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A Momentous Decision

THE decision of the Supreme Court on the constitutionality, or more, perhaps, on the proper construction of the Adamson law, is a reminder of the great John Marshall's work while he was chief justice. He found, in the original constitution and laws, a rude framework imperfectly braced against storm or earthquake and exposed on every side to the elements which, in depraved hearts, would, if possible, prey upon and subvert any government founded on justice and the inalienable rights of a free people.

Chief Justice Marshall took that structure, strengthened its foundations, straightened and braced its framework, and then covered it with a fire and storm-proof covering, leaving it the most glorious example of the wisdom and power that ever came from the angels of Justice, Mercy and Freedom to mankind.

The Adamson law was an expedient which, when framed, represented nothing except to postpone a vexatious question, and to minister to the success of an individual and party election. It paid to a class of workmen, already better paid than any other working men of the same class in the world, an additional stipend of \$60,000,000 per annum.

One of their spokesmen justified this on the ground that the roads were making vast profits, while the cost of living to the workers had increased 40 per cent; a most plausible story to those who look upon railroads as owned by a few men who delight to grind the public.

But when the late E. H. Harriman was at the height of his power and influence, he met that same argument by a simple question, which was: 'Are not the eight hundred thousand (800,000) stockholders in the roads under my control entitled to some interest on their investment?'

But this is a diversion. The Supreme Court took up this law for consideration, and the final conclusion awards the increased pay to the employees; but it does not stop with that. It holds that interstate railroads are quasi public institutions, on which the country leans for protection against extreme want, and as a means of defense in time of danger; that therefore, employees of these roads, for the salaries they receive, surrender their original right to strike and bring confusion and loss and panic to the public.

It is an all-embracing decision. By it the men who last summer thought to gain more money, and in a critical time were bold enough to deliver an ultimatum to the government; who a week ago threatened, unless their demands were acceded to, that they would do something which in effect would paralyze business everywhere and bring on bread riots in the great cities; these men are served a notice that, after all, the government is supreme and does not rest upon the

whims of a few labor leaders. They are warned also that there are means to control them and to make it impossible for them to jeopardize the peace and safety of the nation.

It makes more clear than anything else that has developed in twenty years that free governments possess the power of self-protection—a sovereignty more impregnable than ever hedged about an earthly throne.

The republic takes on a new majesty because of it.

The Revolution in Russia

THE revolution in Russia, which in a week overthrew the ancient rule of the Romanoffs and converted Russia into a free state, bewilders the world. So long and so absolute was that rule, so unyielding and despotic; the Czar, the head of the church and the state, and so absolute in control, that to be overthrown by an almost bloodless revolution is a wonder and amazement.

It is said it started in bread riots, for Russia, while completing through lines of transportation had neglected to make her railroad lines cohesive at home; the riots extended, expanded into a revolution that in a single week consummated into such a cataclysm to the government as a geological period is to the physical world.

It was not the war that brought it about, for the command of the new government to the armies in the field is to press on against the enemy. It is in answer to the prayers that for a century have been rising to a just God from Siberian prisons.

In Russia for generations, first the Czar, the absolute ruler; then an autocracy, the most austere in all Europe; then the higher class of Commoners, whose sons have been banished for more than a century for crying out against the tyranny of the ruler over them; then the peasants who up to sixty years ago were serfs; and lastly, the Cossacks, those nomads, wild riders and fighters, who have made the moving arm of the Russian army.

Did the more generous of the aristocracy join with the more advanced of the Commoners to produce the upheaval, or is there a Cromwell in Russia?

The revolution and its results are surely a world wonder.

Russia has suffered an appalling loss of lives in the war; more than any other power, save France and Germany. The deaths are counted by the millions—

By the Danube and the Dnieper

The Cossack hero sleeps.

By the Volga and the Don

The Cossack mother weeps.

But this did not cause the uprising, and those who believe that Germany will gain by it are mistaken. Napoleon discovered that it was possible to scatter Russian armies and capture her capital, but that it meant final destruction to the invader.

Then, too, there are the old antagonisms; antagonisms of race and creed and centuries of hate—the Slav against the Goth—and behind all, the old Asiatic fatalism, cruelty and love of conquest.

As the revolution fills the world with wonder, it ought likewise to fill the hearts of kings with

apprehension of evil to them, and at least stop their claims to a Divine Right to rule.

The Present Outlook

THE advances being made on the west front in France by the Allies do not indicate so many successes by the Allies as they do the withdrawal, with as little loss as possible, of the Germans to a new line of defense. This new line has been made as nearly impregnable as possible, and behind it a new great army is being trained for the summer's work.

When assembled on the new line, the Germans will wait in the hope that the Allies will attempt to storm their strengthened position, and that in doing so the enemy will suffer fearful losses. This is by way of preparing for a final offensive of their own, an overwhelming advance of their army, accompanied with renewed activity of their sea and air craft, a gigantic move in unison of all the forces she can muster in the last desperate attempt to compel England to consider peace terms. No doubt the military authorities of France and England are fully aware of this, and are making such preparations as they are able to meet it.

In the meantime, the advance of General Haig's army, and of the Russian army, in Asia toward Constantinople, if slow, seems to be sure. While it is filled with menace to the Turks, it likewise forebodes the taking of one more source of food supply from the Teutons. Then what is happening in Russia must be a source of vast disquietude to the German emperor and his immediate advisers. What seemed impossible has happened there, and the suddenness of it, and the almost bloodless overthrow of a four hundred year dynasty, as it were, in a day, is such an example of what a united people can do, as must have been a mighty shock to those who believe in the Divine Right of kings and the subjection of the people thereby. In the meantime, the distress throughout Germany, the distress and sorrow of the present, and the anticipation of more sorrows to come, must be fearful. And the Allies are not much better off. This is the time that the neutral nation should have been united and in a position to urge a settlement on all the powers at war.

The farmers should plant all the acreage possible this spring, for while we may speculate on probable results, the fact that half the civilized world will be in a state of at least semi-starvation when the autumn comes seems already established.

Nothing in history compares with the present situation. To mankind, it has a look as though it were the beginning of chaos.

Government Ownership Of Railroads

AFTER the old Central Pacific, the Southern Pacific and the Chesapeake & Ohio railroads were built, C. P. Huntington, who had been through all the trouble of building and operating those roads from the first, expressed the belief that eventually the ownership of the railroads of the country would have to be assumed by the government of the republic.