

# AFFAIRS OF THE WORLD

BY WILLIS FLETCHER JOHNSON

IRELAND has once more taken the centre of the tragic stage. Scarcely had justice been executed upon the murderers of Field Marshal Wilson when the same abhorrent passion manifested itself again in the even more cowardly assassination of Michael Collins. He was the one man whom the country could least afford to lose, and his death, following hard upon that of his colleague Arthur Griffith,—no less a martyr to duty, though in a different fashion,—leaves Ireland bereft indeed. Never before in our time, not in the days of Phoenix Park and Kilmainham, nor in those of the Easter Rebellion, has the situation been more deplorable and ominous. At the very time when the renascent nation most needs the best possible leadership, it is deprived of the two men who above all others possessed and merited the confidence of the people and had shown themselves competent for the task before them. At the very time when union and harmony are supremely essential, the land is faction-rent as never before. The most ominous feature of the case is, obviously, the danger that chaos and anarchy may presently make it necessary for the sake of humanity that England shall intervene and reëstablish British rule—which would have to be done at the point of the bayonet. Such a necessity, and such a fulfilment of it would, I need scarcely add, be one of the most regrettable things that could possibly happen, from either the Irish or the British point of view. It would be nothing less than a calamity for both nations.

The coal strike, which at one time threatened the greater part of the United States with a winter more dark and cold than that which we suffered during the World War, has been marked with bitter irony. Never before was the machinery of Federal legislation and administration so elaborately and benevolently or-

ganized for the just avoidance of such troubles. And yet, as if defiantly to flout such safeguards and agencies, the very greatest of all such troubles was wantonly and contumaciously brought upon us. The operators proposed that the men should return to work at the same wages which they received in March last, and should continue at work on those terms until the first of April next, meanwhile leaving all other issues to governmental arbitration. But the strikers, or their leaders, peremptorily rejected the offer; not because the wages offered were insufficient nor because any other conditions of labor were unsatisfactory, but solely because they were unwilling to submit to arbitration—albeit the operators had not insisted that acceptance of arbitral awards should be compulsory, but had conceded that the men should be free to reject any award that did not please them. “We will never consent to arbitration, or to any phase of arbitration,” was the declaration attributed to Mr. John L. Lewis, the president of the United Mine Workers; practically reëchoing the intolerably intolerant dictum of George F. Baer, spokesman of the operators, in the strike of twenty years ago. Strange words for the third decade of the twentieth century of the Christian Era! I have keen recollection of more than one case in which labor unions demanded arbitration, and scathingly denounced the employers for their unwillingness to accept it. More than that, ever since the United States and the United Kingdom set the great example of fifty years ago, men and women throughout the world—statesmen and soldiers, scholars and philanthropists, capitalists and industrialists, churches and labor unions—have been earnestly urging the universal substitution of arbitration for war. Yet here was organized labor, which had been conspicuously vociferous for international arbitration instead of war, stubbornly insisting in industrial affairs upon war rather than arbitration. It was a disheartening spectacle.

Not the least interesting and important part of the President's address to Congress on the labor troubles was his reference to the Massacre of Herrin—which he fittingly condemned in the strongest terms at his command—coupled with a renewal of the old,

