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The Treaty That Should Become a Scrap of Paper.

The World's Work for February comments on the activities of the Italian bureau of information in the United States in circulating literature regarding Italy's part in the war and the part she should play at the peace conference.

"The idea which this publicity material emphasizes is that Italy, when she entered the war in May, 1915, did so on the basis of a distinct bargain with the allied countries, Great Britain, France and Russia, and that it is Italy's intention to insist on the complete fulfillment of this bargain.

"The treaty of London is such a modern document—it was concluded on April 26, 1915—that the circumstances which led up to it are fairly fresh in the public mind. When the European war broke out, Italy had for thirty-two years been the ally of Germany and Austria, the treaty of alliance having been renewed so recently as 1912.

"There is not a line of this treaty that does not suggest the outward, discredited, grab-bag diplomacy that caused this war. There are clauses in it which, if carried out, will inevitably mean another war as soon as the peace conference at Versailles adjourns.

ulation of Dalmatia is 96 per cent. Serbo-Croat and 3 per cent Italian; yet Italy now claims a large area of this province and practically all the coastal Dalmatian islands.

"Probably the most unpleasant part of the present peace negotiations is Italy's widely advertised determination to insist on the literal enforcement of this treaty. Not only that, but there are signs that her representatives will push their claims even farther.

"The situation is particularly embarrassing for France and England, for, under duress and under great necessity, these nations signed the treaty that authorizes many of these deprivations. It is distressing that Italy, or at least the particular coterie that now controls her foreign policy, should refuse to acknowledge that a new world has come into being since May, 1915.

An Authority on the Subtle Sense.

No one, perhaps, had a better opportunity to observe the workings of the German mind than Brand Whitlock, minister of Belgium, who wrangled with it for two and a half years, through daily and hourly difficulties and misunderstandings—through that crafty corruption which he says again and again "was deeper than the atrocities."

"The Germans, he says in his story of Belgium, could not believe that America would go to war. At the very last moment they could not understand in the least why we did. This president's enunciations of principles were to them but idle bombast, as treaties had been merely scraps of paper.

"Your democracy, your idea of liberty, bah!" said a German officer to me one day, and another remarked with more mildness: "It doesn't suit us; we have another way of looking at things."

"Precisely. And that way of looking at things deprived them of that moral discipline, that inner subjective restraint independent of all external sanctions, which deters men from doing certain evil things. That subtle sense which we define and recognize as honor, however imperfectly we may live up to it, seemed to be unknown to them.

Outline of Some Railroad Plans.

Hardly anybody seems to want government ownership of the railroads. Nearly everybody, however, wants a larger and more enlightened control exercised by the government.

Representation on the board of directors, will give the public and labor all the benefits of government ownership and at the same time preserve the benefits of private ownership.

The railroad men themselves have been thinking and working along the same line. Perhaps the best plan yet put forward is that offered by the Association of Railroad Executives, representing 92 per cent of American railroads.

THE FORUM

The Place Where Everyone Has His Say.

FROM MR. GARRICK, Editor of Observer:

Why does God permit war? Because sometimes it is the most effective means to an end. Just the same as when a lying spirit was the agent best adapted to bring King Alcohol to execution.

When man, several thousand years ago, was placed on this earth, he was under contract involving some restrictions and limitations along certain lines, but with freedom unlimited along other lines.

To replenish and subdue this earth became man's first and positive duty. He has in a limited way complied with the first clause of the contract, but very soon he lost sight of the other, and instead of learning how to subdue the earth, he has squandered most of his efforts striving to subdue his brother.

This earth was on the run when the first man was landed on it and it is on the run still, and the speed is enormous. Of course the Great Creator placed a fence around it called the law of gravitation, which keeps it within bounds.

When the war is all over, and the peace conference has finished and gone home, and the league of nations has settled down to work, and Germany has reformed, and the bills and indemnities are all paid, and peace broods over the world like a dove, we suppose congress will still be arguing about how the war ought to have been fought and settled, instead of doing its own work.

No nation is being coerced at the peace conference. All agreements are to be made not by majorities, but by unanimous consent. At the same time any power or minority group of powers that holds out for selfish ends against the generous will of the majority is going to find itself mighty uncomfortable.

New York restaurant proprietors say prohibition will make it necessary to raise the price of food, because all their profit now is made on booze. And seeing that they would raise the price anyhow, that will do just as well as any other reason.

Ensign Jay Gould, arriving home from the war zone, won metropolitan fame by sewing a button on his coat. Glad to know that there's one son of a famous father who has all his buttons.

From the New York World's frenzy over prohibition, one gathers that the World is equally concerned with the right of nations to control their own destiny and the right of individuals to drink beer.

It may be deemed advisable soon to censor all library books from the total viewpoint. It's dreadful to think what will happen to Omar Khayyam and Robert Burns.



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