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The Week

SINCE the original issues have disappeared from the controversy between the railroad shopmen and the carriers, and the former are ready to return to work, if they retain seniority, on the promise of the Labor Board to review the wage award, it will be concluded that the strike was unnecessary and unsuccessful, that the men were at fault and paid for great damage inflicted on the public by loss of employment, and that the Labor Board, which offered to reopen the case on July 1st, is now completely vindicated as an agency of conciliation. Let us see. The Board handed down its original decisions, in the face of the expressed determination of the men to strike for a living wage. It delayed its offer to reopen the question until arrangements for the strike had gone so far that they could not be recalled. The shopmen having struck, it consented to reopen the case of the maintenance of way men. It took advantage

of the strike to obtain the surrender of the railroads in the matter of out-contracting for repairs. Previously it had failed so conspicuously to press this issue that President Harding had never heard of its existence. Read aright the lesson of the strike is the failure of the Labor Board to draw power from any source except a strike. It would seem to be susceptible only to the argument effective with the employing class in general—a club.

THE National Industrial Conference Board, whose bias is always on the side of the employers in every industrial struggle, finds that the railway shopmen enjoy weekly earnings 32 percent higher than workers performing similar tasks in outside shops. The Labor Bureau, Inc., whose bias is on the side of labor, points out that the rates in outside shops which serve as a basis of comparison are selected "by the uncertain method of questionnaires sent through the mails rather than through qualified investigators." If statistics are to play a part in determining the attitude of the public in industrial disputes, it is time that something be done to restrain the flood of statistics which look impartial but are nothing but seductive propaganda.

NO wonder the Senate flew into a rage when Senator Caraway proposed an inquiry into the financial interest of the several senators in the tariff schedules under debate. For a century and a quarter senators have been unchallenged in their right to vote taxes upon the consumer and profits into their own pockets in the name of the patriotic policy of protection. There has never been a tariff enacted that did not enrich some senators and representatives. Why should they not vote to enrich themselves, just as their ordinary constituents do? But there would be great public interest in an inquiry that would set the amounts down in black and white. "Senator X, \$20,000 a year from the glove duties; Senator Y, \$30,000 a year from the wool duties; Senator Z, \$15,000 from

steel duties." To be impartial the benefits from the free list ought to be set down as well. "Senator A, \$30,000 from free raw materials; Senator B, \$3,000 from reduced costs of living." If the same precise accounting could be applied to the benefits and costs to the ordinary citizen, no protective tariff law could ever be enacted.

DURING the war the Alien Property Custodian seized the property in this country of the Orenstein-Koppel A. G. of Berlin and sold the plants and goodwill to one William A. Chamberlain, who subsequently transferred these rights to the Koppel Industrial Car and Equipment Co. The sum paid was \$1,312,000, considerably below the value of the property. After the war the German firm resumed business in America through an agency. The American purchasers attempted to restrain this action on the ground that it was a resumption of the goodwill which had been sold. In deciding against them Judge Augustus N. Hand makes the point that if the German corporation had voluntarily conveyed its property and business to the American company, there would be an implied covenant on the part of the grantor to abstain from business involving solicitation of former customers, but that a forced sale, like a sale in bankruptcy, involves no such obligation. He holds that a seizure by the Alien Property Custodian cannot affect the right of a foreign corporation to do business in this country in its own name after the war power is exhausted.

SENATOR UNDERWOOD'S attitude toward enemy private property is, except for a legal quibble, identical with that of the Bolshevik leaders. Both the Bolsheviks and Senator Underwood stand for the confiscation of enemy private property. Senator Underwood thrusts his tongue into his cheek and advises the German nationals robbed of their property here to apply for compensation to the German government, all of whose revenues above necessary civil expenses are mortgaged twice over to the Allies. It has not yet occurred to the Bolsheviks to advise French and Belgian claimants of property in Russia to apply for compensation to the late Tsar and the later Supreme Dictator Kolchak.

AS the military position of the republicans in Ireland grows worse, and they are driven to guerrilla warfare in the field, it is natural that they should adopt the same tactics in their political offensive. They are trying to pick off Griffith, Collins and Mulcahy by the charge that they are acting in collusion with the British government,

and have been all along stool pigeons, plants, agents provocateurs. There is a deadly plausibility about this accusation. Every revolt in Ireland in the past has been sold out. Why not this? The answer is that betrayal, if such there be, should have been found out before this. In the long course of fighting and negotiation there was plenty of opportunity for traitors to be unmasked. It is true that Griffith and Collins are now fighting England's battle as well as their own, and probable that they receive assistance and supplies from the English forces. This may turn out for good as the beginning of a friendship between the governments of Southern Ireland and England which may have an important bearing on the future, especially as regards Ulster. And if the republicans hate this rapprochement, they have themselves to blame.

