

CURRENT MAGAZINES

Justice to Russia:—Editorial in *The Nation*.

Democracy in France: M. André Maurois, in *The Spectator*.

The Riots in Palestine: Editorial in *The Times*.

A New Deal for Latin-America: Mr. E. Gruening, in *Current History*.

1934: Will it See an Atlantic Air Line? Mr. W. E. Bakes, in *Overseas*.

THERE is an indescribable satisfaction to the minds of certain journalists in feeling able to say "I told you so", and it was no doubt a joy to the *New York Nation* to republish in a recent issue its own article of fourteen years earlier, entitled, "Justice to Russia". An introductory paragraph in italics draws attention to the fact that, since the article first appeared, five Presidents have sat in the White House. This, at least, is agreed. It goes on to explain that after years of civil war, starvation, foreign invasion and economic ruin, Russia can now show "one of the stablest Governments on the Continent of Europe"—a statement which may or may not be true, and which, in any case, would have meant more at a time when competition in stability among European Governments was keener than at present.

But the suggested inference, that President Roosevelt's readiness to resume diplomatic relations now shows the wisdom of the *Nation's* plea for resuming them in January, 1919, is not even plausible. A good many other events, besides the succession of five occupants of the White House, have happened in the intervening years. It is fair to assume that the logic of these other events has not been altogether missed in Moscow. Among the causes that have made the Soviet temper so commendably different now from what it was fourteen years back, the obstinate refusal of the United States to enter into diplomatic relations may well be one. In any case, the *Nation* must expect its guess to be met with a guess at least equally probable on the opposite side, and there is no expert authority to determine such a problem in what Maine used to call "Hypothetics—the science of what might have happened, but did not".

More important, however, than an antiquarian retrospect on past wisdom or unwisdom is the enquiry whether what happened last November at the conferences between President Roosevelt and M. Litvinov is matter for international congratulation. One must here recall how the breach lately repaired was first made. Not as a gratuitous interference in Russian internal affairs did the

United States refuse to the Bolshevik Government that recognition which it had given, not only to the Tsardom, but to the short-lived régime of Kerensky. As in numerous other places, of which Mexico and Cuba are the most recent examples, Washington was prepared to recognize any Government in Russia which had reasonable appearance of popular support, of the purpose and ability to maintain order at home, and of normal good faith in dealing on the country's behalf with Governments abroad. On the first of these requirements, there was, fourteen years ago, the gravest doubt; only a very bold prophet indeed felt any confidence, at the opening of 1919, that the Bolshevik leaders would not go the way of countless other revolutionaries; while in regard to popular support, their most eager defenders did not pretend that they had more than two per cent. of the Russian people in intelligent sympathy with them. On the matter of domestic order, it was obvious that the customary sanctities had all been violated, property of American citizens in Russia to the amount of no less than \$440,000,000 had been seized, all claims for compensation or restoration had been flouted, and the elementary rights of free religious worship—not to speak of free discussion—had been crushed under a tyranny which recalled the proceedings of Abdul Hamid in the villages of Armenia. That a régime of spoliation such as this would not endure was a guess too sanguine as it proved, but not unreasonable on the face of it, and at least suggesting that American moral pressure might fitly be used to promote its fulfilment.

It is surely a most remarkable pact which has lately been concluded. With his usual keen eye for the dramatic, President Roosevelt stated it with picturesque exactness. At just ten minutes before midnight on November 16, he says, the diplomatic relations broken off sixteen years before were restored. Naturally his critics ask how far the causes which kept them so long broken have been removed, or whether the present Administration takes the view that its predecessor which broke them off, and its other predecessors which refused to restore them, were all alike misguided. A further question is whether the President feels quite safe in announcing a change about which Congress has not expressed any approval, and whether in particular he is quite sure of the Foreign Relations Committee of the Senate. Certain things happened when the last Democratic President took such support a little too much for granted.

