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COLONIAL ASPECTS OF THE WAR

In a recent speech Mr. Asquith declared that the greatest mistake that Germany had made in respect to the war was in her failure to recognize that there was a British Empire. Great Britain has long been regarded as a small, insignificant island off the European coast. She has been looked upon as a second-rate European power somewhat in the class with Italy and Spain. And such she is in fact if considered by herself alone. But the war has revealed, what the Empire has long since known, that England is an imperial rather than a European nation, that she is but the heart of a group of free autonomous states, that her strength lies not alone in her own people and resources, but in the loyal support of her children and children's children throughout the seven seas.

But this insular conception of England is not the mistake of Germany alone. It has been shared by the public in all the American and European states. It has been taught in our schools and universities; it has been accepted by the chancelleries of Europe. Pick up the first geography which comes to hand and what do you find? Other countries are studied as political units; the British Empire, on the contrary, is treated as a philosophic abstraction. France we know, Germany we know, England we know; but the Empire, that vast aggregation of outlying territories and dependencies, we know not or but faintly understand through the association of its parts with some other state or continent. Canada is a misplaced portion of the British Empire, closely attached to the northern boundary of the United States. Australia is a long-lost island in the South Pacific. India is the distant seat of a great Asiatic civilization. But nowhere in our histories, geographies, or public documents do we find a British Empire. It is like the English constitution; it does not exist.

This misconception of the Empire enters into almost all our ideas of international relations and policies. Turn, for example, to the vast array of statistics prepared by our Department of Commerce and Labour. There we shall find comparative tables of the population, revenue, imports, and exports of all the leading countries of the world. But the statistics for England are set

off against the figures for other countries. India and the self-governing colonies are treated as independent states. But how misleading must be the conclusions in respect to the wealth and resources of the Empire when based upon such misleading data! Let us glance for a moment at the growth of foreign trade by way of illustration. To those of the public who are accustomed to look upon England as an ancient and somewhat decadent state, it may come as a surprise to learn that during the past five years her import and export trade has developed more rapidly than that of any European country. And if the trade of the whole Empire is taken into consideration, the statistics are even more surprising, for it will be found that that trade has not only greatly exceeded in amount the foreign commerce of any other nation, but has also grown almost twice as rapidly as that of Germany, the most prosperous of the European states. To convert the matter into figures: the foreign trade of the Empire has increased by approximately £625,000,000 since 1908, and at the close of the last fiscal year reached the stupendous total of £2,648,537,000. These figures lend small support to the theory of a decadent England or of a moribund Empire. It is only too true that the commerce of England cannot hope to expand in the future at the same rapid rate as in the past, but the trade of the Empire of which England is only one of the component members, is destined to surpass even the fabled wealth of Ormuz and of the distant East.

A hasty examination of the relative strength of the British army and navy will afford us an even more interesting basis of comparison. We in the United States are accustomed to point to our small but efficient military force as the most convincing proof of the peaceful character of our foreign policy. And such in fact it is. The 250,000 men of the British standing army look like a formidable force for the tight little island; but if that army is considered, as it ought to be considered, as an imperial force for the defence of the vast possessions of the British Crown, it appears in its true light as little more than a large police force. It is in fact not any larger proportionately than the army of the United States and insignificant in comparison with the mighty hosts of Europe. The British navy affords us an even better illustration of our provincial misconceptions. The huge preponderance of that navy has long been regarded as a danger to all other states. Its size seems to be altogether out of comparison

with the economic and political needs of the country. And yet if it is distinctly understood that that navy is an imperial navy, the connecting link or arterial system of the whole British Empire, it will be seen that it is not so formidable as might at first appear. It is, in reality, relatively smaller than the American, French, or German navies. If the British navy, for example, were placed on the same population basis as the German navy, the ratio of strength between the two fleets would not be the present standard of ten to six, but of approximately four to one. In view of these facts it is somewhat difficult to believe that the British Government has set the pace in the senseless race of naval and military armaments.

It is time that the public enlarged its outlook and commenced to think imperially. There is, in fact, a British Empire, a huge, unwieldy agglomeration of territory and people monopolizing about one-fifth of the earth's surface and commanding the allegiance of about one-fourth of its inhabitants. It is the greatest hotchpotch under the sun, a nondescript collection of English, Irish, Scotch, Indians, Canadians, Australians, Fiji, Malays, Zulus, and Fuzzy Wuzzies of all ranks and conditions of men, of all races and religious creeds, of all gradations of barbarism and civilization. The British Empire is running a certain American manufacturer a close race for the lead in the variety of the products it can turn out and every race as every product with a distinctive flavour of its own. Yet here it is, a vaster Empire than has been, territorially the most sporadic, socially the most irreconcilable, constitutionally the weakest, yet politically one of the strongest of modern governments. The Empire is in truth the greatest contribution that England has made to the science and art of government.

