

centration of wealth. It was reached in France in 1789; it was reached in Russia in 1917.

Although the menace to us is yet far distant, it behooves us to take warning and to relieve the growing pressure by reversing the tendency toward concentration. The gradual restrictions on inheritances, the guarantee of better living conditions to labor, shorter hours and higher pay will not register any violent effect on our economic or social system. Such reforms will also probably prevent the gradual emergence of two poles—one the pole of concentration of wealth and the other the pole of poverty—that finally causes the electric shock of revolution.

Since the forces that affect the lives of nations traverse centuries in their course, wise statesmen who have the enduring stability of our country at heart must be unusually alert to detect the first germs of the peril that may threaten America in the far distant future. The adjustment of our legal balance wheel so that it will maintain the proper equilibrium between labor and capital, will prevent the formation of a social environment that is favorable to Bolshevism.

## AMERICAN IDEALS AS APPLIED TO CHINA.<sup>1</sup>

BY GILBERT REID.

AMERICAN ideals are higher than mere opinions, which too often are a distorted shaping of the prejudices of passion. Our ideals in these days of world war and world catastrophe have been voiced by the Chief Executive of our nation. Probably the clearest expression of these ideals was contained in the President's address of September 27 of last year in New York City. This address inspired hope in all who wish well for humanity. It encouraged the sentiments of peace in the three enemy countries. It has been spoken of as a Magna Charta for the world.

As with all of President Wilson's pronouncements there are apparently mutually contradictory statements representing two sides to all theorizing. Only one who has been nourished in strict Calvinism and knows how to harmonize the freedom of the human will with God's sovereignty, is capable of harmonizing all of Presi-

<sup>1</sup> We are privileged to publish this article from the pen of Dr. Gilbert Reid, of the International Institute of China, who only recently returned from Shanghai.—Ed.

dent Wilson's utterances, even those of September 27. Some pugnacious individuals quote only the part about the villainous character of the governments of the Central Empires. Others, more charitable, dwell on the principles of universal application, assuring a League of Nations. If difficulty of harmonizing ideas exists it is because of difficulty of applying general principles to enemy governments.

There should be no difficulty in applying these general and good principles to an associate in war so friendly as China, whose entrance into the war was induced by representatives of our own government. This application may be an interesting topic for discussion, as well as informing to not a few of the noble adherents of the League of Nations.

1. "Shall the military power of any nation or group of nations be suffered to determine the fortunes of peoples over whom they have no right to rule except the right of force?"

In 1900, after the barbarism and atrocities of the Boxer uprising, all foreign powers proceeded to take the Chinese monarchical government in hand, and in a military way to occupy Peking and all adjoining towns. These powers, all of them, proceeded to dictate a humiliating peace, though at that time they insisted on plenipotentiaries from the old empress dowager, the guilty head of a sinning government. But all this was eighteen years ago.

Since 1914 the fortunes of the Chinese people, as also the present military autocracy of Peking and all north China, have been gradually and imperceptibly determined by the military power of Japan, or, if this be too prejudiced a view, by the military power of the Entente group of nations, with whom the United States has associated herself.

The question therefore arises: Can China at the close of this war free herself from military or political power assumed through favorable opportunities by "any nation or group of nations" during these last four years? On the principle just cited, no outside nation has the "right to rule" in any part of China, whether Manchuria, Shantung, the Yang-tze valley, or any other part, or to attempt that rule, that dictation, that extraterritoriality, by the so-called "right of force."

Is China to be set free?

2. "Shall strong nations be free to wrong weak nations and make them subject to their purpose and interest?"

Suppose we trace the wrong done to China from the year 1871—the year Alsace-Lorraine was made a conquest to Prussia

and, in part at least, restored to German rule—what a record we would have. Tongking taken by France from the suzerainty of China in 1883; Formosa and Liaotung in Manchuria taken by Japan in 1895 “through conquest of military power”; Kiaochow leased by China to Germany in 1898 (afterward occupied by Japan); Port Arthur and Dalny leased to Russia (afterward occupied by Japan); Kwan-chow-wan leased to France, and Weihaiwei and Kowloon leased to Great Britain, all in the same year, and all instigating the Boxer fanaticism of 1900; and the Legation area of Peking arranged as a fortress in 1901, the recompense for Chinese outrages.