On the matter of terms we are told that the financial liability is still to be negotiated, so one may assume that the Soviet Govern-

ment is willing to meet the Government of the United States some part of the way regarding compensation to Americans whose property in Russia was confiscated. Whether it will acknowledge any obligation to repay the loan made to Kerensky we are not informed, but it is made quite clear that a counter-claim of huge proportions for American aid to the White Armies is going to be pressed with the utmost vigour. If the legitimacy of this is acknowledged, as one must assume that it is, for otherwise the negotiations could not be called successful, then who on earth will be in a position to assess the amount due, or to criticize the bill which the Soviet authorities may choose to present for damage of all sorts? The prospect of recovering moneys from Moscow to discharge the debt of which so much has been made in the United States press for the last fourteen years would seem to be both exceedingly remote and exceedingly indefinite.

A point in the controversy on which there is clearer deliverance is that of freedom for Americans resident in Russia to observe the forms of their religion. The Soviet authorities promise this, but with a disquieting reference to their well-known guarantee of such freedom to everybody. Their practice in the matter is indeed well known, better known than suits their repute. Recollection of what has happened to devout members of the Russian Church will make the American Baptist or Congregationalist desire somewhat ampler protection for his Sunday habits. He may ask, too, for better assurance of ownership in buildings or lands acquired by his religious community for what is known in pleasant Bolshevik idiom as "purposes of the cult". President Roosevelt has bargained further that an American citizen shall not be denied the right of entrance into Russia merely on the ground that he is "a clergyman, a priest or a rabbi": so far as Americans are concerned, these callings are not to be held so disreputable as to exclude at the immigration sheds, though it would be unwarrantable interference to criticise any discriminatory measures which Moscow may have ordained against such lower order of native Russians. Finally, the Soviet rulers have promised that they will neither themselves organize any movement for the overthrow of the United States Government nor knowingly permit organizations planning this to have their headquarters in Russia; but when asked what in particular will be their action in regard to the Third Internationale, they make use of the customary evasions. The Third Internationale, we learn once more, is a body over which the Russian Government has no control, to whose funds it makes no contribution, and about whose activities it is very imperfectly informed.

Acceptance of assurances such as these can be interpreted in only one way. It was the desire of the United States Government to resume diplomatic intercourse with Russia, and some "face-saving" formula of reconciliation had to be devised. The formula chosen is perhaps all the better because, while not grossly below the usual level of such pretexts for a decision otherwise reached, it was plainly meant to appease the multitude alone. To thoughtful observers it has supplied a topic of mirth. If two families have quarrelled, they may determine very wisely after years of estrangement to make it up; but they must expect merry comment from outsiders when they give as a reason that one has now solemnly covenanted never again to try to burn down the other's house or knowingly to furnish a base of operations to anyone else for this incendiary purpose—without commitment, however, regarding that particular member of the covenanting family who set the fire long ago, and whom his kindred find it hard to control, but dare not expel. Nor is the explanation much helped by the record of a pledge duly witnessed and signed, that the aggressor group will not again throw stones at the other on the way to church, and will at least resume conversations (without prejudice as to their result) about the enormous quantity of the other's goods they stole long ago.

There is moral courage, however, in doing a socially expedient thing even at the cost of having to appear intellectually ridiculous. No good cause was being served, and considerable interests were being imperilled, by further refusal to acknowledge in Washington what is certainly *de facto* the Government of Russia.

Lack of a diplomatic channel for communication with those who speak for one hundred and fifty millions of people must have most disastrous results. No doubt a driving motive in this negotiation was the prospect of vast business for American manufacturers, especially desirable at a time when so much of their surplus products has had to be stored. But a further reason, of international moment, was the need for a regular means of access to the officials of a country whose acts so often call for foreign remonstrance. No one else can remonstrate so successfully as those upon whose goodwill important interests depend, and it is reasonable to assume that the United States Government will now facilitate much new business with the U. S. S. R. On the consequences for such matters as the sale of Canadian lumber across the line, it is premature to speak, though Canadian lumber interests are plainly apprehensive. But at least in resuming ambassadorial relations the United States will resume the right to deal candidly

with Moscow. Americans resident there will now have an acknowledged method of invoking their country's protection if they should find themselves in such a plight as that which so lately befell a group of British engineers.

