

troyed. Anyhow it is the last kick of Feudalism in Europe and Democracy is bound to prevail. Even the Czar of all the Russias is promising "Home Rule" to Poland and freedom of citizenship to the Jews. On such a colossal scale as the operations of war are now attaining the duration can not be very long.

The best thing to think about it is that (1) the war will be fairly short and (2) that it will end satisfactorily to Britain and the Empire. But the best is not the only side unfortunately to this bad business. There is a worse side too. But that side is not so bad as the pessimistics regard it. Our Commerce our Industry our Producing power, and our development—all these are according to the pessimists about to be fatally injured, if not ended. Why do they think thus? The answer is on the very surface of things—because there has been dislocation at the outset.

Of course there has been dislocation. When everything is uncertain finance stops. It is the sea we must question for the why and the wherefore. At the outbreak of the war the supremacy of the sea had to be decided. Most people expected to see it decided by a great battle or series of battles between the British and the German fleets. A large literature had been ten years dinning it into our heads that war between Britain and Germany must cripple the trade of Britain and sweep the sea of British commerce to a very large extent. The Magazine writers were the great offenders in this respect, reducing the public opinion of the Empire to abject cowardice incapable of reflection. It is always the man on paper who frightens people. He always forgets that there are two sides to every question. What actually happened in this case is to these people an eye-opener. There was no fight, no disturbance, no doubt. Britain simply extended her hand and took the command of the seas. Before the declaration of war the fleet sailed. Immediately after the declaration the fleet sought out the German ships, with offer of fight or be bottled up, and the Germans went quietly into the bottle. The fleet has acted as a cork ever since. Other fleets went out and swept the sea. Officially it was announced that the seas are clear for British commerce.

Another thing became clear—like the lightning that lights up the sky from the east to the west. The destruction of the commerce and the mercantile marine of Germany. The very fate designed by the foolish pessimists for us was inflicted on the Germans. In war the great superiority of the British fleet told at once. Thousands of ships worth many millions of money were at once paralysed some in our hands and those of our allies and the rest is neutral of German ports. Above this one thousand millions of annual trade stopped dead.

From these two facts one deduces much. Britain depends on the sea for food and raw material. The sea is clear. Nothing prevents the food and the raw material from being taken by sea to Britain. There was deadlock in the first scare of the war. For the reasons we have pointed out. But why should it continue when the seas are safe and there

is business to be done? The British manufacturer is offered the markets of the world vacated by Germany and to some extent by Austria. He will strain every nerve to make good his footing. Britain is guaranteed the continuance of the food supply. The people who live by producing it, transporting it and selling it to the consumer will strain every nerve to get it. Finance? Of course finance must adjust itself under such propitious conditions, to the surrounding circumstances.

The British Government and the New Zealand governments have come to aid the situation by legislation. The first guaranteed the bills of trade and helped the Bank of England in the matter of the legal tender of its notes. The other government helped the banks in this way too and have taken precaution against the undue raising of prices. It has also got the Legislature to pass the Bank Act Amendment Act which makes the paths straight and the rough places plain for the raising of money for the public exchequer. The British Government has also taken up the question of marine insurance and the premiums are no longer excessive. Why should they be when the seas are swept and garnished for the convenience of the Red Ensign?

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In referring to the Dilworth Competition last month, we stated that we thought the New Zealand Institute of Architects should have made some effort to have the conditions for this competition revised. It seems that the Institute's first intimation of the Competition was through the daily papers, and that as soon as the Hon. Secretary heard of it, the matter was taken up. The following is from the "Chronicle" of Proceedings of the Institute" for May:—

"COMPETITIONS.—Correspondence in connection with the Thames High School and Dilworth Trust Board Competitions was read and discussed. With regard to the former it was resolved that a reply be sent to the promoters stating that the conditions governing their competition are unsatisfactory to this Institute, and that in future all members be asked to refrain from taking part in any competition the conditions of which do not substantially accord with the Regulations.

With regard to the latter it was resolved to again approach the promoters particularly urging that the assessors' duties should be defined in accordance with the Regulations and should not be merely advisory.

The Board has since replied explaining the difficulties attached to this in their particular case."

We understand that in addition to the above, the Institute asked that the name of the Professional Assessor should be published, and that the successful competitor should have the carrying out of the work, providing that he were fully qualified.

We are very glad to learn that the Institute is watching things on behalf of its members, but it is a great pity that its members do not immediately advise the Secretary of any forthcoming competition as soon as they know of one, so that the parties could be communicated with, and some arrangement made whereby architects could compete on a fair basis, under conditions that would be much better for all concerned, including the client. In most cases the Institute does not know of Competitions till they are advertised, when it is too late to alter "conditions." Cannot members assist here?