All this wrong is merely in territory. Other and perhaps deeper wrongs are in the general treatment which China has received at the hands of “strong nations,” especially since this war of Europe was thrust into China just struggling into a republic. Take the renewal of opium trade through the British Opium Combine. Take the introduction of morphine into Manchuria and Shantung by the Japanese. Take the twenty-one demands of Japan—and the insulting ultimatum that went with them. Take the various forms of dictation, generally denominated “friendly advice,” which the Chinese government has received week after week for the last year or more, since China was persuaded to imitate the United States in severing relations with the Imperial German government. Take the secret compacts connected with Japan's request for Chinese cooperation in intervention in Siberia. Take all the secret negotiations by loan-mongers of more than one nation, which have loaded China with burdens grievous to be borne. These are so many hints as to the way “strong nations” are trying to “subject” China “to their purpose and interest.”

At the peace conference shall China, one of our associates in war, be freed from the domination of superior force?

3. “Shall peoples be ruled and dominated even in their own internal affairs by arbitrary and irresponsible force or by their own will and choice?”

This may be taken to mean not arbitrary use of force by foreign powers in China, but the “arbitrary and irresponsible force” of the present recognized government in Peking. That government, since July, 1917, has been “arbitrary and irresponsible.” “Military power” dissolved Parliament, and overthrew President Li Yuan-hung. Even war on the two Central Empires was declared without sanction of any legislative body. The legal, constitutional government of the republic has been assembled in Canton. It consists of

progressive men from every province of China. The distinguished statesman, Dr. Wu Ting-fang, has appealed to the Entente Allies and the United States for recognition, but the appeal is other than that of the Czecho-Slovaks, the Russians, or the Poles.

Will the peace conference help to set China free from her own arbitrary rule?

4. "The impartial justice meted out must involve no discrimination between those to whom we wish to be just and those to whom we do not wish to be just. It must be a justice that plays no favorites and knows no standard but the equal rights of the several peoples concerned."

This dictum applies to both sides of this great war. It is a warning to the conqueror; it is good-cheer, based on fair play, to those who surrender.

Suppose we apply it to China and to affairs of these nations in China, what happens? Will Germans be again accorded "equal opportunity of trade and industry," already vouchsafed by Japan in agreement with Great Britain, Russia, France, and the United States, or shall German trade be destroyed? Shall German concessions in railways and mines be restored to Germans or be allowed the Japanese? Shall the beautiful port of Tsingtao be held by the Japanese, be handed over to China, or be returned to Germany, if China herself so permits? Is there to be discrimination against Germans after the war, even as there has been during the war, and this not so much by Chinese as by Germany's enemies in China?

As to China, in comparison with her great rival, Japan, is American sympathy to go out to the latter more than to the former, even in matters pertaining to China? Shall our State Department make arrangements with China about "special interests" in China, or with Japan? Ought China to be given at the peace conference an equally high seat with Japan, and will China's rights be determined by the common action of all?

5. "No special or separate interest of any single nation or any group of nations can be made the basis of any part of the settlement which is not consistent with the common interest of all."

Shall Japan be this "single nation" with "special" interests in China? Shall Great Britain, France, Belgium, Italy, Japan, and the United States, together form a powerful group to direct, reform, or rejuvenate China, or shall all powers take a hand, whether China wants such aid or not? Shall the benevolent moulding of China be even left to the great Anglo-American combination? Will

it after all be possible for us to see in China the fruition of "the common interest of all"?

6. "There can be no special selfish economic combinations within the league and no employment of any form of economic boycott or exclusion."

Will British or Japanese merchants in China give support to this principle? The law is good: will victors sustain the law?

7. "All international agreements and treaties of every kind must be made known in their entirety to the rest of the world."

Another good principle, but can even a League of Nations guarantee its observance? Are "the two Central Powers" the only offenders? If the rule, an eminently sound one, is to be applied to the Far East, by what pressure can Japan and the present military government in Peking be brought to publish their varied agreements since China declared war on Germany and Austria-Hungary? Is the baneful element of secrecy to be limited to "treaties," or shall it also be forbidden to all *contracts* in which diplomats concern themselves? What of secret "conversations"?

8. *"Special alliances and economic rivalries and hostilities have been the prolific source in the modern world of the plans and passions that produce war. It would be an insincere as well as an insecure peace that did not exclude them in definite and binding terms."*

Write this in letters of gold. No alliance, no allies. President Wilson has consistently refrained from saying, "our Allies."

It was economic rivalry that brought the war on to Chinese soil. Can it be expunged at the peace conference?

In maintaining these high ideals, as well as others, President Wilson finds the task a hard one just as much with his own countrymen and the strong Allied nations, as with the two Central Empires.

It may be safely asserted that the people of China are with our President in every one of these ideal principles. Will he be able to reciprocate and help China in the face of opposition from "any single nation or any group of nations"?

Well-wishers of China as well as the Chinese people are looking to President Wilson to guide the nations and peoples on all the continents to a sincere and secure peace such as this that is planned on the basis of true righteousness.