THE GREAT ILLUSION—NOW

by

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THIS EDITION CONSISTS OF

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THE GREAT ILLUSION IN 1938

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PART II

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PART I

THE GREAT ILLUSION IN 1938

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PART I

THE GREAT ILLUSION AND THE 1938 CRISIS

CHAPTER I

BRITAIN'S ARMED DEFENCELESSNESS

After a long series of retreats Britain finds herself in such a position that her armament, however great, would be ineffective to defend her. Only in combination with others besides France could a stand be made against the ever-growing power of the Dictatorships. That combination has not come into being because of the persistence of fallacies this writer tried to expose thirty years ago. Can the necessary co-operations now be created? If it is too late for that it is too late for rearmament.

IN 1914 we entered a war which was to vindicate the rights of small nations (the part played by Serbia in the precipitation of the war and by Belgium in our participation may usefully be recalled); to remove the menace of Prussian militarism; to end war; to make the world safe for democracy; to make this and other free countries secure from aggression, and place their economic life on safe foundations.

In 1908 this present writer published a book, *The Great Illusion*, which gave reasons for the belief that the mere defeat of Germany in war would not, could not, of itself, achieve such objects; that while nations were justified in resistance to brute aggression, and right in using force for the purpose, the power that they were then building up, however great it might become, would not, given the political conditions, deter aggression or prevent war, nor by victory establish conditions in which the commonly proclaimed purposes of war would be possible of accomplishment. He suggested that the victor's power, if used

after war as it always had been used by victors, would not ensure national right nor remove the menace of German militarism, nor end war, nor render democratic institutions more secure, nor bring economic profit to the victor; would not enable the victor to enlarge his trade, nor even compel the vanquished by indemnities or other means to defray the cost of the war.

The writer agreed that if the power of Germany became preponderant, she could deprive this country of all means of defending its rights, would place us at a rival's merey, a position no free country should accept. But he also insisted that the right alternative was not to ask Germany to accept it; to do what we refused to do; to be at our mercy. Nor was the practical alternative the maintenance of an unstable equilibrium, a Balance of Power, which could be upset from one day to another by some new alliance combination. The way out was to make of power in the international field what it is within the nation, an instrument whereby the settlement of disputes by the sheer brute force of one of the parties is made impossible by common and collective resistance to aggression, by common defence of the one supreme law that no nation should use war to enforce its own view of its own rights; the law under which all should be entitled to protection from violence, a protection ensured by the general power of the community of nations. The proper function of force, he insisted, was to cancel out force in human relations, to see that it did not decide disputes. (The policeman, representing the organised power of the state, does not decide disputes. He merely prevents violence from deciding them, and by so doing, makes possible something other than force as the final arbiter—impartial judgement, law). Only by some such method could European power be used to ensure European security and stability.

The Great Illusion of 1908 insisted that the real cause of the forthcoming war was not some especial wickedness

of people of the German race (then a very fashionable, popular, all but universal doctrine in England), nor the existence of any especially dangerous specific differences which needed settlement, the existence, that is, of demands by one which the other felt it could not grant. (It is important to recall that not for years had Anglo-German relations been so free from that kind of difference as on the eve of the war.) The real cause was the method which both nations were adopting to achieve defence, self-preservation; a method under which each attempted to achieve defence for himself by forbidding it to the other; each claiming the right of defence by superior power, thus denying it to the other. Security for one was to be purchased at the price of the insecurity of the other.

Why did not nations apply as to one another the principles each had adopted within its own borders? Why, in other words, did the nations refuse to constitute themselves an organised society for mutual defence?

It was quite clear that if a thing so obvious had not been done, it must have been because powerful forces of interest, conviction, prejudice, passion, stood in the way. Until the nature of the obstacles had been revealed it was useless to draw up schemes of world re-organisation. One recalls what a certain monarch said of the Grand Design of Henry IV: "It is absolutely perfect; without a single defect, save only one—that no earthly prince would ever agree to it."

To discover why earthly princes, nations, persisted in methods of security which condemned them to insecurity so great that the end must be destruction, was the purpose of the *Great Illusion:* It was in fact an analysis of the forces which stood, and stand, in the way of an organised society of the nations.

That analysis is here re-produced. It shows among other things that certain preliminary assumptions about the economic advantage of conquest, accepted universally as

true, were in fact false; and that these economic beliefs had (as they still have) profound political and psychological repercussions which, so long as they prevail, makes international order impossible.

Each great nation believed that predominance over another could be used to immense material advantage, and was indeed indispensable to survival in a world of limited resources inhabited by indefinitely expanding peoples.

The nations would not turn to common and collective prohibition of violence as the necessary prelude to just and rational settlement of disputes, or a workable economy, because each believed it could very well secure its defence by its own power (plus perhaps *ad hoc* alliances) getting thereby not impartial judgment but its own judgment of its own rights; that predominance would give it a bigger share of the world's resources than it could obtain by any system of partnership, of law. In 1914 the world "staggered and stumbled" into war because every great nation was guiding its policy by these assumptions, accepted everywhere as obviously true.

What is involved in such assumptions, why they make war inevitable, why they are false, and how events have proved their fallacy, is explained in these pages.

But those illusions were not merely at the root of war; they were also at the root of the peace which we made at the end of the war. As they accounted for the policy which led to the war, so they have accounted for the use which we made of victory at the peace, and for the greater part of the foreign policy of the last twenty years. The Treaty of Versailles and (much more importantly), the policies since followed, have been marked by almost every one of the errors and fallacies in policies and economics against which, thirty years ago, the *Great Illusion* tried to warn the pre-war generation.

That book dealt largely, though not entirely, with the economic aspects of the problem. The country having

entered the war, this writer, in a book[1] published about a year before its close, uttered in respect of the political aspect, a warning in these words:

> The survival of the Western democracies, in so far as that is a matter of the effective use of their force, depends upon their capacity to use it as a unit, during the War and after. That unity we have not attained, even for the purposes of the War, because we have refused to recognise its necessary conditions—a kind and degree of democratic internationalism to which current political ideas and feelings are hostile; an internationalism which is not necessary to the enemy, but is to us.
>
> For the Grand Alliance of the Democracies is a heterogeneous collection of nations, not geographically contiguous, but scattered over the world; and not dominated by one preponderant State able to give unity of direction to the group. The enemy alliance, on the other hand, is composed of a group of States, geographically contiguous, dominated politically and militarily by the material power and geographical position of one member who is able by that fact to impose unity of purpose and direction on the whole. If we are to use our power successfully against him in such circumstances, during the War, at the settlement, and afterwards (which may well be necessary), we must achieve a consolidation equally effective. But in our case that consolidation, not being possible by the material predominance of one member, must be achieved by a moral factor, the voluntary co-operation of equals—a democratic internationalism, necessarily based on a unity of moral aim. Because this has not been attained, even during the War, disintegration of our alliance has already set in—involving military cost—and threatens to become still more acute at the peace. The enemy group shows no equivalent disintegration.
>
> No military decision against the unified enemy group can be permanent if at the peace-table it becomes evident that the Western Democracies are to revert to the old

[1] The Political Conditions of Allied Success. (Putmans).

lack of consolidation, instability of alliance, covert competition for isolated power and territory, and a national particularism which makes common action and co-ordination of power combrous, difficult, or impossible. . . .

The factors of disintegration in the Grand Alliance include conflicts of economic interest and social aspiration within the nations, more dangerous with us than with the enemy, because our historical circumstances have rendered us less disciplined or less docile, less apt in mechanical and de-humanised obedience.

The general truth we are here dealing with is of far greater importance to us than to the enemy. He can in some measure ignore it. We cannot. His unity, in so far as it rests upon moral factors, can be based upon the old nationalist conceptions; our unity depends upon a revision of them, an enlargement into an internationalism.

The kind and degree of internationalism indispensable for the consolidation of the Western peoples if they are to use their force effectively—an internationalism which must take into account the newer social and economic forces of Western Society—is impossible on the basis of the older state-craft and its political motives. For these assume as inevitable a condition of the world in which each nation must look for its security to its own isolated strength (which must derive from population territory, and strategic position), thus making national interests necessarily rival. The capacity of each nation to feed its population and assure its economic welfare is assumed to depend upon the extent of its territory. A whole philosophy of 'biological necessity', 'struggle for life among nations','inherent pugnacity of mankind', 'survival of the fit', is invoked on behalf of this old and popular conception of international life and politics. Such an outlook inevitably implies an overt or latent rivalry which must bring even members of the same alliance sooner or later into conflict.

The only possible unifying alternative to this disruptive policy is some 'permanent association of nations' by which the security of each shall be made to rest

upon the strength of the whole, held together by the reciprocal obligation to defend one another.

The greatest obstacles to such a system are disbelief in its feasibility and our subjection to the traditions of national sovereignty and independence. Were it generally believed in, and desired, it would be not only feasible but inevitable. . . .

Return to the old relationships after the War will sooner or later doom the democratic nations, however powerful each may be individually, to subjugation in detail by a group, inferior in power but superior in material unity—a unity which autocracy achieves at the cost of freedom and human worth.

This second forecast is now in process of fulfilment.

Note that the passage just quoted was written twenty-two years ago by a man then engaged in trying to warn his generation against the folly of imposing on Germany a "punitive" peace when the war should end; and who was in consequence for a decade at least the victim of violent charges of "unpatriotic pro-Germanism". Those charges were as wrong-headed then as are now the present charges of malicious anti-Germanism. He tried to persuade that generation, as he is trying to persuade this, that any system of defence under which Germany's security kills ours, or ours Germany's, must fail; that for Germany to be at our mercy because our power did not stand for any law or system under which Germany also could find protection was a situation not only inherently evil but one that would break down in disaster; as he is now trying to persuade this generation that for Britain to be at Germany's mercy is a situation inherently evil (for certain fortuitous reasons even more evil than the other) bound to break down in disaster; and that oscillations between such evils have for centuries been the note of history.

To say, as is so often said in this connection, that to attribute to Germany designs of domination of Europe (and of ourselves) is to impute evil motives, implies a

strange confusion, and is in fact unfair to Germans. Those who control the German government and people do not believe that such a design is evil, any more than we in the past have believed that our domination of the seas, or of Germany, was evil. They desire to establish for Germany such preponderance of power in the world that never again can she be victim of the fate which she suffered at Versailles never again at the mercy of foreigners, that in future she alone shall be judge of what her rights are (which means, of course, being judge of what the rights of others are). Hitler believes that we must be at his mercy as the only alternative to Germany's being once more at ours. This is not something which Germans believe to be wrong or evil. On the contrary they have a fanatical belief that it is right, and noble, and that any necessary violence to achieve it is commanded of God; and that our failure to resist it would be proof of that fact. They are not less fanatical than was the inquisitor of old who believed that in inflicting his tortures he was accomplishing the divine will, and who could lay down the rule that to keep faith with the heretic was to break faith with God. Failure to face this fact of Nazi sincerity is not only unfair to Germans, not only imparts to them a degree of conscious wickedness which does them injustice, but ignores the main element of the problem.

Years before the war this writer urged Conference with Germany, as he urges it now. But the indispensable condition of a successful Conference, as of successful revision of treaties, peaceful change, is that the Nazi-Fascist group, fanatically convinced of their right to seize any opportunity of rule, shall realise that though partnership, equality of right, is open to them, their domination is not, and will face resistance. Without that no real conference is possible,

But the first condition of that resistance is, as indicated above, combination among non-German states. If that is prevented, resistance is at an end.

Any conference, therefore, which starts on the basis: "We, Britain, are unconcerned with what you, Germany, do to others; it is none of our business; we acquiesce on condition that you promise to leave *us* alone" has at the start sacrificed the very first condition of any possible resistance to Germany; for the solidarity by which alone our defence is possible has been surrendered. If we undertake not to give our aid in the defence of others, then we have made it impossible to have their aid in our defence. The fact that in addition to undermining the material foundations of our defence we shall also have sacrificed the moral justification for the use of force is not perhaps worth mentioning, for to raise any moral issue in these days is to be accused of desiring "a war of ideologies".

The German Fuehrer has always realised quite clearly that the one thing which could check his domination of Europe was precisely the combination of Germany's weaker neighbours for purposes of defence. If he could deal with them one by one, he had them in his power: if they united they could face him. He has, therefore, always refused to bargain collectively, and in this refusal he has had the support of those in England who have looked with disfavour upon collective defence and prefer bilateral arrangements. He has not hesitated to use other means, particularly the fear of war and the fear of Bolshevism. He has made it clear to lesser states, (as for instance to Denmark), that participation in any arrangement for mutual assistance exposed them to the danger of his enmity; and one by one lesser states have dropped out of the combination. He has said in effect to non-German Europe: You shall not unite for defence. Non-German Europe has yielded to the demand, yielded the more readily because international co-operation even for defence, ran counter to its nationalist prepossessions.

But this break up of the unity of non-German Europe has gone much further than the separation of one state from another, than the surrender of the collective system.

The disintegration has been carried into the states themselves by an entirely new technique of conquest. Support and encouragement is given to subversive movements within the nation it is proposed to dominate (Spain, Austria and Czechoslovakia illustrate that part of the process) while the fear of Bolshevism and the older prejudices against internationalism and racial hatreds deepen the division.

To such extent has this process been carried that in every democratic state in Europe there are important sections who favour the German domination of Europe as preferable to what they regard as the only probable alternative. We have now a situation in which, if Germany should go to war with, say, France or Great Britain, powerful sections of opinion within these two democracies would desire the enemy's success, not necessarily as something good in itself, but, again, as preferable to the alternative; as the lesser of two evils.

If we look back at the long story of the retreat of the democratic states since 1931, we shall find that each step taken by the totalitarian powers towards the establishment of preponderance—whether it be the extension of Japanese power in the Far East, of Italian power in Africa, the establishment of Italy at the back door of the Suez Canal, the re-occupation of the Rhineland, the invasion of the Spanish Peninsula by German and Italian forces, the neutralisation of Gibraltar by the installation of German guns at Ceuta and on the southern coast of Spain, the occupation of the Balearic Islands—all such steps have been welcomed and applauded by great sections of British opinion, sections which include men who gave their sons in the Great War to prevent the growth of German power.[1]

Fear for the security of Britain and the Empire has been crossed by others emotions, by convictions which, even if mistaken, partake of a religious intensity and sincerity.

[1] For evidence of this see the author's *Defence of the Empire*, (Hamish Hamilton) and *Peace with the Dictators?* (Hamish Hamilton).

Even before the rise of Bolshevism the idea of an international institution which might grow sufficiently powerful to "stick its nose into the management of our Empire," which might qualify the complete sovereignty and independence of the British State, excited in many quarters intense hostility. Any nation which challenged it successfully was bound to be popular. Furthermore, very many of a conservative type of mind in Britain are as convinced that Bolshevism threatens all civilization, order and morality, as is Hitler that the Jew is at the root of most of the evils from which Europe suffers and that the preservation of Germanic civilization demands that Jews be exterminated or driven out.

The result is that we are deeply divided as to whether a German or a Bolshevist Europe is the greater danger. [1] These deep and sincere divisions of opinion have produced an oscillation of policy that has in fact made the country for the time being defenceless—as the events of September, 1938, tragically reveal.

Resistance to totalitarian aggression has not been possible because great sections of our people refused to pay the price of effective resistence, that price necessarily including

[1] Commander R. T. Bower, M.P., giving his own view as fairly representative of Conservative opinion as a whole, says:

"The average Conservative does not regard a Communist merely as a member of an ordinary political Party: he regards him as a mortal danger to Christian civilisation . . . foul, cancerous disease of the human soul . . . and the Spanish Government, if not Communist at the moment, is at least a "contact" and going through the period of incubation. As we see it, Communism is something far more than a political or philosophical creed; it is the deadliest enemy of our very civilisation. Before its threat, the hypothetical dangers of a Franco victory sink into comparative insignificance. . . .

"The average Conservative dislikes dictators . . . but we have one thing in common with them, a loathing of that bestial creed, Communism. The dictators may threaten us politically and economically but (excluding, of course, Soviet Russia) they have no exportable philosophy with which to corrupt the very souls of our people. Reduced to simple terms, the Spanish War is a conflict between Christian civilisation and the Beast. That is why so many of us hope that Franco will win." (*Time and Tide*, August 6th, 1938).

such things as close co-operation with Russia, (it is patently impossible to create a balance of forces in Europe which can meet the totalitarian challenge without Russia); and economic and financial aid to the governments of China and Spain engaged in resisting totalitarian invaders who were attempting to destroy them.

Such a course has been rejected, as we rejected the opportunity of enlisting the vast potential forces of China, as well as those of Russia on our side, for reasons which, however sincere and high minded, had little relation to Britain's security.

Twenty years ago we fought to resist a German hegemony of Europe which would place us within Germany's power; would render us so manifestly inferior that in any dispute with her we should simply have to accept her verdict because we had lost the power of resist.

But we are compelled now to accept for the time being at least the unquestioned German domination of Europe, the establishment of the Germanic combination in a strategic position in Central and Southern and South eastern Europe and beyond, in Spain, in north Africa, in the Mediterranean, which makes Germany both relatively and absolutely immeasurably stronger than she was before our victory over her. That security and independence of France which we have so often declared to be indispensable to our own security has become at least for the time being impossible of defence if it should be threatened by Germany. The Great War proved how hazardous was that defence when we had Russia, Japan, Italy, Serbia and Roumania, the economic, and at the end, the military and naval resources of the United States on our side. What would be our position with Russia neutral, in isolation, Japan and Italy on the other side, the resources of the United States not available in the old degree, and France threatened on four fronts—the Rhine, the Alps, the Pyrenees, and in the Mediterranean?

The situation may be past saving, but if we are to save

it we may have to retrace our steps, (beginning perhaps with economic aid to China) to do with infinite difficulty now what could have been done so much more easily ten years ago. Incidentally, this characteristic of doing late what could have been done more effectively at an earlier stage is one which has marked the whole course of British policy since the war. If, for instance, in the matter of Reparations we had been ready to do in 1920 what we actually did at Lausanne in 1932, we might never have heard of Adolph Hitler, since the Weimar Republic might have been saved the miseries of the Great Inflation which did so much to destroy it and which was itself so largely provoked by self-stultifying Reparations claims.

Certain of our errors of the past are to-day vociferously condemned by those responsible for them, who seem to have forgotten they were responsible. If we were making the Treaty of Versailles to-day, we should call for a very different document from that of 1919. Yet the relevant facts were just as available then as they are now. The difference would be due to a difference in mood and temper. Are we quite sure that mood, or temper, is not deceiving us to-day as it deceived us then?

It may shortly be as fashionable to condemn the folly of our policy towards Japan in 1931 and Italy in 1935 as it is now to condemn the follies of Versailles. One reads to-day sweeping condemnation of the Versailles Treaty by many who in 1919 would not only tolerate no word of criticism but clamoured for terms still more severe, and did their best to excommunicate such of its critics as this present writer. But merely to admit past error in general terms is about as useful as a guide of policy as the weekly pronouncement of obviously self-satisfied congregations that they are miserable sinners, and that there is no good in them. For one hundred who are ready to declare that the Versailles Treaty (which at the time of its making they approved) is all wrong, and the chief root of our troubles, and that its revision would give us peace, there

is barely one who reconciles that conclusion with the fact that the World War arose in a Europe which was *not* living under a Versailles Treaty; that the war itself is proof absolute that revision even so drastic as to restore to Germany all her pre-war possessions, not only in Africa, or in Asia, but in Europe as well, would not ensure peace, since when Germany had all those possessions, Europe drifted to war. To restore to Germany everything she had in 1914 would be revision and concession indeed. Would it of itself mean peace? Then why did it not mean peace in 1914? Our problem is a bit older and goes a bit deeper than the Treaty of Versailles.

If it were merely a question of purchasing peace by transferring the greater part of the French or British colonial empire to Germany and Italy for division between them, this writer for one would regard real peace, the lifting for good of the shadow of war, purchased at such a price, as an extremely good bargain. He says this because having spent practically every day of his life for thirty years in the advocacy of peace, and the discovery of the means by which it may be achieved, he finds himself towards the close described repeatedly as a war-monger, willing to risk plunging the whole world in nameless agonies "for the sake of a few thousand Abyssinians", or Manchus, or Czechs, as the case may be. (How is one to describe those who continually make statements which a single moment's sober reflection would prove by the simplest internal evidence, to be untrue?) Still it is not clear, apparently, that the purpose of organised resistance, whether to Japan in 1931, or to Italy in 1935, was not for the sake of Manchuria or of Abyssinia, but for the sake of saving Western civilization.

If indeed it were true that peace could be saved by surrender of freedom, democracy, justice, honour, this writer for one would accept that price too. For in war

there is so little of freedom, or democracy, or justice, or honour, that its choice as a means of defending those things would indeed be hard to make. But the fact is that surrender in the past has not brought peace. It has brought more and more of war. And in all this weary story of seven years of retreat before violence, never once until that last fatal week of September was the alternative between war and peace, between bombs on London (neither Japan nor Italy could have bombed London) and surrender to justice. In each case it was between surrender of our own prejudices or imagined interest and surrender of justice and, ultimately, peace.

Not until that last week had the question ever been "Shall we have war or peace?" It had been: "Shall we set aside our prejudices in order to get a just and peaceful settlement or shall we stick to our prejudices at the cost of surrendering justice with the ever-increasing risk of war?"

If absolute pacifism could really be carried out it would obviously avoid war. But it would have to be carried out to the extent of, for instance, surrendering our tradition of Liberalism—free speech, free press, free discussion. A triumphant, irresistible, Fascist hegemony of Europe, facing the danger of the "spread of Bolshevism," would no more tolerate a Left government here than it has tolerated one in Spain. And if such were attempted and opposed by a British Franco, however small his following, he could, and would, have the backing of the dominant European power to destroy "Bolshevism" here.[1] If the British Government were unarmed, pacifist, non-resistant, it would, of course, be at the mercy of any corporal's guard that chose to seize it. Indefinite retreat before violence would ask too much of too many, for too long.

[1] Already indeed the Fuhrer (in his speech of Oct. 8, 1938) has taken sides in British politics by warning us against the danger of the advent to power of such men as Eden, Churchill and Duff Cooper. It is an entirely new phenomenon in international affairs for the head of one State thus to enter into the party disputes of another with whom he is in diplomatic relations.

The fact that so many millions can accept as true the statement made so naively, or so triumphantly, that the Government has "kept the peace" this last seven years, tell whole volumes concerning the ethical sense of awareness of those millions. For plainly, peace has not been kept. At each retreat war has extended, has proceeded to rage with ever-increasing ferocity and cruelty. From Manchuria it extended into Africa, from Africa to China, from China to Spain, from Spain to Czechoslovakia. What the phrase really means, of course, is that war has not so far come to us; that it has only come to Manchurians or Abyssinians or Chinese or Spaniards or Czechs, and oppression and torture only been applied to Jews, or Social Democrats, or Pacifists or foreign Christians; and that their peace is not our concern. The implication—indeed the repeated explicit statements—that we can preserve peace while remaining indifferent to the peace of others, is accepted by a people who solemnly in their churches and chapels repeat such phrases as that we are all members one of another; who give to such declaration of faith and principle an emotional content; and repeating it, have some vague feeling of "being good."