THERE are few writers more welcome than M. André Maurois, and his effort to disentangle the confusion of French political parties at present has a value far beyond the confines of any single country. Moreover, if his task was difficult when his manuscript for the *Spectator* was under construction, it has not been made easier by the events which have happened since.

A fundamental identity of world problems in all countries was illustrated by the downfall of the Government of M. Daladier, followed very soon by a similar fate for his successor. The French deficit had reached the appalling figure of six billion francs—equivalent, even at the present very low exchange rate for the franc, to about two hundred and forty million dollars. M. Daladier found himself in a position like that of Mr. Ramsay MacDonald in England two years before. He proposed to grapple with the difficulty by reduction in expenditure, and also by an issue of nickel coinage to the amount of 13 per cent. of the deficit. For the remainder, he planned what the French call "fiscal rearrangements"—a nicer word for what we call new taxation.

New taxes were to be laid on incomes, on dividends (which were to be stopped for this purpose at the source), on motor fuel and tyres, on the business turnover of water and gas and electric companies, and so forth. The large financiers found this method of raising revenue exceedingly objectionable—as large financiers might be expected to find it; but they heartily approved of the device for economising by reduction in the pay of civil servants. A sliding scale was here to be introduced, beginning at 5 per cent. reduction and rising to 10 per cent. This was to apply also to military and naval pensions. But there was an enormous uproar. The civil servants in particular, said to be a long-suffering class in other countries, made the welkin ring with their complaints. An immediate and a gigantic inflation was demanded by men in business. The result of inflation, of course, would have been the very reverse of beneficial to civil servants on fixed salaries, but the mounting total of complaints and proposals mutually inconsistent was enough to leave the premier in a minority in the House. So another reigned in his stead. But in France, unlike Great Britain or any British self-governing country, this involves no general election: merely

what is called in polite language a "rearrangement", and in impolite language "log-rolling".

The personality of M. Daladier's successor has a piquant interest. M. Sarraut's countrymen are addicted to coining a nickname for their leaders, and his Ministry soon began to be known as "The Ministry of Convalescence". There is a pleasant ring of hope, but an unpleasant suggestion of tedium, in that term. M. Clemenceau used to be called "The Tiger", for qualities easily identifiable, and notorious beyond the Rhine. The sequence of habit was preserved by a proposal to call M. Sarraut, whether affectionately or derisively, by the soubriquet "The Tom-cat". Its fitness comes from the record of his many hairbreadth escapes. As a very young politician, about thirty-five years ago, he was Under-Secretary of the Interior in the cabinet so troubled by *l'affaire Dreyfus*, and his quarrel with another deputy on that issue ended in a duel in which M. Sarraut had a rapier run through his body. But that, they say, was only the first of his lives to be lost, and he had the feline balance of eight in reserve.

Under M. Briand he became junior Minister of War, and he was sent to the French possession of Indo-China as Governor-General, where he had native rebellions to suppress, and bombs were hurled at him repeatedly. They blew up Chinamen all round him, but his smiling figure remained unscathed when the dust and debris had cleared away. He enlisted for the Great War in 1914, and with his usual good fortune escaped physically uninjured. After the War he went again to Indo-China as Governor, where a Chinese revolutionary emptied a revolver into his body, but with appropriate treatment in an amazingly short time he could be described in the language of the prize-ring as "up again and fighting". Once he was mangled in an automobile accident, but with no more than a temporary suspension of activities. No wonder he is thought of as leading a charmed life, and he had need to call upon his very last vital reserves as Premier of France at a time so critical as this. In private life M. Sarraut is co-proprietor of the great journal called *La Dépêche de Toulouse*, with wider circulation than any newspaper in Paris can boast, so that he illustrates once more the growing strength of that class in politics. From the point of view of French Conservatives, and particularly French Royalists, his elevation was an ominous sign of the influence of that Freemasonry which they abhor. But this is Freemasonry in a sense very different from that which the term bears for us. When shall we escape from the misleading ambiguities of the vocabulary of international politics?

