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DOINGS OF THE WEEK

NEWS REVIEW OF CURRENT EVENTS

Three Divergent Schemes for Naval Limitation Offered at Geneva.

By EDWARD W. PICKARD

THREE great powers, in conference at Geneva, through their representatives, for the purpose of devising further limitation of naval armament, are considering three widely divergent plans, and if they get together on any scheme it will be only by making big concessions and after long debate. The initial positions of the three powers may be succinctly stated thus:

United States—Extension of the 5-5 ratio to all warships, with definite tonnage limits for cruisers, destroyers and submarines.

Great Britain—Further limitation of battleships, reduction in size and armament of both capital ships and cruisers and extension of the 5-5-3 ratio to 10,000-ton cruisers, but no mention of application to auxiliaries.

Japan—A naval holiday on the basis of the status quo, and a ban on battleship construction.

Ambassador Hugh Gibson opened the conference and presided as chairman because it was called by President Coolidge. In submitting the American plan he suggested the following allocation of tonnage:

Cruisers—United States and Great Britain, 300,000 tons; Japan, 180,000 tons.

Destroyers—United States and Great Britain, 250,000 tons; Japan, 150,000 tons.

Submarines—United States and Great Britain, 90,000 tons; Japan, 54,000 tons.

In polite terms, Mr. Gibson hinted that if an agreement among the powers for naval limitation was not reached, the United States was prepared to resort to an extensive building program.

According to American experts, adoption of the British plan would enable England in time of war to swamp the American fighting ships through utilization of her mercantile marine as auxiliary cruisers; her big passenger liners would be capable of carrying airplanes and transporting troops, as well as mounting 6-inch guns. In the Japanese proposal to adopt the status quo the Americans found a joker in the fact that Japan possesses considerable more cruisers and destroyers in commission or capable of utilization than the United States and the legalization of this strength would place Japan just below Great Britain and above America for these categories.

Admiral Sir Frederick Field, British delegate, explained the British point of view. He declared Great Britain requires more light cruiser and destroyer tonnage than any other power because England relies on its food supply from overseas and also for marketing the dominions' products and safeguarding the long routes of communications.

All this was set forth at length when the proposals were turned over to a committee of expert technicians who were instructed to try to find a common ground for discussion. The British claim to greater tonnage of light craft was supported by elaborate charts showing how England's trade routes and lines of communication cross every body of navigable water on the globe.

Navy experts in Washington openly attacked both the British and Japanese plans, and their view was shared by Congressman Britton of Illinois, ranking member of the house committee on naval affairs. Mr. Britton predicted that failure of the Geneva conference will result in increased naval building by the United States, but this view is not shared by Senator Borah, chairman of the senate foreign relations committee. Mr. Borah feels there is little likelihood of the conference achieving real results, but that even if it does fail, this government will not enter upon a large building program.

POLAND'S firm and dignified stand against the demands of Russia in connection with the murder of the Russian minister in Warsaw seems to have had good results, for it is now reported that the two countries are in a fair way to negotiate a treaty of amity. But the Soviet government's savage reprisal in the way of wholesale executions of counter-revolutionists and others accused of being spies in the pay of foreign governments has aroused widespread indignation. An instance of this is the resolution adopted by a joint meeting of the executive committee of the British Labor party and of the general council of the British Trades Union congress.

"While recognizing the Soviet government's indignation at the murder of M. Volker," the resolution said, "we are obliged to protest against the execution of persons innocent thereof as a reprisal. We are of the opinion that meeting murder by murder is a degradation of the standards of civilization and can produce nothing but harm to Soviet Russia."

In this connection it is interesting to read that Pope Pius XI in an allocution before a secret consistory denounced bolshevism as an insidious, subversive doctrine that is permeating the ignorant classes throughout the world. Basing his remarks on knowledge coming to him through evidence gathered by his diplomatic outposts, the pope charged bolshevism with being chiefly responsible not only for the troubles in China but also in Mexico.

MARSHAL CHANG TSO-LIN is now the absolute dictator of northern China—though he may not enjoy that pre-eminence very long. In a twenty-word speech in Peking he announced that he had assumed the office of generalissimo in order to work for the regeneration and unification of the country. The diplomatic body was absent from the brief ceremony and so avoided official recognition of Chang's new status. In a circular telegram to the provinces the marshal pledged himself to fight against communism while breath remains in his body. He added that any seeking to undermine the nation's foundations or acting in collusion with foreigners for a like object, will be regarded as public enemies deserving death.

