

NO MORE WAR

By A. J. MACE

The no-more-war movement is undoubtedly a most desirable agitation for the present generation to promote, for the next generation will not have had the experience which is the best of all teachers. But do those who comprise the movement look deep enough? Do they rightly distinguish between cause and effect?

How many in the movement were agreeable to petition Parliament to proceed with building the cancelled war vessels in order to cope with unemployment?

How many realize that if you prepare for war the chances are you will get it? That, of course, is contrary to the usual argument that to prepare for war would ensure peace, for surely Europe was never more prepared for war than in August, 1914, but that did not ensure peace.

Is not the most disturbing factor in Europe the rival claims to Alsace and Lorraine of France and Germany? These states abound with coalfields.

Why do we hold on to Mesopotamia if not because of the oil wells?

Why were the Allies so very kind to Roumania if not because of the oil wells there?

What was the matter with Kruger except that the land over which he ruled, or mis-ruled as the case might be, contained gold and diamonds?

What nearly brought the U.S.A. and Mexico to loggerheads if not oil wells monopoly?

It is not difficult to see that diplomatists and financiers are mutually interested, for they know that in order to be able to rig a market land must first be "acquired," and then they erect barriers to exclude others from the market by means of tariffs.

These tariff barriers create more animosity and irritation than is generally acknowledged, and no better illustration could be given than the subdivision of middle and south-east Europe. From Britain to the Balkans the number of frontiers have been considerably increased.

This imposition of a tax on goods entering a state makes for lack of personal freedom, causes racial distrust and interferes with national aspirations. In fact, each subdivision soon becomes another "Ireland."

These tariffs are imposed for two reasons, viz., to produce revenue and to protect the people from outside competition (always said to be unfair). The whole argument is a farce because if it brought in revenue it would not keep the goods out, or if it kept them out it would not produce revenue.

What does happen is to increase the price of goods, both imported and home-made, by the amount of the tariff and as prices determine the letting value of land it is not difficult to see where some of the benefit goes. At the same time it tends to drive the trade into the hands of a few who batten on monopoly prices.

It seems logical that if these land values, which now go into private pockets, went into the state purse there would be less desire to "acquire" land for speculation; there would be less, if any, need for taxation on imports; with easier access to land much of what is imported could be produced here; armed vessels would no longer be required "to protect our commerce"; all would be willing buyers of what others were eager to sell; frontiers would not need "guarding." Can you imagine a frontier running away?

There would be no "favoured nation" bogey for lawyers to quibble over and excite the animosity of the unfavoured nations.

The method of raising revenue affects war preparations in another way.

If land values are not taxed then something else must be, for the revenue must be forthcoming. If incomes are taxed wages fall, interest falls and capital tends to become

idle and unemployment occurs. Tax food, clothing and houses, and the cost of living rises and poverty appears.

The fear of unemployment and poverty has driven many to sell their freedom by enlisting in the fighting forces. An instrument to hand invites use.

THE MONEY CHANGERS IN THE TEMPLE OF PEACE.

General Sir Ian Hamilton, speaking at the unveiling of a war memorial at Ashton-under-Lyne on Saturday, said (*THE TIMES*, 18th September) the world stood on the brink of calamity. He received many letters from soldiers all over Europe, and he assured them further mischief was brewing. The idea of grafting a League of Nations into a Versailles Treaty had made no appeal to humanity. Patriots and profiteers were beginning again to cry "Prepare." Desperate people were thinking out desperate plans, and the people must set to work on counterplans. Christians were studying how to manufacture poison gas. There was no escape from them and their preparations, so long as this world remained the old Vanity Fair of the Pilgrim's Progress, and so long as the money changers in the Temple of Peace thought more of mandates than of mankind.

There was no braver town than Ashton. East Lancashire had carried to its highest power the English quality of grit. He asked them now to turn the unrivalled fighting spirit they had inherited from their ancestors into a plan of campaign to remove the causes of war. Through politics let them make it clear that they were in favour of forgiveness of debts so that we ourselves might win forgiveness, if not from the U.S.A., at least from the Kingdom of Heaven. Until the other day this wondrous Empire had never put itself in the pitiful position of saying it would be generous if others made it worth our while. Let them end the feud. The boys they were commemorating did not die for reparations; nor for Mesopotamia; nor even for Jerusalem. They had hoped to kill war, and it was "up to" Ashton to lead Lancashire again in taking practical steps to make those peace dreams come true.

Speaking again when he unveiled the Cambuslang War Memorial, 29th September, Sir Ian said:—

"The root of the matter is this. *We have never made peace. Peace was the last thing the men who made the Treaties of Versailles and Sévres were thinking about—punishment is what they were after.*

Peace does not need armies of occupation to enforce it. Vereeniging did not need what are now called occupations and guarantees.

When you seek cash payments for the blood of those you have lost can you not see for yourselves how, even as you finger the marks, they turn into scraps of dirty paper stamped with mocking promises?"

The Sub-Commission of the League of Nations Assembly, which is concerned with the question of colonial mandates and slavery, continued its deliberations at Geneva on 14th September. Dr. Nansen asked whether natives had the right to refuse to sell their land to concessionaires. Sir Cecil Hurst observed that the Permanent Mandates Commission had asked for full details regarding the land tenure system in all mandated territories.

A Free Copy of "Land & Liberty" is an Invitation to become a Subscriber. Monthly 3d.; by Post 4s. per Annum.