

Falstaff's Hosts of Anti-League Extremists and That American Tired Feeling

CONGRESS has apparently hoped—leaders of the majority party in the senate have,—to wear the American people out on the League of Nations issue; weary them into quiet submission to letting the Paris peace treaty go by the boards. Propagandists in the lead of that movement, employing the senate floor as their footstool, and their official rank as their authority—a system in comparison with which Germany's propaganda at its cleverest was amateurish,—know the great American weakness.

That we travel by airplanes now to beat the Twentieth Century Limiteds and the high power automobiles; that every new day has its fad; that everything is a "passing show;" that we are too busy getting rich—or warding off starvation—to think for long on any other particular subject; that stick-to-itiveness is a secondary consideration save when solidarity serves a more immediate monetary or partisan purpose; these are all indicative of a people, highly nervous, and subject to a brain-fag—always the first by which the new is tried, and yet the last to cast the old aside.

Last year, to "win the war" was our particular excitement; we were willing to do anything and everything, for the moment—to keep on "winning the war."

The year before it was getting into the war, and how we did it, and why, that was our big talkative point,—and the year before that it was a contest between "he kept us out of war" and "I would have too, only I would have done it in the Rooseveltian instead of the Wilsonian way."

Still back beyond that, the sinking of the Lusitania and the plundering of Belgium kept our spirits up,—but to return to the present, this year broke loose with damnation of the president's "fourteen points," swallowed whole during the previous exciting days; this followed by much raving against the president's trip to Europe, and against a League of Nations, now culminating to defeat the Paris peace treaty, with some particular reference to the Shantung proviso—and a pretense of great love for the "chinks."

We are traveling at a rapid gait in the passing of great massive problems in these latter days—even to including now snap-shot solutions of the "high cost of living."

Scarce a one of us but could have settled all these things long ago—by a mere wave of the hand,—notwithstanding that it taxed the limit of our ingenuities to anticipate the means with which to buy a Victory bond.

We might not have known what we were settling, but sure we would have settled it; "too much time was wasted at the peace conference; there has been too much delay,"—and now though all the other powers have finished the job, the United States senate stands alone in prolongation of the agony, seemingly hoping for the eventual support of that tired American feeling, which too often after a first flush, wants to throw up its hands and grasp for the next straw.

—II—

OH yes! We're great speed-artists; we Americans are. Anything to get everything over with. It is to hard to think—more than once on any one subject. Delay as defensive strategy is typically American. The principle of a thing is not half so important with the most of us, as is having it over with; fundamental principles and funny-bones are dumped into the same category.

Could the Paris conference have said, "let there be a peace treaty with a league of nations in it," and had it said it from the tongues of certain political gentlemen, that settling it, it would have been quite satisfactory to the average American, no difference how brainless the arrangement,—but the senate foreign relations committee is now saying, "let there not be a peace treaty with a league of nations" and, well, you know the number of your acquaintances "who always take their final cue from the last man they talk to."

Such are the type of Americans—the shifty, on one side and then the other, back and forth as the conversation proceeds—upon whom the treaty opponents are now depending for their ultimate backing; hoping to tire them into submission with "watchful waiting."

The psychological appeal is a magnificent one, managing far as possible to keep their opposition daily before the people, utilizing official positions, and from thence the columns of the press; appealing to prejudice, appealing to hate, appealing to tradition, yea, indeed, appealing to falsehood when thought essential to the overthrow of truth.

In time, they figure, they can add to the wearied, enough converts by continuous hammering, and repeated appeals—to make their slaughter of the treaty and the league safe; and thereupon the profiteers upon world preparations for the "next war;" the makers of powders, and guns, and armament, with which to shoot to death your sons," will rise up and call them blessed."

—III—

GET the lay of the land! Is it designed propaganda? Witness the combination of elements being utilized by the "bright" minds be-

hind the opposition; the various ordinarily opposing forces that the selfish interests—that thrive upon wars,—have managed to enlist in their cause, appealing from the angles of each, so as to appeal to the weak spots in all sorts of people.

