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SATURDAY - - AUGUST 5, 1919

THE HAGUE FIZZLE.

A dispatch from St. Petersburg yesterday says that "the results of the peace conference have fully come up to the expectations of the government." As a matter of fact, they have fully come up to the expectations of all the rest of the world. In other words, the peace conference has been a side-splitting farce from first to last. The principal object for which the czar invited the powers to come together was disarmament. They have all refused to disarm.

Effort was also directed to the adoption of a plan of arbitration, but even this was only a partial success. The compulsory feature had to be dropped at the start. The convention upon this head, as it reads, amounts to little more than a declaration that arbitration is preferable to war. The acceptance of any of the provisions is purely voluntary on the part of the powers interested.

The conventions exempting private property at sea from seizure, prohibiting the use of bullets that expand or explode in the human body, the throwing of explosives from balloons and the use of asphyxiating projectiles, were not signed by all the powers. The United States signed only the declarations against the use of asphyxiating gases and the throwing of explosives from balloons, and the arbitration clause with reservations; but the final acceptance of these by this country will depend upon the ratification by the senate, as none of the conventions are binding upon any country until ratified by its treaty-making power. The delegates of our own country refused to condemn the dum-dum bullet, and the representatives of Germany, England, Austria, China, Italy, Japan and several minor powers refused to condemn the dropping of explosives from balloons or the use of asphyxiating gases.

The delegates from the United States would not agree to prohibit the use of the dum-dum bullet because they said they were instructed not to assent to anything that would trammel the development of American inventive genius. This is all felderol. There is as much objection to an expanding or explosive bullet as there is to the use of chemicals or balloons for dropping explosives from on high. There is no more barbarism in overcoming the enemy with asphyxiating gases than in overthrowing him with a mangling bullet. There is not much difference between a dangerous missile fired horizontally and one dropped from an airship. The discussions and agreements on these matters have been mere child's play.

In order to save itself from the

charge of complete failure the conference points with pride to the establishment of a permanent board of arbitrators, to which international litigants may submit their controversies. But such submission, as we have pointed out above, is purely voluntary, and the arbitrators are likely to have little work to do. The agreement—if the nations ratify it—confers no additional rights or privileges, for all nations at all times have been at liberty to submit their disputes to arbitration. There is no provision to compel a nation, by force, to accept the verdict of the arbitration board, and if there were the United States senate would never ratify the agreement, as our government could not afford to place itself in an attitude which might bind us to take part in an armed intervention for the purpose of averting a European war.

There have been many exchanges of complimentary remarks between the peace delegates, but little that is definite or final has been acquiesced in, and if war should break out tomorrow between some of the larger powers represented it is doubtful if a single provision in the peace declarations would be lived up to.—Spokesman-Review.

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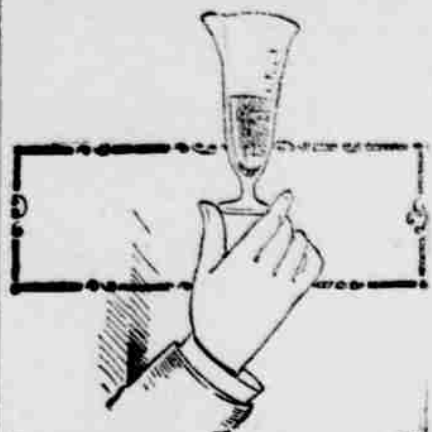
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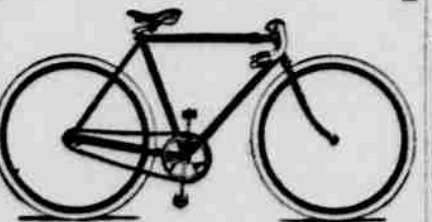
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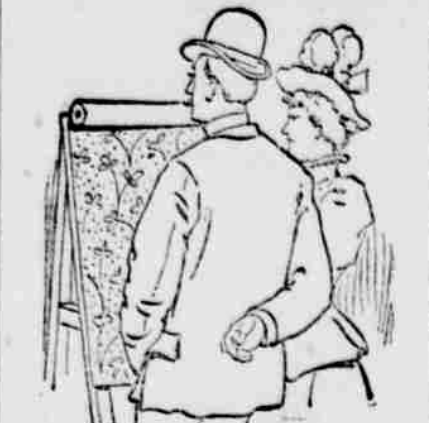
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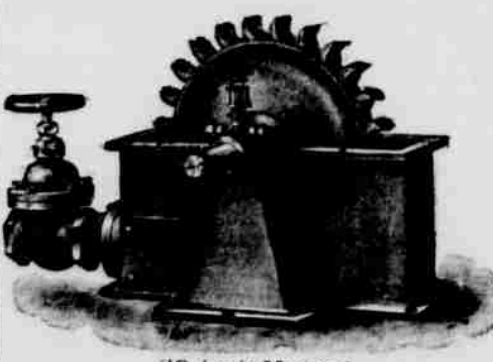
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