

Review.

There is tension between England and France over the Polish occupation of Upper Silesia. The facts in question are subject of some contradiction. The disposition of Silesia, German territory before the war, was left to plebiscite by the Treaty of Versailles, Polish representatives acquiescing though rather under duress. The plebiscite showed one part of the territory favorable to the Polish connection, the remainder, or Upper Silesia, favorable to the Germans. The population is predominately Polish but the Germanic occupation is almost as old as the English occupation of Ireland. Recently, Polish irregulars, apparently without government authorization, and thereafter, regular troops in conjunction with insurgents at various points of disputed territory seized upon certain positions and began "occupation" of the country. The Allied troops, some 10,000 French and 4,000 Italians, remaining there since the plebiscite, after some minor clashes with the invaders, finding themselves too few to cope with the situation fell back upon their own protecting centres, to await the result of exchanges between the council of the League of Nations and the Polish Government. It was while matters were moving rapidly as above that Germany accepted the British and French ultimatum of May 12th., in accord with which they were, among other things to reduce forthwith their military strength to police proportions only. The degree of unanimity with which the German National Council accepted the terms at the last moment was a matter of some wonderment. This was the state of affairs May 12. Since then it has become evident that the Polish National sentiment is solidly behind the occupation operations, that in fact these operations were a kind of Jameson raid intended to present a "fait accompli." Roughly this is how the matter appeared, viewed from this side.

From the Polish point of view things appear somewhat differently. First of all, the Treaty of Versailles has not been ratified by all

the contracting nations, nor has it been regarded as sacrosanct by those that have ratified it. Then again, the doctrine of self-determination in virtue of which plebiscites were called in certain areas has been repudiated by the powers engineering the League, notably by Great Britain in respect of Ireland. Further, the Poles aver that Lloyd George has been all along particularly antagonistic to their claims ; that it was through his opposition that Dantzic, the outlet on the Baltic, was denied them ; that it was through his insistence the Council of the League endeavored to inhibit them from pursuing the retreating Soviet army across the old Russo-Polish frontier. They remembered too, that when the tide turned against them and the Russian armies were under the walls of Warsaw, it was French troops and generals, not British that aided in averting disaster, although the British were guarantors to them of security in possession of the territory which the League had delimited as Polish. To such extent have they felt the hostility of Lloyd George that they had been driven to seek an explanation of it in the British fear of Polish competition in textiles in the markets of the world ; and they are pretty well persuaded that there is truth in the claim of the French Press that Lloyd George overcame Germany's resistance to the terms of the ultimatum, by some secret understanding with the latter regarding the retention of arms and the right to use them to maintain their claims in Upper Silesia. The League Council looked to them to take the pressure of Soviet Russia off Western Europe, but Lloyd George has managed to humbug the French to the weakening of their frontier and the division of the old Polish stock ; and they want to know by what right he who grabbed up all the open lands of the world will apply to them a doctrine which he is not willing to apply to England. The situation is of the gravest ; France is determined that Germany shall disarm forthwith and Lloyd George has intimated in the British House that if France applies force in that direction, the guns of the navy will be turned upon her coastal towns. There have already been clashes between German and Polish regulars in the disputed territory ; if the Poles prevail they will occupy the territory in defiance of the League ; if the Germans pre-

vail it seems certain that France will move. By some means, which I cannot see now, I trust the situation will be patched up for the present ; but the Entente is a thing of the past. Has France won such a position in Europe through the war that it will become necessary to crush her in the interests of democracy ?

.

