

The Nation

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By MORRIS JASTROW, Jr.

An Alliance of the Weaker Nations

By ARCHIBALD ALEXANDER

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The Nation

Vol. CIII

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Summary of the News

President Wilson is still laboring over the railway crisis, though, as we write, the situation seems not to have advanced far beyond the stage which we described last week. The men are still holding out for an eight-hour day, and the railway heads are convinced that arbitration is the best means of settlement. The President, by his speedy espousal of the short day, laid himself open to the charge from the owners that certain concessions should likewise be made to them. To avert a deadlock, Mr. Wilson on Saturday consulted with Senator Newlands to see whether Congress before its adjournment could not be induced to pass some legislation looking to an alleviation of the railways' present burden; specifically to a definite promise that freight-rates would be raised. In Mr. Wilson's plan was also the thought of a bill providing for a permanent arbitration board to hear similar disputes. As the bill which the President endeavored to amend is in the Senate, after having passed the House, it seemed quite improbable that the question could be threshed out anew at this session of Congress.

On Monday afternoon Mr. Wilson again summoned the railway presidents to a conference, and it here transpired that the brotherhoods had already issued a secret order calling a general strike to begin at 7 o'clock A. M. on Labor Day. The brotherhood heads were summoned to the White House on Monday evening and, admitting the authenticity of the strike order, refused to rescind it. Owing to the possibility of a tie-up in a few days, the railway presidents told Mr. Wilson that it was imperative that they should return to protect their properties. Mr. Wilson has announced that he will go before Congress to ask for legislation to prevent the strike.

The most important item in the news of the war is undoubtedly the official announcement received from Berlin on Monday morning that on the evening of the previous day Rumania had declared war on Austria-Hungary, the decision having been reached at a meeting of the Crown Council held at Bucharest on Sunday morning. Precisely what has led Rumania to this action is not entirely clear, though two circumstances must certainly have had a strong influence. The first is, of course, Italy's declaration of war on Germany, in which the Italian Government on Sunday stated through the Swiss Government that it considered itself from August 28 at war with the German Empire, Italy's announcement being necessitated by her entrance into the campaign on the Salonica front. It will be remembered that when Italy first took up arms it was a foregone conclusion in certain quarters that Rumania would do likewise, so closely bound up with each other did the interests of the two countries appear. The other circumstance is the recent efforts of Russia to

clear of hostile forces the Rumanian border in southern Bukowina. The expected happened when Germany retaliated by her declaration of war against Rumania; and it was announced on Monday that fighting had already begun on the frontier of Transylvania. The attitude of Turkey and Bulgaria towards this new situation has not been officially announced.

Now that Rumania is to be counted upon, the position of the Allies in the near east appears to be materially strengthened. Thus Bulgaria must almost certainly recall some of her troops from the Salonica front. The inducement to Greece to enter the war on the side of the Allies is also increased. Even now the report is significant that Gen. Moschopoulos, an avowed friend of the Entente Powers, has been appointed chief of staff of the Greek army. The position of Greece has been rendered particularly critical during the past week by the endeavor of Bulgaria to occupy the Greek port of Kavala, by which she has come into direct clash with Greek garrisons. If, as seems likely, it is Bulgaria's intention to despoil Greece of envied territory, the latter country will find it most difficult to refrain from war. A gigantic demonstration took place before the residence of Venizelos when he proposed the sending of a committee to the King to urge him to prepare the army for "a possible rupture of existing conditions."

On the western front the British have advanced steadily in their attack upon the important stronghold at Thiepval. It is known that Germany, in her defensive campaign, had strongly fortified this town, and its capture by the British, which now seems inevitable, will mean a considerable loss to her. A particularly vivid description of the manner in which trench after trench in this vicinity has been wiped out by artillery fire was printed in the *New York Times* of Sunday. Progress is also noted in the region of Ginchy and Guillemont, and Allied troops have now progressed beyond Maurepas.

Congress, which despaired of adjourning before September 9, suddenly busted itself to such a degree that it planned to finish its session next Friday. Whether the railway crisis, together with the President's request for new legislation, will mean a postponement, is not as yet certain.

