

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

**I**T 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

spite of the best will in the world toward both sides, defect in intellectual power will inevitably range a man on the side which makes the most definite appeal to his unacknowledged prejudices and preconceptions. President Harding may not realize it, but in two communications made public in his name within the last two weeks he has aligned himself so definitely with the side of capital that no one will ever again be able to pay serious attention to his professions of impartiality.

The first of these revealing communications is the letter to Mr. Dean, of July 25th. There a sharp antithesis is drawn between the strikers and the strike breakers. Both are exercising their rights. But

the difference between the two positions is that the striking railroad workers exercise their rights of freedom in seeking to hinder the necessary transportation of the country notwithstanding the provision made by law for the consideration of any just grievance, and the striking miners seek to prevent the production of coal . . . notwithstanding the offer of an agency to make an impartial settlement, while the men who choose to work in response to the call of the country are exercising their like rights, and at the same time making their contribution to our common American welfare.

It is known to President Harding, or if not, it ought to be, that the "provision for the consideration of any just grievance" in the railway field is very inadequate, that decisions of the Railway Labor Board have been flouted by the railways with impunity, and that therefore labor could not reasonably be required to regard them as binding. This particular controversy must accordingly be judged on its merits. Are the railway shopmen fighting for a position of unwarranted privilege or are they standing manfully against sweating and slavery? In either case the President's conclusion would place them in a position morally inferior to that of the strike breakers who are "making their contribution to our common American welfare."

Similarly it is known or ought to be known to President Harding that his proposed coal commission could not have been accepted as impartial until its personnel was known, nor, even if it had really proved impartial, could its good offices have guaranteed the miners' rights in the settlement so long as only a majority—how constituted nobody knows—of the coal operators were ready to accept it. For there is no majority rule in industry. The minority, under no obligations to observe the award, could have gone ahead with their union-smashing activities. Not even President Harding could have expected labor to bid with alacrity for such a pig in a poke. But because they did not, President Harding places them morally in a posi-

tion inferior to that of the strike breakers. "Our common American welfare" seems not, in President Harding's eyes, to depend at all upon the maintenance of decent standards of living, but only upon the immediate reopening of the coal mines, whether by peons or by free labor.

In his letter to Governor Groesbeck of Michigan of July 28th President Harding makes his position even clearer. He has now discovered that "the policy of the national organization is hostile to any state or district arrangement. This apparently is one of the issues involved, and one which must be definitely settled." To be sure it is "one of the issues." It is the issue of life or death for any mine workers' organization. If the workers are beaten on it nothing will stand in the way of the operators wearing them down in one state or district and then using competition as a club to crush them in another. It is, as the President says in a later paragraph, the big issue involved. And what he proposes to do about it is "to submit the whole problem to Congress," with a view to securing a law which may break up the national organization. He has only the coal industry in mind, but obviously what applies to coal would apply to every other interstate industry. No national labor unions: which means, in this country, no labor unions at all powerful enough to make terms with interstate capital.

Neither Mr. Gary nor the National Manufacturers Association has taken a position more hostile to labor than that. What has brought a well intentioned man, meaning to be impartial, to such an extreme of partisanship? He is unable to understand the issues involved, and has therefore slipped back into the domination of his prejudices and preconceptions. And these date back to McKinley. They rest on the assumption that production and profits are the only essential factors in the common good, and that the employer, whose interest lies in production and profits, and the docile laborers, still more the strike breakers, are the men who are "loyal to the public welfare."

## The Key to European Settlement

**W**ITH its characteristic energy the New York World has set out to awaken the American people to a realization of the fact that the key to European peace is in the custody of the American government. It lies with our government to say whether or not European nations shall address themselves to economic and social reconstruction