

EDITORIALS AND COMMENT

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They say you can buy more with a dollar now. The experiment would be interesting if a fellow had a dollar.

Must Hang Together.

THE events of the world during the past two years would seem to prove with sufficient conclusiveness that the nations of this earth must hang together or they will be hanged separately. The truth of this finds its culmination in President Harding's message, which recognized that whether we would wish or not, this government cannot remain isolated without doing the hanging act for itself.

The Herald's economist on Thursday pointed out that the \$100,000,000 Foreign Trade Financing Corporation had decided to fold its hands "until the machinery of the league of nations is perfected." As everyone knows it cannot be "perfected" until the United States is a member. Until then it will go along steady by jerks. It cannot stop nor disintegrate, because, so far as Europe is concerned, it provides the administrative and executive agencies of the treaty of Versailles.

The United States may be able to unscramble it from the treaty—we believe this can be done—and ratify the remainder. This government is interested directly only in the reparations adjustments, as these are affected by the league. But Europe must preserve the league not for a few months, but for very many years, before it can safely let go of this anchorage. By that time it will have permanency, or be simply the tail of the treaty, to give it momentum and direction.

In the meanwhile there will be time to determine under what form and conditions this government will join other nations that they may hang together rather than face the alternative. Because we have been kept outside, quarreling among ourselves, the allies have been able to make our ratification of the treaty itself more complicated. They have shown the character of our "associates" as that of narrow, selfish imperialism.

But so long as we have to trade, do business and live with them, it is necessary to be where we can watch them, to act from the inside and not be merely a goose to be plucked. The Finance Corporation's position illustrates this. Its capital is to be used for long-term credits and investments. To rotate the capital, these must be capable of transfer and absorption.

As The Herald's economist puts it: "If the government finds it advisable to avoid entangling alliances politically, shall the individual become entangled financially with Europe?" In other words investment will wait until the government of the United States is there to protect it. Yet, as a fact, individual Americans, American corporations and companies must be entangled in Europe financially. They are now to the extent of some \$5,000,000,000, and it is only as to other billions they hesitate. Moreover, every citizen has an interest in the \$9,000,000,000 advanced by the government to those other governments now in the league.

It may be wise to first merely declare peace for its mere psychological effect; it can have no other. It may under the conditions which have come since the armistice, be wise to withhold treaty ratification to compel the allies to disentangle some of the entanglements with which they have webbed us in, while we are scrapping among ourselves. That they were able to do this, sufficiently points the final moral which adorns all the tale of the past two years. It sufficiently shows that we cannot adequately protect ourselves unless on the ground. We cannot boss the game from the bleachers.

As generally interpreted President Harding's message treats with a condition, not a theory. His program, as seen by the newspapers, is to first gain

psychological effect. Second, to ratify the treaty of Versailles when the associated governments show a disposition to revoke their sneaks and play fair. Finally to associate ourselves with all nations in a way that will safeguard our foreign markets, open the way out for our farm products and industrial surplus, assure credits and investments, and also assure continued peace by a squarely honorable competition in commerce which will make huge armaments unnecessary.

In the new international pronunciation of friendship, the accent is placed on the last syllable.

Peonage.

PEONAGE, as practiced in several of the Southern States takes the form of bonding negro convicts to private labor. Williams, the convicted owner of the Georgia "murder farm," had a number of such bonded negroes. It was eleven of them he was accused of murdering in a most brutal manner.

He said, in his testimony, that "most" of the farmers of Georgia had such labor. This the Atlanta Constitution denies, while demanding that this bonding system, be stopped. That no prison labor should ever be so farmed out by a State to private employers is a principle fixed beyond debate. It is a modified form of slavery capable of even greater abuse, since the employer does not even have the interest in such negroes of personal property. They are not owned, but merely hired from the State.

How far this system is abused, however, depends wholly upon the individual employer. He may house and feed and treat them well, because of his own character, and to increase efficiency. All the wage, however, is paid to the State and is usually but a pittance. There is a persistent temptation to abuse the prison control transferred to private hands, and especially so when the owner of the business or farm is nonresident, the management being left to a foreman.

So far as known there was but the one bonder of prison labor in all Georgia who was pre-eminently a brute. There was but one who even comparably so abused this bonding privilege. What may develop from this one case is as yet to be learned, but so long as it remains solitary and not typical, Georgia, as a State, is entitled to a withholding of judgment.