There are indications that the Hankow and Nanking nationalist factions will soon get together, at least for the purpose of getting possession of Peking and Shantung provinces. The Shanghai bankers are reported to have raised two-thirds of a \$30,000,000 loan to assist General Chiang in his drive northward.

FAILURE to reconcile the National peasant and Liberal parties in Rumania resulted in the downfall of Premier Babu Stirbei, favorite of Queen Marie, who only recently was elevated to that position. He handed in his resignation and the former premier, Ioan Brattiano, was called on to form a new cabinet pending elections. The National peasants not only refused to co-operate with the Liberals, but announced that they are publishing a manifesto making scandalous revelations against the government party.

PRESIDENT COOLIDGE, who caught his first mess of rainbow trout by using worms as bait, has heard the sorrowful protests of the Izana Walton league members and now is landing the fish with the regulation equipment of fly and casting rod. And Mrs. Coolidge has proved herself no mean angler. The Chief Executive has been receiving various groups of citizens, including the members of the National Editorial association and their wives, and on Tuesday he motored to Rapid City and reviewed the South Dakota National Guard at its camp near there. He took back to the summer White House as an over-night guest former Gov. S. R. McKelvie of Nebraska, who is the editor of a farm paper. Mr. Coolidge accepted an invitation to attend the Belle Fourche roundup on July 4, which is his birthday, and promised to go to Ardmore on July 16 for a big gathering of farmers from South Dakota, Nebraska, Colorado and Wyoming.

Governor General Wood of the Philippines was the President's most

important individual caller of the week, having been invited to report on conditions in the islands. Other visitors included several congressmen.

REPRESENTATIVE W. R. GREEN of Iowa, chairman of the house ways and means committee, went to Washington for a conference with Secretary of the Treasury Mellon, and told the correspondents that there was small hope of a substantial tax reduction in 1928. Present indications, according to Mr. Green, are that, if there is any surplus in the national treasury at the end of the fiscal year, it will not be large enough to permit such reductions as were made in the last revenue bill, which authorized cuts aggregating \$400,000,000.

In this view Mr. Green takes sharp issue with other Republican leaders, notably Senators Edge of New Jersey, and Reed of Pennsylvania, who have predicted a surplus exceeding \$300,000,000, and probably running as high as \$400,000,000.

BECAUSE of his refusal to return to the United States and testify in the trial of Albert B. Fall and Harry F. Sinclair in the Teapot Dome oil lease fraud case, the Department of State has put Harry M. Blackmer much in the position of a "man without a country." The former chairman of the Midwest Refining company has been deprived of his passport by order of the department and so is without the protection of the government on his travels. While his passport has been revoked he has one chance to recover it, namely, to apply for a passport to return to the United States. But as Blackmer evaded service of a subpoena for a long time and finally actually refused service, officials here do not believe he will seek a chance to come home, knowing that this would mean facing another subpoena on landing, or arrest for contempt of court, or confiscation of his American property under the drastic Walsh law, recently enacted by Congress to meet this very case.

COMMANDER BYRD and his three fellow aviators waited all week for weather conditions favorable to the start of their flight to France in the Fokker monoplane America. Heavy fogs and fluctuating winds prevailed over the north Atlantic, and Byrd saw no object in starting as he was not planning a record-breaking flight or contemplating any sensational performance.

Colonel Lindbergh had a few days to devote to his own affairs, and then was summoned to Washington to confer with officials of the Army, Navy and Commerce departments. He flew there from St. Louis in an army plane, making one stop, at Dayton, Ohio. A committee of St. Louis business men has offered Lindbergh the presidency of projected airplane manufacturing company with large capital.

CITIZENS of Indianapolis grew tired of the doings of the city hall ring there and, being given the opportunity at a special election, they smashed it by voting, five to one, in favor of abolishing the council and mayorality system and substituting the city manager form of government. In March the anti-manager forces persuaded the legislature to amend the law so that the change cannot be made before January 1, 1930. If this legislative action is held unconstitutional the city manager will take office next New Year's day.

UNQUALIFIED approval of the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence waterway project is given by the Joint New England-St. Lawrence waterway committee of business men, financiers, economists, and engineers in Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Vermont, Maine, and Connecticut.

