Why Great Britain and France Differ on a German Policy

London Fears a Revival of the Old French Spirit of Militarism

By Frank H. Simonds

IN THE face of many confusing and contradictory reports coming in from the great San Remo conference, two things seem reasonably clear. The British and the French have, at least for the moment, accommodated their differences in the matter of the enforcement of the Treaty of Versailles, and still another desperate effort has been made to get rid of two of the main items of unfinished business left over from the Paris Conference, namely, the Eastern question and the Adriatic problem.

As to the Anglo-French dispute, it is clear that the first stage in the discussion was by no means devoid of bitterness. The press of Paris and London testified to a sharp encounter between Millerand and Lloyd George at the outset, which momentarily promised to lead to a break in the ranks of the Entente. The British proposed that the Germans should be invited to come to San Remo; not impossibly they were ready to appear on short notice. This suggestion was heartily indorsed by Nitti, speaking for Italy. But it was definitively blocked by Millerand.

Deadlocked upon the main issue, for the German question was and must remain the chief concern of European statesmen, the conferrees passed to the debate of the Eastern question, while behind this screen there were exchanges in secret meetings between Millerand and Lloyd George, presently taking on a milder character as birthday parties and social gatherings became the order of the day. Paris and London became less pessimistic, Millerand and Lloyd George began to talk to the press and, last of all, there emerged a statement that all had been arranged, composed, compromised.

Test in the Application

Yet we shall do well to avoid too prompt acceptance of the optimistic statements which mark the last stage of the San Remo conference, if only because the world has had too many such statements in past months, all of which have, in the end, proved to be inaccurate, the expression of hope rather than the veracious report of fact. The real test of achievement must be found in the later application of the principles agreed upon. Nor can one forget that Millerand has to explain his policy to a very censorious Chamber of Deputies in no mood to accept any sacrifice of French interests and unanimously agreed to insist upon an integral enforcement of the Treaty of Versailles.

The main difficulty in the Anglo-French dispute lies in the fact that there is not any difference between Lloyd George and Millerand in the matter of the German question. Rather, the differenec is between England and France. The English believe that the existing chaos—economic, military, moral—in Europe can be abolished only by the application to Germany of an Allied policy which will enable Germany to get back to work, to begin the gigantic task of reconstruction, one result of which beginning will be the commencement of payments to France.

George said in his interview at San Remo that Germany was sick, that her disease had paralyzed her will and her brain no longer controlled the movements of her limbs. He brushed aside the notion that Germany was a military menace, he snapped his fingers at the fears, mainly French, which are the product of a totally different reading of the German situation. In doing this he voiced the present opinion in Britain, the majority opinion, for there is in Britain, but not in France, a strong minority which takes a radically different view.

But Millerand in his interview and in his attitude in the conference expressed the French view. France, resting her case upon the Treaty of Versailles, demands that the first step to be taken in treating the German patient shall be to remove his arms, to insist upon, to compel, remobilization. Nor is France less determined that, whatever assistance may be furnished, it shall not be accompanied by a forgiveness of German performance under the Treaty of Versailles where performance is possible, as it manifestly is in the case of the coal deliveries.

Mutual Suspicions

Unfortunately, these two opposing views, not absolutely irreconcilable in themselves, are accentuated by the mutual suspicions the two nations harbor concerning each other. Thus the British believe that underlying all else in the French attitude is a desire to seize German territory; to use the treaty to destroy Germany; that the occupation of Frankfort was only a clear example of French territorial and militaristic policy. Such a policy, to the English mind, leads straight to new wars, following the infinite extension of the period of economic chaos. At one time, the British believe, such a policy will stimulate Prussianism and Bolshevism, between them there is little to choose so far as future peace is concerned.

The French on their side see in the British course the revelation of a purpose to sacrifice all, allies, foreign policies, the peace of Europe, to the desire to resume profitable commercial relations with Germany. France sees the British forsaking their ally and seeking to enter into new commercial relations with an enemy of yesterday, now, so far as the British are concerned, incapable of aggression, but potentially a menace to France.

And the more one examines these two suspicions the more it becomes manifest that they are not mere developments of the moment. On the contrary, for centuries the tradition of a militaristic France has survived in England. This fact explains the relative equanimity with which the British saw the Germans crush and mutilate France in 1870. Across the Channel England has always been "Perfidious Albion," and the French have read in the history of British intermixture with Continental affairs the invariable purpose to use the Continental powers for British purposes, but to change partners at the close of each dance.