They do not believe that we are members one of another. They do not believe it because, plainly, they do not know what it means, do not understand it; do not see how, in what manner, its truth applies to the working of human society, particularly to the necessary mechanism of the common defence of nations.

We now react to the visible danger by feverish rearming, a rearming which obviously can only be directed at the Totalitarian states. (If we have to teach our babies to wear gas-masks because one day bombs may be dropped upon our cities, we are perfectly aware that they will not be French bombs, or American bombs, or Dutch or

Swiss or even Russian bombs: they will be German. They can be no other.)

But many—perhaps most—of those who clamour daily for ever more and more arms to defend us against German attack, welcome totalitarian efforts in Spain or elsewhere (a recent addition to the cabinet was an active member of a society formed to promote the cause of Franco, the totalitarian nominee or instrument) plainly designed to make it impossible for us to use our arms effectively. "If" writes Captain Liddell Hart "you postpone a stand until the ground has been strategically undermined, you cannot fight" you can only surrender.

Consider that fact in relation to the role which the air arm is to play in modern warfare, particularly as an instrument of civilian terrorization.

The German military authorities are credited with the calculation that from the start of war against this country they would be able with their air arm to account for the destruction of twenty thousand civilians daily. Do a few sums and grasp what that means.

Whatever the effectiveness of our A.R.P. measures (at present comically inadequate, calling for multiplication a hundredfold, though our government still seems to regard them as the very Cinderella of rearmament) air attack would be the German retort to our naval superiority. In order to break our will, to secure acquiescence in her demands, Germany would not attempt to destroy our fleets, which she is not equipped to do. She would attempt to destroy our cities which she *is* equipped to do.

It is beside the point to argue that the slaughter of a few million women and children would not secure military decision because the navy and the fighting forces remained intact. If the husbands, fathers, lovers, feel that they are not justified in asking for the further sacrifice of children, wives, sweethearts, (and the government, army, navy, air forces will all include husbands, fathers, lovers) they will, if the breaking of the country's will in this way has gone

far enough, demand the ending of war. That decision is in fact a military decision, the most fundamental military decision of all, the one decision which is the beginning and end of the whole military purpose, all military effort. Nor can we rule out of account the fact that the last few years have habituated our people to submission—submission to piracy, to the killing of our sailors, to threat, to insult. This is not good psychological preparation for prolonged resistance. German military writers have always seen and stressed the point that the breaking of the enemy's will is the ultimate aim of all military effort, and have in consequence attached enormous weight to the effort of *schrecklichkeit* terror. It will certainly be used as the main military arm of a weak naval power fighting a great one that attempts to shelter itself behind its fleet.

It is not only German writers who stress this point. Marshal Foch once remarked to General Groves:

> "The military mind always imagines the next war will be on the same lines as the last. That has never been the case and never will be. One of the great factors in the next war will obviously be aircraft. The potentialities of aircraft attack on a large scale are most incalculable, but it is clear that such attack, owing to its crushing moral effect on a nation, may impress public opinion to the point of disarming the Government and thus become decisive."[1]

Lord Halsbury, Chief of the Explosives Department of the British Ministry of War during the Great War, informed the House of Lords on 14th July, 1928, that forty tons of diphenylcyanarsine would suffice to destroy the whole population of London.[2]

The late Field-Marshal Sir William Robertson wrote:

> "Modern war being largely a matter of war against economic life, has turned more and more towards the

[1] Quoted in *Behind the Smoke Screen.*

[2] *What Would be the Character of a New War.* Gollancz, 5s.

enemy's home country, and the old principle of making war only against armies and navies has been consigned to the background. Raids on non-military places and people may be regarded as barbaric, and they may, by exasperating the inhabitants, have the opposite effect to that intended—the breaking down of the country's morale—but they are bound to play a prominent part in the next contest, and on a far more extensive scale than in the late war".

Here is an American witness:

The real terror for the civilian population during the next war will be from gases that are intensely poisonous, and perhaps from bacteria as well. Consider a comparatively modest force of, say, two hundred planes making a night attack upon a city. They will be able to approach at a speed of at least six miles a minute and at five miles height, invisible to any searchlight. Even were they visible, they would be immune to anti-aircraft batteries. Such a squadron could drop at least four hundred tons of containers packed with poison gas under high pressure. The gas would be odourless. There would be no warning.

It will be the first time in history that one Power can strike down the civilian population of another long before the military forces come in contact, perhaps within half an hour of declaration of war. It is a grisly speculation, but one that must be faced.[1]

In explaining the course which he took in the events of September of this year (1938) the Prime Minister among other things said this:

You can no longer think of war as it was in the days of Marlborough or the days of Napoleon, or even in the days of 1914.

[1] "A New Era in Speed," Francis Vivian Drake. (*Atlantic Monthly*, May, 1934).

> When war starts to-day, in the very first hour, before any professional soldier or sailor or airman has been touched, it will strike the workman, the clerk, the man in the street or in the bus, and his wife and children in their homes.

What was the position at the end of September, 1938, which in the Prime Minister's view justified the sacrifice of France's ally (and so, at one remove, ours) and the consequent destruction of the system of alliances which France believed indispensable to her security—that security which we have so often proclaimed as indispensable to our own?

The Prime Minister explained that we were on the very edge of war, of all the torments that would be involved in it. How near we were to it may be judged by one statement of the Foreign Secretary. Speaking of the bitter sacrifice demanded of Czechoslovakia, he said:[1]

> Let us make no mistake. Without the help of Dr. Benes it would have been impossible to avoid a European war.

Think for a moment what it means. We had got into a situation in which if one man, the head of a state about to be dismembered as the result of an act which his people regarded as betrayal by us, a man whose career would be at an end as the result of the sacrifice he was about to make, had possessed a little less of magnaminity and fortitude, a little more of demogogy, world war would have been let loose. What shall be said of a policy which produces periodically situations of that appalling danger?

It is not less appalling if we take the view that we were snatched from the jaws of destruction only by the skill and persistence of the Prime Minister at the last moment. But for the luck of having just that man at just that moment in London on the one hand, and in Prague on the other, we should now be plunged into a chaos of

[1] House of Lords, October 3rd, 1938.

torment and agony in which our country, all the freedoms, securities that we most value would perish miserably. Do we regard the fact of having got into a position of mortal and appalling jeopardy as a proof of having followed a sound policy? As proof of wise British statecraft? Are the policies which brought us thus to the very edge of utter disaster, of unimaginable ruin, to be continued?

It may be argued, of course, that the situation of September when we hovered on the very edge of the pit was not the result of the policy which we had been following. But what is certain is that we got into that position after many years of adherence to that policy; that such prolonged adherence had failed to prevent our getting into that desperate situation, from the consequences of which we were only saved, we are told, by the negotiating genius of one man, the almost superhuman forbearance of Czechoslovakia—and yet one more surrender to the threat of war, one more sacrifice of a potential ally in resistance to totalitarian domination.

The last submission to the threat of war comes as the culmination of a long series of collaborations and negotiations with the totalitarian states; of concessions, "conciliations", forebearances and submissions made first to Japan, then to Italy, then to Germany. We had accepted the machine-gunning of ambassadors, the sinking of British ships, the drowning of British sailors, the "recognition" of the Abyssinian conquest two years after we had declared it to be a crime; winked at piracy; withheld from the Spanish government its normal right to secure material for its defence, while for two years we acquiesced (through the gross farce of non-intervention) in the despatch of whole armies to its enemies; put the League in cold storage because its active support or application might be unwelcome to the totalitarian powers. Having failed to make a stand when it was possible to do so without risk of war, we naturally reached a point where a stand would have involved that risk.

Mr. Chamberlain has made it clear that it was the possibilities of air attack which weighed with him most —as it ought to have done. The offence was to get into that position. If it is to be a choice between, on the one hand, allowing some distant country to be brought under alien rule, even though it does mean the destruction of an Ally, the worsening of our defensive position, and on the other the annihilation of British cities and their inhabitants, then the course of surrender will always be followed.

But then we must also face the fact that if that situation is produced very often and we are always to make that decision in it, national defence is at an end and our vast rearmament becomes quite meaningless. For we cannot use that armament effectively save in a certain strategic situation. If, for instance, France, the Low Countries, Scandinavia, Spain—that is to say the continental shores of the North Atlantic—have been brought within the power of the state against which we arm (there is, let it be repeated, only one state whose bombing we have any reason to fear) so that those seaboard nations have ceased to be (a) a shock absorbing cushion against German attack on England; (b) part of the forces which Germany has to meet, and (c) have become instead the main base of attack, then no armaments that we can possibly sustain would make us safe.

If we assume, what may be the case with the absorbtion of Austria, the destruction of an armed Czechoslovakia and the neutralisation of Russia, that Germany is in a position to dominate Spain, France, Belgium, Holland and Denmark, then her own nerve centres and her lines of communication stretching from the shores of the Baltic to the Mediterranean and the Black Sea can be protected by wide fortified barriers and our own remain open to attack from an encircling line stretching along the whole of the Atlantic seaboard from Bergen to the African coast and the Canaries. To get at the German capital we should have to cross great continental areas

strewn with German bases. But the German forces could get at our territory from such bases without having to cross any such barrier. We start with an enormous initial disadvantage. If the contest is to settle down into a war of attrition, of mutual extermination, consider what that means in a contest between a Britain of forty-five millions and a Germanic combination of a hundred and twenty millions, if we consider merely the two chief partners, and of two hundred millions at least if we take into account (as we must) the satellite states. Assume equal civilian losses on both sides and recall that the last war, when air warfare was only beginning, cost the belligerents ten million lives. Twenty millions from the German group (the Germans would see to it that by the distribution of their air bases the Danes, the Dutch, the Belgians and the French paid their quota) would still leave it immensely formidable. If all the losses on the German side were suffered by Germany (and they would not be) she would still be a nation of sixty millions able to dominate the Continent. But as many millions from the British side would mean the reduction of Britain to utter impotence; a broken nation.

Do we doubt that in a contest with Britain, Germany would not concentrate upon destruction of cities as a means of destroying the national organisation and breaking of the national morale? In such a contest everything is overwhelmingly in her favour and against us: numbers, geographical situation, the possibility of infinitely wider distribution of bases, resources, factories, population. She has conditioned her people to indifference to suffering, to animal-like obedience, to a liking for cruelty—all qualities in which we are inferior; and, as important as anything, she can use the advantages of surprise to an extent which we cannot.

The very recklessness of the totalitarian rulers, the fact that they have no very great compunction in plunging their people into war, while our statesmen hesitate, and in a

position of political isolation rightly hesitate, gives to the Germanic group immense advantage.

That is particularly the case when we consider the possibilities of Germany so dominating her European neighbours of the seaboard as to compel their submission to the creation of bases in their territory. What is the lesson of Czechoslovakia in this connection? Czechoslovakia was a powerfully armed, strongly fortified, efficiently managed state, with France and Russia as allies and the moral support of Great Britain. A threat of war by Germany secured the complete, unconditional surrender of that State and her allies in a few days. Compare this with what happened in the case of Belgium in 1914, when a much weaker state resisted the German onslaught, and saw the obligations assumed by others for her defence completely (and successfully) fulfilled.

Since 1914 the fear of war, the fear of Germany, the decay of faith in treaty obligation or collective action, the increased belief by totalitarian states in the efficacy of violence and ruthlessness on their part—all this has so grown that international politics can no longer be interpreted in terms and standards which (defective and inadequate as they were) still stood in 1914.

If France were presented with demands equivalent in some measure to those made upon Czechoslovakia, should we go to war on France's behalf given the knowledge that, with the elimination of Russia at a time when both the Alpine and Pyrineean frontiers call for more forces than they have done so far, and that the German possession of the Czechoslovakian Maginot line has added some thirty divisions to the forces which France has to face, the defence of France is not in fact practicable?

Indeed we can say with complete certainty that our refusal would be a foregone conclusion if there had been previously applied to France the kind of technique, now so familiar, which has been applied in the case of Austria, Spain and Czechoslovakia—the instigation, that is, of

Fascist movements against the French government alleged to be in danger from Communist manœuvres. (A Henlein has already made his appearance in Alsace-Lorraine). It is not difficult to imagine the course events might take.

There are risings in Tunis and in other North African colonies of a Fascist and anti-Semite character, the local authorities being accused of Communist leanings or associations, or of being under Jewish influence. There is barely concealed intervention by Italy and Germany of the kind that has gone on for two years in Spain, this synchronising with the appearance of a powerful semi-Fascist party in France itself (supported by Italy and Germany) based on allegations that Communists were about to seize power and reduce the country to the kind of disorder which—we are told—Germany and Italy faced when the Fascists in the one case and the Nazis in the other seized power in those countries. We should then have in France a situation in many respects similar to that which arose in Spain. British opinion would be hardly less divided than it has been in the Spanish case; issues would be confused; many in Britain, stirred by stories of Communist atrocities, the burning of churches and the raping of nuns (at the instigation of Moscow) would favour the suppression of any Left Government in France, even with German and Italian help; both Germany and Italy would be ready to give most absolute and positive guarantees to respect the integrity of France, undertaking that not one acre of French soil proper should lose its French sovereignty. (Such guarantees have, it is understood, been given to Franco by both Germany and Italy. Similar guarantees by Germany to Turkey before 1914 did not in the least prevent the use of Turkish territory by Germany for military purposes long before war was declared). In these circumstances war by Great Britain in order to save French colonies for a France that was itself deeply divided would be ridiculous, quite out of the question.

There would be no question of war on Britain from the moment that she was prepared to agree to the transfer of French colonies to Italy and Germany, which would have from Germany's standpoint the double advantage of keeping Italy within the German orbit and separating France for good from Britain. Britain would once more maintain peace by throwing a third party to the wolves and sacrificing an ally. France would go the way of Czechoslovakia. With France disposed of, is it imaginable that the little states would risk the annihilation of their populations in what would be in any case a completely vain attempt to prevent the seizure by Germany of a few aerodromes?

No purpose is served by pretence, by "wishful thinking", by minimising the gravity of the position to which we have brought ourselves, especially in view of the fact that it is quite certain we shall not adequately grapple with it until we see the seriousness in all its grimness. If there is courage, the capacity to face facts left in us at all, then we should disguise nothing, minimise nothing. Then we may be prepared to make the necessary sacrifices.

When one speaks of "making sacrifices", it is usually assumed that one has reference to heavier taxation for armament, or to conscription, or to national service, or to burdens of that character. But if there is any force at all in what has just been written, sacrifices of that kind might be multiplied almost indefinitely and still leave us about as impotent as ever. All the democracies have been making that kind of effort for some years now—and their defensive position has become steadily worse.

The sacrifices which could, almost from one day to another, completely transform the position, and place the advantages on the side of the non-German states are not in fact material sacrifices; they are mainly the sacrifice of old prejudices, hostilities; the sacrifice which is involved in setting aside our dislike of examining objectively ideas that have bcome part of emotional habit and equipment.

Let us note in the light of events what is implied in the foregoing to the end that the past may not be repeated.

In September Britain and France surrendered to totalitarian power because we are told, the alternative would have been bombs on London and Paris.

But we have in the past surrendered again and again to totalitarian power, ceding position after position, when the alternative was no such thing as the bombardment of London. And it is reasonably certain that the dreadful dilemma which faced Mr. Chamberlain in September would never have arisen if we had been prepared to take infinitely lesser risks at an earlier date. For instance, in 1931 we refused Mr. Stimson's offer of co-operation in non-military resistance to Japan, a resistance which might have taken the form of economic aid to China given in conjunction with America and Russia, and later perhaps boycott of Japan. Had there been co-operation between Britain, Russia and the United States as early as 1931, China would almost certainly have opposed such resistance as to render impossible the further advance of Japan which took place six years later, and a serious check to Japan, rendering Russia more formidable, would have rendered the European totalitarians far less reckless. It is doubtful if we yet know the meaning of the phrase "the indivisibility of peace". Economic aid given to China in that way in conjunction with the United States would certainly *not* have involved the bombardment of London, even if Japan had declared war on Great Britain, America and Russia all at once. But we did not at that time want that kind of action at all; our Conservatives were pro-Japanese and Sir John Simon rejected the American offer so bluntly and curtly as greatly to offend the Hoover administration. The fact that Japanese expansion thus met with no effective resistance undoubtedly encouraged Mussolini (he has indeed said so) to attempt his challenge

to the League and the British Empire which came in 1935. His immunity on that occasion directly encouraged the stroke of Hitler, first in the Rhineland, and later, with Mussolini, in the Spanish Peninsula; then in Austria; then in Czechoslovakia.

It is commonly argued that we had no power to offer resistance in cases like Mussolini's Abyssinian adventure. But altogether apart from the possibilities of the larger strategy just indicated, it is quite certain that if Abyssinia had been British territory, Mussolini would not have dreamed of attacking it. That is to say British power alone would have sufficed to check Italian aggression if that power had been as obviously directed at the defence of the Covenant as it is to the defence of British territory. To have said in 1935: "We shall defend the Covenant (i.e. Abyssinia) precisely as we would defend Kenya" would not have meant bombs on London any more than our known intention to defend Kenya means bombs on London. But since Mussolini did not believe that we would defend the Covenant in the same way that we would defend our territory, he attacked it successfully, destroyed it for the time being and established himself in an infinitely stronger position in the Mediterranean.

His success in the Abyssinian challenge to Europe encouraged him to invade the Spanish peninsular. If we had at that juncture merely allowed ordinary international law to operate, allowing the Spanish government to secure the materials it needed for its defence, it is, to say the least, extremely doubtful whether that action would have meant Italian bombs on London. Indeed when gross piracy at last stung Britain into action, as at Nyon, Mussolini instantly retreated. The risk of maintaining our strategic position in the Western Mediterranean by allowing the Spanish Government to obtain under normal operation of international law the means to expel the invader, was a small risk. We did not take it. Instead of maintaining the law which would have helped Spain to resist the Italian

invader, our government, parting with Mr. Eden, toyed with the idea of detaching Italy from Germany. Germany's instant reply was the annexation of Austria. We were not in a position to offer Italy help in preventing that; Italy had to accept with the best grace possible. Germany's position was now immensely stronger, and the complete subservience of Italy was assured. Germany felt in a position to demand, on threat of war, the elimination of Czechoslovakia as part of the collective resistance to German hegemony; and the cancellation of the arrangements with Russia.

The surrender was made, and the defensive system of non-German Europe lay in ruins. There was now real risk of totalitarian war, the destruction of London if a stand were made, just because no stand had been made when there were no such risks.

Whether collective resistance would really have meant war or not in 1931 and 1935 is something that can never be absolutely determined, however the overwhelming probabilities may point. What we can determine completely is that the fear of war was not the major motive with those who urged and supported the policy we have followed. For very frankly, very fully, supporters of the Government's policy have repeatedly declared that if resistance to Japan in 1931, Italy in 1935, Italy and Germany in Spain, could have been completely successful without war, that resistance should not have been made, since, in their view, the victory of Japan was preferable to that of a Communist China, the presence of Italy in Abyssinia preferable to a success for Geneva, the victory of Franco with German and Italian aid preferable to the victory of the Spanish Government with its Socialist tendencies.

Our Government has indeed hardly troubled to conceal its view that it has acquiesced in the aggressions, not because resistance would have meant war, but because, as its supporters, and the exponents of its policies, have again and again quite openly and undisguisedly declared, they preferred the politics of the aggressor to the politics

of the victim; preferred the triumph of the aggressor's cause to that of his victim; because the associations (as with Russia), which resistance would have involved, were more distasteful than the aggressor's triumph. No one who recalls for a moment the attitude taken by the bulk of the Government Party, by such Cabinet Ministers as Sir John Simon, in respect of the invasion of China, Abyssinia, Spain, can with any fraction of good faith challenge those statements for one moment. Even in the last tragic days of the crisis the one thing which might have impressed the aggressor, and without which we could not pretend to mean business, the frank, open negotiations for common action with Russia—was withheld until the last possible second, when the clock seemed about to strike. If it was wise or justifiable at all to say as the Government did on Wednesday, September 28th, that it would join Soviet Russia, it is clear that it would have been wiser, more effective, to have made the statement weeks earlier: if at all then before the crisis had so developed.

As these lines are being written the newspapers are full of suggestions for a new world conference to settle the economic, territorial, political differences of the nations. But since the war we have witnessed the holding not of one or two, but literally scores of international conferences. Conferences on economic problems, for settlement of political differences, for disarmament. As a means of getting at the root of the trouble, they have nearly all proved either fruitless, like those of the long years of the disarmament conference, or their fruits have turned to ashes, as was the case with the conference that led to the Locarno group of treaties.

This does not prove that the method of conferences was wrong any more than the collapse of so much of the League system proves that system to be wrong. The conferences failed because the public did not realise the

price it must be prepared to pay for success; did not sufficiently face the fact that if we are to have peace and security, we must make certain sacrifices, and assume certain obligations—just as every valuable thing in life has to be paid for in that way.

The idea that we can secure peace by mere territorial revision is, for reasons explained in these pages, infinitely dangerous. They indicate why territorial revision, even though in certain cases desirable, cannot possibly of itself give us peace, and that brought about as it has been brought about since the war must end by producing utter disaster.

If now, any conference on such vast issues as the revision of Versailles, economic stability, and the establishment of some system of security, is to have any hope of success there must be better preparation in terms of public understanding of the issues involved. The public must have some knowledge of what the possible alternatives are, some sense of why this particular line of remedy might be successful, why that other would be bound to fail. Otherwise, as so often in the past, the real remedy will be rejected. It serves little purpose to find the way of escape if those who are to tread it do not believe it to be the way of escape, and refuse to follow it.

This is an aspect of the problem which is curiously neglected. We seem to assume that if only some one could find the cure for diseases we should at once see that it *was* the cure and apply it. We ask for leaders and leadership. But if the right course which the leader indicates happens to be the course which the multitude sincerely believes to be the wrong one, they will immediately declare that he is no leader, but a misleader. Inevitably in a democracy the leader is he who expresses existing convictions in the most vivid way, who possesses, as some one puts it, "the common mind to an uncommon degree."

How can it be otherwise? The convictions of the multitudes (as, e.g., the desirability of organizing the world on

a nationalist basis) are sincere convictions. They are, as we know, sometimes disastrously erroneous; but they are also disastrously honest. One can imagine people pretending to beliefs they don't hold hypocritically and insincerely for some purpose of advantage to themselves. But one cannot imagine whole nations maintaining a pretence for generation after generation for the purpose of making themselves poor and depriving themselves of their property. No. The Nationalisms, the Protectionisms, the Mercantilisms and all the other fallacies which rack Europe and create the chaos are sincerely held fallacies. They are, to these multitudes, the truth; and the prophet who denies them shall be stoned.