But great as has been the misconception as to the existence of the Empire, still greater has been the mistake in regard to its real character. It has been represented as a colossal sham, as an Oriental despotism, living upon the spoils of its subject races. Day after day we have been assured by a portion of the press that on the first defeat the Empire would fall asunder, that the colonies would rise and throw off the yoke of their oppressors. The dispatch of the colonial troops to the front has been interpreted as an evidence of English weakness and tyranny; it has been condemned as a betrayal of the civilization of Europe. But how different have been the results from those anticipated by the

outside world. Prior to the outbreak of war the Empire was indeed in deep commotion from Ulster to India; but on the declaration of war political discontents were largely stilled, economic and racial differences were almost forgotten. In the face of foreign danger all the colonies and dependencies have promptly rallied to the support of the mother land. At once the war became more than a racial issue between the Slavs and the Teutons, more than a continental struggle between allied states, more than an international issue over the neutrality of Belgium and the moral obligation of treaties; it became, in fact, a great imperial conflict in which the very principles of colonial government were at stake.

But the question arises how can we account for this anomalous Empire, this apparent anachronism in an age of intense nationalism. To a large extent it is the product of English political traditions. The British constitution has been built up on the twofold principle of personal and political liberty. The Englishman is essentially an individualist. The long course of English history is a record of his struggles against arbitrary government. He has worked out his own salvation by his own efforts. He has developed his own civilization, and in so doing has gained that strength and self-sufficiency which the possession of immemorial rights alone can afford. He does not look to the government for the protection of his liberty; he looks after that for himself. The very isolation of England has made this characteristic more pronounced. To this exaggerated individualism is largely due the general unpopularity of Englishmen. We have all suffered at some time or other from a certain condescension on the part of nameless foreigners. As Thackeray has wittily observed, the Englishman is the most objectionable of all travellers because he will insist upon treating the inhabitants of the country in which he is as though they were foreigners. The Englishman usually succeeds in giving to his national pretensions a certain personal character. And this it is that chiefly grates on our sensibilities. We can readily overlook a claim to national superiority, but we are scarcely prepared to admit a personal inferiority on our part. True, the Englishman does not positively assert such individual superiority; but what is much more annoying, he calmly assumes it, and that settles the matter so far as he is concerned.

But in this very quality is to be found the secret of English colonization. It is the individualist, the self-reliant man, who is

the successful pioneer. He does not need nor desire the eternal supervision of the government; he is prepared to go out and face the world alone. The history of all the self-governing colonies is a history of individual efforts and achievement. The colonies have worked out their own social problems. They have thrived most when left to themselves. And what has been true in the autonomous colonies has been equally true in the less favoured dependencies of the Crown. The great proconsuls of the British Empire are the supreme example of triumphant individualism. It is the character of the individual Englishman, said the late Count Ito, not the army or navy, that makes the British Empire what it is. His calm self-possession is the source of his authority. He is born to the purple; he rules by the force of his own personality. He is assured of his own position; he holds himself responsible to his own conscience. He is sometimes stupid and often arrogant and self-willed; but he has a high sense of duty, a keen sense of justice, and an unswerving resolution to carry through whatever is committed to his care. Into the hands of such men England has entrusted the governance of her possessions. And but seldom have they betrayed her trust.

The very individualism of the English people has taught them to respect the rights of others. Every revolution in English history has been a compromise. The rights and privileges of the contending parties have been habitually preserved. The principle of liberty has found expression in the protection of the rights of minorities. To live and let live has been the political motto of English statesmen and people. No other nation has been so insistent upon the maintenance of its own peculiar usages and institutions, yet none has been so careful to recognize the laws and customs of foreign people. The policy of the government has often been cruel, selfish, and hypocritical; and yet there is but one case in English history where the government has systematically striven to Anglicize another race, and that is the case of Ireland. The recent adoption of the Home Rule Bill is an attempt to make amends for that injustice; it is a return to the historic principles of national liberalism. It is to the credit of English imperialism that it has tried to preserve the national life and institutions of all the subjects of the Empire. Strongly as the English Government believes in the superiority of its own civilization, gladly as it would see its institutions adopted throughout the Empire, it has not sought after an artificial uniformity or