First they have the pro-German, anxious that the teeth be removed from the German treaty, yoked side by side with that great American ox, who would have Germany completely wiped off the map, and who damns the treaty because it hasn't teeth enough.

Bear in mind that the German treaty and the League of Nations covenant are one and the same document, the latter being fundamentally the enforcing power behind the former—an agreement of the powers to see that not only this treaty is enforced, but to see to it by a system of peaceful

cooperation that there shall never be another war, or the necessity of another treaty to settle it.

Add then to the pro-German and his extreme antithesis, the extreme nationalists who want an "isolated America," and the extreme anti-nationalists who are willing to see America as a state obliterated; the militarists who clamor for the rule of force, and the anti-militarists who clamor for complete disarmament; communists who want full equality of recompense and monopolists who want the grossest inequality of income; legalists who are sticklers for order and nice technicalities and bolshevists who crave disorder and no law; the wrong-headed who are always "agin" everything and the soft-headed who are for anything that is novel—denouncing this because it isn't novel enough; Hearst and the New Republic, the Liberator and Thompson's Chicago Republican,

the Nation, Col. George Harvey, Marse Henry Watterson, Hi. Johnson, Bill Borah, Boise Penrose, Lodge from Beantown, Phil. Knox and Fill Your Pockets, Jim Reed and Jim Crow.

Opposing social elements have many times made common cause. King and people have joined hands against the nobility; the nobility and people have united against the king; democrats and monarchists have presented a solid front opposed to clericals and anarchists—but never before have so many heterogeneous and conflicting forces bundled themselves together; a veritable Falstaff's army on Shrewsbury Plain, "cankers of a calm world and a long peace," this time, however, exemplifying an unruly world cankerously mad, the bewildered agents of a greedy King Mammon who declines to be satisfied with the

fruits of a "last war" and wants to begin preparations at once for the "next."

—IV—

WEDGED in between these extremes—over and against this motley company,—is the great mass of American people; the people whose boys did the fighting in the war just closed—and whose boys' boys will do the fighting in the "next war," if there ever is one.

These and the people who are otherwise concerned in peace, disciples of humanity, and devotees of the popular welfare; people with ideals founded on reason, and sentiments the outgrowth of Christian enlightenment; even a lot of people of business acumen, who can see greater profit for the masses in peace than in war, and even for industry such as does not thrive directly upon war's alarms; people who have the moral and intellectual stamina to place principle above fads, honest design above selfish interests and partisan prejudice; who can think, and reason, and will, and not tire—such are the legions that Falstaff and his army are maneuvering to cut in two.

True, these legions too are made up of diverse elements, for in the very nature of things, no popular cause can ever have a purely homogeneous following, but however diverse they may be in matters of religious or political creed, in the larger purposes of life, they are a unit. They are fighting to one purpose, not to a dozen or more opposite purposes.

They look to the League of Nations, the attendant force behind the German treaty, as the structure out of which will grow the consummation of that for which their sons and brothers on the battlefields, fought and died.

Lincoln in his second inaugural, expressed the inspiration:

"Let us strive on to finish the work we are in ****; to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and lasting peace among ourselves and with all nations."

They are not to be dissuaded or obstructed; not to be cut off or apart. They know, as the invisible force behind the league opposition knows, that the failure of the Paris treaty—which must stand or fall with the league in it—means the Balkanization of the world.

—V—

IT would mean that at least—and it might mean more. It might mean, and there are grave dangers of it, the bolsheviking of the world. Hats off to Lenin and Trotzky if the Paris peace fails of American adoption. It will be because America went to sleep at the switch; too tired, too lazy, too indolent, too self-centered—to take a warning and ACT upon it.

