

REVIEW

Pen and Mouth Disease. There has lately been a revival in the campaign against the current misuse of the English tongue. We have been honoured in Charlotte-town by a visit from Miss Archibald in the interests of better English. These defects are in every ear and before every eye, and a detailed list of them, though ever so long, would in all probability be incomplete. Together they convert a language of delicate inflections and modulations into a cocophony of "Sweet bells jangled," and destroy what should be an innate grace of our life.

This is not wholly occasioned by any lack of education. It permeates the cultured, as well as the illiterate classes of society. We have no one able to sustain discourse with delicacy and pain, nor no one seemingly able to coin a happy and enduring phrase. What Southey called the "Arts Babblative and Scriblative," apparently reigns supreme. I came across a very good and suitable epigram the other day, which seems to sum the matter up rather well: "To have nothing to say, and insist in saying it with a flourish is the besetting snobbery of the age."

It is very commendable to take the field against jargon and stridency. The best weapon we can use, to my mind, is example. Let us make our young people familiar with the classics. Of course, changes are bound to come; words will take on new meanings, and new compounds will, in time, acquire legitimacy. Nevertheless, such changes should be carefully considered and sanctioned by proper authorities, before becoming embodied in the language.

Lenin, Russia's Man of Destiny. Lenin, we must admit, was one of the giants of the age, for he combined in one person those rare qualities of conviction, courage, energy, and tenacity.

In appearance and manner, he was quite ordinary and unnoticeable. His father had risen from the rank of peasant to that of civil servant, and had thus acquired a status of one of the lesser nobility; yet Lenin remained a peasant in his ways of thinking.

Lenin, was the avowed leader of the urban proletariat. He was fundamentally and truly national. His vitality and determination were his real forte. For nearly thirty

years, he gave himself wholly to the revolutionary cause. He became the idol of the workers and later, of large sections of the nation. Even the enemies of Bolshevism made an exception in his favour. He was widely known as Ilyith, a shortening of his Russian name of Vladimir Ilyith, and sometimes as Lysy, (the bald).

A fierce realist, and a skillful politician who made, at times, the most glaring mistakes, and obviously an opportunist, he became in spite of this an almost legendary figure. The question was asked in many lands, even in India and America, "Who is Lenin?," reminding one of Father Benson's character, "Felsenburgh" in "Lord of the World."

Lenin's victory in Russia was astonishing, yet it may be explained in three words—program, purpose, and perseverance. The little band of Bolsheviks went to work with a tenacity and seriousness, never before dreamed of in Muscovy, they, unlike the Moderates, were not afraid to assume the reins of power, and they were, indeed, the first party to govern the country.

To a great extent, Lenin's weakness was his strength. He had an extremely narrow outlook on life, religion and philosophy, and even the beautiful in any form had no appeal for him. He was dominated by one preconceived idea, that of evolution and class war. This concentration of will gave him the thrust required to carry out his programme, and it gave him a driving power that made him an effective platform speaker.

Lenin was thoroughly imbued with Marxian doctrines, and though truculently orthodox, he consistently and instinctively opposed Marxian principles. He borrowed, from Marx only, the analytical method. Yes, mentally he was the disciple of Marx, but in temper, that of Bakunin. He was an opportunist of genius, almost rivalling Mr. Lloyd George in the anticipation of the tactics of his opponents. Yet, retreating or advancing, he was ever firm. He was never afraid, and his motto was ever that of Danton, "L'audace, l'audace, toujours l'audace."

The Fall of the Franc. Policicians, as well as economists, have been busy during the last two months trying to find an explanation for the fall of the franc. Some, in France, spoke of a combined international attack on French currency and railed against the wickedness of heartless specu-

lators, who were able apparently to force the "Valuta" to answer their beck and call.