After months of study this committee has concluded that the all-American waterway route through New York, proposed as an alternative to the St. Lawrence route, is impractical from a financial and engineering standpoint, and in a formal report the spokesmen for the six states urge the Washington government to initiate negotiations with the Canadian government upon a treaty which will speed completion of the St. Lawrence project.

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Invariably they will burrow to a shallow depth beside the plant on which they have fed.

Cutworms can be destroyed by using a poisoned bran bait. A reliable mixture is one peck or five pounds of bran, one-fourth-pound of white arsenic or paris green, one pint of sugar or molasses and three or four

quarts of water added to the mixture.

United States entomologists warn that it is necessary thoroughly to mix the poison and the bran so that each particle will carry enough poison to kill.

The syrup and water should be mixed and then added to the mixed bran and poison. Stirring should be done slowly.

The bait should be placed along the rows or about the base of the plant in the evening. Care should be taken to keep the mixture away from animals or irresponsible persons.

WHEN MOTHER TOOK A VACATION

(© by D. J. Walsh.)

asking more of your body than a man would of a piece of machinery."

"Well, I will think about it," said Mrs. Cady as she arose and, bidding her friend good-by, wended her way wearily down the street.

"That woman is in for a good sick spell," thought Caroline as she watched her disappear around the corner of West and Bainbridge streets. And she was right, for the very next day Catherine telephoned her that her mother had gone to bed with a raging headache and a temperature and the doctor whom she had called said she must not get up for several days. "And what a shame!" added Catherine in a peevish voice, "when I have invited the crowd in for supper and cards, and, worst of all, mother is looking for Mrs. Walsh every minute."

"Too bad, Catherine," said Caroline, "that you didn't see your mother was getting sick before she got flat down in bed. I should think you would have to call the 'crowd' off and get busy taking care of your mother, and as for Mrs. Walsh, if Fanny Walsh is a bit like she used to be she will look after her herself." And Caroline hung up the receiver.

Mrs. Walsh, true to her schedule, came in due time and at once assumed the care of Mrs. Cady. She filled the place of nurse so well that she had her friend out of bed and quite herself in four days and then she simply packed her up and bundled her into the big roadster and carried her bodily away. And a great time they had, too. They visited many old scenes made dear to their hearts by their girlhood days together. And the ten days lengthened into three weeks. At the end of the three weeks they came back to the Cady home sunburned and tired, but refreshed in mind and body. Catherine looked with amazement at the plump, happy-faced woman with the sparkling eyes and smiling face who sprang out of the car. She could scarcely believe her eyes—surely this never could be her little, fagged-out mother, this radiant woman who laughed like a girl and who seemed absolutely to be without nerves.

"Where is Catherine?" asked Mrs. Benton mildly.

"Oh, she's home. The Carter girls are over and Tommy Shack, only Catherine says I mustn't call him Tommy, and Fred Keator and Marjory Vaile telephoned that they were coming in later. They are going to make candy for the Young People's club tomorrow night. I expect the kitchen will be a sight when I get home. Oh, hum—well, young folks will be young folks."

"Yes," said Mrs. Benton rather sharply, "young folks will be young folks, but Elizabeth, there is no use in their being selfish. I think you are spoiling Catherine. What will become of her if she gets married? She won't know enough to feed herself, let alone feeding a husband. I think you've made a mistake in waiting on her the way you have."

"I suppose I have, but she is so awkward whenever I do ask her to do anything that she always makes a mess of it. It is easier for me to do it myself. And besides, she hates housework. She says it ruins her hands. Why, if she so much as wipes a mess of dishes in the steamy kitchen, the crisp is all out of her hair, and it isn't as if her hair curled naturally, and she has to do it up again before she can go anywhere. Then she never knows when some one is coming in, especially now that Tommy—no, Tom Shack is paying her so much attention."

"Nevertheless," went on Caroline,

"I think you are making a big mistake, Elizabeth. You are robbing Catherine of the chance to show what she can do. Land, when you were her age you could run a house almost as well as your mother. And I guess it came in quite as handy after you were married as Catherine's dancing, primping and fudge-making will. Why, she wouldn't know enough to dress herself without you. You are ruining a fine girl and making yourself sick in the bargain."