old plea for Federal authority to fulfil our treaty obligations. Among the victims at Herrin, it seems, were some aliens, whose Government may call ours to task for the tragedy and may demand redress; in which case our Government will be put in the humiliating and scandalous plight of having to confess that the murderers have not been punished and that it has no power to punish or to compel the punishment of them. Just such things have happened before. Seventy years ago a New Orleans mob wrecked the Spanish consulate, looted the shops and homes of Spaniards, and defiled the Spanish flag and the portrait of the Spanish Queen. It went quite unpunished, and our Government—Daniel Webster was Secretary of State at the time—had to plead the baby act of inability to do anything about it; save to pay a round indemnity from the public funds. Later, in our own time, we were put in the same plight by a massacre of Chinamen at Rock Springs, and by various murders of Italians in New Orleans. For seventy years Presidents have been pleading with Congress, for the sake of justice and national honor, to prevent any more such humiliation by investing the Federal courts with jurisdiction over all offenses against treaty obligations. Nothing could be more logical than that, because treaties are exclusively the business of the Federal Government and all cases arising under them therefore properly pertain to the Federal courts. Of course, unnaturalized aliens are under the protection of treaties made by us with the lands from which they came, and wrongs done to them are therefore wrongs against those treaties. The last time before the present that such an appeal for Federal jurisdiction was made, the granting of it was objected to and was, I believe, defeated in Congress on the ground that to give aliens special protection would be to violate the Fourteenth Amendment of the Constitution which, it was said, guarantees to all persons the equal protection of the laws. But that Amendment contains no such guarantee. It merely forbids any State to deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws; a quite different thing. Since the section in question refers explicitly to persons who are citizens of the United States by birth or naturalization, it is not clear that it applies at all to aliens who are not citizens. Moreover, to forbid a State to dis-

criminate among those under its jurisdiction is certainly not to deny the right and power of the Federal Government to give special protection to those who stand apart in a special class and for whose welfare it is specially responsible. Note that the Constitution does extend the judicial power of the Federal Government "to all cases, in law and equity, arising under Treaties." If the murdering of a man whom a treaty obligates the Government to protect does not present a case arising under a treaty, it would be interesting to know why.

One of the most eloquent tributes paid to Samuel F. B. Morse and his invention of the telegraph was that he had done more than any other man to bring the people of the world together, in intimate communication. That was quite just and true; at that time. But at least equal if not greater credit to the same effect must be given to the late Alexander Graham Bell. The telephone is fully the peer of the telegraph in utility, while it far excels it in familiar and multitudinous use, as of course it also does in ingenuity and the elements of the wonderful. If by popular preference, or on strictly scientific grounds of value, utility and necessity, only one of them were to be retained and the other were to be eliminated from the arts of civilization, there can be no question as to what the choice would be. The name of Bell must ever have a secure place among those of the greatest inventive benefactors of the race.

The famous *Rake's Progress* is eclipsed by the progress of the German mark; in both extent and profligacy. In January, 1914, there were 2,407,000,000 paper marks in circulation, and gold was at par. In July, 1919, the paper circulation was 29,269,000,000, and gold was at 3.81 premium. In July, 1920, the paper circulation was nearly 55,000,000,000, and gold stood at 9.72. In July, 1921, paper marks totalled 78,000,000,000, and gold stood at 18.77. In July, 1922, the paper marks had risen to 173,000,000,000, and gold stood at 113.63. Now, every international financier knows that this has been unnecessary and wanton inflation. France, suffering far greater financial burdens than Germany and taxed several times more heavily, has limited

her paper currency and is now steadily reducing its volume and returning to a parity between it and gold. Germany, like a wanton, chooses "the easiest way"; and not only the easiest, but what she thinks the surest way to defraud her lawful creditors. Also, when the date for paying an instalment on her debts draws near, she transfers her millions from banks where her creditors might levy upon them and puts them where she thinks them safe, and then pleads poverty and inability to pay. Yet there are those who wonder at her chief creditor's increasing inclination to exert lawful pressure upon the international welsher.

Senhor Pedro Carolino, if happily he is still in the flesh, might write a sequel to the little book which made him famous, to be entitled *The Tariff as She Is Made*. We are told that the pending bill, on being sent by the House to a conference committee, for a third drafting, comprised no fewer than 2,436 changes from the first draft. These were all to be passed upon, confirmed, rejected or what not, by a committee of six, sitting in secret; with the intention that the result should then be swallowed, hook, bob and sinker, by both Houses, and become the law of the land. That would be a most gorgeous and resplendent example of that "conference committee legislation" which Professor Lindsay Rogers acutely analyzed and condemned in an article in *THE NORTH AMERICAN REVIEW* of last March. And the unique glory of the thing is that nobody seems to be altogether pleased with the bill in either its first or second or yet its prospective third estate; unless indeed it be Representative Fordney and Senator McCumber, its sponsors; neither of whom is to be reelected to the next Congress! Not the least significant feature of the case is the increasing inclination of those in control to withhold final action on the bill until after the November election; upon which comment would be superfluous.