A Formal Alliance

In a word, the disputes over the Treaty of Versailles have revived on both sides of the Channel sentiments and opinions which were only momentarily silenced during the war and remained in the back of English and French minds even in the heat of the struggle. Thus, in a sense, the French have been expecting to be betrayed, the British to see a new birth of French militarism. Five centuries of war, rivalry, mutual distrust have created in both countries a fixed state of mind toward the other which, if not irradicable, constitutes a factor little less than permanent.

Hence the basis of real coöperation between France and Great Britain can be found only in some agreement so definite, so precise, as to leave no opportunity for the operation of the secular distrusts of both nations. If Britain and France are to continue to work together, then there must be a precise statement of the obligations of each to the other. But this means a definite and formal alliance, which is exactly the thing the present majority in Great Britain opposes and the whole of France demands without any qualification.

The agreement between France and Britain, signed when the Germans were within sight of Paris in September, 1914, to make no separate peace with the enemy is a fair example of the sort of understanding which admits of no questioning on either side. The formal pledge of the British to support France, with all arms, in case of a new German attack would in a measure answer the same description. But this would have to be reinforced by an agreement to keep an adequate number of troops under arms in Britain to make the pledge of real value, for France does not want again to be faced by Germany in arms and find with her at the moment of the first shock only 70,000 British, as was the case in 1914.

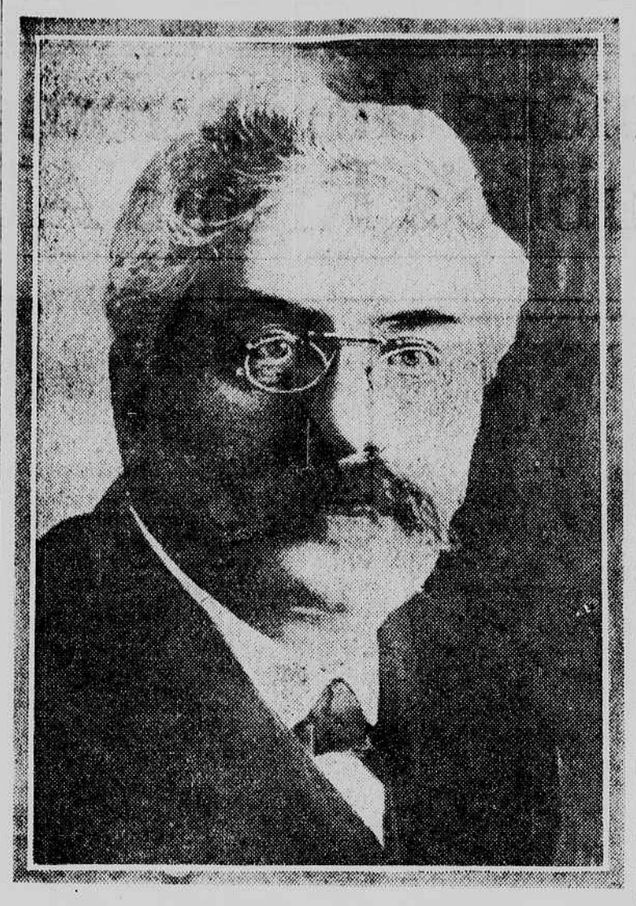
Failing such a categorical commitment, the French will not, can not, accept any British advice or opinion in the matter of dealing with Germany. If the British agree to accept the French view in the matter of the disarmament of Germany, in the matter of safeguarding the French future, the way is open to urge the French to accept the British view in the matter of the application—not the revision—of the economic details of the Treaty of Versailles.

In No Mood for Arms

But Britain is in no mood now to take on new military responsibilities, to maintain an army of, say, a quarter of a million, exclusive of all forces marked for colonial service, which will be ready to move to the Continent if Germany strikes at France again. On the contrary, the driving motive of the present British policy, the underlying explanation of the prevailing British view, is the notion that if the British idea prevails, if the economic phases of the treaty are revised, there will be an end of any danger from Germany, while, if the French view prevails, then there will be inescapable necessity for new military establishments.