M. Sarraut's tenure of power proved to be brief and feverish. No more than his predecessor could he, financially, square the circle. There was no means of meeting the deficit without vast new taxation; and when he proposed to tax incomes of civil servants below 10,000 francs a year, his doom was sealed. One can hardly blame civil servants who get only this amount, less than thirty-five dollars a month in Canadian money, for deciding that they had nothing to spare for the Government! M. Sarraut's successor has an interesting name which means, being translated, "A Hot Time". Doubtless his premiership will show its perfect suitability.

INTEREST has returned somewhat tragically of late to happenings in the Holy Land. Newspapers have reported an outbreak of rioting in most of the chief towns of Palestine. It is all the more lamentable because the four years which have intervened since the last disturbances were thought to have conciliated the feud between Arabs and Jews. The *Times* remarks that at least on this occasion, unlike that of 1929, the Palestinian police, Arab and Jewish as well as British, remained reliable. With reinforcements within call in case of need, both by sea and by air from Egypt, the Mandatory Government soon had the situation well in hand. But there was a regrettable loss of life.

A further point of difference from the case of 1929 is that not Jews but British were this time the object of Arab attack. The cry had been raised that German Jews in enormous numbers were to be introduced by the British High Commissioner, and wrath was stirred not so much against the unwelcome immigrants (who might be supposed ready to come if they could) as against the supervising European authority that was letting down the barrier to admit them. The whole tale was indeed a legend. No such wholesale importation of exiles from Germany had ever been contemplated. Less than one-quarter of the certificates applied for by the Jewish agency, for Jews seeking to enter Palestine during the next six months, had been granted. The British statement is that any recent increase in permits had been the outcome of a purely economic situation. In Palestine the orange trade had been growing, the completion of electrical schemes and of Haifa Harbour, together with the exploitation of the Dead Sea, had created new industries, and the truth is that the Holy Land—unlike most other places—was beginning to feel a shortage of the required labour. An influx not only of Jewish workers but of Jewish capital was thus to be fostered.

But it has taken some time to correct the wild reports of Jews coming in shiploads, far beyond the number which any economic forecast could justify. One may conjecture at will from what source these tales proceeded, but they were at least enough to call forth feverish activity by the Arab committee, to prompt a general strike, and to result in riots with considerable loss of life. A conjecture with some plausibility which appears in the *Times* is that part of the cause of the recent outbreak was the desire of the Arab Executive in Palestine to recover some lost prestige, and that for this purpose there was pretence of a danger which was certain to rally the Arab allegiance. Fortunately the alarms about what might happen on the anniversary of the date of the Balfour Note proved to be groundless, and the situation has become fairly normal again. The whole story illustrates once more how difficult it is to overtake a lie once it has got a real start.

PROBABLY more interest than we could spare from events close at hand should have been felt by Canadians in the great gathering which opened about six weeks ago at Montevideo, in Uruguay. Mr. Gruening writes in *Current History* about this Seventh Pan-American Conference, and takes occasion to remind—possibly to inform—a large body of readers regarding the way in which such Conferences began. A series of disappointing experiences has made us all less sanguine than we should have been some years ago at the sight of delegates from twenty-one nations sitting down at a Round Table to plan co-operation. We may be haunted by a disbelief like that of Coleridge in ghosts, due to the fact that we “have seen too many.” Still, there is no telling what another trial may bring forth, and an age which has learned to believe that “anything may happen” should not exclude in advance from such charitable acknowledgement even the rosy guesses of the optimist. Anyhow, it can only be for our good to use the chance of recalling or learning a little history.