DURING the four years since the beginning of the great Allied offensive an impressive memorial has been erected near the ruins of Vauquois in the Argonne, bearing the names of French, American and Italian regiments which took part in the most terrible of all campaigns in the recorded annals of war. The dedication of that monument furnished M. Poincaré with an opportunity for renewed fulmination in favor of the next and still more terrible war. He found no more significant way of paying honor to the men who fell, or giving consolation to their friends, than the reiteration of the cry, "Germany was responsible for the war, and either with good grace or under compulsion she will pay." It is time for M. Poincaré to be told that if there is no new spirit in France there is in America and in Italy. As a matter of taste, if not of feeling, he will do well to refrain from expending his eloquence on themes of vengeance and blood money when the occasion is the honoring of our dead.

IT is apparently the intention of the government of France to implant such enmity in the minds of Germans that permanent peace between the two nations will be impossible. Mr. Oswald Garrison Villard, in his series of articles on Germany, in the Nation, deals with several forms of outrage perpetrated by the conquerors. There is, first, the terrific financial burden of the occupation, military and civil, which has reached the total of one and a half billion dollars. One significant item is that of the Rhineland Commission, which is limited by the treaty to four members. Actually it provides for more than 1,000 French job hunters. The inevitable hardships of military occupation are intensified by the French use of black troops, and by the compulsory establishment of brothels for

their use. A further abuse has been recently discussed in the Reichstag, the recruiting in Germany for the French foreign legion. It is stated that ten recruiting stations are maintained in Germany, and the number of men already enlisted is upwards of 12,000. By the Treaty of Versailles Germany exchanged pledges with twenty-seven nations that her citizens should not enter foreign military service. Only France insisted that her foreign legion should be exempted from this provision. In the face of all these provocations the prophecy made to Mr. Villard by German pacifists that in five years Germany would rise against her oppressor with bare fists seems but a reasonable expectation.

RECENT events in China are more than usually confused but it is plain at least that the national reunification that was expected to follow on the recent civil war has been mired in the bogs of South China factionalism. After Wu Pei-fu had conquered in the North there was bright prospect of a united government again for the first time since 1917. Wu is known as a "good" militarist, the only one in China who has public confidence. Moreover, he began by accepting all the conditions that the South had previously stipulated for cancelling its technical independence. He forced out the universally distrusted president, Hsu Shih-chang, and recalled the old parliament, the body illegally dismissed in 1917. Then a split developed in the South. Chen Chiung-ming, the head of the larger and moderate party, wanted to join in a united government. Dr. Sun Yat-sen, the old revolutionary and the head of the intransigent element, refused, although all his demands had been granted except, significantly, his own elevation to the presidency. The breach widened and Chen Chiung-ming, who holds preponderancy of military power in the only province loyal to the South, drove Sun out of Canton.

THE way has not yet been cleared for peace, however. Dr. Sun has returned to contest possession of Canton, the capital city of the South, with the support of a small body of troops and a few gunboats. Desultory fighting has been in progress for a fortnight, with neither side willing to risk a battle that may result in the destruction of the historic and wealthy old city. The weight of Chinese opinion appears to be solidly against Sun. The Chinese people want peace above anything else and they are tired of Sun's perpetual recalcitrancy and his periodic alliances with the pro-Japanese and the worst elements in the country. And now he appears to be fighting with a purely

personal motive rather than for a principle, as before. But Sun is a determined man (a very self-determined man, as a Chinese student new to English idiom once said of him) and he has a passionately loyal though small following. He can do little in a positive way but he still has large powers of obstruction. In the meantime a truly national peace is halted.

AID in Russian reconstruction is not going to come through the western governments. If it is to come at all it must come from private sources. After all, the chief reservoirs of credit are in private hands. The discussions of Mr. Sidney Hillman with the Soviet authorities indicate clearly enough that a way can be found for bringing American resources and organizing ability to bear upon the problem of reconstruction. Entire industries, with very respectable plants, can be had under lease. Ordinary labor, not well trained but eager for training, is present in inexhaustible supply. Through the consumers' cooperative organization it would be practicable to convert most of the products of industry into the food and supplies required by labor. Export licenses can be had for enough of the product to pay good dividends on whatever new capital is invested, and amortization on any foreign capital originally invested in the industry. Those who realize that there can be no hope of either prosperity or peace in Europe until Russian reconstruction is under way would do well to investigate the opportunities for industrial intervention that are already available, or could be made available, if there were sufficient American interest in them.

Where Harding Stands

IT is President Harding's aspiration to maintain the rôle of a friendly neutral in the conflict between labor and capital. He believes sincerely that he is neutral. There is a great fund of general goodwill in his breast, and its effulgence falls upon the man in overalls as well as upon the man in frock coat and top hat. He would like to see labor steadily employed, well paid and contented. He would like to see capital buoyant and prospering. Temperamentally, President Harding answers well to the requirements of friendly neutrality.

But neutrality is a difficult position. To maintain it, clearness of head is as necessary as innocence of heart. The real neutral must understand thoroughly the issues involved and be able to face them from the point of view of either side. In