Thus Lloyd George, in accepting the British view, is impelled against Millerand, who is convinced of the accuracy of the French judgment. If Lloyd George proposes a modification of the economic phases of the treaty all France is filled with the conviction that Britain is seeking selfishly to abandon France. If Millerand is driven by French opinion to seek to enforce the treaty, to counter German violations, which are gross and unmistakable, by occupying German cities, the charge is widely spread through Britain that French militarism is rampant again. The result is chaos, chaos which encourages the Germans to new defiances and holds out to the "old gang" in Germany the hope that the treaty can be evaded and the old order in Germany restored.

I have dwelt upon these unpleasant circumstances solely because I desire to put my readers on their guard against too ready belief in the essential accuracy of the statements which come from San Remo and elsewhere that everything has been arranged. Arrangements are not impossible, but recent crises have been very acute, and, a fact worth recalling, each crisis of the Paris Conference has contributed materially to widening the breach between the British and the French, between the nations, not merely the men who represent the nations.



PREMIER MILLERAND, who represented France at the San Remo conference

And at bottom both the British and the French views rest upon a hypothesis impossible now to establish beyond question. The British assume that the application of their policy will infallibly result not merely in the economic but in the moral regeneration of Germany. They insist that the German, if he be now dealt with generously and considerately, will presently prove himself to be a "good European"; that he will turn adrift all his old leaders, "scrap" all his old ambitions and aspirations, discharge his swashbuckling generals, voluntarily dismiss his armies and proceed to repay the world such debts as are not forgiven.

The French Viewpoint

Obviously, if it were possible to prove in advance that this would be the fact the French would be out of court; but it isn't. Meantime the French retort that the German has done certain things for many centuries, most reprehensible of which has been invading France, an achievement four times repeated in the last century, each time with the result that French territory was ravaged and certain frontier districts temporarily or permanently stolen. As to German deeds during the last invasion, they require no proof. Now, either the German will change his character or he won't, and the French assert the German is immutable. But if he doesn't change it will be France that will have to pay the costs.

Nor is it merely the costs of the future; for the policy which the British advocate demands of the French the immediate resignation of certain things assigned to France in the Treaty of Versailles and representing no more than part compensation for German devastations in France. Thus from the French point of view the British purpose in retaining for themselves all the fruits of the common victory—that is, the British share—that France shall surrender a portion of her share and, in the bargain, run risks for the future the gravity of which may be gathered from the history of recent years.

This France will not do. The occupation of Frankfort the other day was not merely notice served upon the Germans, but upon the British, that beyond certain limits France would reassert her own freedom of action; that neither British refusal to coöperate nor open British opposition would lead France to accept the British estimate of what was proper French action in a matter in which the safety of France was at stake and in which the British had no greater interest than that which covered commercial and moral considerations.

Of course, French insistence upon the line indicated in the Frankfort action spells the ruin of the whole British conception. There can be no moral or economic regeneration of Germany, and particularly no industrial renaissance, if French armies progressively occupy the border regions, take over the coal districts of the Ruhr and control the railway lines which unite north and south Germany. Obviously, France will not obtain her reparations, since Germany will not be able to earn; but, by contrast, the British notion of a restored Germany, restored to health and trade, will go glimmering.

More than this, beyond all question the economic paralysis which even now affects all of Central Europe will be intensified. Unrest will increase and spread. Reaction or Bolshevism, the White peril or the Red, and, for that matter, both in turn, will arrive and bring in their wake new conflicts, new miseries, new perils. Thus the very loud and insistent denunciation of French policy in certain quarters in England, where the British view is most ardently professed, resulted from a recognition of the fact that French policy, backed by French action, means the utter failure of all attempts to apply this British policy.

Now the primary fact of the Anglo-French dispute is quite clear. Just as long as the British decline to meet French demands in the matter of security there is not the smallest hope of persuading France to accept any fraction of the British economic policy with respect to Germany. In point of fact, while the British hold the Treaty of Versailles unreasonably harsh the French regard it as hopelessly "soft," and would not have accepted it in the first instance had it not been accompanied by the Anglo-American treaty of alliance. Since the course of the United States Senate has eliminated this detail the French feel themselves left in the lurch, having at best an unsatisfactory return for their great sacrifices, and feel quite strongly that, in view of the collapse of the Anglo-American treaty, neither the British nor the Americans have the smallest right to ask further concessions from France. That these concessions are asked arouses an indignation not difficult to explain.