The Pan-American Conference idea bred in the brain of Simon Bolivar, when he had so successfully led the way in rescuing Spanish colonies from the yoke of their unkind mother country. Why should not these newly formed Southern American republics make a principle of co-operation for the future out of the spirit of a common struggle against the tyrant who had afflicted them all? Moreover, was it not plain that the nations of the western hemisphere had interests to bind them together, in contrast with the nations of the Old World? Why not try, at least, a federated

union of those republics which had, until lately, been Spanish colonies? The earliest attempt at this, in 1826, when Mexico, Colombia, Peru, and "Central America" (not yet split up as at present) came together in conference at Panama, did not result in any permanent organization, and—says Mr. Gruening—over half a century had to pass before Bolivar's scheme took tangible shape. So the first real Pan-American Conference was that which met at Washington in 1889, at the call of President Cleveland, but even it led to no particular change, beyond the founding of the Commercial Bureau of American Republics. In succession from that date, have been seen the meetings at Mexico City in 1901, at Rio de Janeiro in 1906, at Buenos Aires in 1910, at Santiago de Chile in 1923 (postponed from 1914 owing to the World War), and at Havana in 1928. The present, at Montevideo, is thus seventh in order.

What have these gatherings achieved? One is tempted to compare them to gatherings in Geneva, and to dismiss the Pan-American Conference which meets every five years as a sort of American correlate of the League of Nations which meets more frequently, with a similar record of contrast between the vastness of its promise and the paucity of its performance. Yet this cynical attitude of disparagement may be a mistaken one. Even at Geneva, the record of failures has to be matched with a record of successes; and though the successes may belong to a hum-drum field of social service, which attracts no attention, while the failures are in the arena of international conflict which supplies excellent newspaper headlines, it may turn out that the happenings less advertised were, in the long run, more important. So, too, these South American States have been not unproductively employed in discussing together the treaties which regulate their trade, the status which belongs in each to the children of foreigners, the rights they concede to aliens, and the safeguards they provide for public health. It is true that proposals for limitation of armaments have generally failed to win their agreement, but herein Geneva surely cannot afford to be contemptuous. It was at least found possible at Santiago de Chile, in 1923, to reach a bargain for the peaceful settlement of disputes which bound the signatories to a delay of eighteen months for trial of milder measures before plunging into war.

According to Mr. Gruening's picture, the topic of most urgent interest at Montevideo is that of warding off intervention by other powers in the internal affairs of a republic of Latin-America. Ever since the Fourth Conference, at Buenos Aires in 1910, the menace

or at least the dread of United States "imperialism" has hung over these republics like a nightmare. They trace its beginning back to the Spanish-American war, which brought to the United States the annexation of Puerto Rico, the assertion of a controlling voice in Cuba, and a few other "odds and ends" of national aggrandizement, which might well be a token of more to come. The Latin-American memory recalls, since then, the landing of United States marines in Nicaragua, intervention in Haiti and the Dominican republic, as well as the bombardment of Vera Cruz. How much further is this tutelage to proceed? It is not a Munroe doctrine, keeping non-American States from intruding, that these small republics desire. The power they chiefly dread is on their own hemisphere. Nor are they in the least hospitable to the claim of American right to interfere as often as the methods of internal government in a southern republic are judged improper by the Washington conscience.

Among projects discussed at Montevideo, matters of finance very naturally had a large place, and the cables told us of some very interesting suggestions. One was that of a common system of money and banking, a Pan-American currency on the basis of commodity price levels. This was meant, no doubt, to check the chaotic variations of exchange, but it seems hardly practicable while the twenty-one nations involved differ so widely in their ideas and methods of "sound" financing. The United States will gladly be one of a group to carry on discussion on equal terms with a score of others; but it is an altogether different thing to propose equality of risk in a financial enterprise. So one is not surprised to hear that the enthusiasm of the Washington representative was limited to the proposal to call a Pan-American Economic Conference at some date in the future, without prejudice as to the concrete propositions which these "weaker brethren" have already submitted. Let us hope that when it does meet, it will be more productive than its predecessor.

