

arise on the conclusion of hostilities,' is the official setting forth of the matters to be discussed at the gathering. It is a comprehensive programme: it means, in brief, that everything will be brought under review that can be considered as either directly or indirectly helping to the victorious prosecution of the struggle. Especially it will mean, we may be sure, a mobilisation of the resources of every part of the Empire, and there will, it may be safely assumed, be a call for sacrifices—financial and economic—far beyond anything that has yet been asked for from the Dominions. The immediate effect of the move will be to give the outlying portions of the Empire a more direct and vivid interest in the Imperial policy relating to the war; and the infusion of new blood and the gathering in council of the best brains of the Dominions cannot fail to strengthen the hands of the Government in the heavy work that is before it.

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The fact that peace terms figure among the matters to be considered is not the least significant aspect of the gathering. It is not to be taken as indicating that peace is by any means imminent, but at least it shows that matters have advanced to the stage when the Allies think it necessary to be prepared for that eagerly looked-for consummation. The discussion will doubtless proceed on the basis of the decisive defeat of the Central Powers, and the crux of the question will be the determination of the precise terms which are to be imposed in order to provide the most effective guarantee against a repetition of the hideous nightmare of a European conflagration. In this connection it is interesting to recall that a definite attempt has already been made by an ex-colleague of Mr. Asquith's to set forth the precise demands which Britain, at least, would be likely to put forward as a basis for the final settlement. Mr. C. F. G. Masterman (formerly Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster), in an article in the *Daily Chronicle*, under the title 'The Only Possible Peace Terms,' thus semi-officially interpreted the then Premier's ideals:—

1. Belgium should be restored to complete independence, Germany paying an indemnity adequate for rebuilding the ruined cities, bringing about the revival of destroyed industries, and paying compensation to disabled men and relatives of the dead.

2. France should receive Alsace-Lorraine, an indemnity, and a natural defensive boundary, rendering a repetition of Germany's attack for ever impossible.

3. Denmark should receive Schleswig.

4. German, Austrian, and Russian Poland shall be united under the Czar or his nominee.

5. Italy should get the Trentino and the whole Italia Irredenta.

6. The Turkish Empire should be torn to fragments, and Armenia, Syria, Palestine, Mesopotamia, and Thrace should be divided among those who develop the countries. The Turks should be penned in Central Anatolia, where they should be compelled to learn to work instead of to massacre.

7. Serbia should be restored, with the payment of a heavy indemnity from Austria-Hungary, and should receive Bosnia and Herzegovina, with adequate access to the Adriatic, and should also receive all of Serbian Austria.

8. The German fleet should be surrendered, and divided among the allied nations; the Zepelins and hangars should be burnt.

9. The German colonies should remain as trophies to the nations which conquered them.

Compared with some of the terms that have been suggested, these are almost moderate; but it is difficult to imagine Germany agreeing, under any circumstances save those of absolute compulsion, to such conditions as those embodied in Articles 4 and 8.

Germany has also given an unofficial but semi-authoritative indication of the sort of settlement which she desires, per medium of the former Imperial Chancellor, Prince von Bulow. The statement does not 'condescend to particulars'; but even the general observations are of sufficient interest to merit some attention at the present time. In the new edition of his *Imperial Germany*—the later chapters of which were written in May last—von Bulow says: 'This war is a national war not only for us Germans, but equally for the English, the French, and the most influential section of the Russian people. The national hatred which has been aroused by the war and confirmed by bloodshed, will persist after the struggle is concluded until national passions receive an impetus in a new direction. These considerations must be decisive in determining the conditions of peace, and that in two respects. Germany will in future require protection against hostility and desires for revenge, both old and new, in the west, the east, and beyond the Channel; such protection can only be found in the increase of her own power. Our enemies will also strengthen their armaments on land and sea. We must see to it that our frontiers and shores are strengthened and rendered less easy of attack than at the beginning of this war; not in furtherance of that desire for world dominion with which we are falsely credited, but for the maintenance of our present position. The outcome of the war must be a positive, not a negative, one. To prevent our annihilation, loss of territory or dismemberment to ensure that we be not bled to the last farthing, that is not the point; it is a question of definite gain in the form of real security and guarantees, as an indemnity for hitherto unheard of labors and suffering, and also as a pledge for the future. In view of the ill-feeling against us which this war is bound to bring in its train, the mere restoration of the *status quo ante bellum* would mean for Germany not gain, but loss. Only if our power—political, economic, and military—emerges from this war so strengthened that it considerably outweighs the feelings of enmity that have been aroused shall we be able to assert with a clear conscience that our position in the world has been bettered by the war.' Here, then, is the situation: Germany will not be satisfied unless she emerges from the contest with her power strengthened; the Allies, as their reply to the German Note clearly shows, will not be content with any settlement which does not leave Germany crippled, if not absolutely crushed. It looks as if no amount of negotiation would be able to square this circle, and as if a settlement will only be reached when Germany is faced with the prospect of complete defeat.

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It is good to read that in connection with the summoning of the Imperial Conference there has been an active revival of negotiations for the Irish settlement. Little is given us in the way of detail, but there is a hopeful tone in the cables on the subject that is very welcome. As we have before put it, Mr. Lloyd George has taken up the duties of Premier with a firm determination to win the war; and to that end he doubtless realises that the pacification of Ireland, as Mr. Redmond has expressed it, would be worth more than alliance with half a dozen neutrals. As regards Irish settlements, it seems to be always a case of 'so near and yet so far'; but at least in the present interesting juncture we are not left without reasonable grounds for hope.

REPRESENTATIVES' MOVEMENTS

NORTH ISLAND:

MR. RYAN—Taranaki.

SOUTH ISLAND:

MR. PICKUP—Otago Central.