"I suppose I am," sighed Elizabeth with a shake of her head. Then, changing the subject, she told Mrs. Benton about a letter she had received the day before from an old school friend who was making a cross-country trip in order to visit her old home for a few days. She was planning to go on farther East and wished Elizabeth to accompany her. "I will be in Midvale on Tuesday afternoon,"

the woman had written, "and I will stay two days. Then if you are all right I shall pick you up, Elizabeth, and take you with me for ten days. I am coming in my little roadster and there will be just you and I and we will have the time of our lives. Don't let anything interfere, just be ready when I come."

"Of course you will go," Caroline said firmly.

"Of course I can't," said Elizabeth with a sigh. "How in the world can I?"

"Why, just go," said Mrs. Benton.

"Now is your chance, Elizabeth. If you stay on here without a chance to rest or a bit of a change, you are going to get flat down in bed. That's what. The Bible says, 'Six days shalt thou labor—the seventh, rest.'

Now, when have you had a day of rest? Not in four years that I know of, and you don't even rest nights what with all this sitting up looking after Catherine and waiting on young folks who are ruining their stomachs eating all hours of the night. You are

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Land of the Palms



Harvesting Dates in Sahara Oasis.

(Prepared by the National Geographic Society, Washington, D. C.)

OF THE date palms now thriving and bearing fruit in the hot desert regions of Arizona and California, some of the most valuable plants were brought from the Jerid, famous "Land of the Palms," a small group of oases situated at the northern edge of the Sahara and distant about 250 miles southwestward from the city of Tunis.

The Jerid is reached by means of a railway which crosses southern Tunis from the busy little seaport of Sfax, on the east coast, to the rich phosphate mines of Metlaoui near the Algerian frontier. Southward from Sfax one passes through a desolate country, wonderfully like the high plains of eastern Colorado and New Mexico.

An occasional cluster of "gourbis," or tents of skins, an occasional flock of multicolored sheep and goats, tended by half-wild Bedouin children, are the only signs of life in the monotonous landscape. The vegetation consists chiefly of brown clumps of the grass called "alfa" or "esparto," the long tough leaves of which are pulled by hand and shipped in bales to Europe for making baskets, straw hats, and paper of fine quality.

From Metlaoui, formerly the terminus of the railway, the line has been extended in recent years all the way to Tozer, first of the important oasis towns. This final stretch is through blazing sands and on either side are the sharp forms of desert mountains, devoid of soil and trees. In Tozer lives the French administrator of the Jerid region. The town is just outside the oasis on higher ground. After leaving its outskirts and crossing a few rods of bare sand, one plunges directly into the oasis.

Jungle of Date Palms.

The transition from the blinding glare outside to the cool shade of the gardens is delightful. Each is a jungle of date palms, planted in no apparent order, some so close that the stems almost touch, and in other places far enough apart to leave room for little patches of vegetables and lucern and tender young barley. Beneath the tall palms are other trees—figs, apricots, and olives.

It is interesting to watch the harvest which begins in October. Dates grow in large bunches, weighing from 10 to 40 pounds, which hang beneath the crown of leaves on long yellow or orange-colored stalks, hard and polished as ivory. An expert workman, known as the "getas," climbs to the top of the palm, gripping the scaly bark with his bare toes. He is armed with a "mengel," an iron knife, having a heavy serrated blade at right angles to the shank, which is set in a wooden handle.

Severing the stalk with a stroke of his knife, he gives the heavy cluster to the man who straddles the trunk just under him. It is then passed from hand to hand by men and boys who cling to the tree, one below the other, until it reaches the ground.

Only the best varieties of dates are handled thus carefully; for the ordinary sorts it suffices to toss the cluster to the ground, where they are caught in sheets. They are then packed in skins or baskets to be kept for local consumption, or they are exchanged for wheat and barley, which the nomads of the high central plateaus of Tunis and Algeria bring down to the oases in the fall on the backs of their camels.

Water Supply Abundant.

Numerous springs, gushing forth at the base of the escarpment that shelters the oases from the north winds, furnish an abundant and constant supply of water for irrigation. At Nefta the springs are situated in a deep basin, of which the sides are much higher than the tallest palm in the beautiful grove that covers its floor. This is the "Ras el Ain" (head of the spring), which the French call the "Corbeille" or basket.

At Tozer and at Nefta the water of the springs is gathered into one large canal. It is then diverted by means of dams situated at convenient points into the irrigating ditches that penetrate every corner of the oasis.

More than one hundred distinct varieties of dates are grown in these four small oases. There is a bewildering amount of diversity in the shape, color, and flavor of the fruits. Some