

SURVEY OF CURRENT EVENTS

THE WAR.

The most interesting war news of the present week was the statement that American troops had been landed in France. Very little information is given out concerning them. The public does not know how many there are, what port they sailed from, nor at what port they landed. Nor does it know when others will be sent. The War Department has handled this whole matter with wonderful success. It is said that their plans were carried out without a hitch.

Our government is turning its attention especially to the manufacturing of large numbers of aeroplanes, and the training of men to man these. Complete supremacy in the air, it is claimed, will settle the question of victory in a very short time. The present plan is to send at least one hundred thousand machines and men to man them just as soon as they can be prepared. It is said that in a short time the government will be able to furnish them at the rate of many thousands a month.

On the western front in France, the French and English have been making slow but steady progress, but no battle of importance was fought during the week. One of the interesting announcements says that Portuguese are now fighting with the Allies.

Russia seems to be quieting down, and the government seems to be gaining more and more control of the country, and has given the Allies every assurance that Russia will stand with them, and will as soon as possible re-enter the war actively.

Greece has formally broken relations with and recalled its ambassadors from Germany, Austro-Hungary, Turkey and Bulgaria. It seems very probable that in a short time Venizelos will be the practical head of the Greek government, and that it will immediately engage actively in the war on the side of the Allies.

Brazil has revoked her decree of neutrality, and has announced that she will stand with the United States and the Allies against Germany. To what extent she can or will take active part in the war is not now known.

IN OUR COUNTRY.

From information sent out by the War Department, the tests of the men who had been enlisted under the conscription act will be very severe. Only men of strong bodies and strong minds will be taken. The idea is to have the army composed of the very best men available, and it is said that it will be probably the most effective fighting force that the world has ever seen. Here are some of the requirements in the examination:

The men must stand not less than five feet four inches in their stockings. They must have no trace of heart or lung trouble, no kidney or chest affection. They must possess good eyes and ears; all their fingers and toes and four food molars at least. A flat foot or a lopped-off ear will be a bar, and any chronic or mental disorder will disqualify.

It is said that this examination will result in at least 40 per cent of the men being rejected.

The Red Cross campaign, raising funds for war work, surpassed all expectations. This effort was made to raise one hundred million. Up to this time one hundred and twenty million have been raised.

The same success has met the efforts of the Y. M. C. A. in its under-

taking to provide a war work fund. Starting out to raise three millions of dollars, the success was so great that the amount has been passed, and the leaders have now made four and one-half millions their goal.

One of the results of the government's activity in connection with high prices has been that the coal producers have agreed to reduce the price of coal very materially. They have practically admitted that the high price of coal was not due to any necessity, but that they found that they could get the high price and so charged all that they could get. There is a very general impression that the same condition of affairs exists in regard to other necessities, including food and oil. The government will probably take up these matters in a short time, and it is believed that great relief will come to the consumers.

BRITAIN FIGHTS FOR COMPLETE VICTORY.

In discussing the question of peace in a speech at Glasgow, Premier Lloyd-George, of England, said that if the war should be concluded a single hour before the allied powers reached the end they set out to attain at the beginning of the war it would be the greatest disaster that ever befell mankind.

"In my judgment," said the premier, "this war will come to an end when the allied powers have reached the end they set out to attain when they accepted the challenge thrown down by Germany to civilization. Then this war ought to come to an end, but if it comes to an end a single hour before that, it will be the greatest disaster that ever befell mankind."

"I hear people say that Germany is ready to give us a satisfactory peace. No doubt you can have peace at a certain price, for no doubt Germany wants peace which would give her economic and other control over the countries which she has invaded."

THE KAISER'S PUPPETS.

Commenting on the German chancellor's latest speech, his evasions and his silence, his few straightforward utterances and his many shifty words jugglings, the New York World sees in the performance evidence that Germany is now fighting for the Hohenzollern family and all the name implies. "More and more as this struggle progresses it will be made to appear on both sides of the battle line that it is for and against kaiserdom. The dynasty brought on the war. It is the dynasty which has instigated and excused its unexampled atrocities. It is the dynasty against which all the allies, even the revolutionary Russians, are fighting to-day. When Germans themselves are informed that they are starving and dying for nothing but the dynasty, perhaps the day of settlement is not so remote as it has seemed of late."

But the Germans themselves, those who are the kaiser's puppets in the trenches, are the last people whose intellects will absorb any such information. They are born and reared in subjugation to the Hohenzollern militarism. It is their natural state to live and die its victims. They do not question; they stolidly obey. So far as they think they have been made to believe that the Hohenzollern dynasty is Germany; that they are fighting for Germany's very existence;

that the onslaught of democracy against autocracy is an onslaught of invaders on Germany. The antagonism of the allies to kaiserdom; the invocations to Germans from the outside to throw off the yoke of kaiserism, serve mainly to set the kaiser's subjects in stubborn resentment against attempted meddlings in their domestic affair.

