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A DYING METROPOLIS

VERSAILLES promised the peoples of the earth justice and freedom. The peace treaty has brought them injustice and betrayal. The peace treaty was to inspire the ruined world with new life. It has sown broadcast over Europe death and destruction. The high council of the four great powers has wrought its harshest vengeance on the weakest, most powerless, and least capable of resistance of its enemies. The spirits of destruction have speedy wings. Already the cold, gray pallor of death lies over Vienna. But yesterday it was the proud, rich capital of a mighty empire. To-day it is the head of a petty state, more deeply scarred by the suffering of war than even the fragment of distressed territory that still owes it allegiance.

The Austro-Hungarian monarchy before its dissolution was a gigantic economic entity with a population of 54,000,000. Vienna was the heart of this great empire, its capital whence industrial initiative and organizing enterprise spread over the whole country. Vienna directed the labor and the commerce of the millions who resided in all parts of its domain. The emperor, the court, and the heads of all secular and spiritual authority had their seat in Vienna. Furthermore, the princes of industry and finance, the leaders of material and intellectual production, the greatest men in science, literature, and art made that city their home. Vienna was the transshipping point of Europe, where the industrial products of the manufacturing North and West were bartered for the agrarian products of the South and East. Vienna was the junction point of a transportation system radiating throughout central Europe and constituting a bridge between the

Mediterranean and the Black Seas on the one side, and the North and Baltic Seas on the other. Within the coffer of the great banks of Vienna lay accumulated a vast capital drawn from a network of branches extending to the remotest villages and towns of the empire. All the surplus of the country's industry was accumulated at this point.

The collapse of the monarchy has broken this vast economic unit into fragments. Vienna's 2,000,000 people were fed in former days with Hungarian grain and meat, Bohemian sugar, and Moravian potatoes. The furnace industries of Vienna and German-Austria were supplied with coal from the rich colliery districts of Ostrav, Kladno, Brunn, Brux, Falkenau, and Pilsen. The tenements of the working people in the cities and the cabins of the peasants in the country were lighted with petroleum from Galicia. This close unity of interest had endured for centuries, and had knit together the people of the ancient monarchy with such close ties that they could not be rent asunder without disaster.

This common economic area fell apart, and little German Austria found itself surrounded by the insuperable commercial barriers of the newly established states. It produced scarcely a tenth of the coal which it consumed. The result has been a tragedy unparalleled in modern history. For months the great furnaces that converted the ores of Styria into iron and steel for the uses of civilization have been silent. The fine manufactures of Vienna and its suburbs have been reduced to a fraction of their former volume. More than 100,000 workmen, out of a total population of 6,000,000 have recently lost employment. There is no fuel for domestic use. The street railways have not been

in operation for many days. Railway traffic has been cut down to the lowest limit. Trains loaded with urgently needed food stand helpless upon distant sidings. The people of Vienna look forward to the coming winter with the despair of death in their hearts.

To this is added the imminent prospect of famine. The country around Vienna is mountainous. Its alpine declivities and scanty valley lands can supply scarcely three months' provisions yearly for the city of 2,000,000. Vienna has always been mainly dependent upon other countries for its food. The Allies assumed the task of providing provisions for Vienna until October, and advanced German-Austrian credit for that purpose. This credit has been exhausted, and the Allies are unwilling to grant new loans. Vienna has no security that it can offer, and nothing to exchange for food.

The peace of St. Germain leaves German-Austria isolated, delivers it over to the spirit of ruin and destruction. The so-called independence of German-Austria, so assiduously fostered by the Allies, has imposed upon that country the most unendurable dependence suffered by any country in the world. Its rich iron mines are idle because the Czechs refuse fuel to smelt their ores. Its weaving sheds are silent because the Czechs refuse to send it yarns. The labor of 100,000 workers goes to waste because German-Austria does not possess raw materials to give them employment. Ten thousand idle, desperate, pauperized officials and officers roam the streets of the metropolis because the government of such a diminished state can find them no employment. Unproductive expenditures are devouring the last remnants of the public wealth.