Germany's Real Purpose

For France the beginning of a real understanding with the British over the application of the Treaty of Versailles must be the recognition by the British of the French views as to what constitutes security for France. In this regard the French point out with certain justice that they, and not the British, have been correct in the still recent past in discovering Germany's real purpose. They point to the fact that in July, 1914, the British government and the British people were totally mistaken as to the actual state of the case. Had Great Britain taken French warnings any time in the decade which preceded the World War and provided herself with an adequate army, Germany would not have risked the Belgian gamble, would not have risked a general conflict.

Paris Suspects the British of Sacrificing the French for Business Ends

Instead, the British government sought friendly understandings with Germany, resorted to endless private conversations, conducted chiefly by Lord Haldane, only to discover in the events of August, 1914, the absolute correctness of the French estimate and pay for their earlier mistakes by more than half a million of British lives. But is there any more certainty that the British are better informed now than they were in 1914? And is it not passing strange that the loudest voices proclaiming the present British estimate of the German future are precisely the voices which denounced all British preparations before 1914 and turned upon patriots like Lord Roberts, who were awake to the truth, a storm of denunciation and abuse?

But to appeal to past history is to go beyond the circumstances which I have sought to emphasize. The real difficulty in the situation to-day is the same difficulty which made the Paris Conference largely a failure. We and the British in that conference took one view of the future, based upon our faith and fortified by the fact that even if we were mistaken our blunder could not lead to immediate invasion of our territories. The French took another view, immensely influenced by the fact that the peril of invasion was unmistakable and the recent past was filled with the grim consequences of such an invasion.

'Round the Circle

Out of this shock of opposing views there emerged only moderately viable compromises, which were themselves contingent upon Anglo-American promises to support France, by force of arms, if necessary. But this condition has collapsed, the compromises have fallen with it, and we are again just where we stood when the President set out for Paris, so far as the German fact is concerned. The existence of the treaty does not much affect the situation, because we insist the treaty shall be modified, while the French mean to give it new vitality by the vigor of the enforcement.

In England and even in America the charge is made that the French are imperialistic. In France the allegation is heard that both the British and the Americans are hypocritical. The British say that the French are seeking to take territory and that behind French demand for the enforcement of the treaty lies an ulterior and militaristic purpose. But the French say that behind Anglo-American concern for humanity lies an anxiety to make money out of German industry and trade. London says that the French generals are driving the nation into territorial ventures. Paris reports that there is at least as much justification for French occupation of Frankfort as for British invasion of Constantinople.

Such recriminations become endless and naturally lead nowhere save to the ultimate wrecking of the Anglo-French alliance, or association, which in war had the character of an alliance and was the primary circumstance in the salvation of the world from the German menace. But it is essential to recognize that they represent a fundamental distrust between the British and the French peoples, and this distrust, and not minor or even major incidents of foreign policy, is at the root of all the crises from the opening of the Paris Conference to the meeting at San Remo.

When Lloyd George and Millerand meet in conference, both being eminently reasonable and men neither the one nor the other representing personally any antagonistic views, it is not difficult for them to agree upon certain compromises which will banish the immediate danger of rupture. But the real difficulty begins when, the conference over, they return to their respective countries and find themselves in the presence of the strongly antagonistic views of the majorities in their own countries. Then the debate starts all over again and we have more incidents, more disputes, more insistence on Lloyd George's side for modifications of the treaty, more demands on Millerand's side for rigid enforcement.

Bonds Grow Weaker

This, after all, is the reason alliances are short lived in peace. In war, nations are bound together by their common danger, and their primary concern lies in defeating the enemy. But in peace their interests are quite different. To-day British interests seem to a majority of Englishmen best served by a policy which to the French seems to threaten the absolute ruin of France. And as the war becomes more and more remote the bonds holding the two nations together grow steadily weaker.

Thus, whatever was agreed upon at San Remo, and it is a hopeful sign that an open breach was avoided and a modus vivendi, at least for the moment, agreed upon, it is self-evident that we are not at the end of the chapter of Anglo-French differences. In point of fact, the Germans will see to that. The reason is found in the fact which I have sought to emphasize here, that the real trouble lies in the utter dissimilarity of the English and French views of the German situation and the actual antithesis which exists between the interest of the two nations so far as the treatment of Germany is concerned.

I shall discuss the Turkish and Adriatic agreements of San Remo next week, but it is worth noting at the moment that, in reality, there is no settlement of either question. The creation of a state of Fiume is, in reality, merely the preservation for the future of the task of liquidating the dispute between the Slavs and the Italians. To Danzig and the Saare there is now added the equally thorny problem of Fiume. Actually neither the Slavs nor the Italians are in the mood or the condition to fight now and both may well welcome a truce, but the dispute remains, only the decision is adjourned.

