

## *Liberalism Restated*

THE WORLD PEACE AND AFTER. By Carl H. Grabo. Knopf; \$1.

A League of Nations we shall have as a result of the war, but for those who take literally a pledge to make the world safe for democracy a League of Nations is but the first turn in a long road. The war has taught the enemies of democracy that a secure commercial expansion and a rapprochement between competing national capitalistic groups are inseparable. The German autocracy has also proffered a fertile suggestion in its successful manipulation of the German workman. The latter does not seem overly concerned about his political impotence or about limitations upon his freedom to speak and write, so long as he is assured an effective education, material comforts, recreational facilities, and security against the misfortunes of ill health, accident, and an impecunious old age. Democracy will continue endangered if the conclusion of war leaves capital in control of an international government which winks at international devices for combating labor, checking freedom of speech, controlling the dissemination of news and opinion, and allaying popular discontent by means of programmes for social reform.

In his book "The World Peace and After" Carl H. Grabo expresses his fear of such an eventuality. He maintains that the test of our belief in the ideals of democracy is our willingness to introduce democratic institutions at home. To be sure, he would establish a league of nations which will guarantee the free use of roads of commerce, the equality of all states before law, a like economic opportunity for all nations, the protection of small peoples from the exploitation of larger, and the right of diverse peoples to develop diverse cultures. But all this, he holds, does not mean of itself a democratic world. A democratic ideal implies equality of opportunity as between individuals. And equality of opportunity means, if it means anything, "that we should all be born, inheriting strong bodies free from defect; that we should be well nourished; that we should be equally well educated." Nature has forever decreed that men shall be unequal in ability, but man's intelligence can make an approach towards an economic democracy as it has made progress towards political democracy.

A true democracy, then, according to Mr. Grabo, involves both economic and political equality. And this, manifestly, we do not have. But the war makes possible the creation of a

more just society. It has swept away the old order. Under the necessities of war governments have increased their functions. In a world that has spent its inheritance the necessities of peace will require their multiplication. We seem to face a situation in which we must decide between an oligarchy which combines political and industrial power, and an intelligent reorganization of the state which will unite industrial efficiency with democratic control. The British Labor party aims at the second, and much that Mr. Grabo writes is a restatement of its programme. His chapter "The Citizen and the State" discusses the immediate steps requisite for a transformation of our present society. A progressively increasing tax upon incomes, inheritances, and unearned increments affords a transition to greater economic equality and supplies one means for financing the socialized activities of the state. The gradual participation of labor in the management of industry will lead to an industrial democracy, while the referendum, the recall, and proportional representation are indispensable conditions of a political democracy.

The book is worth reading. To be sure, one familiar with Bertrand Russell, Sidney Webb, and others in sympathy with the programme of the British Labor party will find little in it that is novel. The radical social philosophy which the war brings into prominence merits however a constant restatement, and particularly in America. But novelty of content is the only justification I can imagine for the tiresome repetition of ideas which leads Grabo to cover 154 pages in saying what might better be said on 75. In point of fact there is very little in the five chapters that is not said in the chapter on "International Relations"—with one exception.

And this exception is irrelevant to the main purpose of the book. It occurs in connection with a plea for a new social morality to replace the present individualistic morality. Grabo evidently believes that since our individualistic morality professes an origin and sanction in a personal God, a social morality must derive vitality from a pantheistic God. This new deity is "the larger all-embracing consciousness of the world realizing his aims through the willing coöperation of men." A sympathetic reader will perhaps know what these words mean. I confess that I do not. But I think we have here Mr. Wells's Invisible King masquerading under an assumed name, "The World Spirit." And Mr. Archer will get him if he doesn't watch out.

V. T. THAYER.