There has been warning enough. All of Europe has been warning us. The warning sizzles within our own gates. We ceased to be a "government by the people" just that much the other day, and gave way to sovietism, when congress repealed the daylight saving law over the president's veto, in response to the demands of "organized" agriculturists.

That means government by organizations of business; government by representatives of crafts, arts and industries, instead of the unorganized masses.

Another specimen is the demand of the railroad brotherhoods—not of the members as American citizens but of the organization—for government ownership and a tripartite management of the railroads.

If the invisible hand of Falstaff, the war profiteer, representing the interests that thrive upon war and the preparations for it, can because of their money, propaganda-spreading power, and control of legislation, crush the America will and falsify her ideals, as the defeat of the Paris treaty and League covenant would—it makes of it an open field, and the man or organization that enters for control through the open gate, is not half the "thief and robber" as he who sneaks in through a mere hog-hole in the rear fence.

Russia today shivers in fear that America will ratify the League. It means lost hope for the bolshevists; lost hope of an alliance with Germany, and a number of other powers, perhaps Japan, and certain of the Balkans—in a contest for a new balance of power hopeful of ruling the world.

Where would our "splendid isolation" be then—with the bolshevists in our midst taking new hope, encouraged by the prospective ascendancy of the Russian god-mother?

Fifty thousand letters; letters of men, women and children who believe in peace, in America maintaining her leadership in the affairs of the world, and who prefer democracy—the rule of the people,—over bolshevism—the rule of the crafts,—should emerge from this city on the very morrow, insisting that our United States senator, representative of Indiana, stop monkeying with the buzz-saw; that they transfer their allegiance from Falstaff's scissors to the people whom they are at least presumed to serve.

Think not for a moment that they are not hearing from Germany's emissaries here; the secret agents of bolshevism—and the partisanized dupes of the war profiteers! Are you too tired, too internally lazy, to express to them your wish?

If you are don't whine if some time a day of reckoning comes; if America "splendidly isolated," finds herself of necessity a militarist nation, dangerously exposed from without, while bolshevism, ally of the threatening invader, sizzles within.

With only three or four exceptions, even League opponents in the senate no longer dare to oppose the League principle but fight it now on excuses—pointing out nice technicalities; always the scare-crow displayed by nice lawyers, judicial vampires, and political idiots.



THIS cartoon was calculated to be illustrative of the accompanying editorial; of Falstaff and his motley army intent upon cutting the people off in their quest of a lasting peace. However, John Barleycorn appears to have joined forces with Falstaff and his anti-League allies—after all a rather natural sequence,—and taking possession of the cartoonist effected a rather poor execution of the idea.

Yes, a "rather natural sequence;" John Barleycorn never was any great lover of government anyhow—of government or regulation in any form,—and the League of Nations covenant has a proviso in it that might be construed as protective of "dry" nations against trade boycotts from "wet" nations in retaliation of the former's refusal to import the latter's "wet" goods.

And mysterious are his ways; just "a spirit of evil" that lurks always just around the corner—particularly in South Bend,—entering whomsoever he may, to upset the equilibrium of things—dulling the mind, corrupting the morals, damning the soul, blasting the career, polluting humanity with vice, insanity; imbecility and crime; well, it is just this sort of thing—the experience of wives, of mothers, of children, of employers, of civilized society—and of the victims themselves,—that has put America on the "dry" map.

"Bob" Burdette used to get drunk as a fool and then go out delivering temperance lectures. He said he took John Barleycorn along as a "horrible example"—to illustrate his lecture,—and that is quite the sort of illustration here presented, incident to the accompanying comment.

We cannot say which of his local rendezvous he emanated from; whether from the "bull pen" at the city hall, or some one or more of the administration protected bawdy-houses, blind-tigers, or gambling-hells, but behold his work; perhaps more illustrative of the world league opposition than had our own thought been portrayed instead.

It introduces a new ally to the Falstaff hosts that we had let slip.