So leaders cannot help us much if they merely lead more forcefully and more quickly in the wrong direction. The prophets can only help to the degree that they are able to show that errors sincerely held as the truth are not the truth; and thus make possible the perception of the right way.

Examination of past errors, whether at Versailles or the other conferences, reveals this strange fact—that we have gone wrong, not from lack of knowledge in any technical sense, but from failure to apply to public policy knowledge which was universally possessed, from failure to see the meaning, that is, of facts which are beneath our noses. (One is indicated a page or two back, when millions, asserting that the sole cause of the present chaos is the injustice of Versailles, make no attempt to account for the outbreak of world war when Europe was *not* suffering under a Versailles Treaty.)

It is with such simplicities that this book deals.

One of the tragedies of this crisis, as of the preceding ones, is that the public, groping for peace and justice, have tried to grapple with the difficult and complex aspects of the problem (aspects with which the layman is not equipped to deal, and which are not, properly speaking, vital and relevant) and have neglected aspects which are

vital and relevant, and are at the same time fundamentally simple, and within the layman's competence.

Take the newspaper discussion of the Czechoslovak crisis. Day after day the major and more simple issue is obscured in a mass of minor and more difficult ones. Nine out of ten of the letters, and nine out of ten of the leading articles discuss the merits of the rival claims of Germans and Czechs. Suddenly, at a few days' notice, leader and letter writers take it upon themselves to pass judgment on a matter of enormous complexity, about which students who have devoted a lifetime to the subject differ. We were told that if the Czechs made this or that concession, we ought to support them; if they did not, we ought not to. That sort of discussion landed us finally in this position: The Czechs under "irresistible pressure" from Britain and France having made concessions to the point of the dismemberment and the placing of their State at the mercy of Germany, the Hungarians and Poles (quite naturally, given the character of Nationalist morality) made similar demands. The amateur judges then swung round violently. This was too much; we ought to support Czechoslovakia. So, while we would not risk war to defend Czechoslovakia's right to defence, to existence, to be given even a hearing and fair trial before what the German press call "execution", we *would* fight to prevent a few hundred thousand Hungarians being returned to Hungary, or Poles to Poland.

Many of the leading articles, especially those of *The Times* and its letters to the Editor, really did seem to assume that that kind of question was the issue. We had columns of exploration into past history, into the errors of Versailles, long discussions as to whether the Bohemians really are Germans; the merits of the Swiss Cantonal system. And much more to the same effect.

Even if those things really did constitute the issue, a democracy could never pass judgment on them. They are not issues for the layman at all. They are highly

technical and difficult questions demanding the knowledge of experts in the history of those areas, the ethnographical circumstances, the constitutional peculiarities and capacities of the Governments concerned, and a thousand and one considerations altogether beyond the layman.

Those things never were of course the real issue, as the event—the passing of the last remaining democracy east of the Rhine under the complete domination of the Nazi hegemony—abundantly proves.

But upon the real issue, a democracy, if it has any social judgment or feeling or instinct at all, *is* able to pass judgment. The issue is this:

> Shall disputes between a great State and a small one be settled by the force of the greater? Shall the more powerful of the two disputants by the mere fact of his superior power be sole judge and impose his judgment by war?

That was the supreme issue from the beginning of the Czech dispute, as it was the supreme issue when international order was challenged, first by Japan in Manchuria, then by Italy in Abyssinia, then by Germany in the Rhineland, then by Italy and Germany in Spain, then again by Japan in China.

The fact that if we cannot co-operate to resist lawless violence against others, we are bound in the end to become its victim ourselves; that, since we cannot possibly defend ourselves without allies, we shall be defenceless ourselves if one by one those necessary allies are destroyed—that sort of truth *can* be made understandable to the ordinary layman because it is part of the process of organised society with which, in only a slightly different context, he is familiar. About the institutions of justice and security in his own State he argues: "I cannot determine whether this or that man is guilty or not; such is the job of judge and jury, the court. But I can and do know that it is to

my interest that he should have a fair trial, that violence, even if it be against those unknown to me, must be restrained".

Had our education for citizenship, for democracy, been what it ought to be, and might be, the public would certainly have grasped more clearly than it has done what policy in a crisis like this it had to support in order to achieve its dominant purpose.

That purpose was peace, the prevention of war. Plainly, therefore, the first task was *not* to establish the merits of a difficult and intricate question, but to stand firmly on the simple point that it should not be settled by war or by its threat. Whether the prospective victims of violence were China or Abyssinia or Czechoslovakia we should have said: "We do not presume to be judges of the dispute at all, but only judge of the principle that a dispute between two States should not be settled purely by the force of the stronger". In each of these cases we should have said to the stronger party:

> First and last no war. We stand for the full investigation, complete ventilation of your claims, and shall make plain to the weaker party that our assistance to him is conditional upon his willingness to allow full consideration of the matter and to facilitate impartial settlement. So long as he is willing to agree to that we are ready to defend him against violence.

Having made as certain as we could that violence, the mere superior strength of one party, would not settle the dispute, the way might have been open to investigation, peaceful settlement. But so long as the stronger party, convinced of the right of his claim, was uncertain whether we should stand by the weaker party or not, he certainly would not forego to use force which he deemed justified by what he felt to be the rightness of his cause. Defence for the weaker is obviously an indispensable part of

peaceful and impartial settlement of any major dispute between two parties of very unequal strength.

But in none of the long list of aggressions we finally compounded have we taken the line of saying: "No war. No settlement by force". In every case—Japan, Italy, Germany—just when the dispute had reached its crisis, when the forces of the stronger were already moving towards decision, we occupied ourselves, not with resistance to the use of force, but with passing judgment on the merits of the case. We made the principle that a small litigant is entitled to be defended from the violence of a big one depend on our judgment, hastily given, as to whether the small litigant had the better case.

To be able to realise that such a social principle is inequitable and unworkable, makes nonsense and is bound to fail, does not demand a specialist's knowledge, whether of ethnographic frontiers or of strategical factors. It demands only that general understanding of the way human society must be organised if it is to work without constant friction and conflict, an understanding that ought to be the possession of every citizen; and could and would be, if our social education were rationally directed.

It was wrong in principle and wrong in tactics and strategy to send Runciman to Prague. We should have made plain that we stood for full investigation of Sudeten and German claims; for their just and impartial settlement, but at the same time should have taken boldly the essential steps to see that that became possible by placing the weaker on something like equality with the stronger, by preparing to give the former effective help. That help was not possible in any of the cases mentioned unless we were prepared to accept the co-operation of Russia, and to treat the problem of resistance to violence as "indivisable". The place for us to have helped Czechoslovakia was in China and in Spain. We should have had such cases as Czechoslovakia and Spain, and their strategic importance in mind, when we so casually rejected Mr. Stimson's offer

of diplomatic co-operation in 1932; when we so eagerly abandoned sanctions in 1935, and turned (at the cost of Mr. Eden's resignation) to such disreputable bargaining with Italy in 1937. And when the Czechoslovak crisis loomed on the horizon we should not so very pointedly have ignored Russia. That fact alone was proof that we did not mean business; that we were prepared to sacrifice the only means by which resistance to violence was possible.

Perhaps now it is too late to retrace our steps and the situation now beyond saving. But in that case it is too late to arm—unless indeed we are arming to add power to the anti-comintern bloc.

But we cannot know of course that the totalitarians have already won the war they have been waging this last seven years. Some fortunate accident, the passing of a dictator or other fortuitous circumstance, may furnish an opportunity of recovering the position. If and when that occurs we should be ready by an understanding of the issues to seize the opportunity.

Our problem now is to combine certain revisions with the effective defence of rights or interests which we value; to combine such defence with peace; to do substantial justice without placing ourselves, to say nothing of Western civilisation, still further within the power of those whose ideas of justice do not happen to be ours.

The problem is on one side political and on the other economic. In respect of the political problem we must face the fact that we have been placed in a position in which only the collective method of defence, and all that is implied thereby, can save us. We shall only be able to talk with Germany on equal terms if (*a*) Britain and the Seaboard States of Europe can somehow be made a defensive unit; (*b*) the co-operation of Russia be assured; (*c*) Four hundred million Chinese aided part of the forces resisting aggression; and (*d*) the growth of totalitarian power checked and a stand made at points where a stand would not involve the annihilation of our cities.

In respect of the economic problem we must be ready to offer to those whose violence we intend to resist a peaceful means as effective as their violent means of achieving prosperity. We must not merely be prepared to open our dependent empire on equal terms to them, but in the building up of the "defensive confederation of the democracies" we must make it a combination which from the economic standpoint is worth joining. That aspect is dealt with later on. We need to consider first the political conditions of its success.

CHAPTER II

SHALL WE PROFIT BY EXPERIENCE?

Armament can prevent aggression but can also fail so to do as the last war proved. That failure will be repeated unless we take more fully into account than has been the case in the past the arguments presented in the *The Great Illusion*, particularly in respect of (1) The way in which power must be used if it is to be effective as a deterrent of aggression; (2) the facts in respect of raw materials, colonies, population expansion which settlement with Germany, Italy and Japan involves; (3) the "co-operative" system of defence which is in fact the core of the Collective System and the League; (4) Recovery from Economic Depression; (5) Prevention of Revolutionary upheaval. A note on illusions concerning *The Great Illusion.*

OUR country is engaged at this moment in war preparations on a greater scale than it has ever made before in all its peacetime history.

It is not merely a matter of armies and navies. The whole population is being drawn into these preparations. For we realise that if war comes, the dense masses of our great cities will share the fate of Canton, Barcelona, Madrid, Almeria. We are learning how to equip the children with gasmasks. The trenches may be safer than our homes; our soldiers safer than our babies.

In the process, our economic life is being transformed. We are reaching a condition in which it is a commonplace to remark that we can neither afford to continue the present scale of expenditure owing to the burden upon the taxpayer, nor to cease it owing to the crisis of unemployment which would be produced. We are spending upon our defensive preparations sums which, if they go on increasing as they have been increasing this last few years, will either land the taxpayer in insupportable burdens, or involve the wholesale expropriation of ac-

cumulated savings. That expropriation will not be direct nor will it be called such, but will be as much a fact as was the similar fate of the rentiers, the middle classes of all the continental belligerents after the last war. The multiplication of loans for unproductive purposes must ultimately produce a monetary inflation which, by reducing the purchasing power of the pound (as that of the franc and other continental currencies has been reduced) will correspondingly reduce the real value of the incomes of recipients of fixed money payments.

We are taking these measures because—obviously—we believe that the possession of great power is the surest, in the last analysis the only preventive of attack, and that it is of itself, if great enough, a certain deterrent. We accompany the building up of our power by a very conciliatory attitude towards potential enemies; an attitude expressed not merely in the settlement of specific and discernible differences, like those which enter into the Anglo-Italian agreement, but by refusal to resent things which only a year or two ago would have put navies and armies on a war footing; such things as the violation of solemn treaties which other states have made with us, the shooting of British Ambassadors or officials, the sinking of scores of British ships, the killing and drowning of British sailors; the almost admitted participation by foreign states in revolutionary movements against our authority in various parts of the world; invasions designed to facilitate the occupation of strategic positions with the plain intention of weakening our power of defence if it ever comes to war. To our increasing armament we add all this increasing submissiveness.

What more can be done, says John Smith, to ensure peace?

Yet all relevant experience, particularly the most outstanding and tragic of all such experience, that of the Great War itself, is a warning that neither the power nor the submission is of itself enough; that unless certain

things are added they will fail to defend us, to preserve peace, to deter aggression.

The experience of the Great War proves this because in that war we and our Allies had immense power, very much greater relative power perhaps than we could ever hope to have again. We had on our side not merely France and Belgium, but in addition Russia, Japan, Italy, Roumania, and the United States, the economic resources of the last-named from the beginning and its naval and military resources as well later on. Here was overwhelming power, as the final victory proved. But that overwhelming power did not deter the aggressor, nor prevent war. Nor did it ensure effective defence either of the million of our people who were killed, of the trade which disappeared, or the political independence now so precarious. Nor did final victory make us secure, or we should not now, after victory, be proclaiming that we are more insecure than ever.

Why has overwhelming power thus failed to achieve its purpose?

Historians have answered that question, and the answer is childishly simple. The power did not prevent aggression because the putative aggressor did not know that he would have to meet the power. Had Germany realized, agree practically all the historians, that the result of following the policy she did, would have been to bring all those forces into the field against her, she would not have followed that policy and there would have been no war.

"Attack," of course, does not necessarily mean actual invasion. We have not had to fight foreign soldiers on our soil since the Norman Conquest. But we have been concerned in many wars. The Germans were not proposing to invade Britain in 1914 (they wanted very much to keep us out of the war); nor were they invading Japan when she entered the war; nor Italy; nor Roumania; nor were German troops threatening to land in New York when America entered. (They were otherwise engaged at the

time.) Nevertheless, although there was no direct threat to their soil, the Allied states took the view that Germany was adopting a line which, if continued, would be fatal to their safety, their interests, their rights; and must be resisted.

Some years ago an American Admiral said to the present writer: "If only our navy in 1914 had been twice the size it was, the Germans would never have dared to go to war." But if, a decade or so before 1914, America had begun greatly to increase the size of her navy, it is Britain, not Germany, that would have been most disturbed. For it is with Britain, not Germany, that America has had her most serious quarrels, quarrels over sea rights which had already led to one war between the two countries and brought them very near to others. An immense American navy previous to 1914, precipitating Anglo-American naval rivalry, would certainly have had no deterrent effect upon German aggression and might very well have directly encouraged it as giving rise to the impression that the power of the English-speaking peoples would cancel itself out by the renewal of quarrels between them, quarrels which had already led to war between them in the past.

It is quite clear that power, however great it may be, cannot possibly deter another nation from taking a given line of action unless that nation knows it will have to meet that power as the result of such action. "Had the Allied and associated powers been in a position to say beforehand that they would do, what at long last they were in any case compelled to do, they would not have had to do it."

So little have we learned that lesson, that to-day those whom we regard as potential enemies do not know whether our power is intended to support or oppose the policy they are following; do not know whether Britain will fight with Russia against Germany or Japan, or stand aside; or aid Germany and Japan (whether economically or by benevolent neutrality) or be actual allies to destroy

Russian Communism; or cease to be Allies of France if a Socialist or Communist policy is followed by that country.

No one who has talked much with Germans can be unaware of the fact that many Germans, in positions of influence, are fully convinced that in the coming war, in which Russia will be involved, Britain will be for Germany; and that if governments in France move much more to the Left and nearer to Moscow, Britain will refuse to come to the aid of France, if she is attacked, and that Germany, therefore, will be able to subdue France and eliminate her as a possible ally of Britain. Yet our government has stated a score of times that once France is overcome Britain will be unable to defend herself, whatever the latter's individual power may be.

Now these German convictions may be entirely ill-founded. They probably are, as was the German belief in 1914 that Britain would not make up her mind as to entering the war until it was too late to change its outcome. But in that case they are false beliefs that can be just as fatal for our peace as were similar false beliefs in 1914.

So long as there is this confusion of purpose, policy, intention, our power, however great it may become, will be quite ineffective to prevent other states following a line which at the last we should feel compelled to resist, as we felt in 1914, and America a year or two later.

A country's security depends, obviously, at least as much upon its political situation in the world—that is, upon the answer to the question: "Who, when the guns begin to go off, will be on its side and who against it?" —as upon its military and naval resources. And who will be for and who against depends upon policy.

Yet there is a curious tendency to evade this plain fact. About some alleged shortage of planes or shells, or a given type of cruiser, it is easy to stir widespread public interest. But a change in the international situation which may mean that whole armies and navies are shifting over

from the side of our defence to the side of potential aggression leaves the same public relatively indifferent.

But a further point needs elucidation.

When to the question: "Could the Great War have been prevented?" Mr. Lloyd George answers "Yes" and tells us (as do most historians) that if Germany had realized beforehand that her policy would provoke the resistance it did she would not have followed that policy and the war would not have taken place, he is giving an incomplete explanation, or statement, of the position.

Suppose Germany *had* foreseen the opposition and had said:

> "You—Britain, France, Russia, America—have preponderant power. Germany is at your mercy. What sort of future for Germany does that distribution of power in the world mean? Does it mean that great areas are to become increasingly closed to us, to our emigration, our trade? That raw materials, indispensable to us, only obtainable in areas that you control, may be shut off from us or doled out at your discretion, and at prices which you may control?"

Now to that question, coming from Germany before the war, such a condominium of non-German powers as finally made the Grand Alliance would have replied (as the samples of pre-war opinion given in the pages which follow make abundantly clear) to this effect:

> "Yes. The territories you refer to belong to us. Our sovereignty must not be questioned. We shall do with them as we please, make what tariffs we like, such immigration restrictions as seem good to us, establish such monopolies as will advantage us, however much they may disadvantage you."

What, in that case, would Germany have done? She would have done what she has been doing this last six or

seven years, and have done it more easily than she can in the existing circumstances. She would not have declared war at that juncture in 1914 (neither Germany nor Japan, be it noted, has, since the Peace Treaties, declared war anywhere), but she would have turned to individual members of the Grand Alliance, situated much as she is, in the position, that is, of a Have-Not power, and would have proposed to them common action for the remedy of a common disadvantage.

That it would not have been difficult to detach members of the Alliance, subsequent events have proved since both Italy and Japan, members of that Alliance, have now become Allies of Germany. And if to-day, twenty years after utter defeat, Germany is probably relatively stronger than she was in 1914, there is no reason to suppose that she could not have terrorized or cajoled the "Have-Not" members of the alliance, destroying it in detail as she has in fact since done.

In other words, the Grand Alliance could only have been held together and Germany prevented from following the line which she has since followed, by offering her the means of obtaining peacefully the necessary conditions of life. For in the absence of peaceful means of obtaining them she will quite certainly fight for them. As we should.

That offer was not made before the war, was not made at the peace, has not been made since, because we believed in 1914, as we believe still, that to make it would place our own people in an impossible economic position, or at least demand sacrifices on their part which Governments, acting as trustees of the interests under their charge, are not justified in making; we believed that we had to choose between the economic welfare and political security of foreigners or our own people and that our first duty was to our countrymen.

That this was and is the view of dominant sections of our people, the quotations which follow (and which could

be multiplied indefinitely) make clear beyond any possibility of doubt. It is a conviction the implications of which we are apt to evade, refusing discussion of them because we feel that if faced with clarity and incisiveness they would reveal the existence of an irrepressible and insoluble conflict. If it is a true conviction, then it means that war is inevitable. And we have come to hate and fear war as we never hated it and feared it before.

So we turn from a frank facing of this ultimate though simple issue with the feeling that if uncovered it would reveal a gulf we cannot bridge. So, we seem to say, let us ignore it, pretend it is not there. Do not let us discuss the most vital cause of difference, but instead be overwhelmingly friendly; refuse to criticize anything the potential enemy may do, even when it is directed very obviously at rendering us impotent in the future to defend ourselves; even pretend that the evil he does is not evil, and then somehow, if we maintain a friendly atmosphere long enough, these deep but unmentioned and unmentionable conflicts will somehow resolve themselves.

It is not even a fools' paradise. For it is no paradise to be forced to remain silent and smile and smile in the presence of evil, ever-increasing, ever more menacing.

One wonders whether we realize how closely parallel is the situation to-day with that which thirty years ago provoked the writing of this book. Then, as now, we feared war; then, as now, the only source from which war could come was Germany; then, as now, we armed and found allies and built up our power, a power which became ultimately irresistible. Then, as now, we made (or were shortly to make) with Germany's ally, Italy, not very creditable bargains in which third parties were sacrificed to the need of detaching her from the Berlin orbit; then, as now, we shrank before war from open and unmistakable commitments and preferred to make our "ententes"

and our understandings vague and non-committal; then, as now, we believed that the one and only, the first and last, real hope of preventing war was just to build up our own strength and not worry about much else; then, as now, we made sporadic efforts at appeasement and reconciliation with Germany and laboured (successfully) at the settlement of "specific" differences or causes of quarrels like the disputes over Morocco and the Baghdad railway (the sort of point which makes the subject matter of the twenty-two documents of the unratified Anglo-Italian agreement).

And it all ended in war.

Is history to repeat itself?

The measures which we then took, including the defensive armament (about the need for which the author of this book was very emphatic indeed), were good as far as they went. But they failed because we did not face the one element which lay at the root of the whole trouble. And we evaded the tackling of that because we conceived it—mistakenly—as representing an insoluble problem, an "irrepressible conflict" which was best left alone.

Now the theme of this book is that the conviction or prejudice which prevents our making to Germany, and other nations, the offer which would ensure peacefully the things for which otherwise they will have to fight (and not get) is a fallacious conviction; that it is not true to say that we can only satisfy the needs of others by sacrificing the means of satisfying our own; that it is not a question of redistributing territory or "property," of a new sharing out of a limited stock of resources in the world so that what some other gets we lose. This book suggests that this conception, so deep-rooted, buttressed by unquestioned assumptions, and which stood before the war, as it stands now, in the way of the only type of agreement upon which permanent peace can be based,

is in large part pure fallacy, "the great illusion" of our political thinking.

It serves little purpose to show that "war does not pay," and that phrase does not accurately describe the purpose and theme of the book here in part reproduced. It argues that *conquest* does not pay, but since we are all arming and would fight if attacked, we all, presumably believe that war does pay dividends in the sense of defence. While it is fashionable to-day to declare that "war does not pay"[1] nearly everyone believes that policies which lead inevitably to war do pay. Every nation sincerely desires peace; and all nations pursue courses which, if persisted in, must make peace impossible.

All nations are quite ready to condemn "in the abstract" armaments, economic nationalism, international suspicion and mistrust, while each one individually clings to his armament, adds to his tariff, invents new modes of economic nationalism, and insists upon an absolute national sovereignty which must make international order impossible, and the prolongation of anarchy and chaos inevitable.

This is not hypocrisy. The demonstration that war, however victorious, spells ruin, has results alike disastrous and incalculable (especially to capitalists, who are supposed to carry an especial load of guilt for war), is too plain, too inescapable, not to make the desire to avoid it a genuine one. The explanation is that popular thought

[1] Though it is to be observed that very many—journalists, publicists, politicians—thus ready to assert positively their conviction that "war does not pay," usually, when some case like that of Japan's seizure of Manchuria arises, immediately declare that such instances are proof not merely that war often pays, but that it is sometimes an indispensable instrument for providing an expanding population with means of life, for effecting necessary changes in the *status quo*. A study of the British Press, during the course of the discussions of the Manchurian problem, proves the general opinion that "war does not pay" to be a very unstable one.

does not grasp the relation between policies which seem on the surface legitimate or advantageous, and their final effect as a cause of war and chaos. The problem is not merely to show that "war does not pay" (is not, that is to say, either advantageous to our country, or an effective means of defending its interests and rights), but to show why the policies which we pursue and which we believe do pay, must lead to war; to find why we pursue those policies; and to create the will to reverse them. It is not a problem of creating a will to peace, which already exists; but of finding out why that will is frustrated and defeated.