The names of the three American members of the International Joint Commission created to compose the differences existing between the American and Mexican Governments were given out by Secretary Lansing shortly after the *Nation* went to press last week. They are: Franklin K. Lane, Secretary of the Interior; George Gray, of Wilmington, Del., former member of the judiciary and until recently Judge of the Third Judicial Circuit, and Dr. John R. Mott, of New York, general secretary of the International Committee of Young Men's Christian Associations. To make the record complete we give the names of the Mexican members, which were an-

nounced several weeks ago: Luis Cabrera, Minister of Finance in Carranza's Cabinet; Alberto Pani, President of the Mexican National Railways, and Ignacio Bonillas, Sub-Secretary in the Mexican Department of Communications.

A semi-official telegram from Berlin, dated August 23, admitted that on the preceding Saturday the German battleship *Westfalen* had been hit and slightly damaged by a British torpedo. On August 26 it was officially announced from London that a British naval auxiliary, *Duke of Albany*, had been torpedoed in the North Sea, with the loss of her commander and twenty-three men. Italians also suffered the loss of the steamer *Erix*, of 885 tons gross, and of the sailing vessel *Dea*, of 167 tons gross. On the night of August 24 German airships perpetrated a raid on the east and southeast coasts of England; no casualties were reported. This was in addition to an attack the preceding night by an airship which dropped bombs in the fields on the east coast. In return British aeroplanes made a dash over Belgium, penetrating to the vicinity of Namur, thirty-six miles southeast of Brussels, and bombarding sheds of German airships.

All Germany is rejoicing over the safe return of the *Deutschland*, which reached the mouth of the River Weser on the afternoon of August 23, having travelled only 100 miles under water.

President Wilson has succeeded in saving the provisions of the General Revenue bill for the creation of a permanent non-partisan Tariff Commission. Senator Underwood, in the discussion on this measure, caused something of a scandal in Congress by rejecting the decision of the party caucus and registering his disapproval of the provision which puts a tax on dyestuffs. Mr. Underwood maintains that in certain features of the bill the Democratic party is at variance with its traditional policy.

Dr. Karl Liebknecht, leader of the Socialist party in Germany, who appealed against his sentence of treason, has received a new and severer sentence of four years and one month of penal servitude and expulsion from the army. On the other hand, no treason, as we write, has been charged against Cardinal Mercier because of the stirring address which he delivered in the Cathedral at Brussels on July 21, which was the eighty-sixth anniversary of the declaration of Belgian independence. We commend to our readers the text of the address, which was published in translation in the *New York Times* of August 27.

As a result of negotiations carried on between the British and Swedish Governments, the correspondence relating to which has now been made public, Sweden has released 60,000 parcels destined for Russia, under an agreement with Great Britain to submit the matter to arbitration after the war. The Swedish seizures had been in retaliation for British interference with the parcel post between Sweden and the United States.

Count Reventlow, is to play for the whole stakes.

In this chaos of argument and motive what is the purpose of the German Government in encouraging discussion? Why does Maximilian Harden receive a blank commission to utter the doubts that possess the German soul? The answer is that the German Government is not thinking of imposing a peace, but of arranging a peace. It is not a question of being generous to Russia or to the western Powers, but of buying off Russia or England and France. The German people is now engaged in floating *ballons d'essai*. And, incidentally, by constant dwelling upon peace, the German people may be brought to a longing for peace which will make the Government's task easier in an emergency.

Foreign Correspondence

UNMUZZLED!

By SIR HENRY LUCY.

WESTMINSTER, August 5.

When Gladstone was rejected by Oxford University and went northward to woo a more Liberal constituency, he, making his first appearance on a Lancashire platform, proclaimed himself Unmuzzled. It was an ominous phrase promptly followed, to the exceeding dolor of his former constituency, by disestablishment of the Irish Church and the emancipation of Irish land. Mr. Redmond, protesting against a decision of the Cabinet that wrecked a settlement, arrived at under the presidency of a Cabinet delegate, between the trusted leader of the Unionist party and himself, declared that he and his party, while abstaining from any course inimical to carrying on the war, would feel at liberty, as in former time, to consider the conduct and the policy of the Government.

