

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.

[*The Outlook*, December, 1919]

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

can possibly rest on the American people or the American Senate, and no reproaches ought to be directed against them. The blame and the reproaches should be laid, if anywhere, at Mr. Wilson's door.

[*La Depeche de Toulouse, December 11, 1919*]

THE TREATY AND THE MONROE DOCTRINE

BY C. BOUGLE

WE must confess that the American Senate is just at present making the task of America's friends and of the society of nations most difficult.

The period immediately following the war has brought us many disillusion. It is vain to deny that fact. But the present one is perhaps the greatest and the most embarrassing. It is the more disappointing because the arguments which the Republican Senators send to Europe to explain their reservations are far from convincing. We cannot escape the conclusion that if all the nations that pretend a desire for permanent peace were to present similar arguments, we should make little progress. More probably we should still continue to wallow in blood and misery.

The recalcitrant Senators say in substance: 'We are unwilling to sign the League Covenant because it violates our Constitution and also is incompatible with a fixed policy of our government, the Monroe Doctrine.'

How does the Covenant of the League of Nations violate the Constitution of the United States?

It provides in Article X that when any one of the signatory Powers is the victim of armed aggression by another Power, all the nations signing the Covenant shall come to its relief.

The Republican Senators declare that they cannot consent to this be-

cause the Constitution reserves the right to declare war to the Senate. They then go on to criticize the unconstitutional pretensions of Mr. Wilson. They assert that he did not realize that he would be unable to impose upon America the arbitrary procedure that was allowed to pass in Europe.

Just a moment! We want to see where the distinction lies. We rub our eyes in vain. It is not apparent.

Do these gentlemen mean to say that America is the only country where the right to declare war and to ratify treaties is reserved for a legislative assembly? Certainly they cannot mean this. Moreover, every democracy has taken under one form or another, great precaution to prevent the exercise of arbitrary power by its executive heads. But does this imply that any nation with a democratic government is by that very fact rendered incapable of making a firm covenant with other nations? The inference would be most embarrassing. We should have to admit that progress toward democracy is quite the reverse of progress toward peace. That would be an admission to rejoice the hearts of our Royalists. Do the Republicans enjoy this implication?

The fact is that all governments, whether democratic or otherwise, are now in the same boat. If they really desire to form an international organization, capable of maintaining peace, they must necessarily curtail their own sovereign rights in some fashion or other. They must recognize the moral validity of the contracts that they, after due deliberation, have signed. Unless they do this, what security is there for the world? There cannot be peace unless international pledges are respected.

The Republican Senators say that unfortunately they cannot pledge themselves to such a contract. There is