We must understand something of the reasons which prompt a nation to risk a world war in order to add a few square miles of territory to its national domain. For so long as that remains the scale of values for millions of men war will always be just round the corner. Moreover, unless we realize at what point and in what way we cause the results we do not intend and do not desire—until there is intellectual comprehension of that—the nations, while sincerely hating war, may well continue to pursue policies which in the end must produce war, and the anarchy which preparation for it involves.

Indeed, the primary problem is not to "stop war" as a fire brigade might examine means of putting out fires; it is to discover what motives stand in the way of creating an internationally workable world, a world freed in some measure from the stresses which present policies create and which war is an attempt to relieve. To the degree, and broadly only to the degree, to which we succeed in that purpose, shall we succeed in the prevention of war.

The Great Illusion (described in its sub-title as "A Study of the Relation of Military Power to National Advantage"), did not discuss, merely or mainly, the question whether "war paid"; it discussed whether the reasons underlying the policy which all nations follow,

the pursuit of power, were valid reasons; whether preponderance of national power "paid," was effective, that is, for the purposes of political and economic security; whether annexation paid, really added to the wealth of a people; whether trade could be promoted or transferred by dominant armies or navies; what we really meant when we talked of our navy "protecting our trade"; whether the wealth and resources of the modern world were of a fixed and limited quantity, any share of which, seized by one nation, was lost to others, thus making of war "a struggle for bread," or whether the quantity of wealth available depended upon the efficiency of that co-operation by which it was produced; whether the effectiveness of that co-operation was not incalculably reduced by the international situation which preparation for war necessarily produces; what was the real function of force in the organization of these co-operations; what were the conditions of its social employment and where it became self-defeating and anti-social; how, in other words, we might hope to make power effective for the defence of civilization. In the final analysis its purpose came to this:

To examine the assumptions which caused the nations to adopt a method of defence which is self-defeating; and to make plain the fallacy of those assumptions in terms of the obvious facts of the modern world.

The question of how best to secure defence necessarily includes the question of what it is we want to defend; how far the problem includes the defence of life, civilization, social order, and the things necessary thereto, as well as moral freedoms, cultural possessions, nationality, political independence.

It is that particular approach which gives the book its relevance to our present problems. To understand the case there presented is to understand the failure of the world community to deal more effectively with crises like the Sino-Japanese conflict, the Italian aggression in

Africa, and to-morrow it may be further German aggression in Europe. Had those arguments, not a mere vague acquiescence in the proposition that "war does not pay," really entered into public consciousness, it is certain that a large part of the mess in which we have entangled ourselves would have been avoided. The present settlement and its aftermath seem to have embodied almost every fallacy which *The Great Illusion* of 1909 indicted. Yet the policy has been imposed by a public opinion (for many witnesses have testified that some of its most dubious features are explained not by the fact that the governments and actual treaty-makers believed them to be feasible, but because public opinion demanded them) honestly desirous to have done with war, weary of it; by a public which proclaimed sincerely enough that its intention in making a treaty of that kind was precisely to make this the war that should end war. That indeed was the slogan of the time. No one wanted war any more. No one believed that war paid. But our behaviour is proof that everybody wanted to annex new territory, wanted economic self-sufficiency, preponderant power, strategic frontiers, the continuation of the international anarchy—to pursue, that is, the policy which produced the last war. We may not have believed that war paid, but quite plainly we believed that annexation paid, that the impoverishment of neighbours paid, and particularly that power paid. Nowhere do we see reflected in our policy the belief that our prosperity is dependent upon that of our neighbours, that our economic stability can only be secured by an international co-operation which must be based upon equality of right and which continued competition for preponderance of power must make impossible.

In order to give precision to the point and to show the relevance of this discussion to current problems let us anticipate a little and see just what the issue is.

Rather over thirty years ago this writer began to ask of his generation, the pre-war generation, this question:

"Why is there such conflict with Germany as to lead very possibly to war? Out of what main issues does that conflict arise?"

The answers, though they took various forms, amounted for the most part to one answer, fairly summarized by the late Leo Maxse in these terms:

"Germany must expand. Every year an extra million babies are crying out for more room. . . . She needs the wheat of Canada, the wool of Australia . . . which, it cannot be too often repeated, is no mere envious greed but stern necessity. But these resources belong to us, are needed for our posterity, and we, as their trustees, must hold to them. The same struggle for life and space which more than a thousand years ago drove one Teuton wave after another across the Rhine and the Alps is now once more a compelling force. Colonies fit to receive the German surplus population are the greatest need of Germany. . . . It is an ultimate struggle for bread. It may not be a Sunday School view of the situation, but it is the true view."[1]

That interpretation of the facts was not confined to the Right in politics. The Socialist Blatchford took the same view and went on to point out that accepting these promises about the coming war being a struggle for bread, there could be no possibility of settling it by agreement or the establishment of any sort of law. He wrote:

"Why should Germany attack Britain? Because Germany and Britain are commercial and political rivals; because Germany covets the trade, the Colonies, and the Empire which Britain now possesses. . . . As to arbitration, limitation of armament, it does not require very great effort of the imagination to enable us to see that proposal with German eyes. Were I a German, I should say: 'These Islanders are cool cus-

[1] One or two separate passages have been combined in this quotation.

tomers. They have fenced in all the best parts of the globe, they have bought or captured fortresses and ports in five continents, they have a virtual monopoly of the carrying trade of the world, they hold command of the seas, and now they propose that we shall all be brothers, and nobody shall fight or steal any more.'"[1]

In the pages which follow a whole mass of similar quotations of that period are given in order to show that the ideas which these two writers expressed were practically universal.

And to-day it would be possible to fill a book like this with quotations showing that statesmen, writers of accepted authority, editors, commentators of all kinds, would subscribe word for word to those statements as representing to-day the root of the trouble which inexorably seems to be bringing once more Germany and Britain into conflict.

Take two typical instances, both American, and for that reason the more noteworthy as being in a measure detached. Mr. F. Simonds, of acknowledged authority on international affairs, writes:[2]

"It is a matter of life and death for Germany and Italy, as it was for Japan, to break the blockade which is throttling the economic activities of both. For, unless that blockade is broken, the future holds out only the prospect of material misery and political upheaval. . . . What makes the actual situation even more intolerable for the hungry is that those who are fed to-day owe their good fortune to the fact that they were bad yesterday. . . . When Mussolini tells the world that Italy must expand or explode, he is putting it on notice of violence to come, and the spokesman for the liberal Italy which has now vanished gave the same warning long before the march on Rome.

"In itself the League of Nations represented an attempt to regiment and regulate the lives of nations. It

[1] *Germany and England*, pp. 4–13.
[2] *Saturday Evening Post*, October 5th, 1935.

undertook to eliminate growth and to ignore decay. It took the map of the world, which had been created by wars innumerable and disclosed injustices and inequalities beyond numbering, and made it the basis of a scheme of perpetual peace. . . .

"When, however, the Italian, German and Japanese people concluded that for themselves the implications of peace on present terms were more fearful than those of war and that only war could produce an amendment of those terms, then the Geneva game was up and nations began to take partners and make preparations for another dance."

Mr. Leland Stowe, a foreign correspondent attached to the *Herald Tribune*, who knows Europe and European opinion well, addressing a gathering of American business men, said:

"Terrible as it is for Mussolini to be militarizing the whole people, and to have propagandized them and to set them off dropping bombs on the heads of people who have nothing but coconuts to return, as terrible as that is, it seems to me there is just as grave a responsibility on the shoulders of the British Government which possesses in the world more than it ever needs to have, which has taken mandates over Palestine and Iraq out of the last war as booty and a good big part of the German colonies in East Africa, and to this day has never offered to give up even 10,000 square miles to satiate either Germany or Italy in order to prevent the next war.

"Nor has France offered to give up a single inch of territory in the last war. Would you say that Germany and Italy were the only ones to blame? I would say that the 'haves' have just as great a responsibility as the 'have-nots' for leading the whole world into this terrible thing. Until they are willing to give up something, what chance have we for peace? . . ."[1]

[1] From an address by Leland Stowe before the Executives Club of Chicago, Friday, October 18th, 1935.

Does anyone suggest that the currency of such ideas, their all but universal acceptance as obviously true, has no particular bearing upon the issues of war and peace? If the claim for colonies has economic foundation at all, then it is not in equatorial Africa that the claims will be satisfied.

Germany possesses what most countries do not: a Testament, a Bible of its national policy, accepted as Holy writ, inculcated in every school, taught religiously to every boy and girl. That Bible is of course Hitler's *Mein Kampf*, and so far as Germany's foreign policy is concerned the testament is simple, clear-cut, unmistakable —to a portentous and sinister degree.

The root fact, as Hitler sees it, and to which he returns again and again, is that the German race (which he insists is so much superior to all others as to constitute almost a separate species, and which is an expanding race) has not enough land to live upon. He discusses four possible solutions: (1) birth control; (2) increased productivity of the present area; (3) the expansion of factory production for foreign markets; (4) annexation of new land.

The first he rejects on those racial grounds already indicated; the second he considers incapable of meeting the need; the third he rejects not only because he wants Germany to be self-sufficient so as to be independent of the rest of the world, able to defend herself by her own strength, but because he detests the urbanization that goes with industrialization and wants the Germans to be a race of peasants, living on a land sufficiently extensive to make possible that spaced population which would make it less vulnerable to an enemy.

Mr. R. C. K. Ensor, who has carefully studied this aspect of the German testament, gives details as follows :

> "The scale of the new territory which *Mein Kampf* contemplates annexing is indicated on p. 767, where we are told that, whereas to-day there are 80 million Ger-

mans in Europe, the right policy must look forward a century, and provide land 'on this continent' where 250 million Germans can live—'not squeezed together as factory-coolies for the rest of the world, but as peasants and workmen, who through their production assure a livelihood to each other.' Where is this vast area to be found? Herr Hitler does not beat about the bush. It could only be found, he says quite frankly (pp. 154, 742), at the expense of Russia. And Providence has opportunely brought Russia into a state propitious for the enterprise (p. 742). Such a policy, he adds, cannot be pursued by halves. It would be—and before the war it was—a great mistake to quarrel with other Powers about oversea colonies, which in any case could not afford settlement for a large white population. Germany's future lies not on the water, but on the land. Bodenpolitik is the slogan."[1]

The implications are all quite clearly drawn. How are the Germans to obtain this Russian land? By the sword, by fighting for it, as their fathers fought for the soil that is now Germany. And the morality of such aggression? "State frontiers are man-made, and men may alter them. . . . The right to land and soil may be turned into duty, if without an extension of its soil a great people appears doomed to destruction." Germany "will either exist as a World Power or not exist at all."

Let us turn to Italy.

The Italian Ambassador in Washington declares:

"There can be no denial of the fact that we need expansion. Our forty-four million people are compressed within a territory less than half the size of your State of Texas, and not as rich in natural resources. Expansion for us is not a policy invented by Mussolini. It is a need—an actual and physical need of the Italian nation, and a need which Mussolini is trying to satisfy in order to keep the living standard of the Italian

[1] *Spectator*, April 3rd, 1936.

people at least at its present level; in order to prevent the restless forces of anarchy and Bolshevism exploiting the hardships of an economic life which only the sound disciplines of Fascism has been able to make endurable."[1]

Says Signor Grandi:

"Ours is a vital problem that involves our very existence and our future, a future of peace, tranquillity and work for a population of forty-two million souls, who will number fifty million in another fifteen years. Can this population live and prosper in a territory half the size of that of Spain and Germany, a territory lacking raw materials and natural resources to meet its vital needs, pent up in a closed sea beyond which its commerce lies, a sea the outlets of which are owned by other nations, while yet others control the means of access—the Caudine Forks of her liberty, safety, and means of livelihood—and while all the nations of the world are raising barriers against the development of trade, the movement of capital, and emigration, denationalizing whoever crosses their frontiers to enter, I do not say their own homes, but even their protectorates and colonies?"

and finally Mussolini himself:

"The Italians are a people of workers forever growing in number. Italy produces more children than coal, iron or wheat. When the needs of an increasing population cannot be met by the scanty resources of national territory, it follows that the people seek expansion elsewhere. . . .

"A country which has a population equal to that of France, confined in an area half the size of the latter, with colonial possessions one-twentieth the size of the French and one-hundredth that of the British, must forcibly find an outlet for her surplus inhabitants. But where and how? As it is, Italian resources hardly fill the requirements of her forty millions to-day, but the

[1] An address at Boston, Mass., October 14th, 1935.

problem will become exceedingly urgent in the course of the next twenty years, when her population will have risen to fifty millions or more. At that moment Italy will find herself on the verge of servitude, certainly economic, and perhaps political."

No apology need be made for making these somewhat lengthy quotations, for they are the expression of the idea which, more than any other, explains the drift of policy. It will be largely accountable for the next war even if the real motives of a statesman like Signor Mussolini are not at all those which he professes; even if the real motive behind the Abyssinian adventure, for instance, does not derive from economic need but from a desire to turn attention from internal conditions, to silence criticism at home. For the feelings to which a government, German or Italian, can so easily appeal in justification of war are feelings rooted in the sense of injustice, "inequality" which the idea we are discussing sets up, to say nothing of the sense of national need for expansion.

If an Italian feels that by risking his life, or losing it on the battlefield, he may help to save his children from miserable poverty, and lift his nation to prosperity, he may deem the sacrifice worth while, and his government may fan his passion to fever heat. From the moment, however, that he perceives the idea to be illusion and fallacy, he will not only think differently about his interests, he will feel differently about his duties.

To establish the economic truth is to modify profoundly the deepest emotions touching a moral problem.

Where a sense of injustice, a psychological condition, arises from a fallacious interpretation of economic facts, the correction of that fallacy is indispensable if we are to deal either with the economic or the psychological condition. The Duce's policy is at present being justified to the Italian people, and their passions are being aroused by an economic plea, the alleged need of the fatherland

for bread, life, space. We cannot deal with those passions except by correcting the economic fallacy which gives rise to them.

The idea that the nation is being starved, deprived of its fair share of the world's resources, is itself the cause of passion, resentment, bitterness; becomes something much more than "economics"; it becomes identified with national right.

So long as a whole nation believes that it must expand territorially or its people starve or be deprived of their fair share of the world's wealth, that nation can be persuaded to fight to the death: not for "money," not for wealth, not for profit, not because war pays, but for justice, for the profoundest of all human rights, the right to life. If the economic theory embodied in the above quotations is sound, it ceases to be an economic question and becomes one of the deepest of all ethical and moral questions.

The author of this book suggested before the war that so long as these ideas concerning the need of a nation of increasing population for expansion of territory, prevailed, so long would war be inevitable, for the reason that, if valid, the needs of one nation could only be satisfied by denying those of another; that with the best will in the world, and with a degree of readiness for self-sacrifice which no nation showed it possessed, no remedy based on such assumptions could possibly work; that no international Conference or friendly negotiations could have aught but barren results (as barren, say, as our ten years' Disarmament Conference) so long as the parties concerned accepted the premises just indicated.

Think for a moment what is implied in the view of the situation just illustrated, the view that in order to feed its people, to be in a position to live adequately, a nation must have within its own political control the resources necessary to its industry and life, be relatively self-sufficient.

There are sixty independent nations in the world. None of them is self-sufficient and most of them hopelessly

deficient in the things necessary to civilized life, if civilization is to include cotton shirts, paper manufactured from wood pulp, motor cars with rubber tyres, chocolates, coffee, tea, drugs, ocean travel, holiday tours, and a thousand other similar things. Germany, Italy and Japan are not the only "have-not" states in the world. They are merely the strongest and most clamant. China and India are in many respects much less self-sufficient with much greater need of "expansion" and the Have-not states include highly civilized lesser states like Switzerland, Sweden, Denmark, Norway. If, therefore, the views expressed above imply, as they plainly do, that solution lies along the lines of territorial redistribution,—a "share out" of resources so that each will be selectively self-sufficient,—then the world faces a problem so bristling with difficulties that our Disarmament Conferences and Versailles Peace Makings are likely to become mere pleasant afternoon tea parties in comparison. In fact, there can be no solution along the line of territorial self-sufficiency because it is a physical impossibility to make one nation even relatively self-sufficient without depriving some other of self-sufficiency, to say nothing of cutting athwart the claims of national right.

Mr. Maxse saw this and faced the implication. If a nation must have the material which it needs within its own political control, Germany will certain want sources of raw material like those contained in Australia or other British territory. But so may Britain, and it is the British duty to keep them. Japan may talk of the need of the means of life, but the Chinese need the means of life too and have made it quite clear that they will fight to the death to keep not only such means of life but what they conceive to be national right.

Furthermore it is not merely a question of what is self-sufficiency for to-day. Populations may increase; women may once more begin to have babies instead of motor cars, a fact for which, in justice to our posterity, we—that is to say each nation—must provide. And, quite apart

from the population question, what is self-sufficiency to-day may not be self-sufficiency to-morrow owing to changing needs. Yesterday coal was the supreme need of industry; to-day we need just as much oil and rubber, which no one fifty years ago wanted or ever supposed they would want. If the "sharing out" in this sense began, each would feel that, in order to be on the safe side, he would have to keep what he had.

National self-sufficiency involves what *The Great Illusion* called the economics of cannibalism. "It is quite clear," that book imagines one cannibal saying to another, "that I must eat you, or you must eat me. Let us come to a friendly agreement about it." If indeed it were true, argues this book, that the only source of food for either of those two parties was the body of the other, the two would not come to a friendly agreement about it, however much goodwill they put into the negotiation. They would fight. But they would fight equally if the assumption each made were not true at all, but each supposed it to be; if, in fact, there was plenty of food available for both in the higher branches of the trees which neither could reach alone but quite accessible if only one would stand on the shoulders of the other, and then divide the spoil. But the fact that ample food was available if only they would turn to co-operation would not affect their conduct so long as they stuck resolutely to the cannibalistic view of the economic situation, refusing to question established and familiar conceptions. "Not the facts, but men's beliefs about the facts guide conduct." And beliefs are very hardy things. The anthropologist tells us that it took a hundred thousand years after man had made the discovery that he could use a stone to bring down and skin his prey, to make the further discovery that it would be a more effective tool if he turned it into a hatchet by tying it to the end of a stick. If it took a hundred thousand years to make that discovery, we need not be surprised that the illusions and fallacies which this book attempts to unveil persist through a few generations.

The idea that the road to peace necessarily involves territorial redistribution (which for the reasons just indicated would itself prove a most fruitful cause of war); the idea that we can only live by seizing each other's territory, arises partly from a fallacious view of what takes place as the result of conquest; partly from a fallacious conception of the nature of wealth in the modern world.

Again, to illustrate the relevance of this discussion to current problems, the course of the argument here reproduced must at this point be anticipated a little.

What happens when a province or a territory is transferred from one government to another? We think of conquest as the transfer of property (a conception which arises in part from our grossly misleading terminology as when we talk of British "possessions" in North America, or at the antipodes, or of our "owning" this, that or the other territory). The prevailing view is that when a country conquers or takes over a province, or a colony, there has been a transfer of wealth, of goods; those who before were poverty-stricken, starving, have become property-owners, rich.

It is all mystification. Speaking broadly, and with only minor qualifications, there is no transfer of property from one group of owners to another in the event of conquest. When a province like Alsace (to-morrow perhaps Bohemia) is conquered by Germany, as in 1872, or conquered back as in 1918, the property—the farms, fields, factories, houses, furniture—remains in the same hands after conquest as before. There is a change of government which it may be worth while fighting to bring about or to resist. There is not a transfer of property.

Yes, of course, it is an outrage upon common sense to say that when a nation "annexes" potash, or gold mines, as Britain, of course, "annexed" the gold mines of the Transvaal when it defeated the Boers, it does not add to its wealth. "Such a statement," said an early critic of

The Great Illusion, "is neither more nor less true than the statement that if my uncle in Devon should leave me his thirty-thousand-acre estate and its rent roll of twenty thousand a year, I should be no richer."

Well, the book now in your hands is not a long one; it is not technical. It is being re-issued, not only thirty years after its original publication but long after its propositions have been subjected to the test of a world-wide experience. May not the thing be worth an hour's attention?

When it is suggested that we "own" Canada, as Mr. Maxse did suggest, as recent maps published by learned societies investigating the distribution of raw materials in the world suggest, plain facts, plain truth are set at naught. No Englishman "owns" anything in Canada by virtue of the presence of the King's head on Canadian stamps. Germans want the wheat of Canada or the wool of Australia, says Mr. Maxse. But those things "belong" to us and we must keep them for our posterity. Do they "belong" to us? Can we get Canadian wheat or Australian wool without paying for it, like any German? If the German conquered those territories could *he* get those things without paying for them?

Let us put it in an extreme form. If the whole of the overseas British Empire could be transferred from Britain to Germany, that fact would not solve for Germany any of the characteristic economic difficulties of our time—alternating depressions-booms, booms-depressions; unemployment, high taxation, financial instability—from which at times practically all nations suffer.

Why is it possible to make that statement with such certainty? Because Britain, possessing the greatest empire in the world and in history, faces just those difficulties—the alternations of the business cycle, booms-depressions, depressions-booms, high taxation, declining trade, failing industries, a semi-bankrupt agriculture, increasing unemployment, financial instability. If a world-wide empire does not save Britain from these things, why should it save

Germany? Has Germany greater experience in turning empire to account? Greater natural aptitude for that task?

The commonest retort to that is that it proves too much. If empire is thus valueless, why should we hesitate to give it up to those who believe they need it?

The right answer to which goes to the root of the whole matter. The private road from my farm which leads to the main road, is valueless to me as a source of income, a piece of property. It grows nothing, is expensive to keep up. I should be better off if it were a public highway as I should then be relieved of all but a fraction of its upkeep, whereas now I have to assume the whole of it. I would gladly give it up to the public, under the law which would secure my right to its use.

But if my neighbour with very questionable views of public right should ask me to hand it over to him, under no law at all save his sole and irresponsible judgment as to what my rights in it would be, then I should resist to the uttermost. Though I get no income from it, though as a piece of individual property in that sense it is valueless to me, his possession of it might make my whole farm valueless by making it impossible for me to get my produce out or the goods I need in.

Let us develop this parable a little.

Others build upon land which can only be reached over this road. Differences about its use arise. In the irritations and quarrels which ensue a number of those concerned begin to take this strange line:

> This idea of common rights in a piece of public property is too idealistic to work in a selfish world. Let each own his own bit of the road, possessing every property right in it. Then we shall have peace.

Would we? Let the reader consider the point and relate that little parable to the suggestion to redistribute territory.

In fact, of course, to the German query "Why, if empire is valueless as a 'piece of property,' source of income, do you not give it up?" our retort is simple: "We *are* giving it up—to the people who live there." Most of the Empire, something like two-thirds of it, has ceased to be an empire. The Dominions are no longer subject provinces governed from an imperial centre. They have become what are in fact independent states. This process of "de-imperialization" of "unconquering" is the really significant tendency of British "imperialism" the full implications of which even British folk often fail to grasp. This book, thirty years ago, drew insistently attention to the importance of this tendency.