The state of things in the Irish quarter since the war began, thus threatened with eruption, has been the most notable Parliamentary phenomenon of modern times. For two years the self-imposed vow of silence has transformed what had been the liveliest, not to say the noisiest, quarter of the House, into the quietest. The intermission of divisions rendering unnecessary the regular attendance of Irish members to support a Ministry that had given them Home Rule, they took advantage of the opportunity to absent themselves. The habitually populous Irish camp became a wilderness that might truthfully be called peace. Mr. William O'Brien put in an occasional appearance and made a speech on the current topic of debate into which he was certain to drag the head of his former colleague, Mr. John Redmond. Lacking the incentive of that gentleman's presence on a corner seat on a back bench, he desisted. More frequently Mr. Tim Healy, K.C., Bencher of King's Inn and Gray's, looked in on his way home from business in the Law Courts, and to the delight of a jaded House snapped forth a genial remark on a casual speaker, much

after the fabled manner of his countryman who, passing a tent and observing a head projecting from its folds, brought down his shillalah upon it. It was drear work not worth pursuing. Mr. Flavin, brooding upon a back bench, thought of days that are no more, and of at least one night, when, at the bidding of the Speaker, he was carried forth shoulder high by hastily recruited policemen, chanting as he went "God save Ireland."

No member taking his seat within the past two years has been privileged to see Mr. Swift Macniel popping up and down on his seat like a parched pea in a frying-pan, what time he shook his fist at an erring Minister of the Treasury Bench. The honorable and learned gentleman has stayed at home, occupying his enforced leisure by writing letters to the *Times* on historical questions or points of constitutional law, on both of which he is admittedly a high authority. Making a rare appearance at Westminster this week, he has done a public service, and established a fresh hold on the esteem of the House, by overcoming strange reluctance on the part of the Prime Minister to remove from the list of the English peerage the names of certain German princelings who, owing to no particular personal merit, had obtained places upon it.

This is all very well for the dispatch of public business. It must be admitted that the muzzling of the Irish members eclipses the gaiety of the House. It has been largely responsible for the dullness that has been the marked characteristic of the place through this long war-time. Members listened with mixed feelings to Mr. Redmond's threat of a new departure. Business is all very well in its way. But the House of Commons likes to be amused, and the only section who, seated on the benches below the gangway on the Ministerial side, essay to play the part of the militant Nationalist members are problematically able, but indubitably dull. If the Redmondites were going into opposition there would be wigs on the green, and other long unfamiliar episodes of cheerfulness.

It cannot be said that hope thus raised has been realized. Mr. Redmond, contenting himself with utterance of the recorded threat, has personally abstained from taking part in its execution. The ban removed, Mr. Dillon has lost no time in once more stepping into the breach. But he is too deadly in earnest to satisfy the aspirations of bored legislators. Expectation was raised to a high pitch when he grimly announced that on the third reading of the Consolidated Fund bill he would "have Sir John Maxwell on the gridiron." There was something about this way of putting it excitingly reminiscent of the giant of nursery fiction who, before lurching or dining, was accustomed to remark—

Fee fie fo fum,
I smell the blood of an Englishman.

The result was disappointing. Indeed, Mr. Herbert Samuel, who has recovered his sense of humor checked by wasteful excess on the question of registration, gravely complimented him on the moderate tone of the speech in which, later, he redeemed his pledge, and discoursed on Sir John Maxwell's administration of martial law in Ireland. By way of retort the Irish members insisted upon opposing introduction of a bill assimilating clock-time in Ireland with that adopted for use in Great Britain. Polling all their available men they mustered fifty-four. That is a significant re-

sult which atoned for some little waste of time. It brought into prominence the fact that though Irish members may bark if they please they cannot in the present condition of political parties bite.

AN ALLIANCE OF THE WEAKER NATIONS.

By ARCHIBALD ALEXANDER.

GENEVA, August 1.

The neutral nations of Europe are already discussing the future effects of the war on their industrial and commercial relations. In Switzerland our leaders of opinion seem to favor some sort of commercial union among the neutral states which shall promote the interests and preserve the independence of each of them when the war is over. Some months before war was actually declared, leading writers in Geneva were advising that a defensive alliance should be formed among the smaller states. These men saw the storm approaching, with danger to the weaker nations—economic as well as political danger. It is now argued that if there had been such an alliance, Germany might have hesitated about crossing the Belgian frontier. The army of none of these smaller nations taken alone would have been a match for the army of any one of the great Powers, but it was thought that the armies of all collectively might have prevented such an invasion, and so might have kept out of the conflict all except the original opponents. Plainly the way to Paris through Belgium seemed to the German General Staff easier than the way through Switzerland; but it is believed here that, had there been a defensive combination of the weaker nations, the Germans would have crossed the French frontier directly, respecting both Belgian and Swiss neutrality.