A single gaunt spectre seems to have haunted the deliberations at Montevideo—the spectre called "Cuba". Should the new Government of that distracted island get recognition? The language which came from Cuban quarters was such as to cause much anxiety at the early meetings of the Conference lest the United States might be offended into withdrawal. But it was extremely difficult to carry on the discussions at all without such perilous reference, explicit or implicit, to what was in every delegate's mind. It was well known that the Government which succeeded Machado came to so speedy and abrupt a close because it was

regarded as the nominee of Washington. At Montevideo the remembrance of delegates went back inevitably to the meeting at Havana in 1928, whither Machado in the heyday of his power had attracted such an impressive United States delegation as no one had seen before, inducing even Mr. Coolidge to attend in person at such Conference—a new departure for a President of the United States. Did not “the tyrant” then muzzle the Havana press, forbidding all hostile comment on United States policy towards Latin-America? To suggest to Cubans that the United States must bear in that quarter of the world something like “the white man’s burden” of responsibility for order and justice among the backward races was not merely to wound the local sense of dignity. It was to call forth at once the cynical rejoinder that in this apostolate the pet and darling of the superior nation’s patronage had been Gerardo Machado!

And yet, whatever may have been the errors, or misdeeds worse than errors, in actual practice, which of us can help agreeing with the doctrine enunciated by Mr. C. E. Hughes—that when government breaks down, so that American citizens are in danger of their lives, the United States can never give up its right to protect them?

THE end of the year is generally marked by forecasts, and there is special interest for Canadians in what that brilliant airman, Sir Alan Cobham, foresees for 1934. Mr. W. E. Bakes, in *Overseas*, has raised the question of an Atlantic Air Line within the next twelve months, and he brings to our attention the warnings of a very eminent authority against the lack of “airmindedness” in the British people. “We have lost”, says Mr. Bakes, “the blue riband of the Atlantic, so far as ocean-going liners are concerned; but we shall never lose the blue riband of the air, because it can never be ours to lose, unless a great change in policy takes place”. Naturally the achievement of Marshal Balbo, and the enthusiastic support for further aerial projects which this called forth among the Italians, are cited for admonition of the British people.

What are the prospects for 1934? It has long been felt that the establishment of a regular trans-Atlantic Air Service would come last among the links by which “Imperial Airways” would connect the different parts of the British Commonwealth. Exceptional problems not only of fog but of fuelling stand in the way. Sir Alan Cobham thinks, however, that next year will see a solution for these difficulties of Atlantic transit. He looks forward to a regular service, some time in 1934, in which flying boats with

wireless equipment, almost if not wholly independent of weather conditions, will carry each of them, say, 30 or 40 passengers from the Old World to the New. He pictures the English business man embarking at a British airport at six o'clock in the evening, to attend a Conference in New York at nine the next morning, and punctual to his appointment after a comfortable night's sleep. Whether the various trans-Atlantic steamship lines will share Sir Alan Cobham's delight, we may perhaps doubt. The British railway companies do not rejoice over the triumphs of mechanical dexterity in equipping the automobile bus.

What about the available trans-Atlantic routes? Mr. Bakes reminds us of the recent flight by Colonel and Mrs. Lindberg, "the last of a series of exploratory flights in search of possible landing places and other information". Colonel Lindberg was commissioned by "Pan-American Airways"; the route he followed by Newfoundland and Greenland does not involve anywhere a sea crossing of more than 600 miles. It is highly significant—says the writer—that the American company concerned has already secured all the concessions which would be required for the establishment of a service that way. What, then, is "Imperial Airways" about? Its achievements, we read, dwindle into insignificance when compared with those of its American rival, which has a really marvellous system of air routes through the United States and also through the various States of South America.

And so we require, among the myriad other needs pressing upon us, to become "air-conscious"! It may be so. The whole matter is too technical to discuss in these pages, but a reference to the warnings of Sir Alan Cobham and Mr. Bakes may bring it to the attention of the very few people who are qualified to appraise its various sides. Quite obviously there are possibilities of the highest importance for Canada if, as critics predict, the Atlantic passenger service will take, at least at first, the Arctic route. And a great deal depends on being prepared, a little ahead, for the chances which are coming.

H. L. S.