Germany has her Lebedours and Schiedemans, who are dally growing bolder in their gestures toward republicanism, but the masses in Germany are still, perhaps more than ever, the dynasty's unreasoning and unquestioning slaves.—Louisville Courier-Journal.

THE PALESTINE PROBLEM.

Among other serious post-bellum problems now commanding the attention of the British press and British statesmen, confessedly one of the most serious, is the "future of Palestine." The British expedition against Palestine was solely military—was a military necessity. Assuming complete conquest of the country, what next? What of peace territorial and political adjustments? Anything like return to the conquered Biblical land to Turkish rule or suzerainty may be dismissed at the outset. That is recognized in every discussion of the subject. Likewise it is recognized that annexation by Great Britain or by any of her allies is, if for no other than political reasons, out of the question. Such a policy could not but revive old European animosities and jealousies, even among the allies themselves, and tend to make Palestine a bone of contention and a danger spot in itself and for all the contiguous region. Therefore, the conclusion is that an independent state must be created, the form most favored being that of a republic. But obviously an independent Palestine could not stand alone. Its isolated position would necessitate its protection by some great Christian power, for long years, at any rate. And obviously again, in a measure—in large measure—the protectorate of an European power would be open to the same objections, and would involve the same danger as would annexation.

Consequently a leading British journal turns, in the dilemma, to this country, with the suggestion that America has here a great opportunity of "rendering a service to Europe and the East." America, our British contemporary argues, might well undertake the task of protecting the Jewish republic of Palestine—"a neutral international republic, in which no power was unduly favored to the exclusion of others—just as America has fulfilled the task of protecting the republics of Cuba and Panama." Allusion is then made to the influence of the American missionaries throughout the Near East, and to the affection entertained for them by so many of the various races there; and in concluding its article, the British journal urges these points:

"America has no political aims to serve in the Near East. Her assumption of a protectorate would simply be a guaranty that the little Palestine republic would have no external enemy to fear and would be required to maintain an honest and competent administration. Many conflicting and irreconcilable ambitions would thus be stilled forever, and Christians, Jews and Moslems alike could visit peacefully the sacred places which have an

eternal appeal for mankind."

For all three of the religious elements mentioned there are in Palestine sacred, or "holy places." Without essaying to pass on either the advisability or the practicability of our contemporary's suggestion, it can be said that it is exceedingly interesting. It is this, both in its content and as foreshadowing the expanding part this nation may be expected to play in the future in determining world destiny.—News Leader, Richmond, Va.

HOW WE GOT ALASKA.

The man chiefly responsible for the acquisition of Alaska by this country was William H. Seward, then Secretary of State. During Johnson's administration Seward renewed old discussions regarding such a purchase with the Russian minister, Edward de Stoeckl. He found that Russia was not unwilling to allow her possession to pass into the hands of a traditional friend, but would not permit it to go to a European power. The price to be paid was largely a matter of maintaining the dignity of the contracting parties. Russia thought \$10,000,000 would be about right. Seward proposed \$5,000,000. "Splitting the difference" followed, after which Seward suggested "knocking off" half a million. This brought the sum down to \$7,000,000. It was then found that the Russian Fur Company had claims against the Russian government which it was thought the purchaser should extinguish. This was agreed to, and \$200,000 was added for that purpose. The general argument was that the interest on the payment, \$7,200,000, would easily be met by the annual yield of timber, mines, furs and fisheries.

On the evening of Friday, March 29, 1867, the Russian minister informed Mr. Seward at his home that the Emperor had given consent to the cession. And by 4 o'clock the next morning the treaty was engrossed, signed, sealed and ready for transmission by the President to the Senate. There was need of haste, for the end of the session was near at hand.

In the debate which followed the President's message the extremes of ridicule of the proposition were reached. The matter dragged along, with outcries and protests, until the ratification on May 28. But it was not until the 27th of July of the following year that an act making appropriation to pay for Alaska was finally passed and approved. On the next day the Secretary of State made requisition upon the Treasury for \$7,200,000 to be paid to the Russian government, whereby Alaska became ours by payment in full.

Within the half century that has since elapsed "Seward's Folly" has long since ceased to be a byword. Of incalculable value have been the treasures taken from sea and land in Alaska and its borders in fish, fur and minerals. During thirty-two years of mining Alaska has produced over \$351,000,000 worth of gold, silver, copper and other minerals, and it has seams of coal as yet scarcely touched that are not second in magnitude to any in the world.—Thomas F. Logan, in Leslie's.

Happiness is a very beautiful thing—the most beautiful and heavenly thing in the world.—Lillian Whiting.

That happy state of mind, so rarely possessed, in which we can say, "I have enough," is the highest attainment of philosophy. Happiness consists, not in possessing much, but in being content with what we possess. He who wants little always has enough.—Zimmermann.