endeavoured to compel its citizens or subjects to accept a supposedly higher and better civilization. The armies of England have overrun a large part of the world, but they have come not to destroy but to fulfil. In the province of Quebec to-day the language, religion, and laws of the inhabitants are French; in South Africa they are Dutch; in India the Hindus and the Mohammedans retain their own social and religious institutions; and so on throughout the Empire. The Judicial Committee of the Privy Council is called upon to interpret and apply not only the common law of England but also the tribal usages of the Maori, Hottentots, Bornians, and many similar races.

It is this combination of the qualities of personal independence with the recognition of the principles of social and political liberty which makes the British Empire what it is. It is the secret of England's successful colonial policy. There is no love lost between the English, Scotch, and Irish; the relationship between the cockney and the colonial is scarcely that of the David and Jonathan type; the Hindu and the Anglo-Saxon are strangers to one another, for the "East is East and the West is West and never the twain shall meet, till earth and sky stand presently at God's great judgment seat." The relations of various parts of the Empire are often strained, yet these differences are essentially of the Irish domestic variety in which it is safer for the outsider not to interfere. The very variety of its life is the source of its unity; the very diversity of its organization the secret of its strength. The Empire is powerful because it is free. Throughout its length and breadth there is a sense of personal security, a certainty of justice and an assurance of political freedom that cannot be found elsewhere. The political faith of the Empire, like that of the Christian church, transcends all considerations of race, language, religion, nationality, and civilization. Its loyalty is a devotion to a political ideal, an ideal of freedom. In short the British Empire is the most liberal-minded of all democracies, in that it expresses the highest faith in humanity itself. The English constitution makes no distinction in respect to race, colour, or previous condition of servitude. It goes even farther than that of the United States in conferring full citizenship on all persons within its jurisdiction. There are no outlanders within the British Empire. The Zulu and Fiji, unlike the Filipino, are legally qualified to hold any office under the Crown from the pettiest municipal post up to the

Premiership of Great Britain. That this right is not a mere theoretical right is evidenced by the presence of large numbers of colonists in the imperial service. To the colonial has been entrusted an ever increasing share in the government of the Empire.

In short, the superior civilization of the Englishman confers on him no special privileges; nor does it warrant him, according to the principles of English liberalism, in forcing his brand of civilization upon other races within the Empire. It was not without cause that the old English law laid down the rule that a man ought not to be judge in his own case. And which among the nations is placed above this principle of equity; which of them can forecast the future or rightly determine its own place or that of any other nation in history? It is, indeed, a dangerous thing to crush or destroy the soul of a nation. For this reason alone, if for no other, the policy of imperial expansion can be justified only in as far as it recognizes and respects the culture of subject races. It has been the glory of British imperialism that it has appealed to the national consciousness of the colonies and dependencies, that it has encouraged them to seek after a higher and more independent status, and that in as far as they have shown political capacity it has conferred upon them the full rights and privileges of self-government. Thanks to this liberal policy, the government of the British Empire is gradually being transformed into a great federation of free and autonomous states.

The history and spirit of German nationalism is fundamentally different. Germany is the cradle of a great civilization. Within her borders art, music, science, literature, and philosophy have found their highest expression. These have been her greatest gifts to humanity. She has accomplished in the higher realm of thought and feeling what England has in the lower world of politics—a true mastery of the souls of men. The civilization of Germany can boast a noble and ancient lineage. But Germany as a nation is a decidedly modern power. She can look back to a bare half century of national life. At a time when England and France had long since attained to full national consciousness and were fighting out their political differences in India and America, Germany was a backward, semi-feudal state. True, she had already attained to intellectual pre-eminence, but her greatest thinkers gave themselves over to the consideration of philosophical rather than political questions. The satire

of Voltaire was only too true; France ruled the land, England the sea, and Germany the clouds.