As for the Turkish solution, there is, of course no settlement whatsoever. Assigning Thrace to Greece is a wise and righteous verdict. Since Constantinople will remain occupied by Alllied troops, the Turk is in fact, although not in theory, at last bundled out of Europe, "bag and baggage," an enterprise which has taken, first and last, countless the years devoted to the effort to keep him out in the first place, something like eight centuries. Greek occupation of Smyrna is a step in the right direction, although at best a halting step swathed with conditions and plebiscites, but for the rest, the San Remo conferees, like those of Paris before them, have done no more than make black marks on white maps and postpone for the future the task of transforming the black marks into something more tangible.

Nor can one fail to note that at San Remo, as at Paris, the Russian question has escaped settlement. Until Russia and Germany are brought back into the European, into the world, system, everything is provisional and relatively insignificant by contrast—solutions of the Adriatic dispute, of the Turkish tangle, allocations of ships, territorial agreements upon the sums to be asked of Germany, all have an insubstantial character. World peace still waits upon the German and the Russian.

(Copyright, 1920, McClure Newspaper Syndicate)

New Kansas Court Puts Public Above Capital and Labor

(Continued from page one)

gaged in the operation of any such industry, employment, utility or common carrier wilfully to limit or cease operations for the purpose of limiting production or transportation or to affect prices, for the purpose of avoiding any of the provisions of this act; but any person, firm or corporation so engaged may apply to said Court of Industrial Relations for authority to limit or cease operations, stating the reasons therefor, and said Court of Industrial Relations shall hear said application promptly, and if said application shall be found to be in good faith and meritorious authority to limit or cease operations shall be granted by order of said court."

Penalties of fines and imprisonment for violations of the law are prescribed for both capital and labor.

After getting all this weighty information about the new court there followed, of course, the natural question:

"How does it work?"

Governor Allen was silent a moment before he answered, and in the moment's pause one sensed the doubts that may have risen while he was waiting for time to give him the answer to that query. Possibly there was just a hint of pride in his voice when he answered, speaking slowly:

A Protest Strike

"The law went into effect on a Saturday. The following Monday several hundred miners went out on a protest strike. I immediately sent my Attorney General into the district. He called the leaders before him and told them about the law. When he was through the miners said:

"'You go back and tell the Governor we're not striking. We got paid Saturday, and this is 'blue Monday' with us. We'll be back at work to-morrow.'

"And," said the Governor, "they were.

"Our law went into effect in January," continued Governor Allen. "In the next three months the mines of the state turned out more coal than in any previous five and a half months.

"The miners themselves were quick to take advantage of the law. Within a short time after it became operative seven hundred men appeared before it and asked for the adjustment of grievances. And these grievances were adjusted in a manner satisfactory to them and in a way the operators admitted was just.

"But as a result of this action on the part of these union men Alexander Howat, head of the Kansas miners, put through a rule that any miner who appealed to the court should be fined $50 and any union that made such an appeal should be fined $5,000. Howat did this because he does not recognize the court and holds it is illegal.

Leaders Sent to Jail

"Howat himself, when summoned by the court to give testimony in another matter, refused to appear and was promptly sent to jail by a court of competent jurisdiction to which the Court of Industrial Relations appealed. Howat's contention that the Court of Industrial Relations is unconstitutional is now before the Supreme Court of the state and will be decided within the next few weeks.

"But let's consider for a moment the benefits to labor gained under our new court and those accruing through the leadership of Howat. In three years Howat ordered 408 strikes in Kansas.

"These strikes cost the miners more than $2,000,000 in wages.

"They netted the strikers less than $1,000 gain in wages.

"And in the mean time the miners paid out of their pockets for the support of Howat's organization $157,000.

"In the three months that the law has been in operation, in which time more coal was mined than in any previous five and a half months there would have been forty-two strikes had the average set by Howat for the previous three years been maintained.

"On the other hand, the miners have already reaped substantial benefits under the new law. In the matter of powder alone they are materially better off. You know, a miner gets so much a day and must pay for his own explosives for use in mining coal. For a year or so the miners have had cause to complain because the operators, from whom they buy the powder, would not fix a regular price for it. The court took the matter up, fixed a price satisfactory to the miners and it was accepted by the operators.