This view of the matter, widely prevalent in Switzerland, has also been entertained by many in the Scandinavian countries. It is suggested that a commercial, not a military, alliance should forthwith be formed, and that Spain and the United States might be induced to join this international group. Like the United States, Switzerland would be strongly opposed to taking any action which at the close of the war might make the nation commercially dependent either on the Entente or on the Central Empires. With their jealous regard for their own neutrality and independence, the Swiss are anxious to avoid the danger of subjecting their commercial relations to the will or to the rival interests of the great belligerent Powers.

It is probable that the Swiss mind sets a high value upon this idea of alliance among the weaker nations because combinations of that kind have had a decisive influence at certain periods in Swiss history. At this season of the year, it is natural that the thoughts of the people should revert to the alliance of the original cantons Uri, Schwyz, and Unterwalden. On the first of August every year is celebrated the anniversary of the formation of that "pact" which enabled the forest cantons to resist their powerful foes. It thus happens that the Swiss national festival celebrates a diplomatic transaction, not a military victory, and that the signing of the charter of Swiss independence, not the battles of Morgarten, Sempach, Murten, and Grandson, is commemorated with enthusiasm throughout the Confederation.

It may be added that this year there is a discordant note in the national celebration. It will be remembered that several months ago two high officers in the Swiss army were accused of betraying military secrets to the Germans. For this they were tried, but were acquitted, yet the verdict did not at all satisfy a great many intelligent men both in and outside the army. The "affair of the two colonels," as it is called, and some minor incidents of a like kind have caused, especially in French Switzerland, a profound distrust of the officers at the head of the military administration, particularly a distrust of Wille, the Commander-in-Chief. To exhibit their distrust and dissatisfaction, many groups of people at Lausanne and other towns in the canton Vaud have expressed their unwillingness to celebrate this year the Swiss Independence Day. Vaud is perhaps the most patriotic and chauvinistic of all the cantons; moreover, the disaffection of this minority among the people has a special significance because the Swiss President this year is a Vaudois who kept silent when things occurring in the army were causing uneasiness throughout the nation. The Swiss press, however, does not manifest any sympathy for the attempt to refrain from celebrating the first of August. Even the leading newspaper of Lausanne sharply rebukes those who would slight the nation simply because certain political and military officials had been unfaithful.

Considering the very critical phases through which Swiss trade relations have passed since the war began, considering also the even more critical situation which will exist when peace has been signed, the foreign service of the Federation is not altogether satisfactory. The administration of foreign affairs is a function of the Federal Council, although one of its members only is the official mouth-piece. It happens very rarely that any one charged with the high responsibility of administering the Foreign Office can speak and act with the determination of the late Numa Droz, whose correspondence with Bismarck forms a classic page in the history of diplomacy. Still less satisfactory is the Swiss diplomatic service abroad. The defect is not in the personnel, but in the organization of the service. In certain important countries the functions of diplomatic agent and of Consul are discharged by the same man. In some cases some powerful Governments have legations at Berne, while there is no Swiss diplomatic agent at their own capitals. For example, before the war Belgium spent more than twice as much as Switzerland for her diplomatic service. The Swiss are aware of these deficiencies, but seem to think that industrial and commercial relations with foreign countries can best be adjusted through the procedure of dispatching special business agents.

During the war, the relations between the Federal Government and the press have caused much complaint. Of course the censorship of news was criticised by many editors. But the Council also complained that it was not properly represented in the press. For a long time one of the Berne newspapers exhibiting strong German sympathies has been regarded as the semi-official organ of the Government. It is now stated, however, that while the several representatives of political parties in the Federal Council have their organs, there is no really authoritative news coming from the Swiss capital. In order to establish a closer relation between the Government and

the press, a bureau of information has been established so that responsibility will be fixed when news is given out. This is generally approved by Swiss newspaper men. It will save the time of correspondents, there will be less waiting in the ante-room of editors, and the censorship will be simplified. The method will be by no means so stringent as that now in vogue in Germany and France. The object of the plan is only to insure the prompt supply of accurate news concerning Federal politics.