But to hand over the government of territory to the people who really "own" it, the people who live there, is very different indeed from handing over its government to other alien rulers. The first process means making a beginning in getting rid of imperialism; the second means perpetuating imperialism by splitting it into a larger number of rival and competing imperialisms. De-imperialization, which Britain has already carried so far, is incompatible with the policy of self-sufficient empires, a world of economic nationalism. The German proposals are based on the policy of national or imperial self-sufficiency.

The issue is much more than economic. It profoundly affects the political problem of defence, security. No method of defence compatible with peace is possible if nations insist upon national self-sufficiency. We shall find on examination that the methods of defence which we adopt are largely determined by the view we take of the "struggle for bread" problem; and that the adoption of the current view of "need for expansion" prevents any solution of the purely political problem. Let us recall what that problem is.

All nations demand first of all defence: Self-preservation is the first law. In the past each great power has taken the view that in order to be adequately defended, it must

be stronger than any likely to attack it. Then what becomes of the defence of the weaker? In such a situation defence of one is secured by killing the defence of the other. You have the same sort of cannibalistic situation that we find in the economic field.

We should probably realize the stultifying, mutually exclusive, character of the individualistic method of defence which we have all adopted in the past if we realized that "defence" cannot merely mean the defence of territory, keeping alien armies off our soil. We in Britain have not had to fight the invader since the Norman Conquest. Our wars for a thousand years have all been fought in someone else's country. They were not by that fact necessarily aggressive. They were defending interests, what we believed to be our rights when they came into collision with what others conceived to be their rights. But if we conceive defence as the right to enforce our view of our interest in a dispute with another it means that we are fighting for the right to be judge in our own cause, for a right of judgment, that is, which we deny to the other party. If in a dispute we are to be the judge, the other party cannot be. We thereby deny to him the right we claim.

From this ancient dilemma mankind from the beginning of organized society has found only one way out: Neither party must be the judge, but must submit to third-party judgement, which may be law, custom, the accepted thing, the chief's decision or that of an arbitrator, or the court, or the judge, or the toss of a coin. The part which force and coercion plays in civilized society is really to arm that law, whether of custom, of contact, of status, or what not, so that neither of the litigants can defy it. Society has learned that it must arm the law not the litigants, and that if it is to avoid anarchy, somehow the law must be made more powerful than either party to the dispute. The problem which confronts civilization in the international field is somehow, however slowly and tentatively, to transfer power from the litigants to the law.

But if the views, pre-war and post-war, which have been quoted earlier about the need for territorial expansion are sound, the principle of law, or equality of right, is in conflict with a nation's elementary needs of sustenance. If, in fact, we must expand or starve; take another's territory or see our children suffer dire poverty, we are not going to co-operate in the establishment of a law which protects that other's territory, a law also which may be invoked to shut us out from things necessary to our life. No nation can be asked to commit suicide on behalf of the higher morality. "Necessity knows no law." Indeed that is precisely why, say, Messrs. Maxse, Blatchford and a host of post-war writers, who agree with them, there can be no law governing the struggle of nations.

The world, if that view is right, must live as primitive man lived, each watching with hungry vigilance such means of life as he may have been able to seize, knowing that he may only hold them against the needs of others to the extent that his power to defend them is greater than theirs to take.

It will be said that this is too stark, a mere logician's dilemma, divorced from the world of political realities.

That is not true. These ideas are of the very essence of the political realities which confront the nations to-day. They are held not as arguable propositions but as completely self-evident truths, with blinding passion by the peoples of the Have-not states, a passion which their rulers (themselves victims of those same illusions) nurture and exploit. On the foundation of these ideas and the scale of values they create are built the slogans daily voiced by the Dictators, slogans which to-morrow will be the battle cries that we may have to face.

Nor will it do to say that these ideas are confined to Germany and Italy and Japan, and that the only useful place to explode them is in those countries. They dominate still in Britain and are the real obstacle to the policy which

if consistently followed would constitute a workable alternative to that of recurrent war.

The future of civilization depends upon the way in which the millions who in the long run determine policy answer the question: By which of two methods can the nation—its interests, rights, prosperity—be best defended? By the method of preponderant individual power, each for himself, or by co-operative action of the whole body of nations for the defence of those rights which are indispensable to the secure life of any nation? Shall we adhere to the system of isolated power, each being ready to repel any direct attack upon his own rights, but refusing to participate in the defence of general right or shall defence rest upon defence of those "rules of the road" necessary for the safety of all?

The average man still overwhelmingly rejects the co-operative method in the relations of states. Why? In part, obviously, because he believes that the alternative method of individual power can be effective; and power which is exercised at his (or his nation's) sole discretion for his own direct interests makes an appeal which shared power, for the protection of general right in which his interest is indirect and more remote, does not.

If we conceive of this problem of making secure the means of civilized life as, broadly speaking, the problem of ensuring the smooth working of an intricate, world-wide co-operative process, we shall stand inevitably for co-operative methods of defence; conceive of defence mainly as the means of securing observance of necessary rules, laws, which will permit all to live. If, however, we conceive of prosperity as based upon the exclusive possession of materials, things, limited in amount; of a nation's wealth as consisting of goods and chattels that can be taken, as a burglar might take a householder's plate, then we shall think of defence in terms of isolated power, as a

problem of defending the nation's soil from marauders, as a man locks his door to prevent robbery. This last case would even be stronger still—conclusive indeed—if it were true (evidence given in these pages shows that it is still the prevailing view) that a nation's economic opportunities throughout the world depend upon its power, by military or naval preponderance, to enforce its economic claims against the claims, similarly presented, by others; if the view that the competition for power is, in fact, the struggle of expanding populations for sustenance, for their due share of the limited resources of the world. So long as these assumptions—unexpressed, it may be, or vaguely and hazily held—dominate the public mind, each nation will trust to its own power and oppose any collective or co-operative system of defence.

But as against that view this book presents another, which can be outlined in part as follows:

Defence, the security of the nation, its people, wealth, trade, prosperity, cultural rights, civilization, demands mainly, not the defence of materials or soil from predatory seizure by others—all nations in the modern world are actually far more concerned to exclude than to seize the goods of others—but the organization of processes analogous to the maintenance of unimpeded traffic on the highways. While Big Navy organizations are demanding more cruisers to "protect our trade routes," two-thirds of that trade disappears in a few years, and our ships lie idle in port successfully blockaded by economic collapse. What is the Navy doing? Vital trades in great industrial cities like Bradford are ruined by the tariff of our own Dominions. How does the Navy protect it? An admiral once said that, but for our Navy, foreigners would "loot the cellars of the Bank of England." We were pushed off the gold standard through a raid by foreigners upon our gold reserves. How could the Navy prevent it? If in fact the livelihood—the life—of our nation is dependent upon the maintenance of a flow or process, analogous to traffic regulation on a highway,

then defence of that life can only be secured by co-operation with others. To attempt to ensure safety and smooth travel by the method of each having a bigger car than any he is likely to collide with, and to drive as he sees fit with no regard to general rule, must by its nature fail. It can only produce chaos and disaster, as indeed it has in the international field. You cannot possibly ensure anybody's defence by the isolated action of each user of the road.

Defence, safety, must be organized by the community, or there can be none at all.

It may clarify the foregoing to supplement it with a statement in political rather than economic terms, thus: The ultimate cause of war is the attempt to carry on international life on a basis of the sovereignty and independence of nations without mutual obligation between them concerning the defence of indispensable common rights; on a basis, that is, of anarchy.

Please note that the foregoing statement does not merely indicate the futility of conquest, of attempting to employ national force to seize wealth or trade; it indicates also the basic importance of the supreme need for a "rule of the road," and of its maintenance. The two things are at bottom different aspects of the same truth. If law is to rule, then those who would defy it and set it at naught must be resisted. They can be restrained in part, and let us hope increasingly, by enlightenment, by their growing recognition of common interest. But where force plays a role at all, as in every organized society in the world it does, its social function is to resist, cancel only the violence which would set law at naught.

The Great Illusion was not a Pacifist book in the sense of repudiating defence, or the employment of force to ensure it. Its purpose was to show that the economic gains of conquest were illusory and that military force was being employed in a way which made general defence impossible.

It is extremely difficult to keep this discussion to the right issue. "Force is force, and war is war, killing is killing," say alike the Pacifist and the Militarist—the latter of whom has of late adopted Pacifist argument in disparagement of the League of Nations. One may read any day in the correspondence columns of *The Times* letters from Majors General telling us how shocking is the thought that "Genevafists" and bloody-minded people like Lord Cecil propose to keep the peace by threatening war, an altogether dangerous, immoral and bloodthirsty conception. Usually the sermons end up with an appeal to this country to arm itself ever more heavily on behalf of peace—that is to say, to maintain peace by threatening to go to war with anyone who does something (quite unspecified and undefined and apparently quite incapable of definition) which we regard as "attack"—i.e. damaging to our interests or security.

If one wants to know why has the League failed, the explanation after all is fairly simple: It is because we are prepared, all of us, to use force anarchically, each for himself; but we are not prepared to use it for the necessary law. We are prepared to accept as right and natural that the litigants should be armed; but as horrifying all thought of arming the law.

Part of the purpose of this book was to show that the issue was not one of Force *v.* No Force, but of discovering the means by which the employment of force could be limited to social ends, could be so used as to make defence compatible with peace, and with equality of right.

If our police had turned robbers; if the army or a section of it were in process of making themselves masters of the State and abolishing the Constitution, we might argue: "These evils come from the existence of police and army, let us abolish both." But that would merely be to run from one difficulty into another. If police can turn robbers so can ordinary citizens. So long as the issue were regarded as one merely of keeping the police or

abolishing it, no solution would be found. Only when it was realized that the real problem was that of keeping the police to its proper function would progress be made.

Never in modern history were these clarifications more needed. It is not merely a question of peace as between nations but of freedom and civilization within. In the phenomenon of Fascism, and the support by, or acquiescence therein of, the masses of the people, we see the mind of whole nations bemused on this point; utterly confused; applauding the seizure of power by armed parties because that party happens for the moment to be voicing some prevailing discontent or popular prejudice or fallacy. If we continue to regard the alternatives as those of Force or "No Force" we shall continue to oscillate between two impossibilities. Our real problem is to be able to distinguish clearly between the social and the anti-social function of power.

What likelihood is there that the coming world conference to grapple with the economic and political difficulties of the nations will have any success when decisions arrived at will have to be ratified by parliaments and publics dominated by the sort of illusions which this book discussed? When the average voter envisages an imaginary world where a nation can go on selling and never buying; go on having a "favourable balance of trade" without producing an unfavourable balance in another; where we can base our nation's defence on preponderance of power without depriving others of defence, and so on down a whole long list of unilateral illusions.

The Great Illusion of 1910 included a chapter (reproduced *verbatim et literatim* in the 1933 Edition)—entitled "The Indemnity Futility." Its theme—clumsily stated—is that, in great international payments of this kind, the analogy

which the ordinary layman makes in his mind between payments of money by one person to another and one nation to another is utterly fallacious; that payments of great sums between nations can only be made in the long run in goods or services. If the sums are small enough to be made in gold,[1] the gold itself must either be used by the nation which receives it for the purchase of foreign goods, or for an internal monetary expansion which would raise prices in the creditor country to the disadvantage of its export trade and competitive position. The chapter suggests that on the morrow of a bitter war the victor would be in no mood to see his home or world markets swamped by enormous quantities of goods produced by the defeated enemy state.

One phrase in that chapter runs as follows:

"The difficulty in the case of a large indemnity is not so much the payment by the vanquished as the receiving by the victor."

The point is recalled, not for purposes (will the reader believe?) of personal vindication, which, after all, the events in this respect at least have achieved, but for another purpose: to remind the reader that the failure of the general public to see clearly that particular truth involved the intensification during fifteen years of economic and financial unsettlement and uncertainty; and may yet involve Europe and America in bitter controversy and further complication of like kind; and further to point out that the truth would have been grasped instantly if the view of international life which this book sets forth had become part of the common texture of popular thought. The indemnity chapter was not something apart from (and extraneous to) the general theme of the

[1] The chapter discusses the hypothetical payment of one thousand million sterling by England to Germany, because the late Lord Northcliffe had declared that Germany would go to war with England in order, among other things, to get that indemnity.

book. Its main proposition is all part and parcel of the book's theme concerning the difficulty of transferring by physical coercion wealth in its modern form from one nation to another; that to get another nation's products is not our real concern; that the problem is not one of scarcity of goods, but of maintaining the smooth working of the process by which they are made freely available for consumption, and that crude "seizures" and military tributes must ruinously dislocate those processes. The chapter flows logically from everything else written in the book. And when orthodox economists boggled at this chapter, as they did, I wondered whether I had made clear the case as a whole.[1] For if the case as a whole is accepted, that particular point of it is inevitable. The difficulties which have arisen in the Reparations and Debts problems constitute proof in a specific case of the book's argument as a whole.

Not merely was the truth in this matter not recognized, even by economists before the war; it was not recognized by most economists for a considerable time after the war. It was a distinguished banker, a Governor of the Bank of England, who urged that Germany could pay annually a sum of twelve hundred million sterling. (Mr. Keynes showed the absurdity of her paying one-tenth of that

[1] When that chapter first appeared, an extremely able economist wrote me to this effect: "There are some interesting and valuable suggestions in your book, but I do beg of you to keep out of it the sort of 'too clever by half' stuff, which you have put into the chapter entitled 'The Indemnity Futility.' It is a mixture of protectionist fallacies and unfamiliarity with the elasticity of the exchange apparatus. That sort of gaudy brick will jeopardize the whole building, and I think you would be wise to drop it entirely." One very eminent French economist, whose works have been translated into English, in a review of *The Great Illusion*, wrote with the utmost contempt of the suggestion that there would be any particular difficulty in the victor's securing not merely the costs of the war but great sums in addition. I was so impressed by all this that in subsequent editions I did drop part of the chapter and substituted for it a more qualified and guarded statement. But the chapter as first written proved to be an under-statement, not an over-statement, of the difficulties which were to be encountered.

sum.) Anyone who cares to explore what even respectable economists and business men at the time of the Armistice were saying, and compare their pronouncements with subsequent events, could only conclude that we were living in a world of phantasy. As, indeed, we were. For neither specialist nor layman had really faced the changes which had come over the nature of wealth as the result of modern conditions, those economic and political changes to which *The Great Illusion* had attempted to call attention.

If to-day, after the event, the reader will go through the mountain of literature, official and non-official, which has piled up around the problem of Debts and Reparations, it is quite certain that the one point which above all other points whatsoever the authorities deem it most important to emphasize, is this feature of the "transfer difficulty"; the fact that payment must be ultimately in goods and services, which, though relatively easy for the debtor to produce, are extremely difficult to transfer to the creditor without financial and economic dislocations of the most serious kind.

All this is now an old story, yet it took ten years for the truths just expressed to be translated into public policy, the while European finances, industry and commerce went to pieces; ten years for the European public to see the point (if indeed they see it yet), while to-day exactly the same obtuseness characterizes American public opinion in the matter of debts.

It is when we come to the Disarmament efforts that we see most clearly at work the conception of civilization and welfare, not as things dependent upon the better organization of co-operative processes, but as the struggle of competing units for survival one against the other. Each nation talks of the "sacrifices" it is prepared to make for peace. No wonder the conferences fail. Unless the object of the Conference is conceived as part of a general method for making everyone safer, more secure, better

defended, it cannot possibly achieve success. But the public does not so conceive it. It is not a Conference for Better National Defence; but a meeting in which each member feels that he is being asked to increase the danger to which his nation is to be exposed.

A similar failure to relate this effort to the real facts of the world is revealed in comment on its economic implication. We are perpetually hearing of the waste on armament expenditure, and the economies which might be effected if armaments could be reduced. But the real cost of armaments was not until we started spending sums like fifteen hundred million, the amount which each nation spends on armaments. The greater burden, the immeasurably greater burden, arises from the fact that if the armament competition goes on it will be impossible for the international arrangements indispensable for the restoration of prosperity to succeed. For if the present draft continues we know that war one day is certain; and war means, we also now know, unpayable debts, repudiation, inflations, dislocations, all those things which the last war meant. How can we establish the confidence with another war on the horizon?

It is certainly true that in plumping for the isolationist as opposed to the co-operative method of defence the public is obeying a deep instinct. And it is commonly objected that since the public in this matter acts from instinct, what is the use of argument—such argument as this book presents, for instance? But the way we react to instincts in a given situation depends upon the way we read the facts of that situation, the way we relate them to past experience; and that in its turn depends upon argument, argument with ourselves or others. Once certain facts have become clear the instinct of self-preservation can operate as powerfully *for* the support of the co-operative

method as for the other. The instinct of self-preservation may prompt the landsman, caught in a gale at sea, to turn his boat shorewards; but the "instinct" of the sailor with experience may be to get as far away as possible from the land at that point. The instinct in both cases is the same; the purpose and aim is the same: self-preservation. But the policy in which it is expressed is in the one case diametrically opposed to the policy which finds expression in the other case. And whether obedience to the instinct is to prompt action that will destroy or action that will save will depend upon how the facts of the particular situation are interpreted. On hearing the cry of "Fire!" in a crowded theatre, the instinct of self-preservation may prompt a great many in the audience to take individual isolated action without reference to others, and make a rush for the doors. If a sufficiently large number thus adopt the isolationist method of security and start a stampede they are likely to be destroyed. But the "instinct" of those more habituated to social discipline will immediately suggest co-operation for the orderly emptying of the theatre. If this second reading of the facts of the situation prevails, "instinct" will operate to save the audience. Again, the aim and purpose, the fundamental instinct of both groups would have been the same: self-preservation. The difference of policy and method would have been due, as in the case of the sailor and landsman, to the way in which experience is interpreted.

Whether the instinct of national self-preservation leads to a method of defence which will certainly destroy the nations and their wealth, or to one which can be effective, will also be determined by the way in which the facts of the situation are interpreted.

It is those facts, and their relevant interpretation as bearing upon the question of national self-preservation, which these pages present. Our conception of the economic character of the modern world determines very largely our conception of the appropriate defensive institutions.

This book relates the problem of defence to the nature of our modern economic apparatus. The case is almost as unfamiliar to the general public of 1938 as it was to the public of 1908 (as a dozen instances of post-war policy here discussed reveal), the difference perhaps being that the specialists and experts, as distinct from the general public, accept this reading now and rejected it then.

The decision of the millions to stand by isolated arming as the appropriate method of defence, flows quite logically and rationally from the premises touching the nature of wealth in the modern world still all but universally accepted —as certain evidence presented in these pages (all too plentifully the reader may decide) very clearly shows.

There are two objections which at this stage of the statement need a word, though they are both more fully developed in the pages which follow. The first is that, not public opinion but the influence of vested interests determines the issue of war and peace; and the second (already briefly touched on) that the instinctive and subconscious forces of public opinion, the emotions related to nationality, are of a nature that no "balance sheet," however terrifying, can influence; that they are not only imponderable, but invulnerable to attack by reason.

As to the first of these objections, the view that capitalists, financiers, vested interests dominate public opinion and promote the chaos for purposes of their own. This was dealt with in the original *Great Illusion*, and the passages are again produced. (Chap. VIII, Part II.) That capitalists should have deliberately produced a situation in which capitalism has collapsed; financiers produced the complete wreck of the financial system, is a phenomenon which seems to demand more explanation than the Marxists are usually prepared to give it. The truth is, of course, that capitalists and financiers usually share the illusions of their generation. It was not presumably their intention, in Central Europe or anywhere else, to wreck the system upon which their

wealth was based. They simply did not foresee that this would be the result of their policies. They thought, not as capitalists, but as Nationalists. Where they did not, they were overborne by the power of popular Nationalism, as financiers and bankers have been overborn this last ten years or more both in Europe and America.[1]

That special interests, such as the armaments industry, exploit public opinion to their own advantage, if they can, is certain. But to dismiss the continued failure of Disarmament as due to the ability of interested parties—armament makers, admirals, diplomats—to compel whole nations to do what those nations have clearly determined not to do, is surely absurd. A few score officials—or capitalists—cannot by their physical power compel hundreds of millions year after year to go on paying taxes, taking vast risks, jeopardizing prosperity, if those millions are persuaded that the taxes, the risks, the sacrifices are quite unnecessary and indeed mischievous.

The vested interests—if we explain the situation by their influence—can only get the public to act as they wish by manipulating public opinion, by playing upon the public's indifference, confusions, prejudices, pugnacities or fears. And the only way in which the power of the interests can be undermined and their manœuvres defeated is by

[1] I agree on the whole with Mr. Bertrand Russell, who discussing the international situation in 1923 wrote:

"I fear I shall incur the displeasure of most socialists if I say that high finance seems to me at this moment, in certain respects, the sanest and most constructive influence in the western world. Believing, as I do, that the goal is international Socialism, I believe also that, at this moment, internationalism is more important than socialism. Although socialists profess internationalism, they do not seem to me, at present, to be able to be practical internationalists. In these days of unemployment, for example, the fear of German competition would make it very difficult for a Labour Government to adopt unrestricted free trade with Germany. And it will certainly be a long time before socialists are in a position to create the machinery of international government. High finance, on the other hand, is ready to do so and is impelled in that direction by urgent motives of self-interest." (*The Prospects of Industrial Civilisation*, Bertrand Russell. Allen and Unwin, pp. 89–90.)

bringing home to the public the danger of its indifference, the absurdity of its prejudices, or the hollowness of its fears; by showing that it is indifferent to danger where real danger exists; frightened by dangers which are non-existent.

Some of the confusions which sometimes mark the discussion of the relation of Capitalism to War can be cleared up perhaps by an illustration used in the older book but may be noted here.

Suppose that if, in what is now the United States, there had developed from the original thirteen colonies half a dozen independent sovereign nations (as the Spanish American Colonies developed into a dozen nations) each with its own army, navy, tariff, currency. They would have fought each other as Bolivia fights Paraguay, Chile, Peru. What would have been the cause of the war between, say, Pennsylvania and Ohio? Capitalism? But there is Capitalism there *now* and they do *not* fight. If Pennsylvania does *not* fight Ohio, but France does fight Germany, it is not because the American states are socialist, for they are not; nor because their people are necessarily superior in social morality or intention, or in peacefulness, to those living in Cologne or Lille, but because history has developed a Federal bond in the one case, and not in the other. If, by some happy accident of European history some form of Federal bond had been left (as a legacy, say, of the Roman Empire) so that we had to-day a United States of Europe in which France and Germany occupied much the position that Pennsylvania and Ohio occupy in the American system; or if they occupied the position of a French or German Canton in the Swiss Confederation, war would be as unknown between the two Rhine nations, as it is between States of the American Union.