The death of Lord Northcliffe closes a career at once romantic and pragmatic almost beyond imagination, and removes one of the great, outstanding figures which the world could least well afford to lose. One of the most impressive tributes to him is implied in the simple fact that the ownership and direction of

*The London Times* formed only a minor part of his multifarious labors. His connection with that paper was one of his last engagements, but is the one for which he will be most remembered; in the illustrious roll which includes the names of the Walters, who hesitated not to criticize the immoralities of the Prince of Wales and of Royal Dukes; of Barnes and Sterling, who won the name of "Thunderer"; and of Delane who, in a service of unrivalled duration, caused *The Times* to be known as "the leading journal of the world." Easily *primus inter pares* in the newspaper world, he more than any other man of his generation incarnated the veritable Genius of the Press. By his labors and achievements in the World War he made civilization and humanity his everlasting debtors.

We may not revere the American Academy of Arts and Letters as our Gallic cousins do their Immortal Forty. It is young yet, founded only in 1904. Yet a glance at the exquisite little *Book of Record* which it has just issued *in memoriam* affords grateful reminder that this country can boast a company of men and women "of light and leading" not unworthy to be compared with those of any other land. Of the fifty-one former members, now deceased, here enrolled, there is not one who did not add distinction to the art and letters, not only of America but of the world. It is with pardonable pride that among them we may observe two former editors of THE NORTH AMERICAN REVIEW, while probably a majority of them were contributors to the pages of this magazine.

## NEW BOOKS REVIEWED

THE JEWS. By Hilaire Belloc. New York: Houghton Mifflin Company.

It is the frankness of Hilaire Belloc's discussion of the Jewish problem—a frankness as interesting as it is devoid of indelicacy—that gives the principal value to his book. This value is limited, on the other hand, by the fact that the problems, being one of social attitudes rather than tangible political or economic factors, is not subject to regulation in the ordinary sense. There is no public programme to be advocated; the book will do good just so far as it influences the attitudes of individuals.

The Jewish problem, declares the author, exists and cannot be successfully ignored. The method of nineteenth century Liberalism—that of regarding the Jew as a citizen of the country in which he happened to reside, indistinguishable from other citizens except in the peculiarity of his religion and social customs—cannot be maintained, because it contradicts the facts. It is of no use to pretend that the Jew is a member of the French or English nation when all the time he is really a member of the Jewish nation. This method of ignoring the truth has proved feasible for so long as it has done so, only because of specially favorable conditions, and there is no reason for regarding it as a permanent solution. It has worked no longer than have other solutions. Invariably, in the past, the Jewish problem has passed through a certain cycle. First there have been tolerance and even welcome; then, as the Jews became more numerous and more powerful, there have been unrest and dissatisfaction; and finally there have been intolerance and persecution. In England, and perhaps in the United States, the second stage has been reached, and the third stage may not be far off.

Mr. Belloc does not define very concretely what he means by Jewish nationality; one would judge from his discussions that it has no important political aspect, and so the nationality or racial solidarity of the Jews (for these two expressions seem to mean the same thing) seems to be just a factor in what is essentially a social question—a problem of living together.

The ultimate cause of dissension would seem to be a kind of instinctive intolerance between two groups persistently differing in certain more or less indefinable ways as to culture and ideals. The Jew has moral courage, for example, and so, we think, have we. But manifestations of this virtue on the part of the Jew are apt to appear to us in the light of arrogance or obtuseness. Our courage, on the other hand, may appear to the Jew in a no more favorable light. It may seem to him, perhaps, to be mere weakness or folly. The differences are endless and yet so complex and variable that they can scarcely be stated in terms sufficiently exact to avoid unjust implications.