The *internés* from the several countries at war continue to arrive in large numbers. They soon show a marked improvement in physical condition owing to changed circumstances, and especially the Swiss climate. How severe the mental strain of the war must be is faintly shown by the arrival at Geneva a few days ago of a train filled with soldiers, every one of whom was insane. The morale of those interned in various parts of Switzerland requires more attention than their physique. Sir Thomas More, and later Balzac, pointed out the evil of leaving soldiers unoccupied after they were withdrawn from actual fighting, and many means are employed to sustain and improve the moral health of these new visitors. They differ from those confined in hospitals and prisons, in that they are brought into contact with ordinary conditions of life. Many of them have not the means to live up to the standard of their life before the war; and they are separated from their families. Workshops for them have been organized in several places, although the economic objection is raised that they thus become rivals of the Swiss laborer.

An important event to Swiss Catholics will be the meeting of the Dominican chapter which is soon to be held at Fribourg. The order has no monastery in this country, although there are several Dominican professors at the University of Fribourg. This meeting will celebrate the seven hundredth jubilee of the order, which was founded in 1216. Since then the chapter has met in Switzerland only once—in 1473.

Among the subjects most discussed here is the question: How severe should military discipline be in a democratic state which prescribes universal conscription? On this point there is a notable difference of opinion. In the German cantons, except among the Socialists, there is a tendency to imitate the method and the manners of the Teutonic army, and in that part of the country officers enforce certain practices which are not required by the military regulations, such as a certain excessive rigidity of carriage, the striking of the heels together in saluting, the goose-step in marching, and the infliction of unusual punishments. There is also a discouragement of familiar relations of any kind between officers and their men. In the battalions of French Switzerland discipline, if strict, is not so severe; and the public are very restive about any approach to methods commonly associated with the German caserne.

It is very interesting to observe, in a pamphlet just published by a lieutenant on the General Staff who is personal aide-de-camp to General Wille, that the question is raised: How is it that the Swiss people, so unanimously enthusiastic and patriotic at the beginning of the war, now look askance at the army, and show signs of discontent? The author replies that the chief causes are: differences of political opinion, the prolonged service, the excessive severity of the officers,

and the seditious utterances of an anti-military press. The pamphlet has not been well received in the German as well as in the French cantons. It would be hard to prove that the army or the people are dissatisfied at the thorough military preparations. Indeed, as the war goes on the idea seems to be more and more prevalent that Switzerland will be entangled in it before the end comes. It is of course impossible to predict what the future may bring in a conflict so extensive and unusual. But from what has thus far taken place, the prospect of the Swiss becoming engaged seems rather remote. There are only two dangers which are at all probable: one is that Switzerland may be so pinched economically as to bring her into collision with one of the warring nations; the other is that when the ultimate *débâcle* is threatened or actually arrives, a defeated army may invade Switzerland in self-defence. It is difficult to see how at this stage in the war the strategical advantage of such an encroachment could outweigh the manifest disadvantage of encountering a new, fresh, well-trained army numbering fully half a million.

REVIVAL OF FRENCH RELIGION— WAR AND THE POPE.

By STODDARD DEWEY.

PARIS, August 12.

Is there a renaissance of religion going on in France? The Union Sacrée has been a good reason for not speaking about it. Jesuits and Christian Brothers by the hundred, *curés* and other priests by the thousands and tens of thousands, fight and are wounded and killed beside the "lay" school-teacher and the Protestant minister and the Jew, with a Freemason corporal mayhap leading them.

Before the war the intellectual and the moral, and even the physical, life of the French people was cruelly misunderstood in foreign countries, as French behavior in war has more than proved. So, too, their religious life was not only misunderstood, but it was commonly underestimated. Latterly, it was mixed up with magnifying legends of anti-Catholic political activity in France. Such activity cannot cease from existence, but it is largely suspended by the enduring explosion of war and danger common to the lives of all. This is, at most, a very negative revival of religion.

Any positive revival which has been brought about by war must be sought in the armies of France, which hold her able-bodied citizens, or in the civil population where women and the ailing are at work with aged men and boys, all "revolving inly the doom" of their people. To all, war keeps ever present the one foundation of religion in practice. "Forget death, and there would be little or no religion," is the conclusion of the English writer who thought most resolutely of these things; but he took pains to add "what religion is in its broadest definition—it is life cultivated under God, and in the presence of death." No one can doubt the presence of death among the French people. Has it perchance been cultivating life under God—or whatever other form of words expresses any proper renaissance of religion?