The creation of a united Germany was not, as in England, the result of a long historical struggle on the part of the people; it was rather the sudden emergence of an ancient civilization under the genius of a few great statesmen. It was the product of autocracy, not of democracy; of blood and iron, not of constitutional agitation. Germany had won her way in the world by her own heroic efforts. She was conscious of her own mission in life. From the very outset she demanded and properly demanded her rightful place among the world's great powers. But she did not receive the generous welcome that she had hoped for. England, in particular, was inclined to look upon the newcomer as a *parvenu*, a political upstart in an old established society. Germany very naturally objected to such cavalier treatment. She was intensely proud of her new nationality and she soon made England realize that fact. The long period of German humiliation was over. German civilization had at last come to fruition; it had attained a national life of its own. For the future the development of German culture was identified with the progress of the German state.

But in this very identification there lurked a danger. The sacrifice of individual liberty to the demands of high state policy is only a part of the price of German nationalism. What is even more significant for our purpose is the exaltation of German civilization at the expense of lesser races and people. In the mind of the nation at large the maintenance and extension of German culture is inseparably bound up with the ascendancy of the Teutonic race. This conception is, perhaps, best set forth in the well-known declaration of Treitschke, "that just as the greatness of Germany is to be found in the government of Germany by Prussia, so the greatness and good of the world is to be found in the predominance there of German culture, of the German mind—in a word, of the German character." Herein may be seen the dominant idea of Roman imperialism, the idea of a superior world-civilization. Germany has succeeded, in theory at least, through the Holy Roman Empire, to the place and traditions of ancient Rome. She has inherited the splendid ideals of Roman culture and organization, of the supreme but beneficent rule of a superior race. In this imperial conception there is no room for a competing civilization. Herein is to be found the justification of

the efforts of the German Government to proscribe the language, expropriate the land, and suppress the political agitation of the recalcitrant inhabitants of Posen and Alsace-Lorraine. It is a policy of compulsory assimilation. The justification of the present war rests upon the same sure foundation. By reason of her situation in the centre of the armed camp of Europe, Germany is obliged to take the strongest measures for the preservation of all that is nearest and dearest to her. Her very existence apparently is at stake; and necessity knows no law but the primitive law of force. Under these circumstances it is little wonder that the political and intellectual leaders of the country have laid down the principle that the national aspirations of an alien race, however justifiable they may be in themselves, must needs give way to the paramount demands of a higher civilization. From this standpoint the European war is but one phase of the age-long struggle for the survival of the fittest. In taking up the Slavic challenge, Germany is fighting not for her own interests alone but for the civilization of the world. But the very strength of this conviction bodes ill, in case of a German victory, for the vanquished party.

The ideals of Germany are not, as many Englishmen would have us believe, those of material advantage or political ascendancy alone. These national aspirations are but another aspect of German idealism. They are a manifestation of the firm resolution of both rulers and people to live worthily of the high station whereunto they are called; they are an evidence of the same nobility of spirit that finds expression in the beauty and strength of a Wagnerian chorus. For the national ideals which Germany cherishes in her heart are those of a spiritual dominion. In the words of the late Professor Cramb:

“Force alone, violence or brute strength by its more silent presence or by its loud manifestation in war may be necessary to establish this dominion; but its ends are spiritual. The triumph of the empire will be a triumph of German culture, of the German world-vision in all the phases and departments of human life and energy, in religion, poetry, science, art, politics, and social endeavour. The characteristics of this German world-vision, the benefits which its predominance is likely to confer upon mankind are, a German would allege, truth instead of falsehood in the deepest and gravest preoccupations of the human mind.”

This supremacy of the German spirit has become almost a religious tenet of the German people. This is, indeed, the soul

of the Pan-Germanic movement. It has taken possession of the German heart with all the force of a master passion. These ideals constitute for them the supreme good not for Germany alone but for the world at large.

Two conflicting ideals of government are thus brought face to face. The genius of the British nation has expressed itself in the form of political liberty; the genius of the German people in the form of national culture. And between these two ideals there is a great gulf fixed, not of race but of tradition. The conflict is, in truth, a conflict of ideas rather than of nations.

But it is time for me to turn from theoretical considerations to questions of practical politics. For after all it is the specific grievance rather than the political principle that sticks in men's minds and causes trouble. We must face the questions how has the colonial antagonism of Great Britain and Germany arisen, and what have been the chief points at issue?