It comes near, of course, to being a truism: if there were no sovereign nations, we could not have international war, though we might have civil or class war; and the critic might argue that we have still to find the cause of war, in that, we have to find what stands in the way of the creation

of a Federal bond; to find what prompts nations each to support anarchy, isolationism; why, with all our passionate protestation of desiring peace, we refuse this one price of a degree of Federalism which would secure it. Why do we refuse even any step or contribution thereto? Why do we refuse even to travel in that direction, but insist, on the contrary, in going in the opposite direction? Why at this moment is our own nation so strongly nationalist in tendency? Why does our popular press so strongly favour isolationism; want us to keep out of all commitments which might be the beginnings of some sort of world Federalism?

To understand the economic contradictions of competitive nationalism helps us to understand its moral contradictions also. And the problem is mainly to enable the multitudes to see through the moral imposture of the Nationalist animosities, retaliations, hates which still bedevil the politics of Europe. At present those emotions are able to masquerade as noble, elevating sentiments, as the highest patriotism. That imposture would be impossible if we faced the moral implications of economic Nationalism —that its method is to secure advantage for one country by killing the prosperity of some other through the exclusion of that other's products; to cure unemployment on one side of the frontier by increasing it on the other; to demand always a favourable balance of trade, though it means that some other must thereby have an unfavourable balance. And this "cannibalism" is necessarily carried over into political and cultural questions. Every Nationalist in the world demands political independence for himself and denies it to some other. For the Italians a native government is a sacred and inalienable right, but it is bad for Tyrolese; Polish poets for generations have sung that to deny a people its own cultural or national expression is "murder of the soul." But Ukrainians should be beaten up and tortured if they ask for such things. Hitler wants to purge the German Nordic body of its alien elements, so Jews must go, but the non-Nordic Poles or Czechs must

be brought into the German corporate body against their will. The Irish, says Mr. de Valera, have the right to the government they want; but that does not apply to the Ulster Irish.

It is broadly true to say that there is not a Nationalist in the world who is not denying to others the national rights which he claims for himself; repudiating, when applied to others, the very arguments by which he defends his own case. Most Nationalists are engaged in denying Nationalism, threatening war in order to destroy it (the Nationalism of others, that is).

Such stultification is inevitable in the competitive method of defence. The Nationalist is obliged to repudiate the Nationalism of others so long as he bases defence upon isolated power: if he does not include the unwilling populations in his territory a rival will; he will be outbalanced in power by that rival and so deprived of defence. And finally, power is claimed for itself.

It may of course be said that the desire for power is prompted by fear and that liability to the emotion of fear is innate in human nature, part of the instinctive apparatus of self-preservation. But what we fear depends, as already noted, upon our reading of experience. The superstitious terrors of the African savage are overpowering; his educated son does not share them. What has abolished them, made what is "instinctive" in the father not at all "instinctive" in the son? What else but such rational analysis as education has made possible; the looking at what it is we fear and examining it? That rational analysis is applied in these pages to the fears of international politics.

The same general truth applies to hates as well as fears, and the point is developed at some length in Chapter IX in Part II herewith. Of two men accused of murdering my friend, evidence points clearly to one. I begin to look upon him with loathing. A detective, by a highly intellectual process, shows me clearly that it is the other. Reason has caused my emotion to change its course. Hate is a matter

of biology; of the unconscious; the object of the hate a matter of reasoning, of the conscious.[1]

Nationalism must be subject to the same general rationalizing and civilizing process. Hitler has managed to persuade a great many Germans that his policy, with such items as the carefully planned ruin of those of his helpless fellow countrymen who happen to belong to the race of Jesus Christ, represent the truest Patriotism, will redound to the glory and welfare of Germany.[2] To others such policy seems mainly mean and futile bullying, and cannot possibly constitute a cure for the economic and social evils from which Germany suffers. In the same way French patriots insisted thirty or more years ago that only by maintaining the condemnation of Dreyfus, guilty or not, could "the honour of France" be truly vindicated. To others it seems that the honour of France could best be vindicated by the exactly opposite course of showing a readiness to repeal judicial error.

How are we to determine which is the truer Patriotism in such cases? How are we to persuade the victims of the more dangerous and evil type that it *is* dangerous and evil?

[1] We usually explain the unworkability of certain features of the Treaty of Versailles by saying that at the time we were so angry with Germany that we could not see the simplest fact. But if it would be truer to say that we were angry because we could not see the simplest fact, particularly the fact that in our desire for "punishment," our punishment would fall mainly upon those who had nothing whatever to do with the acts which had made us angry. We were passionate largely because we thought of Germany as a single person with a single will; had we seen that we had allowed a convenient symbol to become an actual thing of flesh and blood in our minds, that in fact the very mixed population of Germany no more makes a "person" that can be held responsible in that way than the people living along the line of the Great Western Railway can be held responsible for the crime of some season-ticket holder on the line, much of our anger would not have arisen. The economic facts discussed in this book try to show that the nations are no more commercial persons or units than they are biological persons or units.

[2] Sir Evelyn Wrench (*Spectator*, April 21st, 1933) describes a talk he had with a Hitlerite, who said to him: "Hitler has accomplished a rebirth of the German nation. . . . We feel we can hold our heads high once more."

In part at least by being very clear about what it is we (as trustees when we come to voting and determining policy) want for our country, what we ought to want, and whether the proposed policy is the way to get it.

This question, "What do we want, in what does the welfare of our country consist?" is a question, curiously enough, very rarely asked. *The Great Illusion* insisted upon asking it; insisted that though economic welfare is by no means the whole object of statesmanship it is an indispensable part of any worthy civilization; and that to be loftily superior to it is not noble, but silly and dishonest. Dishonest because the Chauvinist invariably stands by a doctrine of economic nationalism not only material, but what I have called cannibalistic.

In other words, it is only by the kind of analysis here attempted that we can subject Nationalism to any sort of moral or social evaluation. (Parenthetically, when Nationalist critics are so scornful of the "materialism" of this book, it is not in fact the materialism which irritates them, for their economic nationalism is just as material; what irritates them is that their creed should be subject to rational analysis.) A glance at the first chapter of Part II, and at Chapters IX and XI, will show how persistently the book attempts to secure this preliminary effort at introspection: "What do you want? If you don't want prosperity, what *do* you want?" It is still necessary to insist that those shall be among the first questions asked in politics.

For it is about as certain as anything well can be that we drifted into the war; into the making of the disastrous peace which followed it; into the post-war chaos and confusion, the mutually destructive economic nationalisms which have brought our economic apparatus to wreckage, mainly because we did *not* ask ourselves whether we wanted welfare and the things indispensable thereto, or whether we wanted certain other things in conflict therewith, which perhaps we had not defined even to ourselves. The

question indicated above is one which a world, wrecking itself on the rocks of nationalist fallacies, passions and retaliations, still needs to ask, and which for the most part it still fails to ask with any clarity.

We declared that our purpose in entering the war was to destroy autocracies and vindicate the principle of democracy or of arbitration; or the rights of small nationalities. And then when the war for democracy is followed by an epidemic of dictatorships of a severity which the pre-war world could not parallel, the result is applauded by the very people who a year or two previously were sending multitudes of their country's youth to die in order to prevent it.[1]

It would hardly be an exaggeration to say that our popular Press of 1938 treats daily with derision and contumely the moral aims of the war passionately proclaimed when we entered it, and for which our youths were sacrificed.

The point for the moment is not which of the two contrary views held by our public—the view of 1914, or that of 1938—is the right one, but to realize that to know what we want, and then to judge whether that want is a worthy one, is the first step to wisdom, to sanity even, in the control of our national policies.

Mr. R. G. Hawtrey, in his *Economic Aspects of Sovereignty*, makes the fact that power is desired for itself a ground of criticism of the argument here presented. He says:

[1] The opening sentence of a five-volume *History of the Peace Conference of Paris*, edited by H. W. V. Temperley, and published under the auspices of the Institute of International Affairs, is as follows: "The war was a conflict between the principles of freedom and of autocracy, between the principles of moral influence and of material force, of government by consent and of government by compulsion."

"Norman Angell's argument is, within its limits, an important truth. The opinions he attached were misconceptions and very dangerous misconceptions, which his attack did something to dispel. But he did not succeed in completely disposing of the case.

"The popular desire to acquire sovereignty over more and more territory is ostensibly based on beliefs and expectations, a great part of which can indeed be written off as mere illusions. But there remains a hard residuum which is not mere illusion."[1]

It *would* be illusion, he implies, if the objective were welfare. But it is not illusion if your objective is power for itself, irrespective of what it can do in the promotion of welfare. Mr. Hawtrey continues:

"The economic ambitions of states are to be expressed in terms of power. We are accustomed to think of economic ends in terms of welfare, but in matters of public policy that is never the whole story. To each country power appears as the indispensable means to every end. It comes to be exalted into an end itself.

"So long as welfare is the end, different communities may co-operate happily together. Jealousy there may be, and disputes as to how the material means of welfare should be shared. But there is no inherent divergence of aim in the pursuit of welfare. Power, on the other hand, is relative. The gain of one country is necessarily loss to others; its loss is gain to them. Conflict is of the essence of the pursuit of power. If it has constantly been an aim of public policy to use the authority of the State to favour the activities of those who undertake economic development, even to the extent of acquiring undeveloped territory as a field for their activities, and possibly risking war in the process, that is because this policy has been believed to further the power of the State.

"So long as international relations are based on force, power will be a leading object of national ambition.

[1] *Economic Aspects of Sovereignty*, R. G. Hawtrey (Longmans Green and Co.), pp. 25–6.

There results a vicious circle. When a political leader says that war is necessary in his country's vital interests, what he usually means is that war is necessary to acquire or to avoid losing some factor of national strength. The interest is only vital in the sense that it is vital to success in war. The only end vital enough to justify war is something arising out of the prospect of war itself."[1]

That strong, but obscure, instincts buttress the economic motive behind power, this author has never seen any occasion to deny. Indeed, one of his first essays in political literature was a book designed to show the extent of the non-rational, subconscious forces in international politics[2] and in a later book wrote:

"Underlying the disruptive processes so evidently at work in the international field is the deep-rooted instinct to the assertion of domination, preponderant power. This impulse, sanctioned and strengthened by prevailing traditions of 'mystic' patriotism, has been unguided and unchecked by any adequate realization either of its anti-social quality, the destructiveness, inseparable from its operation, or its ineffectiveness to ends indispensable to civilization.

"The psychological roots of the impulse are so deep that we shall continue to yield to it until we realize more fully its danger and inadequacy to certain vital ends like sustenance for our people, and come to see that if civilization is to be carried on we must turn to other motives. We may then develop a new political tradition, which will "discipline' instinct, as the tradition of toleration disciplined religious fanaticism, when that passion threatened to shatter European society."

[1] *Economic Aspects of Sovereignty*, R. G. Hawtrey (Longmans Green and Co.), pp. 26–7.

[2] *Patriotism Under Three Flags*: A Plea for Rationalism in Politics. T. Fisher Unwin, 1903.

The reasons which prompt me to reject non-resistance; unilateral disarmament, as the right conclusion to be drawn from the arguments here presented, are reproduced in the final Chapters of Part II. It is true that an aggressor could derive no advantage from an attack upon us and could only injure himself; the history of the small states in Europe is proof that military weakness can go hand in hand with national security. (Belgium suffered, not because Germany wanted to attack *her*, but to get at France; the Belgian case was an incident of the struggle between great armed states.) But even in the small state the impulse to the increase of power is constant; power is desired as a means of maintaining national right; and in any dispute with another, even minor material questions, especially questions of frontier adjustment, become questions of abstract right, for the vindication of which the whole nation—each side is deliberately taught to feel —should be prepared to die.

The whole case is illustrated by the post-war history of Germany. Germany's powerlessness during these fifteen years had not endangered her material security (the fact that she was unable to resist the Ruhr invasion saved her from mountainous losses and miseries, which she would have suffered if she had resisted). When she virtually repudiated her debts and obligations, her creditors could do nothing. Non-resistance, in a material sense, worked. But though it worked it was abandoned and a huge scheme of armaments embraced owing to the readiness with which those motives to which Hitler appealed could be aroused.

A state confronted by more powerful neighbours will always attempt to correct that position of inferiority if it can; correct it, unfortunately, by making the other inferior, which, of course, brings the problem not one whit nearer to solution. The motives are mixed: fear, "inferiority complex," the deep impulse to assert power, all stimulated by those appeals having in them so large

an element of mysticism with which the Hitlers, big and little, have lately made us familiar.

In that situation surely the best chance of dealing alike with the fears and the inferiority complex, is not to ask a nation to put itself at the mercy of a stronger one, but to invite it to contribute its own strength to the collective power of the community of nations in order to uphold equality of right for all, a general rule, one, for instance, entitling all to the right of third-party judgment, freedom from the violence of the other party to the dispute who may happen to be stronger. Surely there is a greater chance of dealing with the sensitive pride which is so large a part of nationalism by that method than by demanding of nationalism, a renunciation which normal men and women will not make.

Chapters X and XII of Part II attempt to show that non-resistance does not give equality of right; it means surrender of right by the weak. If the stronger party to the dispute, believing sincerely that he is right, knows that he will meet no resistence in imposing his own judgment, he will not submit to third party judgment. Resistence to injustice is a condition of justice. Collective power behind a law equal for all comes nearest to impartiality and justice.

§

One or two common criticisms may appropriately be dealt with here before the reader tackles the argument itself; broadly as presented twenty-five years ago.

One constant criticism is that that argument suffers from over-simplification; does not sufficiently consider qualifications.

Yet much of this book is a protest against over-simplification of the wrong kind. But it stands for a method of simplification which might be illustrated by a parable:

Standing with a young friend once, watching the gamblers at Monte Carlo, we got into conversation with another

watcher. The conversation led to the statement that this stranger had worked out a system by which, with a capital of a few thousand francs, one could break the bank and win millions. My young friend was rather taken with the idea and looked to me to reply to certain arithmetical arguments used by the inventor. Now I knew that if once I tried to answer him on that ground I should be lost. I am no mathematician, and the system dealt in "weighted averages," "the law of random frequency," and other things about which the mathematicians have endlessly quarrelled. But there was one fact which established the value of the system. The inventor was desirous of selling it for a hundred francs. I suggested to my young friend, that, in view of that fact, we were not interested in the inventor's figures. That reply, too, was perhaps over-simplified. There might be a great deal that could be said for his system. But we were confronted not by the problem of nicely balancing the arguments in a difficult mathematical theory, but by the problem of deciding there and then upon doing one thing or the other: whether to risk money upon the working of a gambling system, or to refrain from so doing.

I suggest that that is the situation which confronts civilization in the matter of its choice between the risks of war and the risks of creating those international institutions of government which alone can prevent it. A decision has to be taken. It has to be taken, not by the experts, the trained economists, the academic specialists, but by the voting millions of over-driven professional men, coal-heavers, dentists, tea-shop waitresses, parsons, char-women, artists, country squires, chorus girls . . . who make and unmake governments, who do not hesitate, as we have seen again and again, to over-ride the specialist or expert and impose their opinion upon him. With them rests the final verdict. At best they can give to it only a "spare-time attention," since most of their energies are absorbed in the daily tasks and anxieties of livelihood

and home. Competing for that spare-time attention are a number of suggestions coming from Press and politician designed first of all to please, not to correct any existing error or misapprehension, a correction which, when attempted, is almost always, for the subject of the effort, a distinctly displeasing business. None of us likes to be told that his ideas are wrong, the things he usually does utterly foolish, and the newspaper which should habitually do this would lose circulation, and the politician who did it would lose votes. What both do normally is to win approval by confirming existing error.

This book challenges widely spread belief, even more widely spread twenty-five years ago than to-day. That means basing the appeal upon argument and reason. If you desire to perpetuate existing belief, you can play upon habit, prejudgment, prejudice; but not if you wish to change it. Given the extent of attention available, the most that is humanly possible, if practical results are to be obtained at all, is to select, from a mass of possible considerations, those that are in the last analysis the determining ones as well as true. Whatever might be said about the incompleteness, the "over-simplification," the lack of due qualification in the statement which I made to my young friend that "men who work gambling systems lose their money," it was the relevant consideration for the decision at that moment to be made; and the obvious poverty of the inventor a sufficiently relevant supporting fact. Yet men have broken the bank, and they may have worked a system.

The truth is that far from the elementary issues being over-simplified they still have not been simplified enough.

Thus despite all the efforts which this author made to present the issues simply and clearly, he failed it would seem, to make clear the first thing of all—what the book is about, what is its purpose.

Here was a man thirty or more years ago obsessed with the thought that the world was drifting to an appalling

catastrophe. He had an urge, as any normal human believing that he saw his country moving towards destruction would have, to shout warnings. He did shout, however feebly.

But what did those who professed to hear him deem him to be shouting? That there *could* be no catastrophe, that "war had now become impossible."

Hardly a critic dealing with this book but refers to its clarity and simplicity. And for perhaps twenty years, in so far as the public knew of the work at all, its message was taken to be the exact contrary of its intended message. Attempting, with all the emphasis and precision the author knew, to explain that war was inevitable if we continued to follow the line we did, he was interpreted as saying that it could not take place.

The book is now in your hands; the larger book of which it is an abridgement is obtainable. So the reader may judge how far it predicts the "impossibility of war."

Will the reader note:

I have never said or implied in any book, anywhere, at any time, that war had become impossible, or that it could not be financed, or that it could last only a few weeks. I have never thought it, and again and again have repudiated such an idea, and again and again stated, long before the war, that war was extremely likely, indeed inevitable so long as the political ideas which this book attacks were dominant in international affairs.

Surely the self-evident facts of the case should have destroyed the legend from the first. If the author really believed war to be impossible, why should he have disturbed himself—engaged in an ungrateful and thankless agitation to prevent something which he believed could never take place?

In the years before the war he was in the habit of writing denials like the following:[1]

[1] To the *Saturday Review*, March 8th, 1913.

"You are good enough to say that I am 'one of the very few advocates of peace at any price, who is not altogether an ass.' And yet you also state that I have been on a mission 'to persuade the German people that war in the twentieth century is impossible.' If I had ever tried to teach anybody such sorry rubbish I should be altogether an unmitigated ass. I have never, of course, nor, so far as I am aware, has anyone ever said that war was impossible. Personally, not only do I regard war as possible, but extremely likely. What I have been preaching in Germany is that it is impossible for Germany to benefit by war, especially a war against us; and that, of course, is quite a different matter."

And articles with passages like the following:[1]

". . . One learns, with some surprise, that the very simple facts to which I have now for some years been trying to draw the attention they deserve, teach that:

(1) War is now impossible.
(2) War would ruin both the victor and the vanquished.
(3) War would leave the victor worse off than the vanquished.

"May I say with every possible emphasis that nothing I have ever written justifies any one of these conclusions.
"I have always, on the contrary, urged that:

(1) War is, unhappily, quite possible, and, in the prevailing condition of ignorance concerning certain elementary politico-economic facts, even likely.
(2) There is nothing to justify the conclusion that war would 'ruin' both victor and vanquished. Indeed, I do not quite know what the 'ruin' of a nation means.
(3) While in the past the vanquished has often profited more by defeat than he could possibly have done by victory, it is no necessary result, and we are safest in assuming that the vanquished will suffer most."

[1] *Daily Mail*, September 15th, 1911.

But all to no purpose, or little purpose. The legend seems as lively as ever.

It may be said that there must be some cause for so persistent a misrepresentation. There is. In part of course, it is due to that unconscious "protective misrepresentation" by which we defend ourselves from the disturbance involved in modifying old ideas. If we can satisfy ourselves that the new are ridiculous we need not worry to consider them. And there is further that obstinate and deep-seated fatalism which is so large a part of the prevailing attitude to war and against which the book under consideration was in part a protest. Take it as an axiom that war comes upon us as an outside force, like the rain or the earthquake, and not as something that we can influence, and a man who "does not believe in war" must be a person who believes that war is not coming; that men are naturally peaceable. To be a Pacifist because one believes that the danger of war is very great indeed, or because one believes men to be naturally extremely prone to war, is a position incomprehensible until we have rid our minds of the fatalism which regards war as an "inevitable" result of uncontrollable forces.

What is a writer to do, however, in the face of persistent misrepresentation such as this ? If he were a manufacturer of soap and someone said his soap was under weight, or he were a grocer and someone said his sugar was half sand, he could of course obtain enormous damages. But a mere writer, having given half his life to the study of the most important problem of his time, is quite helpless when a tired headline-writer, or a journalist indulging his resentment, or what he thinks is likely to be the resentment of his readers, describes a book as proclaiming one thing when, as a matter of simple fact, it proclaims the exact contrary.

§

It would be wearisome and superfluous to attempt to show in detail how far the events of the post-war period have

verified the general proposition of the book in its largest aspect, that military victory cannot be turned to advantageous economic account, that the wealth of a defeated enemy cannot be taken by, nor his trade transferred to, the victor, and that the attempt can only end in the dislocation of the processes upon which both almost equally depend. *Circumspice !*

It is true that the last twenty years have not been all depression. Many of the countries involved have had periods of prosperity, of boom, though, looking back, it now seems pretty clear that that activity was the fever which preceded the illness. But whether the victor—Britain, France, America—was momentarily on the top of some boom, or in the trough of a slump, it was equally impotent to use its military power either to make the prosperity permanent or to cure the depression: it could not indemnify itself with the wealth of the vanquished, nor "take" his trade in order to make up the loss of his own. We have managed to get from the defeated enemy in the way of indemnities rather less than what we lent him for the purpose of paying us. Indeed, if we take into account the purchases of German currency, subsequently to prove worthless, made by speculators in the Allied countries, it is fairly certain that Germany has had a great deal more of our—the Allies'—money than we have had of hers.

The literature of the subject is now mountainous.[1] A mere list of the books and documents published would run into dozens of pages of this book.

But all, of course, now in some measure belong to the past. The Lausanne agreement of 1932 is at long last official admission that in a modern war indemnities or reparations at all commensurate with its cost cannot be paid for just

[1] A fairly complete bibliography, up to 1930, is given in *Information on the Reparation Settlement*, by J. Wheeler Bennett and Hugh Latimer (Allen and Unwin). The books by Mr. J. M. Keynes on the Treaty and its consequences deal authoritatively with the facts of the case. The books by Mr. H. G. Moulton, of the University of Chicago, are also particularly to be recommended.

about the reasons very clumsily outlined, but nevertheless outlined, in the chapter entitled "The Indemnity Futility," which appeared in the 1910 edition of *The Great Illusion.*

The notion of "rivalry" dominated our first peace arrangements. We really did believe that we had an interest in "destroying Germany's competition," and having (under the illusion here attacked) taken elaborate steps, alike in the blockade (maintained for no imaginable military purposes long after the war) and in the Treaty, to destroy as much of the enemy's trade as possible, we found that our own trade was injured about correspondingly in the process, and thereupon proceeded, through the City of London, to lend the defeated enemy large sums for the purpose of enabling him to re-establish the industry and trade which our navy and treaty-makers had been at such great—and expensive—pains to wipe out. The money so lent by the victor to the vanquished assumed finally such proportions that the victor and creditor himself became bankrupt, in the sense of having to pay his own creditors fifteen shillings in the pound, being obliged, that is, to abandon the gold standard and to pay in depreciated currency, the victim of a monetary crisis precipitated by the failure of a bank situated in the enemy territory coupled with a lack of confidence in Britain's ability to meet her obligations owing to the extent of the loans which she, the victor, had made to the vanquished.[1]

It reads like a chapter of *Alice in Wonderland.* But it is a bald statement of historical occurrence: and constitutes complete vindication of the main thesis of *The Great Illusion.*

Our generation has produced whole libraries of economic

[1] The reader may be reminded that it was the failure in 1931 of the *Credit Anstalt* of Vienna which, involving Berlin creditors, created the fear that London's long-term loans to Berlin might be jeopardized; this started a "run" on London, by those holding short-term or on-demand claims, which resulted in pushing London off the gold standard; and produced later a situation in which Britain was only barely able to meet her own obligations to the American Government.

literature, describing and detailing our present plight, which are, in fact, an enlargement of that vindication.

