

A NORWEGIAN STATESMAN'S VIEWS ON MR. ROOSEVELT'S NOBEL LECTURE

ONE of the ablest political leaders of Norway is Erik Vullum, a statesman whose utterances always command national attention. Norway being, through its representatives, the distributor of the Nobel peace prize each year, the national mind naturally runs on the peace problem. Hence the widespread public interest in what Mr. Vullum has to say on ex-President Roosevelt's lecture in Christiania. Writing in the review *Tidens Tegn*, the mold of opinion in Norway declares that what gives weight to all of Mr. Roosevelt's statements is the fact that "there is a man behind his words. It is a *will* which shows itself, and again behind this will there is a power."

Characterizing the ex-President further, as the "most typical living representative of the greatness of his growing country," the Norwegian writer continues:

Mr. Roosevelt's consciousness of the difficulties connected with the practical solution of the peace problem was clearly discernible. He did not consider the problem insoluble, but held that the strongest kind of energy would have to be applied. And then patience. A Viennese statesman once said that the greatest drawback about idealism was that it never could be realized. Mr. Roosevelt is far from sharing this view. His optimism shines more brightly, but equally far is he from the exaggeration which compels a man to transfer his ideals bodily into reality. . . . An opponent of over-armament, he considers no armament the niggardly surrender of cowards. There are many of us who are holding the same view, and the utterance of Roosevelt has given it added weight. He takes the times just as they are—the proclamation of eternal peace is a chimera, but as chimerical is it

to picture the future as a constant state of war. This constitutes the blending of the spiritual elements of our time, and Mr. Roosevelt himself is of the same blend.

Perhaps, continues Mr. Vullum, there are those who will find the peace lecture of Mr. Roosevelt rather warlike—but this is "doing the great American statesman an injustice."

The thoughts and discussions of peace advocates are centered, with a steadily growing energy, around the question of *arbitration* as the form of peaceable settlement. It has become the pivot, round which revolve the different attempts of solution of the peace problem. Arbitration is about as old as war. Until now it had not gained much ground. But now its day has come. The Arbitration Court at The Hague has become a central point appealing to the consciousness of the peoples. . . . But the difficulty! The great difficulty! Roosevelt faced it squarely without flinching or concealment. The question is: Who is to execute the judgments pronounced by the World's Court? This question, the central question here, still remains unsolved, but there are indications that we are getting nearer to its solution. . . . Bismarck advised the Prussian Government to support the arbitration plan with the hidden argument that no executing body had been provided to enforce any judgment by this proposed international court. This clever, if not altogether noble, argument carried its weight, and for a long time it kept down all idea of arbitration. Roosevelt has put the question differently. He holds that possible which Bismarck considered impossible. This marks a progress. It is not a great stride in the march of progress, but then great strides are never made in movements which have to count with hundreds of years. And in this count Mr. Roosevelt has spoken good, sound common sense.