It has acted and certainly must further act, to abolish the system. This is the wholesome and worthy demand of its press. What is most serious as a charge against the State, is the seeming total lack of any form of State supervision over this bonded labor, any system of inspection, or required rules of treatment. It seems without excuse that eleven or more of these negroes could be murdered without the State's almost immediate knowledge that they had at least disappeared.

This denotes an absence of record, an indifference and a disregard for how this labor might be treated, which is almost unbelievable. But we believe Georgia will now give its own linen a thorough cleaning and that not only it, but all States, will abolish this relic of barbarism. In the meanwhile the North has a portion of like laundering to do. It is not without blame in its own household of labor and is not the one to throw too many stones of righteous indignation.

In a period of deflation, put up or shut up means put up more collateral or shut up shop.

Having discovered the center of population, it would seem the logical course to colonize it.

The waste of war may have left the allies short of a great many things, but patience isn't one of them.

And the reason the Lenin-Trotsky regime is in desperate straits is because it is out of everything else.

Hereafter we shall know enough to make each belligerent post a cash forfeit before sitting in the game.

We can't hope to settle this prohibition controversy until we make up our minds to try it and see how it works.

Among twenty mothers, exactly twenty are afraid the children of the others will corrupt her darlings.

Germany may conceal her gold, but she isn't at all backward about revealing her brass.

Nature's Lincoln Memorial.

SEATTLE and Tacoma are two cities of the State of Washington, as all the boys and girls of the fourth grade know. They are on the inner waters of Puget Sound, if we recall our geography, and are but a pleasant motorcar jaunt apart. They are commercial rivals which means they are quite certain not to agree to anything except to disagree.

Down to the southeast, another auto jaunt, is Mount Rainier, famous for its comparative isolation and rotund sort of prosperous corpulency of form. It is nearer to Tacoma by the distance from Tacoma to Seattle. So Tacoma regards Rainier as within its own particular zone of influence. To cinch this the city proposed a goodly number of years ago, the name be changed to "Tacoma." That was enough; Seattle objected; it still objects and Rainier remains Rainier.

But the Grand Army of the Republic has now intervened. It has endorsed a movement to rename the mountain for Abraham Lincoln, as a memorial erected by nature to their beloved commander. They back this by recalling that it was named for Admiral Rainier of the British navy, a man whose name is not recalled in this country with pleasurable pride as a sea raider during the Revolutionary war and as a land grabber for his country. It was for this he was honored.

The Lincoln proponents urge that it is not fitting that the great show mountain of the Northwest, the most remarkable of landmarks should continue burdened with that name and as veterans of the civil war, they protest. They also contend that that Far Western part of the country needs and should have a memorial of immortal Lincoln. What better one could be conceived?

The proposal will strike a responsive chord of all the people of this country. It will probably receive a very hearty; "So be it." It touches the popular imagination and what the committee of the G. A. R. now advocates before the proper authorities, will not lack encouragement and support from outside their ranks.

Belgian Perplexity Over U. S. Foreign Policy.

IT IS not surprising that Europeans who are unacquainted with the intricacies of our political system are perplexed by the attitude which we appeared to have adopted regarding European affairs. This inability to understand and to estimate properly American opinion naturally results in disappointment and irritation. Articles ridiculing the United States, her citizens, and her political and economic policies are not infrequent in the European press.

Our apparent refusal to participate in the league of nations, our supposed plan to negotiate a separate peace with Germany, and repeated assertions that we are to maintain a policy of isolation, combined with extravagant talk about building the largest navy in the world can easily be interpreted to our discredit.

Recently a paper in Antwerp, under the head, "The United States in Trouble With the Entire World," gave an account of our troubles with Japan over the Island of Yap, our immigration problems, the controversy with England regarding Mesopotamia, naval competition, and the misunderstanding with Belgium for the reported refusal of Congress to ratify President Wilson's arrangement for discounting Belgium's debt. From such an account the impression is created that during the period of two years America has fallen from her position of leadership in the affairs of the world to become a center of contention.

The President's message, however, clears the way for concrete action. Europe will not now have long to wait, to know exactly what that policy is and they will find that it is not desertion of our war associates, nor comfort to Germany. The one central and important fact to them will be that in some form the main treaty is to be approved. With this assurance, all the rest will be of secondary importance.

A Celebration of Modern Times.

We enter now a complicated phase,
Hard to hit off in any single phrase.
I want a word connoting evolution;
Sound reform, industrial revolution;
A higher birthrate and a lower rent;
New worlds for old; research magnificent.
Such words are hard to find, yet there is one—
I almost blush to use it—WELLSIAN.

—From "Wells' Springs of History" in the Literary Review.