One of the causes of the slump may be traced, I think, to the additional inflation of 1,200,000,000 francs, to which the currency was subjected in December. This, together with an unnecessary, continued national expenditure and inadequate taxation has seriously aggravated the situation. The elections in the offing have, in a great measure, damped the courage of those who might be able to make sincere and definite proposals. The statesman who takes the matter in hand will have these three things to overcome:

- (1) Bad national finance, (France has borrowed from her people instead of taxing them.)
- (2) World-wide speculation.
- (3) Currency inflation.

The temporary measure of relief given by the Pierpont Morgan loan, is only a palliative, and at that, one of the worst kind, a short term loan. This also marks the abandonment by the French government of their announced policy: not to resort to borrowing. Is history repeating itself? One is rather inclined to say yes, when one reads of what the papers say of the crisis and its remedies. One may find the whole argument in the files of the Paris journals of over one hundred years ago, when Louis XVI had been executed and the then government was unwisely printing too many assignats.

There have not been wanting men to point this out. The danger is, that optimists who are blind may be encouraged by remembering that the assignats did not sink France after all.

Oxford and Politics. The Oxford Union Society celebrated its centenary the other day by a banquet and debate. Professor Gilbert-Murray supported by Mr. Philip Guidalla moved "That civilization has advanced since this society first met." Mr. John Buchan, the novelist, and Father Ronald A. Knox opposed.

Among the distinguished ex-Presidents who spoke, must be included the Archbishop of York, Lord Curzon, Lord Birkenhead, Mr. Asquith, Sir John Simon, Mr. Hillaire Belloc and Sir Anthony Hope-Hawkins.

On the occasion of the Jubilee celebration of 1873, Cardinal Manning, Archbishop Tait, Lord Salisbury, all ex-Presidents were the principal figures in a remarkable

assembly of about four hundred, whose signatures constitute a select list of contemporary autographs, and who account for a large part of the affairs of Victoria's reign.

Oxford through the Union, has contributed much to politics in the past and present, and here, I may be permitted to quote the British Press: "If the services of Oxford and the Union to the 19th century were withdrawn, a very large part of history would disappear." The claims can confidently be made that their services to the present century are no less. Nor to-day are the older parties in the state alone indebted to the University and the Society. The newer force in politics owes something and will owe more. The history of the Union is a guarantee for this. It has enabled Oxford to exercise itself in the highest of practical studies, and to maintain itself in fruitful contact with the problems of citizenship in which it borders. In other universities, such societies render a similar service. But the Oxford Union, though not the oldest, must be acknowledged the doyen of them all.

Woodrow Wilson: A Tragedy. There is no one, we think, but must be touched by the sense of tragic conclusion in the passing of Mr. Wilson. Whether enemy or friend, we must attend with human sympathy. A career, broken and maimed by physical catastrophe, an endeavour to reach the highest pinnacle of world's statesmanship with a corresponding failure—an overthrow, due as much to his own defects as to the machinations of his enemies are the last act of this grim drama.

Neither the encomiums of his friends nor the diatribes of his enemies, is one to gain a true impression of Mr. Wilson. He was an idealist, yet shrewd and well-schooled in politics before 1914; and if we understand his failure, we will realize that it was not because his ideals were too lofty, nor because he was a dreamer on the field of action, but because he compromised his ideals.

Mr. Wilson soon found himself isolated at Versailles. Clemenceau had one idea before his mind, and that was "Delenda est Germania." Mr. Lloyd George had distractions and pet schemes; then there was the unfortunate quarrel with the Italians, which practically resulted in their exclusion from the council chamber. "This" says Orlando, "was the most critical moment of the great historical tragedy of the Peace Conference." Stronger

men than Wilson would have yielded in his position; and so, the "Fourteen Points" were sacrificed. Defeated at the council table, Mr. Wilson held on to the League. He sanctioned a bad treaty, rather than sacrifice the League, and he relied on this League to correct the errors of the Peace Treaty.

The President went back to the United States to fall from high position, broken in health and strength, and misunderstood by the bulk of his fellow-countrymen. He made mistakes—some indeed as grave as any committed by statesmen, but his ideals remained with the stars. History will honour him as a man who has given mankind a new concept and conscience in world affairs.