And will the reader please note that that verification remains even though he take the view that the chaos, bankruptcy, ruin, which has fallen upon the post-war world, is not to be explained by the war; that it is inherent in the system and would have come, war or no war. For, in that case it is evident that military power, victory, cannot be used to remedy conditions produced by inherent defects of the existing system; that it is impotent to correct those conditions or the defects which produce them.

We now fear upheavals, Communism, Class War. But the conditions which have produced Communism were not produced by the Communists. We have gone through dire financial and economic revolutions—not merely or even mainly in Russia: in Western Europe the system has been turned upside down. But those upheavals were the work—in Germany, in Austria, in Italy, in France—not of Socialists but of "law and order" governments of the Right. Those results were the inevitable though unforeseen results of policies followed by Conservative governments before and since the war.

There is only one way to stave off the danger of these upheavals, and that is to deal effectively with the economic conditions which produce them.

The indictment which *The Great Illusion* embodied does not lose in force or importance if we take the view that the present collapse is due to defects in the existing economic system, now due for radical treatment or a surgical operation. In one respect the argument of this book gains in importance if that be our view.

If our patient, the body politic, needs a surgical operation, say a major abdominal one—which he may—it is not a good plan for him, on the eve of the operation, to get into a drunken brawl in which he breaks a leg, fractures his skull, and contracts a serious infectious disease. If the time had come for that operation, it was important first to

see that the time had come. But in 1914 the nations were moved and excited about entirely different things, and for that reason those who saw the need could not make others see the need; nor that the less irrelevant complications entered, the greater would be the chance alike of getting the operation decided upon and of its success when entered upon. Could we have avoided the dislocations and complications produced by the war, and directed to the real cure of our social diseases a tiny fraction even of those energies which have gone into making the disease worse, we should plainly have gone immense distances towards making our civilization something more worthy of our efforts.

What follows in Part II herewith is an abridgement of *The Great Illusion* as it appeared in various editions between 1908 and 1914. The reader can judge it in the light of victory and conquest, in the light of the event, and by that fact judge how far the principles are to be trusted in guiding policy in similar circumstances again.

PART II

THE PRE-WAR BOOK

(Abridged)

PART I

THE PRE-WAR BOOK

SYNOPSIS

WHAT are the fundamental motives that explain the present rivalry of armaments in Europe, notably the Anglo-German? Each nation pleads the need for defence; but this implies that someone is likely to attack, has an interest in so doing. What are the motives which each State thus fears its neighbours may obey?

They are based on the universal assumption that a nation, in order to find outlets for expanding population and increasing industry, or simply to ensure the best conditions possible for its people, is necessarily pushed to territorial expansion and the exercise of political force against others (German naval competition is assumed to be the expression of the growing need of an expanding population, a need which will find its satisfaction in the conquest of British Colonies or trade, unless these are defended); it is assumed, therefore, that a nation's relative prosperity is broadly determined by its political power; that nations being competing units, advantage, in the last resort, goes to the possessor of preponderant military force, the weaker going to the wall, as in the other forms of the struggle for life.

The author challenges this whole doctrine. He attempts to show that it belongs to a stage of development out of which we have passed; that the commerce and industry of a people no longer depend upon the expansion of its political frontiers; that a nation's political and economic frontiers do not now necessarily coincide; that military

power is socially and economically futile, and can have no relation to the prosperity of the people exercising it; that it is impossible for one nation to seize by force the wealth or trade of another—to enrich itself by subjugating, or imposing its will by force on another; that, in short, war, even when victorious, can no longer achieve those aims for which peoples strive.

He establishes this apparent paradox, in so far as the economic problem is concerned, by showing that wealth in the economically civilized world is founded upon credit and commercial contract (these being the outgrowth of an economic interdependence due to the increasing division of labour and greatly developed communication). If credit and commercial contract are tampered with in an attempt at confiscation, the credit-dependent wealth is undermined, and its collapse involves that of the conqueror; so that if conquest is not to be self-injurious it must respect the enemy's property, in which case it becomes economically futile. Thus the wealth of conquered territory remains in the hands of the population of such territory. When Germany annexed Alsatia, no individual German secured Alsatian property as the spoils of war. Conquest in the modern world is a process of multiplying by x, and then obtaining the original figure by dividing by x. For a modern nation to add to its territory no more adds to the wealth of the people of such nation than it would add to the wealth of Londoners if the City of London were to annex the county of Hertford.

The author also shows that international finance has become so interdependent and so interwoven with trade and industry that the intangibility of an enemy's property extends to his trade. Political and military power can in reality do nothing for trade; the individual merchants and manufacturers of small nations, exercising no such power, compete successfully with those of the great. The public credit of small states possessing no political power often stands higher than that of the Great Powers of

Europe, Belgian Three Per Cents standing at 96, and German at 82; Norwegian Three and a Half Per Cents at 102, and Russian Three and a Half Per Cents at 81.

The forces which have brought about the economic futility of military power have also rendered it futile as a means of enforcing a nation's moral ideas or imposing social institutions upon a conquered people. The fight for ideals can no longer take the form of fight between nations, because the lines of division on moral questions are within the nations themselves and intersect the political frontiers. The moral and spiritual struggles of the modern world go on between citizens of the same State in unconscious intellectual co-operation with corresponding groups in other States, not between the public powers of rival States.

This classification by strata involves necessarily a redirection of human pugnacity, based rather on the rivalry of classes and interests than on State divisions. War has no longer the justification that it makes for the survival of the fittest: it involves the survival of the less fit. The idea that the struggle between nations is a part of the evolutionary law of man's advance involves a misreading of the biological analogy.

These tendencies, mainly the outcome of purely modern conditions (e.g., rapidity of communication), have transformed the nature of the modern international problem; yet our ideas are still dominated by the principles and axioms, images and terminology of bygone days.

CHAPTER I

ECONOMICS AND THE MORAL CASE FOR WAR

Though the end of the present Anglo-German rivalry must be collision, the rivalry will go on so long as each side feels that fundamentally it is a struggle for life, for economic survival. If it is true that an increasing population must expand its national boundaries or starve, or that national welfare depends on power, then there is a moral case for conquest which the ordinary peace appeal does not meet. Until this case is met pacifist advocacy will fail and deserves to fail. Upon the solution of the economic depends the solution of the moral problem.

IT is generally admitted that the present rivalry in armaments in Europe—notably such as that now in progress between Great Britain and Germany—cannot go on in its present form indefinitely. The net result of each side meeting the efforts of the other with similar efforts is that at the end of a given period the relative position of both is what it was originally, and the enormous sacrifices of both have gone for nothing. If as between Great Britain and Germany it is claimed that Great Britain is in a position to maintain the lead because she has the money, Germany can retort that she is in a position to maintain the lead because she has the population, which must, in the case of a highly organized European nation, in the end mean money. Meanwhile, neither side can yield to the other, as the one so doing would, it is felt, be placed at the mercy of the other, a situation which neither will accept.

There are two current solutions which are offered as a means of egress from this impasse. There is that of the smaller party, regarded in both countries for the most part as dreamers and doctrinaires, who hope to solve the problem by a resort to general disarmament, or

at least a limitation of armament by agreement. And there is that of the larger, commonly deemed the more practical party, who are persuaded that the present state of rivalry and recurrent irritation is bound to culminate n an armed conflict, which, by definitely reducing one or other of the parties to a position of manifest inferiority, will settle the thing for at least some time, until after a longer or shorter period a state of relative equilibrium is established, and the whole process will be recommenced *da capo*.

This second solution is, on the whole, accepted as one of the laws of life: one of the hard facts of existence which men of ordinary courage take as all in the day's work. And in every country those favouring the other solution are looked upon either as people who fail to realize the facts of the world in which they live, or as people less concerned with the security of their country than with upholding a somewhat emasculate ideal; ready to weaken the defences of their own country on no better assurance than that the prospective enemy will not be so wicked as to attack them.

To this the realist is apt to oppose the law of conflict. Most of what the nineteenth century has taught us of the evolution of life on the planet is pressed into the service of this struggle-for-life philosophy. We are reminded of the survival of the fittest, that the weakest go to the wall, and that all life, sentient and non-sentient, is but a life of battle. The sacrifice involved in armament is the price which nations pay for their safety and for their political power. The power of Great Britain has been the main condition of her past industrial success; her trade has been extensive and her merchants rich, because she has been able to make her political and military force felt, and to exercise her influence among all the nations of the world. If she has dominated the commerce of the world, it is because her unconquered navy has dominated, and continues to dominate, all the avenues of commerce. This is the currently accepted argument.

I am not aware that a single authority of note, at least in the world of workaday politics, has ever challenged or disputed them. Even those who have occupied prominent positions in the propaganda of peace are at one with the veriest fire-eaters on this point. Mr. W. T. Stead is one of the leaders of the "Big Navy" party in England. Mr. Frederic Harrison, who all his life has been known as the philosopher protagonist of peace, declared recently that if Great Britain allowed Germany to get ahead of her in the race for armaments, "famine, social anarchy, incalculable chaos in the industrial and financial world, would be the inevitable result. Britain may live on . . . but before she began to live freely again she would have to lose half her population, which she could not feed, and all her overseas Empire, which she could not defend. . . . How idle are fine words about retrenchment, peace and brotherhood, whilst we lie open to the risk of unutterable ruin, to a deadly fight for national existence, to war in its most destructive and cruel form." On the other side we have friendly critics of Great Britain, like Professor von Schulze-Gaevernitz, writing: "We want our (i.e., Germany's) navy in order to confine the commercial rivalry of England within innocuous limits, and to deter the sober sense of the English people from the extremely threatening thought of attack upon us. . . . The German navy is a condition of our bare existence and independence, like the daily bread on which we depend, not only for ourselves, but for our children."

Confronted by a situation of this sort, one is bound to feel that the ordinary argument of the pacifist entirely breaks down; and it breaks down for a very simple reason. He himself accepts the premise which has just been indicated, viz,. that the victorious party in the struggle for military predominance gains some material advantage over the party which is conquered. The proposition even to the pacifist seems so self-evident that he makes no effort to combat it. He seems rather to say: "I am not concerned to

know whether seizure by force—theft—is advantageous or not. It is wrong; I object to it and base my hopes upon the survival one day of better ideals."

The peace advocate pleads for "altruism" in international relationships, and in so doing admits that successful war may be to the interest, though the immoral interest, of the victorious party. That is why the "inhumanity" of war bulks so largely in his propaganda, and why he dwells so much upon its horrors and cruelties.

It thus results that the workaday world and those engaged in the rough and tumble of practical politics have come to look upon the peace ideal as a counsel of perfection which may one day be attained when human nature, as the common phrase is, has been improved out of existence, but not as long as human nature remains what it is. While it remains possible to seize a tangible advantage by a man's strong right arm, the advantage, it is felt, will be seized and woe-betide the man who cannot defend himself.

Nor is this philosophy of force either as brutal, or immoral as its common statement would make it appear. We know that in the world as it exists to-day, in spheres other than those of international rivalry, the race is to the strong, and the weak get scant consideration. Industrialism and commercialism are as full of cruelties as war itself—cruelties, indeed, that are longer drawn out, more refined, if less apparent, and, it may be, appealing less to the ordinary imagination than those of war. With whatever reticence we may put the philosophy into words, we all feel that conflict of interests in this world is inevitable, and that what is an incident of our daily lives should not be shirked as a condition of those occasional titanic conflicts which mould history.

The virile man doubts whether he ought to be moved by the plea of the "inhumanity" of war. The masculine mind accepts suffering, death itself, as a risk which we are all prepared to run even in the most unheroic forms of money-making. None of us refuses to use the railway

train because of the occasional smash, to travel because of the occasional shipwreck. Indeed, peaceful industry demands in the long run a heavier toll even in life and blood than does war. It suffices to note the physique of the thousands—women as well as men—who pour through the factory gates of the north; the health of the children left at home, the kind of life that industry involves for millions, to say nothing of the casualty statistics in railroading, fishing, mining and seamanship, to be persuaded of that fact. Even in the "conscious" brutality which we usually deem special to war, such peaceful industries as fishing and shipping reveal a dreadful plenty. Our peaceful administration of the tropics not only takes its heavy toll in the health and lives of good men, but much of it involves a moral deterioration of human character as great—as does so much of our "peaceful" industry and trade.

Beside these peace sacrifices the "price of war" does not seem unduly high, and many may well feel that the trustees of a nation's interests ought not to shrink from paying that price should the efficient protection of those interests demand it.

When the pacifist in these circumstances falls back upon the moral plea as opposed to economic considerations, he does not seem to realize that he has not met the militarists'—which is here the common man's—moral case, a case for war which is undoubtedly valid if one accepts the economic assumptions that are usually common alike to the pacifist and the militarist.

If it be true that successful war secures for a people enlarged economic opportunities, opportunities which may be necessary for life and welfare, it may be our only available means of preventing the starvation of our children, of making due provision for them. This is an economic task, but moral motives may well underlie it, and moral rights be involved. We can only meet that moral case by disproving the economic one. Yet so often

does the pacifist regard it as sordid to discuss economic issues at all. The militarist says in effect:

> All life is a struggle. One individual lives by ousting another. We did not decree it; we found it so; are born to that particular world; condemned to it by a law we did not make. We struggle, or by our failure so to do we commit suicide; and there can be no moral obligation to commit suicide. This is as true of nations as of individuals. I have to choose whether in a world of limited opportunity, in which some must go under, those who do shall be my people, my children, those to whom I have responsibilities and owe loyalty, or whether I shall sacrifice those whom it is my plain duty to protect, in favour of alien peoples, the children of others to whom I have no specific obligations. Selfish? Please note that I propose if necessary to give my life to protect my people, so the question of selfishness hardly arises. But in a situation where one or the other must go under I have to make a choice: for which group shall I sacrifice myself? I say for mine. You say it is wrong to take by force? Then I must either resist the other when he does so or acquiesce in wrong.

Now you cannot answer that case merely by invoking righteousness, the higher claims of morals over economic interest, for the moral question itself arises out of the question of economic rights.

The economic fact is the test of the ethical claim: if it really be true that we must withhold sources of food from others because otherwise our own people would starve, there is ethical justification for such use of our power. But if such is *not* the fact, the whole moral issue is changed, and with it, to the degree to which it is mutually realised, the social outlook and attitude. Furthermore, as voters we are trustees, trustees of our nation, and as such it is our duty to do the best we can for its prosperity. We have here, therefore, a moral obligation to understand economic issues.

So much of pacifist advocacy fails to do the militarist

the elementary justice of assuming that, however mistaken, the soldier is sincere when he says that he fights for right as he sees it; that he has no other recourse than to fight or to acquiesce in wrong. To retort in that circumstance that all war is wrong is merely to beg the question: the rightness or wrongness is the very thing in dispute. And when the soldier, who honestly believes that he is giving his life for a righteous cause, is met by the pacifist appeal to "righteousness," the plea is apt to excite a not unnatural exasperation.

Not long since, an English Divine said that the root cause of all war was the selfishness and avarice of man. One thought of the spectacle which almost any war affords us, of tens of thousands of youngsters going to their deaths as to a feast, of the mothers who bid them good-bye with smiling faces and breaking hearts; of the fathers who are so proud of them; of the millions who starve, and skimp, and suffer through the years without murmur. Selfishness? Avarice?

War does not arise because consciously wicked men take a course which they know to be wrong, but because good men on both sides pursue a course which they believe to be right, stand, as Lincoln stood when he made war, for the right as they see it. It is a case not of conscious and admitted wrong challenging unquestioned and admitted right; but of misunderstanding of right.

It is not a question of moral intent, as some pacifist advocacy would so persistently imply, but of intellectual error in the interpretation of Right, and the problem is to find at what point and in what manner the mistake arises. The investigation of that misunderstanding is a task rather of intellectual clarification than of moral exhortation; and it must include examination of economic situations, since questions of right and morals arise out of economic conflict, or assumed economic conflict.

This book is not, therefore, an attempt to set up the economic motive over against the moral; it is an attempt

to analyse a moral situation which arises out of alleged economic needs; to examine the economic reasons commonly advanced as morally justifying war.

To criticize such examination as preferring "an appeal to narrow self-interest" to one based on righteousness and morals, involves one of those confusions of thought which frustrate and stultify so much peace advocacy, and perpetuate the misunderstandings which lie at the root of war.

This of course does not imply that the economic motive should dominate life but rather that it will unless the economic problem is solved: a hungry people is a people thinking first and last of bread. To turn their minds to other things they must be fed.

I would summarize the points I have tried to make so far thus:

1. Until economic difficulties are so far solved as to give the mass of the people the means of secure and tolerable physical existence, economic considerations and motives will tend to exclude all others. The way to give the spiritual a fair chance with ordinary men and women is not to be magnificently superior to their economic difficulties, but to find a solution of them. Until the economic dilemma is solved, no solution of moral difficulties will be adequate. If you want to get rid of the economic preoccupation, you must solve the worst of the economic problem.

2. In the same way the solution of the economic conflict between nations will not itself of suffice to establish peace; but no peace is possible until that conflict is solved. That makes it of sufficient importance.

3. The "economic" problem involved in international politics—the use of political power for economic ends—is also one of Right, including the most elemental of all rights, that to existence.

4. The answer which we give to that question of Right will depend upon our answer to the main query of this

book: must a country of expanding population expand its territory or trade by means of military power, in order to live? Is the struggle for the political control of territory a struggle for bread?

To refuse to face this problem because "economics" are sordid, is to refuse to face the needs of human life, and the forces that shape it. Such an attitude, while professing moral elevation, involves a denial of the right of others to live. Its worst defect, perhaps, is that its heroics are fatal to intellectual rectitude, to truth. No society built upon such foundations can stand.

It is because this fact of the relationship of economics and morals has not been adequately faced that so much peace propaganda has failed; that the public opinion of the countries of Europe, far from restraining the tendency of governments to increase armaments, is pushing them into still greater expenditure. Behind that impulse, and justifying it, are certain universally accepted assumptions, such as that national power means national wealth, national advantage; that expanding territory means increased opportunity for industry; that the strong nation can guarantee opportunities for its citizens that the weak nation cannot. The Englishman, for instance, believes that his wealth is largely the result of his political power, of his political domination, mainly of his sea power; that Germany with her expanding population must indeed feel "encircled in iron"; that she will fight for elbow-room; and that if he does not defend himself he will illustrate that universal law which makes of every stomach a graveyard. He has a natural preference for being the diner rather than the dinner.

Admitting his premises—and these premises are the universally accepted axioms, of international politics the world over—who shall say that he is wrong?

CHAPTER II

THE ACCEPTED AXIOMS

The purpose of this book is to question the all but universally accepted axiom that a nation's military power can be used to promote its economic welfare, that its share of the world's wealth is dependent upon its power to enforce its claims thereto. Quotations which show that this assumption is indeed generally accepted and constitutes the major motive in international politics.

BUT are the premises or axioms indicated at the close of the last chapter unchallengeable?

Is it true that the wealth, prosperity, and well-being of a nation depend upon its military power?

Can one civilized nation gain moral or material advantage by the military conquest of another?

Does conquered territory add to the wealth of the conquering nation? Is there in the case of conquest any transfer of property from one set of owners to another?

Is it possible for a nation to "own" the territory of another, in the way that a person or corporation would "own" an estate?

Can wealth or trade be transferred as the result of conquest from vanquished to victor?

Could Germany "take" our trade and Colonies by military force?

Could she turn British Colonies into German ones, and win an overseas empire by the sword, as Great Britain won hers in the past?

Does a modern nation need to expand its political boundaries in order to provide for increasing population?

If Great Britain could conquer Germany to-morrow,

completely conquer her, reduce her nationality to so much dust, would the ordinary British subject be the better for it?

If Germany could conquer Great Britain, would the ordinary German subject be the better for it?

The fact that all these questions have to be answered in the negative answer seems to outrage common sense, shows how much our political axioms are in need of revision.

The literature of the subject leaves no sort of doubt whatever that I have correctly stated the premises of the matter in the foregoing chapter. Those whose special competence is the science of politics or the philosophy of statecraft in the international field, from Machiavelli and Clausewitz to Mr. Roosevelt and the German Emperor, have left us in no doubt whatever on the point. The whole view has been admirably summarized by two notable writers—Admiral Mahan, on the Anglo-Saxon side, and Baron Karl von Stengel (second German delegate to the First Hague Conference) on the German.

Admiral Mahan says:

"The old predatory instinct that he should take who has the power survives . . . and moral force is not sufficient to determine issues unless supported by physical. Governments are corporations, and corporations have no souls; governments, moreover, are trustees, and as such must put first the lawful interests of their wards—their own people. . . . More and more Germany needs the assured importation of raw materials, and, where possible, control of regions productive of such materials. More and more she requires assured markets and security as to the importation of food, since less and less comparatively is produced within her own borders by her rapidly increasing population. This all means security at sea. . . . Yet the supremacy of Great Britain in European seas means a perpetually latent control of German

commerce. . . . The world has long been accustomed to the idea of a predominant naval power, coupling it with the name of Great Britain, and it has been noted that such power, when achieved, is commonly often associated with commercial and industrial predominance, the struggle for which is now in progress between Great Britain and Germany. Such predominance forces a nation to seek markets and, where possible, to control them to its own advantage by preponderant force, the ultimate expression of which is possession. . . . From this flow two results: the attempt to possess and the organization of force by which to maintain possession already achieved. . . . This statement is simply a specific formulation of the general necessity stated; it is an inevitable link in the chain of logical sequences—industry markets, control, navy bases . . ."[1]

Baron von Stengel (a statesman of Liberal views as well as being the German delegate to the first Hague Peace Conference) says in his book:

"Every great power must employ its efforts towards exercising the largest influence possible not only in European, but in world politics, and this mainly because economic power depends in the last resort on political power, and because the largest participation possible in the trade of the world is a vital question for every nation."