Before the war Vienna was a most

industrious city. To-day it has lost all traces of that virtue. On the one hand is a vast multitude of unemployed living in indescribable misery: on the other hand is a small but avaricious group of smugglers and speculators. The newly established countries in eastern Austria are seizing upon the opportunity offered by the low rate of exchange to dispose of their goods in western countries. English, American, French, and Italian buyers are glad to give their commissions to Vienna brokers and speculators because the latter understand the Asiatic business customs of their eastern neighbors. This class of shady middlemen is reinforced by a clique of venturesome fellows who speculate in exchange. All these people conduct their business under cover, in the great hotels and coffee houses on the Ring. They manage to evade the income tax, and their profits are spirited away to safe neutral countries.

So we witness at the same time the bitter suffering of the desperate, freezing, starving working people and of the intellectual proletariat, the prodigality of a new middle class reported to be fabulously wealthy. This change in the economic service performed by Vienna has converted the former proud, prosperous centre of western civilization into an Oriental metropolis, with all its characteristic features — absence of useful productive labor, a horde of parasites, throngs of schemers of high and low degree; into a town infested with smugglers and speculators, and lost to all interest in the useful and higher things of life.

Thus has the peace of St. Germain sealed the ruin of Vienna. Its own strength will never be sufficient to rescue the ancient capital from its present humiliating dependence. It will not be able to feed its million-children, to clothe them, or warm

them, or give them light. The most industrious and enterprising of its inhabitants will flee from this sepulchre of a city, leaving behind the young and the aged, the cripples and the invalids, the feeble and the incompetent, to suffer their fate.

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THE PRESIDENT AND THE TREATY

BY SYDNEY BROOKS

It seems to me important — though there is a certain unavoidable ungraciousness in emphasizing it — that people here should realize how entirely the fiasco over the treaty is President Wilson's own doing. He never had the slightest warrant for committing the United States to the League of Nations. It was a purely personal policy; it ran counter to the strongest of all political interests among his countrymen — the instinct that warns them not to meddle in the affairs of Europe; and there was never any prospect that it would become effective unless it was adopted by the United States Senate, in which the President's political opponents predominate.

These being the fundamental conditions, Mr. Wilson ought obviously to have taken no step without consultation with the Republican leaders, and without conducting a simultaneous campaign of education throughout the country. He did neither. He preferred to go his own independent way, and to trust to his prestige and his eloquence to compel the triumph of his views. He is paying the penalty of an excessive self-confidence. His only chance of securing the ratification of the Treaty is to agree to the stiff and dentalizing reservations which the Republicans have attached to it. If he refuses the treaty is dead. If he recognizes his

defeat and works for a compromise the treaty may be, I think will be, ratified. But in any case America has served ample notice that for the present at all events she intends to abide by her traditional policy of non-intervention, that she regards the war as a mere interlude, and that she is not prepared to accept any responsibilities for the state of Europe.

To many Englishmen this is a keen disappointment. But I am not at all certain that Anglo-American relations will suffer anything whether the United States decides to enter the League as a purely formal and passive member or whether she elects not to enter it at all; and I am decidedly of opinion that, if she makes it a condition of her adherence to the Covenant that the British Dominions should not be allowed a separate vote, we should inform her with frank friendliness that we cannot accept any such provision. For the rest, no one who knows either the American people or the American Constitution ought to be in any way surprised at the turn events have taken. The people, while favoring a League of Nations as an abstraction, have no real desire to assume any liabilities whatsoever in Europe or anywhere else; and the Constitution vests the power of deciding on such matters with Congress and not with the President.

What the Republicans have done with their reservations has been little more than to reassert the constitutional powers of Congress against the encroachment of the President. I cannot see how they could possibly have acted otherwise unless they had been prepared to amend their organic charter of government and shift the whole balance of political power in deference to Mr. Wilson's wish that America should participate automatically and at the President's discretion in the new world-order of his dreams. No blame