The three successful wars of Prussia against Denmark, Austria, and France gained for Germany a marked ascendancy in European affairs. But Germany was not long satisfied to remain a continental power only. Political and economic considerations alike prompted her to aspire to a colonial domain. It had grieved the hearts of German patriots to see so much of the best blood of the country drained off to foreign lands, to see rival nations developing at her expense. It was small satisfaction to know that German civilization was making its influence felt throughout the world. The rapid industrial development of the Fatherland demanded new sources of raw material and new markets for manufactured products. The success of England's colonial policy appealed to the imagination of the German people. Why should Germany not enlarge her dominions and become a world-wide power? Had she not also an imperial tradition; and what other nation could more rightfully claim a place in the sun? For "in the German race," as Bernhardt has said, "the instinct for empire is as ancient and as deep-rooted as it is in the English race; and in the Germany of the present time, above all, this instinct, by reason of the very strength of Germany within herself, her conscious and vital energy, her sense of deep and repressed forces, is not a mere cloud of the brain, but is almost an imperious necessity." In the face of these demands, Bismarck at last gave way and consented somewhat

reluctantly to enter upon a policy of colonial expansion. But the object of such a policy was, he declared, purely commercial, for the protection and promotion of German trade. This decision marks a new era in the history of Germany. She assumed her place among the world powers.

The colonial aspirations of Germany, it must be admitted, were perfectly legitimate. It is doubtful whether any other state could put forward such strong claims for an extension of territory. Least of all could Great Britain, with her vast undeveloped areas, properly object to the enterprise of her neighbour. But the practical question at once arose; admitting the right of expansion, where should Germany expand, what quarter of the globe should be considered open for occupation and settlement? This was a political rather than a commercial question. The natural and most suitable region for colonization was to be found in the temperate zone of South America, where a considerable number of Germans had already established themselves in thriving communities. But unfortunately for Germany the Monroe Doctrine blocked the way. According to this well-known doctrine, the American continent is expressly reserved for the American people. The European powers are generously allowed to encroach on one another's territory in all other portions of the world, but they are distinctly informed that their presence is not desired on this side of the Atlantic no matter how high and exalted their civilization may be. Germany had no desire to question the validity of the traditional policy of the United States and wisely determined to seek other fields for colonization. Unluckily for England, the districts selected lay alongside some of the British colonies and in certain cases were regarded as falling within a British sphere of influence. To the Monroe Doctrine is thus due in a measure the colonial rivalries of Germany and Great Britain.

In 1884 the German flag was hoisted over Angra Pequena on the southwest coast of Africa, in the face of the protest of the government of Cape Colony. The Australian colonies in turn were filled with alarm at the rumour of a German expedition to the neighbouring islands to the north of Torres Strait. The Queensland Government hastily took possession of a part of the island of New Guinea but the act of annexation was disavowed by the Colonial Office. In the hope of forestalling foreign aggression the Australian colonies united in formulating a Monroe Doctrine

of their own, in which they solemnly warned all foreign states to keep away from the Australian coast. At the same time New Zealand was begging the English Government to annex the Samoan Islands in order to prevent them from falling into the hands of a foreign state and being used as a naval base. The Australasians were quite willing to reciprocate the courtesy of the United States by permitting the Germans to settle anywhere on the American continent provided that the Southern Pacific were left undisturbed.

But Bismarck paid small heed to British colonial opinion. He knew the man with whom he had to deal. The British Foreign Office at this time was occupied by Lord Granville, an aristocratic radical of the Manchester School. Bismarck knew there was nothing to fear. The colonies were weak and helpless. The English Government would not show fight; at most it would content itself with mild representations together with certain pious observations on the wisdom of respecting the rights of the natives. Accordingly Germany promptly raised her standard over several of the principal island groups of the Pacific and followed this up by the annexation of important areas in Africa. By a sudden *tour de force* Germany had become a great colonial power. In pursuing this policy she had undoubtedly acted well within her legal rights, but in so doing she had sacrificed the good will of the British colonies. From the standpoint of international law her conduct was perfectly legitimate, but from the standpoint of international comity it was of doubtful expediency. It was, indeed, no small thing to outrage the sensibilities of a group of ambitious young colonies. A question commercial in its origin had been converted into a serious political issue. Bismarck had taught the colonies that their protests were useless, that the only language which Germany understood was the language of force.

