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CONTENTS.

EDITORIAL:

Superstition	865
Unreasonable Expectations	865
International Responsibility	865
Popular Government and War	866
Unwise to Pay Blackmail	866
Restricting Food Exportation	866
Interrupting Good Work	867
A Measure of War Madness	867
Circumstances Alter Cases	868
The Case of Captain Rust	868
Jury Trials for Employers	868
Something New in Taxation	869
Congressional Duty and the Deficit	869
"Rational Tax Reform" in Oregon	869
Tax Restriction and Prohibition	870
Woman Voters and Progressive Policies	870
Thoughts for Labor Day—Robert S. Doubleday	870

EDITORIAL CORRESPONDENCE:

Maine Politics—R. Lee Bussabarger	871
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INCIDENTAL SUGGESTIONS:

Slavery in the Philippines—Erving Winslow	872
Indiana's Needs—Dave S. Dunlop	872

NEWS NARRATIVE:

The European War	874
Pope Benedict XV	875
Mexico and the United States	876
The Panama Treaty	876
Congressional News	876
Part of Navigation Laws Suspended	877
Progressive Nominations	877
Wisconsin Reactionaries Win	878
Commission on Industrial Relations	878
The Labor War	879
News Notes	880
Press Opinions	880

RELATED THINGS:

The Red Prayer	881
Annals of Our Village—Charles F. Shandrew	881
Cases Instead of Causes—Bolton Hall	882
The Cost of War—Harry Kemp	883

BOOKS:

Germany's Preparedness	883
Books Received	884

EDITORIAL

Superstition.

To the heathen of Senegambia; prosperity, security and general welfare depend upon a grotesquely fashioned idol; to the Christian of Europe these things depend upon huge standing armies and navies. Which will be the first to see the light?

S. C.



Unreasonable Expectations.

Why expect the Kaiser, who upheld military brutality at Zabern, to condemn similar brutality at Louvain? Why expect the Czar, who approved of Red Sunday and the Kishneff massacre to disapprove of Cossack criminality in East Prussia? When all the armies are through with killing foreigners they will doubtless be prepared, whenever called upon, to deal the same way with their countrymen, who are now cheering, applauding or excusing them. They will deal with them even as they dealt at Dublin a few weeks ago, on the gun running occasion, or as they dealt in 1910 with the strikers at Berlin and suffrage demonstrationists throughout Prussia. Why should one look for squeamishness in soldiers in dealing with vanquished foreigners, when these same soldiers have not hesitated to fire on their own countrymen?

S. D.



International Responsibility.

This is a good time for persons who hold that the solidarity of the human race is a myth, to gather some new data on the subject. Scarcely had the first ultimatum issued, or the first gun been fired, when our financial affairs were in a fever of excitement. And when, by the aid of the Government, confidence had been restored, it was only to see another trans-Atlantic influence at work. Prices began to advance, and revenue to fall off. Nor will the return of peace in Europe relieve us of the burden of this war. Many people will be impoverished, numerous industries will be destroyed, many of the best men will be killed; and

those remaining will have to bear the burden of the war tax. Consequently they will be poorer customers, and we shall lose some of the advantages we formerly had in trade. The same will be true of the South American trade diverted from European countries to the United States. Anything so obtained, over what should come to us economically, will be an injury to those countries, and will be reflected again in the curtailment of the demand of European customers for American goods.



One nation may advance temporarily at the expense of another, one industry may be promoted at the expense of another; but every positive and lasting gain will be made with, not at the expense of, other nations and industries. The same social law that governs individuals governs groups of individuals. And just as the individual serves himself best when he helps his fellow most, so the nation that does most for others will do most to enrich itself. The expense of guiding, aiding and counseling Mexico during her recent troubles amounts to many million dollars. Is there any one so blind as not to see that our moral, spiritual and economic growth in consequence are worth many fold what they have cost? When statesmen see this, and when an enlightened public opinion holds them to the mark, nations will have done with protective tariffs and standing armies, and will undertake to do as friends what they have heretofore tried to do as enemies.

S. C.



Popular Government and War.

Because France is a republic and Great Britain a monarchy in name only, a correspondent figures that the war must have had the approval of the people. It should not be necessary to remind a resident of the United States that republics can go to war without popular consent. Within the past few months the question of war or peace with Mexico lay with the President alone. Fortunately he happened to be a peace advocate. A militarist President would have decided differently. Perhaps the European people did favor war, but it is certain that they were not consulted. Another correspondent refers to England's volunteer army to show that the burdens of war have been voluntarily assumed. But soldiers do not bear the entire burden. Wives, mothers and children are not usually asked to consent. In Canada the consent of the wife is required and has prevented many enlistments, but Canada is exceptional. Owners of commandeered property do not voluntarily surrender it, nor is there any volunteering in the matter of taxation. Still another correspondent

claims that England's guarantee of Belgian neutrality morally obligated it to commit the immoral act of waging war. That brings up the question concerning what a government may rightfully do and what it may not do. The things which no government may rightfully do are those which constitute violations of individual rights which it was organized to protect. Such an infringement is a treaty binding it, under certain circumstances, to force citizens, regardless of their wishes, to risk their lives and surrender their property as is done in warfare. For this reason no existing treaty offers a valid excuse for any of the belligerents. Treaties should be sacredly kept when they contain no pledge to do wrong. It is different with a pledge to commit murder or help in its commission.



It has furthermore been said that to deny a government's right to coerce soldiers and commandeer property will render it defenseless. Those who urge this reasoning forget that widespread indifference on the part of citizens as to what becomes of the government, indicates that it is not worth the sacrifices necessary for defense, or at least that the citizens do not hold it to be so. A government justly entitled to defense need not hesitate to leave its citizens free in the matter of military service.

S. D.



Unwise to Pay Blackmail.

It is regrettable, if true, that four rich citizens of Brussels have agreed to pay the forty million dollars war tax levied on that city by the invaders. It would have been better to refuse to pay, and to defy the predatory commander of the conquering army to show the world just how much, or how little, civilization he has within him.

S. D.



Restricting Food Exportations.

A petition to President Wilson is in circulation in certain parts of the country calling upon him to ask Congress for an embargo on food exports. A condescending concession is made by these petitioners that the President, in trying to establish a merchant marine, is acting according to his light; but the demand is made that he give over trying to find means to export our "bumper crop," and instead, stop such exportation. The argument runs to the effect that the war in Europe is not of our making, that if the people there run short of food it is nothing to us, and that therefore we should