

Poincare's Position Similar To that of President Harding

Placed in Power by Various Groups Opposed to Briand Any Action on His Part Likely to Cause Him Loss of Some of His Supporters

By DAVID LAWRENCE

This is the ninth of Mr. Lawrence's dispatches from Europe dealing with post-war reconstruction problems as they appear to him after five years absence. He finds that the French have made amazing progress in restoring those portions of their country that were devastated in the war, but that their mood after five years is still one of vivid war recollections. That is why he started his survey of European reconstruction on the battle fields of France where he says every student of French policy should start.

Paris, July 25.—Outwardly Premier Poincare looks like "the strong man of France" but actually he lives in constant fear of the various groups that support him. His inflexibility with reference to the reparations question during the last several months has been the result of intimidation, not determination.

And his downfall will come in a few months when the people of France realize their national interests might have been just as well preserved and more might have been gained at the same time by a proper understanding with other Allied powers.

It is true that the British, American and Italian viewpoints on what ought to be done about reparations have not coincided with what the man in the street in France wants to see done, but never-the-less there has been and will be room for co-operation such as former Premier Briand tried, and finally Poincare will be driven to the same thing, so the people might as well ask what they have gained by Poincare's stubbornness.

The new general election will be held in France next April. It is one of the utmost importance to the whole world because in the months immediately ahead the present administration must strive to show that some thing has been achieved.

No possible manipulation of statistics can make the occupation of the Ruhr look successful. Less coal is being obtained from the Ruhr now than before the French seized it. Passive resistance has deprived France of her reparations and at the same time has not crippled Germany for the latter has been importing coal from Great Britain. The French dislike to admit failure, but they cannot erase the facts and almost all an outsider needs to know to be convinced of the utter futility of the Ruhr enterprises is that while the average monthly imports of coal to France from Great Britain used to be 900,000 tons it now has reached 1,800,000 tons. Not only has the Ruhr failed to pay France reparations in kind but it has diminished the coal supply previously obtained from the Ruhr itself. French statesmen who are not interested in supporting Poincare's adventures in economic coercion but who are as vehement in expressions of nationalism as anybody in Europe, say that the vital question of the hour is the will to pay. The Ruhr is worth many times the cost, they insist, if it makes Germany realize her defeat and the obligation to pay her debts. That is why the United States Secretary of State Hughes' suggestion of a committee to investigate the facts about Germany's capacity to pay does not interest France. Even if the facts were established, would Germany pay if she thought she could escape the obligations? The French have seen the Germans wriggle too much in the last three years to trust any one on the other side of the Rhine.

France will believe Germany when the private bankers of the world and foreign governments generally have underwritten and guaranteed Germany's promises.

Of course, the continued policy of isolation will get France nowhere. The French see this more plainly than they did six months ago.

They miss the comradeship of Great Britain and Italy more than they dare admit. And if the truth were known Belgium is by no means as ready to follow France as blindly as she appeared to be at the outset of the Ruhr excursion. The fact that impressed the writer most about his trip through France was that the latter misses Great Britain and needs her. One hears denunciations about the British selfishness, even British treachery, in failing to participate in the Ruhr invasion, but when all is said and done, the French know that passive resistance would end tomorrow and Germany would sit up and take notice if the French and British could agree.

Just now the British are making another effort to join hands with the French. Poincare gives every evidence of alertness combined with the fear that he may not be able to agree to the British proposals for joint action in the reparations controversy. But whatever he fails to do now, he or some other premier will be compelled to do before the snow flies again. Europe cannot get along without concerted action. Economic disturbances of today already are breeding seeds of tomorrow's war. Germany has coal, France has iron. The two must be brought together. America could

Civic Opera Is Proving Success

Chicago Goes Into Grand Opera Business and Makes Money on the Plan

Chicago, July 26.—Chicago has gone into the Grand Opera business, and after a year's operation, the financial statement shows that the city is making a success of it.

Backed by a regiment of guarantors, who are to be found in all walks of business, commercial, industrial and social life, as well as by the general public, the Chicago Civic Opera Company has become almost as truly civic as a public library or a public park. The admission charged for performances, which is moderate and considered popular, though insufficient as yet to pay the full cost of entertainment, is the sole mark distinguishing the Chicago Civic Opera from other civic institutions with a general appeal.

There are 2,200 guarantors who stepped to the front when Harold F. McCormick and Mrs. Edith Rockefeller McCormick contributed their holding to the then Civic Opera Association.

It is now announced by Samuel Insull, president of the opera company, that when the deficit for the first civic opera season, that of 1922-

1923, was finally determined and made known, the guarantors responded immediately and unhesitatingly and fulfilled their pledges without demur.

Mr. Insull says: "Grand opera in Chicago thus has passed into a stage of Civic Grand Opera, supported by as representative people as would be met by the tax collector gathering sinews for city government. The method of obtaining support closely approximates the municipal state subsidies provided operas abroad, the sole difference being that in Chicago a preferred list of taxpayers of all professions underwrite opera, while abroad, in many instances, financial losses are liquidated by general taxation."

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