So far, it seems to me, Germany has a reasonably sound case against the colonies, notwithstanding their appeal to the principle of the Monroe Doctrine. In order to justify, however, an aggressive colonial policy, it is not sufficient for a nation to demonstrate its pre-eminent right to enlarge its territory; it must likewise show an aptitude for colonization in the case of settlement colonies or a capacity for administration in the case of possessions with a large native population. But a glance at the statistics of the German colonies will reveal that after thirty years of

propaganda the government has succeeded in inducing only about twenty thousand of its citizens to settle in the colonies. The host of German emigrants have preferred to seek the protection of any other flag rather than their own. And in respect of the government of native territories the German Colonial Office has made even a sorrier showing. From the very outset the government declined to learn anything from the experience of English colonization. It believed that its own scientific organization and military efficiency were greatly superior to the rough and ready methods of English administration. So expensive, however, has been the bureaucratic régime in the German colonies that but one of these dependencies up to date has paid the full cost of administration. This is the penalty for the loss of political individualism, the price which the country has paid for the attempt to apply a rigid administrative system to the divergent conditions of distant territories.

But there has been an even more serious defect in German colonial policy. The right of expansion carries with it as a necessary corollary a reciprocal responsibility as to the use to which the right is put. Permit me to use a homely illustration. As a private individual I have no right to object to any decent and respectable member of society acquiring a piece of property alongside my own, however personally objectionable the latter may be to me; but I can properly object to his using that land for purposes which are dangerous or deleterious to me. In other words, the right of acquisition is conditioned upon the property's being put to a social use. The same principle, it seems to me, should be equally applicable to the relations of states. The right of conquest or territorial sovereignty is not, as is sometimes assumed, an absolute and unqualified right; it is subject not only to "a decent respect for the opinion of mankind" but also to the moral obligation of respecting as far as possible the social and political institutions of friendly neighbouring states. Upon the recognition of this principle depends in fact the social progress of mankind.

I can still remember distinctly my surprise when on appearing at my first lecture on Colonial Government at the University of Berlin, I saw a splendid group of young military officers in full uniform occupying all the front rows of the room, the mere civilian members of the class being seated very modestly some distance in the rear. In this little incident I saw clearly

revealed two of the most characteristic features of German society—the marked pre-eminence of the military class and the superior scientific training of all officers of state. At the same time there was brought home to me the equally significant fact that the Prussian military system was being introduced in full forcé throughout the German colonies. The administration of the German possessions was to be placed in the hands, not of civil officials, as is the case in the British and American colonies, but of military men whose ideas of government were almost necessarily those of the barracks and mess room. The divergent character of the political systems of the three great colonial powers now at war has been happily summed up in the statement that whenever England establishes a colony she sets up a customs house, Germany builds a fort, and France a road. The German colonies were doomed from the outset to an essentially autocratic régime. From their very location within the tropics they were not suitable for settlement purposes; they could never become the actual or prospective home of thousands of the loyal sons and daughters of the Fatherland. They were, on the contrary, commercial prospects or military outposts for the protection of German interests in different parts of the world. That Germany was legally entitled to set up a military administration in her colonies cannot be questioned. It is inherent in the very nature of sovereignty that a state shall be free to choose its own form of government. But the question now at issue is not one of legality alone. The attempt of the English parliament to tax the American colonies has been rightly considered as one of the greatest crimes of history. Yet from the constitutional standpoint the action of the English Government was perfectly valid. It is only when we consider the question from the higher standpoint of human liberty that the revolt of the American colonies is entirely justified. There is a higher court of appeal than to the throne of Cæsar or to the decisions of a supreme court. The judgments of history are not juristic in character; they are based upon the eternal principles of justice and liberty. And it is to this higher test that Germany must submit her colonial policy.

But the problem was even more serious in its international bearings. The policy of the German Colonial Office reacted powerfully on the British colonies. For many years the latter had been living in a state of happy isolation. They had been busy working out their own social and economic problems with

but a passing thought to the political complications of Europe. Now for the first time they found themselves face to face with a military danger. They had no direct interest in foreign politics and had no desire, as Sir Wilfrid Laurier said, "to be caught in the maelstrom of European militarism." But through no fault of their own the menace was brought to their very shores. Instead of holding out to them the right hand of fellowship, Germany had greeted them with the mailed fist. She had not only forced herself upon them as an unwelcome neighbour, but had also proceeded to set up a military establishment incompatible with their political and social ideals. In the judgment of the colonies Germany had abused the rights of territorial sovereignty by endangering the peace of her neighbours. To them the dominion of Germany appeared in the light of a revival of the principles of Roman imperialism.

