

THE PEACE OR WAR OF VERSAILLES?

TILL THE SPURIOUS PEACE of the Versailles Treaty has been cast aside and the human race has joined hands in a peace which is genuine, there can be no rest not only in Europe but throughout the civilized world, according to Rudolph Eucken, one of Germany's most famous savants, whose words before the war wielded much influence far beyond the confines of the University of Jena where he is a professor. This question of repealing the Treaty of Versailles, "which was founded on the falsehood of Germany's sole responsibility for the war," he says, must take precedence of all other questions, and the demand that it be done should be made not only by Germany but by the whole world. In the *Eucken Review*, organ of the Eucken Society, which is published at Jena, this German scholar declares that:

*The
Literary Digest
for
April 28, 1923*

"The so-called Peace of Versailles subjects the German people to unheard-of treatment; has injured and crippled Germany; has, with refined cruelty, deprived her of fertile territories; robbed her of sources indispensable to her existence; has heaped upon her huge burdens, and this for an indefinite time—the intention being, if possible, to reduce her people to serfdom. Hatred and vengeance it was which dictated this deplorable peace.

"But in spite of these fearful losses, the German people has done its best to fulfil the iron conditions; undaunted it took up its peaceful activities in every sphere, and adjusted itself with great skill to the real situation; once more it displayed itself as the nation of thorough workmen; it had every right, a just computation of existing difficulties being made, to anticipate a gradual recovery. But it was just this which the merciless opponents, France especially, desired to prevent. They refused the tortured people the necessary time for recovery; the prodigious imports levied were extorted with the greatest

ruthlessness, the whole standard of living being reduced to the lowest level; for this the decreased and ever decreasing value of money was chiefly responsible, the direct result of the enemy's extortion. . . .

"Now these conditions Germany has done her best to fulfil, recoiling from no sacrifices, but at last these are growing beyond endurance, and the old proverb is verified: *ultra posse nemo obligatur*. And yet any failure in fulfilment, no matter how small, nor how entirely the result of the general distress, is designated by our opponents as 'wilful default.' Finally such a 'wilful default' has become for the French Government a welcome pretext for the greatest possible territorial extension of its power. It has resorted to force, occupied our most productive regions, thrown enormous masses of troops into the defenseless country, where it now exercises unrestricted dominion. By this means the economic and social life of these highly developed regions has been thoroughly disorganized, while our officials and workmen, faithful to their duty, are being handled like criminals, fined and imprisoned, and civil servants of high standard are driven from house and home to search for quarters, no matter how mean, in the towns already overfilled."

Professor Eucken's remarks on Germany's money situation indicate to some French writers a strange lack of information

Of the Treaty itself, an opinion sharply opposite to that of Professor Eucken is expressed by a French publicist of high distinction, Gabriel Hanotaux, of the French Academy, who declares that it "confirms and consolidates the New Europe in its labors and its hopes." Wherever the spirit of the Treaty of Versailles rules, he tells us in the *Paris Figaro*, it is "a spirit of peace, of conciliation and of accommodation, supported by the sound authority of the League of Nations." and he proceeds:



A SPANISH THRUST.

"If one of them does not let go, the Treaty cloth will rip."

— *Campana de Gracia* (Barcelona).

about the causes underlying Germany's dilapidated mark and the flood of paper money with which the country is deluged. They wonder, also, how he can convince himself that the Germans have honestly attempted to meet their Treaty obligations, as he claims they have done.

"To be sure, there are difficulties and conflict a-plenty. The works of man are not perfect; but no Power even if hurt, or believing itself hurt, has recourse to arms. The nations wait for the future to alleviate their ills. Is it not an inspiring spectacle for history to see those ancient countries which have been brought back to life trying to live again; or those new countries which are the offspring of a conception that at first seemed very daring, namely, self-determination?"

Mr. Hanotaux eulogizes "admirable Poland resurrected from the tomb," and Czecho-Slovakia, which has become a "master country" under the guidance of Foreign Minister Benes. He finds that Roumania has taken on a new lease of life, and passing through the rest of Europe, east and southeast to Jugo-Slavia, he sees good promise for the future in Austria, Bulgaria, Hungary, and elsewhere. Italy will stand by France and Belgium, he believes, because she values the justice that was finally dealt to her by the Treaty of Versailles. Even in England he discovers signs of a more sympathetic attitude toward France. President Harding "says nothing, but the American mind is working hard," and that is a good augury, according to Mr. Hanotaux, who adds:

"Yet a little while and the triumph of good sense will make its appearance. Even the buyers of German marks will understand that all they have to do is to look out upon a new horizon; and then the sagacity of France will be praised by those who lately blamed her so violently, her occupation of the Ruhr will be recognized as having saved the world from a frightful catastrophe—the catastrophe Germany wished to see in order that other nations might go down in her collapse. Then the New Europe will be seen fixed and solidified in its labors and in its hopes—this Europe of the Treaty of Versailles."



A GERMAN APPEAL TO THE PROLETARIAT
TO TEAR UP THE VERSAILLES TREATY.

—*Der Wahre Jakob* (Stuttgart).