"This court might well be called the 'court of the penniless man.' A miner may take his case before the court, and if he is not satisfied with the decision he may take it to the Supreme Court of the state, which latter court will give such cases priority. And it will not cost the seeker for justice one cent. It is not even necessary for him to have a lawyer.

"Here is a case in point. A poor old hunchback miner came into the court asking for relief from an abuse that has gone on for years. Now, I'm not striving for dramatic effect when I call him an 'old hunchback miner.' It just happens to have been the case.

"You must understand that the miners are paid every two weeks. When a man has been working a week he often wants to draw the money for that week's work because he needs it for his family expenses. The company allowed him to do this, but charged him 10 per cent for the privilege. For example, in the case of the miner who made the complaint, he had $28 due him, and the company charged him $2.80 for paying him what he had already earned.

"The court pointed out to the operators that if this was kept up throughout the year a man would pay 512 per cent interest, and it issued an order that hereafter a miner might draw his money at any time it was due him, but allowing the company to charge 15 cents each time to pay for the extra bookkeeping involved.

"But the operators had been going along for years charging the men that 10 per cent interest, and the unions had never thought of protesting."

"Do you believe, Governor, that the country is in the frame of mind for a law of this kind?"

"Well, there were seven votes against the measure in the lower house of our legislature and two in the Senate. Labor controls forty of the legislative districts of the state, but it could swing only seven of these votes against the bill. That seems to indicate at least the frame of mind Kansas is in, doesn't it?"

Replanting a Garden With Shakespeare's Flowers

IN THE trenching operations necessary to the laying out of an old-fashioned Elizabethan "Knott-Garden" at New Place, Stratford-on-Avon, the walls of a chamber or receptacle, 10 feet long by six feet broad, have lately been discovered about two and one-half feet below the present level of the ground. That the walls are, partly at any rate, of Shakespeare's time seems evident from the lower part of the brickwork exhibiting the characteristics of Tudor times; that is, bricks of the size, shape and quality of those days, laid in the old English bond of alternate lines of "headers" and "stretchers," with wide mortar joints, declares a writer in "The London Times." But dividing the chamber into two is a more modern wall, possibly as recent as the end of the eighteenth century.

As to what purpose this receptacle served it is difficult to arrive at any certain conclusion, though it was probably originally connected with the work of the garden—perhaps a gardenmidden. Not far off is a brick well, twenty-four feet deep and about two and a half feet across, in which fresh spring water rises to a height of eight feet. This, which was discovered some few years ago, is certainly of Shakespeare's time and doubtless served for watering his garden. To this purpose it is now to be devoted once more.

Apart from this receptacle, not so much of interest as might have been expected has been brought to light by the excavations—probably owing to the fact that the soil, for a depth of two or three feet, is all made ground, dating from a not very remote period. Neither the oyster shells nor the chicken bones which have been unearthed can reasonably be ascribed to the retired dramatist's table, nor the curiously shaped clay tobacco pipes. Indeed, Shakespeare never mentions tobacco, and was probably not a smoker of it.

There was discovered, however, a few days ago, the complete skeleton of a medium sized animal, which some imaginative Shakespearean, when it was first uncovered, was disposed to identify as that of the deer said to have been poached by Shakespeare, when a youth, from the neighboring park of Sir Thomas Lucy of Charlecote. The skeleton, however, when brought forth and carefully examined turned out to be nothing more romantic or interesting than the bones of a pig, and a late eighteenth century or even a mere early nineteenth century pig at that! Archæologists, however, are on the alert, and strict orders have been given to the gardeners carefully to examine every bit of soil turned up for the smallest fragments of anything unusual. Shakespeare, we know from many allusions in his plays, had a thorough knowledge and experience of the practical side of gardening—of pruning especially. Should, therefore, any old pruning knife or other gardening tool of the Elizabethan period be unearthed we may rest assured it will be treasured.

In the mean while the stocking of the garden with old English plants and flowers proceeds apace. Besides the gifts from the King, Queen Mary, Dowager Queen Alexandra and the Prince of Wales, consignments from every part of the country have been and are being received from the owners of every sort of garden, historic and modern, great and small. From Kew Gardens, also, where Shakespeare's garden is regarded as a matter of national concern, both valuable counsel and large contributions of plants have been received. There have also been subscriptions in money, Miss Marie Corelli heading the list with a gift of £50.