The lesson was not lost on the British colonies. Probably no other factor has contributed so much to develop the spirit of colonial nationalism particularly in the Australasian colonies. From this time dates the movement for the organization of a distinct army and navy for the self-governing colonies. The latter were no longer content to rely upon the protection of the mother land, but proceeded to develop their own means of self-defence. Germany sowed the wind; she has reaped the whirlwind in the loss of many of her colonies and in the dispatch of 150,000 colonial troops to the battlefields of Europe. This is the colonial answer to General Bernhardt's declaration that the "colonies could be completely ignored so far as concerns any European theatre of war."

We must now turn to the fiscal aspect of the question. The adoption by England of the free-trade principles of the Manchester School had a most important effect upon the commercial relations of the colonies with the mother land. The colonial legislatures were now entrusted with the power of determining their own tariff policies according to their respective needs. But they were not entirely free to do as they wished. The government at Westminster no longer attempted to interfere with the fiscal schedules of the colonies, but it did indirectly place an important restriction upon their economic freedom through the exercise of the treaty-making power and the royal veto. There was still an imperial commercial policy; only its name and practice had been changed from protection to free trade. In furtherance of

this policy Great Britain had entered into commercial treaties with Belgium and the North German Bund under the terms of which the colonies were prohibited from levying discriminatory duties. On the advent of the Liberal party to power in Canada, Sir Wilfrid Laurier called upon the English Government to terminate these treaties with a view to the adoption of a policy of imperial preferential trade. The British Government acceded to the demand and formal notice of the termination of the agreement was soon after conveyed to Germany. Sir Wilfrid Laurier at once proceeded to put his policy into effect by granting a 25 per cent. preference to Great Britain and most of the British colonies. This preferential policy opened up a new era in imperial politics. It was intended to give notice to the world at large of the growing sense of imperial unity. This policy was accepted by all the powers save one as a natural and legitimate expression of colonial loyalty. That one exception was Germany. She alone refused to treat the British Empire as a commercial unit and demanded that she should be put upon a fiscal equality with the mother land in the Canadian market upon pain of levying retaliatory duties. Sir Wilfrid Laurier refused to back down, whereupon the German Government promptly imposed counter-vailing duties and Canada retaliated in turn. A sharp tariff war ensued. England declined to interfere but the other self-governing colonies took up the challenge and ranged themselves by the side of the Dominion. Germany got the worst of the petty fiscal squabble and at last agreed to withdraw her discriminating duties and accept the policy of imperial preferential trade.

In taking such drastic measures Germany had acted well within her rights. She was entitled to treat the British self-governing colonies as fiscally independent, for such in fact they were; but it was none the less inexpedient for her to do so in view of the intensity of colonial feeling in the matter. On a previous occasion she had appeared to challenge the principle of colonial nationalism; she now appeared to attack the ideal of imperial unity. The colonies could not overlook the fact that the British colonies alone had been singled out for attack whereas the preferential policies of other nations including France and the United States had been accepted by the German Government without question, and apparently without thought of retaliation.

Throughout all these early controversies Great Britain had remained a passive spectator. She had left the colonies to fight

their own battles. So far as she had ventured to interfere it was rather with a view to modify than to support the pretensions of the colonies. The present anti-German feeling throughout the British Empire did not arise in England but in the colonies. The imperialistic spirit had gained the ascendancy in the latter long before it succeeded in making much of an impression upon English politics. The colonial policy of England was still conducted according to the tenets of the Manchester School. At the same time her foreign policy was marked by a careful withdrawal from active participation in European politics. There was little occasion for international complications. As late as 1899 Lord Salisbury declared that the relations of Germany and Great Britain were "everything we could desire." But colonial suspicions of Germany's imperial designs had already spread to England, and with the growth of colonial influence in English politics that suspicion became more strongly confirmed. The Kruger telegram and acrid German criticisms of the Boer war added fuel to the flames. Many of the leaders of English public opinion came to believe that Germany harboured designs on the British Empire, and the Foreign Office began to assume a more critical attitude towards Wilhelmstrasse.

But the political controversy was destined to take on a more materialistic character. The economic rivalry of the two countries added to the flame of international suspicion and misunderstanding. A part of the commercial interests of the two countries were quick to play upon national sentiment to further their own selfish interests. It was no mere accident that the tariff-reform agitation and anti-German sentiment developed side by side in England. They were, in truth, but different phases of the same movement. Protection, according to its wont, robed itself in the false garb of patriotism and set forth to sow discord between the two peoples. The big armament firms in turn played and preyed upon the fears of the public. The history of this agitation reflects no little discredit upon a considerable portion of the Conservative press and party. The peace propaganda of the Liberal leaders checked for a time this campaign of malevolence, but the refusal of the German Government to agree to any of their proposals for a limitation of armaments defeated their well-intentioned efforts to bring about a happy solution of the points of issue. In both countries the seed of national hostility had been well scattered. The asperities of the

press, the agitations of the Navy Leagues, the programmes of the Admiralty and War Departments were the immediate result of this insidious campaign. And Europe is now reaping the full harvest.

