding—they feel that their moral "normalcy" has been fully restored. Innumerable scapegoats laden with the sins of their party, and diffusing a sanctifying odour of oil, have been sent into the political wilderness in propitiation of the gods of Democracy; and the Republicans feel that all is or should be well with them. Their accidental Presidential candidate has the inestimable advantage of not having done anything during his brief occupancy of the Presidential chair. His nominal followers in Congress took care that he should not, by thwarting his every attempt. They feel now that by this thoughtful procedure of theirs they have laid up much treasure against the day of popular trial, on November Fourth.

Mr. Coolidge's reputation, which, apart from his ability to control his tongue, rests mainly on one pre-Presidential incident in his public career, is their and his chief positive asset. This seems to be the principal stock in trade of the Republicans. The Democrats are more fortunate in their candidate, and in their comparative freedom from the taint of oil, if in no other respects. Mr. Davis is a gentleman of culture and standing, of high personal character, great ability and wide experience. He is an American of the very best type. The worst that can be said of him is that, as a professional man, he has accepted fees from wealthy corporations in return for legal services. He has had the courage, which his party in convention lacked, to condemn and denounce openly the infamous Ku-Klux-Klan. He has had the further courage, lacked by his party, to promise a reduction of oppressive and unjustifiable tariff taxation. In most if not all respects, so far as known, he is a better and abler candidate than his Republican rival. Mr. Coolidge, however, has the great advantage of being already in possession of the White House, of all the machinery of government, and of the prestige of high position. He has also the advantage of being supported by a party which presented no divided front to the public in its nominating convention, and which chose him as its candidate by acclamation.

But there is the new Third Party, under La Follette, to be reckoned with. La Follette has been nominally a Republican. He would appear likely to obtain the support of considerable numbers of that party. He has, however, received endorsements from other quarters which promise to equalize losses between the two old parties. Neither he nor anyone else expects that La Follette will be elected by popular vote. He represents the Adullamites of the United States, including, of course, the Communists, Socialists, political Labourites, and, in particular, the discontented farmers of the Middle West who have come to realize that they are not being made wealthy as rapidly as they anticipated by high-tariff taxation. It is from these last that the strength of the Third Party candidate's support is expected to come; and it seems likely to be considerable. Its aim and hope is to capture a sufficient number of States to prevent either of the other parties from having a large enough vote in the Electoral College to elect its candidate. Should this be accomplished, the choice of the next President would fall to Congress.

The Republican Vice-Presidential candidate will probably receive a large measure of Third Party support. In the event of a failure of the Electoral College to name President and Vice-President,

the election of the latter falls to the Senate, and of the former to the House of Representatives. Should the Lower House fail to make Presidential nomination, the Vice-President chosen by the Senate would, *ex officio*, become the next President of the United States. All sorts of exciting or grave possibilities, according to the way the situation is regarded, may arise should La Follette's plans not miscarry. There may even be dangerous complications. At present, however, the outlook seems to favour the regular return of President Coolidge for a second and longer term of office.

W. E. M.