Your reviewer in the Easter number uttered an assured dictum to the effect that Pan-Anglo-Saxonism is repudiated by America. At that time President Harding had selected his cabinet and the revelations of his mind so made, could not have been the basis of assurance, for, without exception. the men chosen had been more or less conspicuous advocates of " rapprochement " with Great Britain. Harding himself had already written his remarkable letter to the Sulgrave Institute, the Pershing speech had received his applause, and Viviani missions had met with marked official coolness. These are a few of many gestures which had openly proclaimed the tendency of official Washington, which ambassador Harvey has recently put into such love-sick language at St. James, that English-trained diplomats find his effusiveness an embarrassment and even a nuisance. All this, however, is not what the American people intended, though many of them feared it, when in rejecting Wilson they were left no choice but Harding. Wilson betrayed their hopes. Already they are speaking of Harding as a traitor to his pledged faith. The heads of the indictment are all in the Harvey speech which the President has openly approved. Harding before election would have no old world entanglements ; after election his ambassador proclaims solidarity with England, the very locus of old world entanglements. America, official and popular, had again and again assured France of undying friendship ; Harding, at a moment of tension between France and England throws all the weight of America's friendship to the side of the latter. Your reviewer does not abate one jot the absoluteness of his view regarding America's attitude to Pan-Anglo-Saxonism. The effusiveness of mutual admiration loses allegiance of one large section of America,

as the adjustment of mutual interests which must follow will apply the acid test to the remainder.

Western civilization though not ancient is old. It has grown old through "progress" from "homogeneity to heterogeneity with differentiations and adaptations etc." Is it too late to retrace the way by which we have come, or are we doomed to stumble on without any vision which is not of the earth, earthy. It is true that some can see in the present state of spasm the indications of a renewal. The old Phoenix has been burned on the funeral pyre which he collected and the young bird is even now issuing from the purifying flames. Others, however, recognize in the symptoms merely the hardening of the arteries. There is general but not "divine" discontent and an equal disinclination to work. There is a stupefying prevalence of quackery and contradiction; human life is carelessly flung away and yet there is hysteria about hygiene and health. There is a general denunciation of war and intense activities of those agencies that derive their meaning from war. Democracy, the word, is on every tongue but the really earnest democrats are mostly under restraint, at best, by the grace of an expert alienist for treatment, while those in positions of control are everywhere endeavoring to convert the concessions to emergency into clenched rights of permanent privileges. Sallust probing with a cold stylus the diseases of avarice and luxury which prepared Rome for the Catiline conspiracy pauses to look back. "It is worth while," says he, "when you have become familiar with the homes and villas built up like cities to visit the temples of the gods which our forefathers made. They decorated their shrines with piety, their homes with honor, nor did they wrest from the conquered anything save the power of further injuring; but the men of whom I speak have reached that depth of baseness that they wring from their friends what magnanimous conquerors used to leave to the conquered; as if the proper use of power were to inflict injury. I suppose there were progressive comedians in his day, to whom Sallust was a pessimistic

humbug ; but if ancient Rome lives for us today it is in the pages of a few such men as he who saw and said whither the sickened beast was reeling.

To one who looks, as with the eyes of Sallust, upon another world whose homes and villas are built up like cities, but whose temples are deserted, there are not wanting spectres as sinister as the Catiline conspiracy to complete the work of lying, luxury and avarice and inhumanity. Socialism is a word as vague as Evolution. Both theories as stated by their votaries have the same kind of facility when applied to picked cases, and the same kind of futility when applied at large. Neither idea is clarified by saying that Socialism is to be the evolved State. Nor are those who denounce Socialism as Bolshevism more specific, since no one seems to know what meaning should be given the defining term. But whatever else Socialism may include, there is at the very heart of it a negation of individual liberty in all that makes human life worth while. It breaks with the past and has therefore an attraction for a certain type of mind ; the type, however, is not quite human and mere trust in human nature in certain fundamentals gives us assurance that can never be the choice of the mass of men. Its greatest evil today lies not in itself but in the occasion which it gives to the undue concentration of power in the hands of those who oppose it. Sparta, in name a Republic, was in fact a Socialistic slave state. It drifted into that condition because, being centrally located and exposed to attack from many quarters, men lived as in perpetual emergency and submitted themselves to a life of unquestioning obedience. Men were required to keep themselves in a state of preparedness for war. To that fetish all that makes life human was sacrificed. The individual belonged to the State and had no reclamation against its vexatious exactions. The same idea of the omnipotence of the State is being sedulously fostered by thousands of plausible people in every land today, and these are not called Socialists. Nay, they are organizing us against Socialism, but they are really a greater menace than Socialism as we know it today.