For the beginning of this international antagonism Great Britain cannot be held primarily responsible. She did not afford the occasion for the first offence. The aggressive policy of Germany, as we have seen, stirred up a hostile spirit in the colonies and this reacted strongly on English public opinion. The foreign policy of England had in truth become a colonial policy. It was in reality, as Lord Rosebery declared, "more dictated from the extremities of the Empire than from London itself." But for the subsequent development of England's foreign policy, for the entangling European alliance, for the policy of the political isolation of Germany, for the Moroccan imbroglio, the British Government must bear its full share of responsibility. For many years Great Britain had been content to be an imperial power; she had consciously withdrawn from continental politics. She did not object to the ascendancy of Germany on land, provided that she ruled the seas. But with the advent of Germany as a colonial power England resumed her former place in the councils of Europe; Germany had apparently challenged her position as an imperial power. England replied by questioning her rival's supremacy in Europe. Not that England essayed to be a great European power, but that she endeavoured to adjust or readjust the balance of European power so as to secure a free hand for carrying out her imperial policy. The policies of both nations were avowedly patriotic but at the same time essentially selfish. A spirit of exaggerated nationalism has dictated the policies of the chancelleries of Europe. And this, after all, as far as the chief European states are concerned, is the deep underlying cause of the present war.

The British colonies have not gone into the war blindly or from compulsion but of their own free will. They were kept well informed as to the course of negotiations and they heartily approved of the policy of Sir Edward Grey. The war is of their own making as far as their participation is concerned. The English Government has not the right to levy a single man or impose a single penny of taxation in any of the self-governing colonies for the support of the war. The Canadian, Australian,

and Indian troops can be employed outside their respective dominions only at the instance of these governments themselves. In fact, in both fiscal and military matters the self-governing colonies enjoy what is practically an independent status. And even in respect to foreign affairs they have developed in some cases a distinct policy of their own, as for example in respect to relations with Japan. They carry on their negotiations through their own officials and determine for themselves what imperial treaties shall be made operative within their territories. According to the conventions of the constitution neither the imperial government nor parliament can bind them without their own consent. "Daughter am I in my mother's house, but mistress in my own."

In joining in the war, the colonies have no desire to wreck the German Empire, to impair its civilization or subject it to an alien race. They seek but the removal of the dark threatening cloud of militarism which has hung over them since 1884. The war to them is a defensive war, a war for the preservation not of the British Empire alone but of the constitutional principles of national liberty on which that empire is based. It is a struggle not of rival races or of competing civilizations, but of contrasted forms of government, of political ideals, of democracy *versus* autocracy. And in that issue they feel that they have as great an interest as England herself. They are convinced of the justice of their cause. Out of this war they hope to see a better and more liberal-minded empire arise.

"Nobody doubts," said a prominent Hindu, "whatever may be the temporary difficulties we shall emerge victorious out of this terrible war; and we Indians feel that it will open a new chapter in our history, and if I may say so, in the history of England, brighter and nobler than any in the past, for now and henceforth, England, India, and the oversea dominions will stand and grow together in bonds sanctified on the field of battle."

But more than that, they hope to see, in the words of Gladstone, "the enthronement of the idea of public right as the governing idea of European politics." In place of the rule of force the colonies would set up the ideals of the gospel of universal peace, a peace not dependent upon the supremacy of the single state or on the uncertain balancing of selfish interests, but broad-based upon the public opinion of the whole community of nations.

In this spirit of liberalism the colonies appeal with the same high confidence as does Germany, to the judgment of history. Their prayer is the prayer of Ajax in the Battle of the Ships:

“And now deliver thou, O Father Zeus, the sons of the Achaians from under this cloud and make clear sky above them and grant to their eyes to see; that so if it be thy will to slay them, thou slay them in the light.’ Thus spoke he and Father Zeus looked down upon him in his sore travail. And forthwith he smote the mist and drove away the murk from Heaven and the whole face of the battle was made plain.”

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