In order to show that the above two quotations do not embody a special or unusual view, but the all but universally accepted political philosophy of the modern world, the opinion of the great mass which prompts the actions of governments and explains their policies, I take the following from current newspapers and reviews ready to my hand:

[1] *The Interest of America in International Conditions.* Sampson Low, Marston & Co., London.

"It is the prowess of our navy . . . our dominant position at sea . . . which has built up the British Empire and its commerce."—*The Times* leading article.

"Because her commerce is infinitely vulnerable, and because her people are dependent upon that commerce for food and the wages with which to buy it . . . Britain wants a powerful fleet, a perfect organisation behind the fleet, and an army of defence. Until they are provided this country will exist under perpetual menace from the growing fleet of German Dreadnoughts, which have made the North Sea their parade-ground. All security will disappear, and British commerce and industry, when no man knows what the morrow will bring forth, must rapidly decline, thus accentuating British national degeneracy and decadence."—H. W. Wilson in the *National Review*, May, 1909.

"Sea-power is the last fact which stands between Germany and the supreme position in international commerce. At present Germany sends only some fifty million pounds worth, or about a seventh, of her total domestic produce to the markets of the world outside Europe and the United States. . . . Does any man who understands the subject think there is any power in Germany, or, indeed, any power in the world, which can prevent Germany, she having thus accomplished the first stage of her work, from now closing with Great Britain for her ultimate share of this 240 millions of overseas trade? Here it is that we unmask the shadow which looms like a real presence behind all the moves of present-day diplomacy, and behind all the colossal armaments that indicate the present preparations for a new struggle for sea-power."—Mr. Benjamin Kidd in the *Fortnightly Review*, April 1st, 1910.

"It is idle to talk of 'limitation of armaments' unless the nations of the earth will unanimously consent to lay aside all selfish ambitions. . . . Nations, like individuals, concern themselves chiefly with their own

interests, and when these clash with those of others, quarrels are apt to follow. If the aggrieved party is the weaker he usually goes to the wall, though 'right' be never so much on his side; and the stronger, whether he be the aggressor or not, usually has his own way. In international politics charity begins at home, and quite properly; the duty of a statesman is to think first of the interests of his own country."—*United Service Magazine*, May, 1909.

"How was this Empire of Britain founded? War founded this Empire—war and conquest. When we, therefore, masters by war of one-third of the habitable globe, when *we* propose to Germany to disarm, to curtail her navy or diminish her army, Germany naturally refuses; and pointing, not without justice, to the road by which England, sword in hand, has climbed to her unmatched eminence, declares openly, or in the veiled language of diplomacy, that by the same path, if by no other, Germany is determined also to ascend! Who amongst us, knowing the past of this nation, and the past of all nations and cities that have ever added the lustre of their name to human annals, can accuse Germany or regard the utterance of one of her greatest a year and a half ago (or of General Bernhardi three months ago) with any feelings except those of respect?"—Lord Roberts, "*Message to the Nation*," pp. 8–9.

"National entities, in their birth, activities and death, are controlled by the same laws that govern all life—plant, animal, or nation—the law of struggle, the law of survival. . . .

"That idea of international arbitration as a substitute for natural laws that govern the existence of political entities arises not only from a denial of their fiatas and an ignorance of their application, but from a total misconception of war, its causes, and its meaning."—General Homer Lea, *Valour of Ignorance*, p. 88.

"Let us conceive of a decisive defeat of the British fleet, and that Great Britain be humbled from her proud

position as mistress of the seas. . . . How long before Germany landed troops at Cape Town and Port Elizabeth? And how long before our American cousins discovered that it was the manifest destinies of Canada and the West India Isles to become parts of the American Union? From every quarter of the globe the rats would gather to devour the dying carcase, and how would this affect British industry? The capture of our Australian trade by Japan, the capture of our Indian trade by Russia, the capture of our Canadian trade by America, an enormous war indemnity to pay off, and the markets in confusion. Ruined capitalists, silent factories and unemployed—that is the answer.

"The teaching of all history is that commerce grows under the shadow of armed strength. Did we not fight with Dutch and French to capture the Indian trade? Did we not beat Dutch and French because we happened to be the strongest? Could we have beaten either Dutch or French but for the fact that we had gained command of the sea?

"Disarmament will not abolish war; you *cannot* abolish war from a competitive system of civilization; competition is the root-basis of such a system of civilization, and competition is war. When a business firm crushes a trade revival from the markets by cut prices, there is exactly the same process at work as when a business nation crushes a trade rival by physical force; the means vary, but the end in view, and the ethical principles in question are identical. In both cases the weaker goes to the wall; in both cases it is woe to the vanquished."—*The Struggle for Bread*, by A. Rifleman.

"Great Britain, with her present population, exists by virtue of her foreign trade and her control of the carrying trade of the world; defeat in war would mean the transference of both to other hands and consequent starvation for a large percentage of the wage-earners."
—T. G. Martin, in the *World*.

"We offer an enormously rich prize if we are not able to defend our shores; we may be perfectly certain

that the prize which we offer will go into the mouth of somebody powerful enough to overcome our resistance and to swallow a considerable portion of us up."—The Speaker of the House of Commons in a speech at Greystoke, reported by *The Times*.

"We appear to have forgotten the fundamental truth—confirmed by all history—that the warlike races inherit the earth, and that Nature decrees the survival of the fittest in the never-ending struggle for existence. . . . Our yearning for disarmament, our respect for the tender plant of Nonconformist conscience, and the parrot-like repetition of the misleading formula that the 'greatest of all British interests is peace' . . . must inevitably give to any people who covet our wealth and our possessions . . . the ambition to strike a swift and deadly blow at the heart of the Empire—undefended London."—*Blackwood's Magazine*, May, 1909.

These are taken from British sources, but there is not a straw to choose between them and other European opinion on the subject.

In the writings of such classic authorities as Clausewitz one finds full confirmation of the views expressed above, while they constitute the characteristic note of most popular German political literature that deals with *Weltpolitik*.

How deeply the danger is felt even by those who sincerely desire peace, and can in no sense be considered Jingoes, may be judged by the following from the pen of Mr. Frederic Harrison. I make no apology for giving the quotations at some length. In a letter to *The Times* he says:

"Whenever our Empire and maritime ascendancy are challenged it will be by such an invasion in force as was once designed by Phillip and Parma, and again by Napoleon. It is this certainty which compels me to modify the anti-militarist policy which I have consistently maintained for forty years past. . . . To me now it is no question of loss of prestige—no question

of the shrinkage of the Empire; it is our existence as a foremost European Power, and even as a thriving nation. . . . If ever our naval defence were broken through, our navy overwhelmed or even dispersed for a season, and a military occupation of our arsenals, docks, and capital were effected, the ruin would be such as modern history cannot parallel. It would not be the Empire, but Britain, that would be destroyed. . . . And a successful invasion would mean to us the total collapse of our Empire, our trade, and, with trade, the means of feeding forty millions in these islands. If it is asked, 'Why does invasion threaten more terrible consequences to us than it does to our neighbours?' the answer is that the British Empire is an anomalous structure, without any real parallel in modern history, except in the history of Portugal, Venice, and Holland, and in ancient history, Athens and Carthage. Our Empire presents special conditions both for attack and for destruction. And its destruction by an enemy seated on the Thames would have consequences so awful to contemplate that it cannot be left to be safeguarded by one sole line of defence, however good, and for the present hour however adequate. . . . For more than forty years I have raised my voice against every form of aggression, of Imperial expansion, and Continental militarism. Few men have more earnestly protested against postponing social reforms and the well-being of the people to Imperial conquests and Asiatic and African adventures. I do not go back on a word that I have uttered thereon. But how hollow is all talk about industrial reorganization until we have secured our country against a catastrophe that would involve untold destitution and misery on the people in the mass—which would paralyse industry and raise food to famine prices, whilst closing our factories and our yards!"

CHAPTER III

THE GREAT ILLUSION

Although the views embodied in the quotations of the previous chapter are all but universally held, they disregard the plain facts of the world about us, and constitute a gross and dangerous misconception. Conquest in the modern world does not involve a transfer of property or trade from one set of owners or merchants to another, but a change of political administration. If capture of territory added to the conqueror's wealth those in large countries would be richer than those in small. The facts. The "cash value" of Alsace-Lorraine. Who takes the taxes?

I THINK it will be admitted that there is not much chance of misunderstanding the general idea embodied in the passage quoted at the end of the last chapter. Mr. Harrison is especially definite. At the risk of "damnable iteration" I would again recall the fact that he is merely expressing one of the universally accepted axioms of European politics, namely, that a nation's whole economic security, its financial and industrial stability, its commercial opportunity, its prosperity and well-being in short depend upon its being able to defend itself against the aggression of other nations, who will, if they are able, be tempted to commit such aggression because in so doing they will increase *their* power, and thus prosperity and well-being, at the cost of the weaker and vanquished.

I have quoted largely journalists, politicians, publicists of all kinds, because I desired to indicate not merely scholarly opinion, but the common public opinion really operative in politics, though in fact the scholars, the experts on international affairs, are at one with popular opinion in accepting the assumption which underlies

these expressions, the assumption that military force, if great enough, can be used to transfer wealth, trade, property, from the vanquished to the victor, and that this latent power so to do explains the need of each to arm.

It is the object of these pages to show that this all but universal idea is a gross and desperately dangerous misconception, partaking at times of the nature of an optical illusion, at times of the nature of a superstition—a misconception not only gross and universal, but so profoundly mischievous as to misdirect an immense part of the energies of mankind, to misdirect them to such degree that unless we liberate ourselves from it, civilization itself, will be threatened.

And one of the most extraordinary features of this whole question is that the complete demonstration of the fallacy involved, the exposure of the illusion which gives it birth, is neither intricate nor doubtful. The demonstration does not repose upon any elaborately constructed theorem, but upon the simplest statement of the plainest facts in the economic life of Europe as we see it going on around us. Their nature may be indicated in a few simple propositions stated thus:

1. An extent of devastation, even approximating to that which Mr. Harrison foreshadows, as the result of the conquest of Great Britain, could only be inflicted by an invader as a means of punishment costly to himself, or, as the result of an unselfish and expensive desire to inflict misery for the mere joy of inflicting it. Since trade depends upon the existence of natural wealth and a population capable of working it, an invader cannot "utterly destroy it" except by destroying the population, which is not practicable. If he could destroy the population, he would thereby destroy his own market, actual or potential, which would be commercially suicidal. In this self-seeking world it is not reasonable to assume the existence of an inverted altruism of this kind.

2. If an invasion by Germany did involve, as Mr. Harrison and those who think with him say it would, the "total collapse of the Empire, our trade, and the means of feeding forty millions in these islands . . . the disturbance of capital and destruction of credit," German capital would, because of the internationalization and interdependence of modern finance, and so of trade and industry, also disappear in large part, German credit also collapse; and the only means of restoring it would be for Germany to put an end to the chaos in Great Britain by putting an end to the condition which had produced it.

3. For allied reasons the exaction of tribute from a conquered people in our day has become an economic impossibility; the exaction of a large indemnity so difficult and so costly directly and indirectly as to be an extremely disadvantageous financial operation.

4. For reasons of a like nature to the foregoing, it is a physical and economic impossibility to capture the external or carrying trade of another nation by military conquest. Large navies are impotent to create trade for the nations owning them, and can in peace do nothing to "confine the commercial rivalry" of other nations. Nor can a conqueror destroy the competition of a conquered nation by annexation; his competitors would still compete with him—i.e., if Germany conquered Holland, German merchants would still have to meet the competition of the Dutch, and on keener terms than originally, because the Dutch manufacturers and merchants would then be within the German customs lines; the notion that the trade competition of rivals can be disposed of by conquering those rivals being one of the illustrations of the curious optical illusion which lies behind the misconception dominating this subject.

5. The wealth, prosperity, and well-being of a nation depend in no way upon its military power, otherwise we should find the commercial prosperity; and the economic

well-being of the smaller nations, which exercise no such power, manifestly below that of the great nations which control Europe, whereas this is not the case. The populations of States like Switzerland, Holland, Belgium, Denmark, Sweden, are in every way as prosperous as the citizens of States like Germany, Russia, Austria, and France. The wealth *per capita* of the small nations is in many cases in excess of that of the great nations. Not only the question of the security of small States, which, it might be urged, is due to treaties of neutrality, is here involved, but the question of whether military power can be turned in a positive sense to economic advantage.

6. No other nation could gain material advantage by the conquest of the British Colonies, and Great Britain could not suffer material damage by their "loss," however much such "loss" would be regretted on sentimental grounds, and as rendering less easy a certain useful social co-operation between kindred peoples. The use of the word "loss" is misleading. Great Britain does not "own" her Colonies. They are, in fact, independent nations in alliance with the Mother Country, to whom they are no source of tribute or economic profit (except as foreign nations are a source of profit), their economic relations being settled, not by the Mother Country, but by the Colonies. Economically, Great Britain would gain by their formal separation, since she would be relieved of the cost of their defence. Their "loss" involving no fundamental change in economic fact (beyond saving the Mother Country the cost of their defence), could not involve the ruin of the Empire and the starvation of the Mother Country, as those who commonly treat of such a contingency usual aver. As Great Britain is not able to exact tribute or economic advantage, it is inconceivable that any other country, necessarily less experienced in colonial management, would be able to succeed where Great Britain had failed, especially in view of the past history

of the Spanish, Portuguese, French and British Colonial Empires. This history also demonstrates that the position of Crown Colonies, in the respect which we are considering, is not sensibly different from that of the self-governing ones (i.e., their fiscal policies tend to become their own affair, not the Mother Country's). It is not to be presumed, therefore, that any Eurpoean nation, *realizing the facts*, would attempt the desperately expensive business of the conquest of Great Britain for the purpose of making an experiment which all colonial history shows to be doomed to failure.

The propositions just outlined—which traverse sufficiently the ground covered by those expressions, British and German, of the current view quoted in the last chapter—are little more than a mere statement of self-evident, facts in Europe to-day. Yet that mere statement of self-evident fact constitutes, I suggest a complete refutation of the views I have quoted, which are the commonly accepted "axioms" of international politics. For the purpose of parallel, I have divided my propositions into six clauses, but such division is quite arbitrary, and the whole could be gathered into a single clause as follows:

As the only feasible policy in our day for a conqueror to pursue is to leave the wealth of a territory in the possession of its occupants, it is a fallacy, an illusion, to regard a nation as increasing its wealth when it increases its territory. When a province or state is annexed the population, who are the owners of the wealth, are also annexed. There is a change of political administration which may be bad (or good), but there is not a transfer of property from one group of owners to another. The fact of modern history abundantly demonstrate this. When Germany annexed Schleswig-Holstein and Alsace-Lorraine no ordinary German citizen was enriched by goods or property taken from the conquered territory. Military power can do nothing

commensurate with its cost and risk for the trade and well-being of the particular states exercising it. It cannot be used as an instrument for seizing or keeping trade. The idea that armies and navies can be used to transfer the trade of rivals from weak to powerful states is illusory. Although Great Britain "owns" Canada, has completely "conquered" Canada, the British merchant is driven from the Canadian markets by the merchant of (say) the United States or Switzerland. The great nations neither destroy nor transfer to themselves the trade of small nations, because they cannot. Military power does not determine the relative economic position of peoples. The Dutch citizen, whose Government possesses no considerable military power, is just as well off as the German citizen, whose Government possesses an army of two million men, and a great deal better off than the Russian, whose Government possesses an army of something like four million. A fairly good index of economic stability, whether of a business organization or a nation, is the rate at which it is able to borrow money; risk and insecurity are very quickly reflected by a rise in the interest it must pay. Thus, as a rough-and-ready, though incomplete indication of the relative wealth and security of the respective States, we find that the three per cents of comparatively powerless Holland are quoted at about ninety-six, and the three per cents of powerful Germany at seventy-five; the three and a half per cents of the Russian Empire, with its hundred and twenty million souls and its four million army, are quoted at seventy-eight, while the three and a half per cents of Norway, which has not an army at all (or any that need be considered in this discussion), are quoted at ninety-eight.

If Mr. Harrison were right; if, as he implies, our commerce, our very industrial existence, would disappear did we allow neighbours who envied us that commerce to become our superiors in armament, and to exercise

political weight in the world, how does he explain the fact that the Great Powers of the Continent are flanked by little nations far weaker than themselves, having nearly always a commercial development equal to, and in some cases greater than, their own? If the common doctrine be true, the financiers would not invest a pound or a dollar in the territories of the undefended nations. Yet, far from that being the case, they consider that a Swiss or a Dutch investment is more secure than a German one; that industrial undertakings in a country like Switzerland are preferable in point of security to enterprises backed by three millions of the most perfectly trained soldiers in the world. The beliefs of European financiers as reflected in their acts, are in flat contradiction with the beliefs of European politicians as reflected in *their* acts. If a country's trade were really at the mercy of the first successful invader, if armies and navies were really necessary for the protection and promotion of trade, the small countries would be in a hopelessly inferior position, and could only exist on the sufferance of what we are told are unscrupulous aggressors. And yet Norway has, relatively to population, a greater carrying trade than Great Britain,[1] and Dutch, Swiss, and Belgian merchants compete in all the markets of the world successfully with those of Germany and France.

The prosperity of the small states is thus a fact which proves a good deal more than that wealth can be secured without armaments. Exponents of the orthodox statecraft—notably such authorities as Admiral Mahan—plead that armaments are a necessary part of the economic struggle of nations, that without such power a nation is at a hopeless economic disadvantage.

The relative economic situation of the small States gives the lie to it all. This profound political philosophy is

[1] The figures given in the *Stateman's Year-Book* (1908) show that, proportionately to population, Norway has nearly three times the carrying trade of England.

seen to be just learned nonsense when we realize that all the might of Russia or Germany cannot secure for the individual citizen better general economic conditions than those prevalent in the little States. The citizens of Switzerland, Belgium, or Holland, countries without "control," or navy, or bases, or "weight in the councils of Europe," or the "prestige of a Great Power," are just as well off as Germans, and a great deal better off than Austrians or Russians.

Even if it could be argued that the security of the small States is due to the various treaties guaranteeing their neutrality, it cannot be argued that those treaties give them the military and naval power, the "weight in the councils of the nations," which Admiral Mahan and the other exponents of the orthodox statecraft assure us are such necessary factors in national prosperity.

I want, however, with all possible emphasis, to indicate the limits of the argument that I am trying to enforce. That argument is not that the facts just cited show armaments or the absence of them to be the sole, or even the determining factor in national wealth or poverty. Nor, indeed, that there are no advantages in large national areas. Plainly there are (e.g., the absence of tariffs and fiscal barriers). But the facts cited do show that the security of wealth is due to other things than armaments; that the absence of political and military power is on the one hand no obstacle to prosperity, any more than the possession of such power is a guarantee of prosperity; that the mere size of administrative area has no relation to the wealth of those inhabiting it, any more than it would be true to say that a man living in London is richer than a man living in Liverpool, because the former city is larger, and has a bigger budget.

A very common reply to the arguments just adduced is that the security of the small States, nevertheless, depends upon armaments—the armaments of the States

which guarantee their neutrality. But if treaty guarantees suffice for the protection of small States why not of great? When that is suggested, however, the militarist is apt to turn round and declare that treaties are utterly valueless as a means of national security. Thus Major Stewart Murray:[1]

> "The European waste-paper basket is the place to which all treaties eventually find their way, and a thing which can any day be placed in a waste-paper basket is a poor thing on which to hang our national safety. Yet there are plenty of people in this country who quote treaties to us as if we could depend on their never being torn up. Very plausible and very dangerous people they are—idealists too good and innocent for a hard, cruel world where force is the chief law. Yet there are some such innocent people in Parliament even at present. It is to be hoped that we shall see none of them there in future."

But, again, if the security of a nation's wealth can only be assured by force, and treaty rights are mere waste paper, how can we explain the evident security of the wealth of States possessing relatively no force? By the mutual jealousies of those guaranteeing their neutrality? Then that mutual jealousy could equally well guarantee the security of any one of the larger States against the rest.

The right understanding of this phenomenon involves, however, a certain distinction, the distinction between economic and political security. The political security of the small States is *not* assured; no man would take heavy odds on Holland being able to maintain complete political independence if Germany cared seriously to threaten it. But Holland's economic security *is* assured. Every financier in Europe knows that if Germany conquered Holland or Belgium tomorrow, she would have to

[1] *Future Peace of the Anglo-Saxons* (Watts & Co.).

leave their wealth untouched; there could be no confiscation. And that is why the stocks of the lesser States, not in reality threatened by confiscation, yet relieved in part, at least, of the charge of armaments, stand fifteen to twenty points higher than those of the military States. Belgium, politically, might disappear to-morrow; her wealth would remain practically unchanged.

If this truth—that the wealth of an unprotected country is safe, that it cannot be seized—is recognized (as it is) by investors and financiers, the experts most concerned, whence comes the political danger, the danger of aggression? It is due, surely, to the fact that the truth recognized by investors, financiers, business men, when dealing with facts belonging to their familiar world, has not been carried over into less familiar political ideas. The average business man does not see the contradiction between his daily conduct as a business man and the policy which he encourages his government to adopt. He sees no need of reconciling the fact that he will invest heavily in property that has no military or naval protection, and his applause of Mr. Harrison, when the latter declares that but for the British navy the foreigner would run off with every penny that we possess, or words to that effect.

The actual policy pursued by financiers and investors implies that they do not believe that wealth, property can be "taken" by preponderant power. Yet preponderant power is pursued everywhere as the means of national enrichment. Power as an end is set up in European politics as desirable beyond all others. Here, for instance, are the Pan-Germanists of Germany. This party has set before itself the object of grouping into one great power all the peoples of the Germanic race or language in Europe. Were this aim achieved, Germany would become the dominating power of the Continent, and might become the dominating power of the world. And according to the commonly accepted doctrine of national advantage, such

an achievement would, from the point of view of Germany, be worth any sacrifice that Germans could make. It would be an achievement so great, so desirable, that German citizens should not hesitate for an instant to give everything, life itself, in its accomplishment. Very good. Let us assume that at the cost of great sacrifice, the greatest sacrifice, which it is possible to imagine a modern civilized nation making, this has been accomplished, and that Belgium and Holland and Germany, Switzerland and Austria, have all become part of the great German hegemony: *is there one ordinary German citizen who would be able to say that his well-being had been increased by such a change?* Germany would then "own" Holland. *But would a single German citizen be the richer for the ownership?* The Hollander, from having been the citizen of a small and insignificant state, would become the citizen of a very great one. *Would the individual Hollander be any the richer or any the better?* We know that, as a matter of fact, neither the German nor the Hollander would be one whit the better; and we know, also, that in all probability both would be a great deal the worse. We may, indeed, say that the Hollander would be certainly the worse, in that he would have exchanged the relatively light taxation and light military service of Holland for the much heavier taxation and the much longer military service of the "great" German Empire.

To the thesis here developed, the thesis that, while military conquest in the modern world involves a change of political administration which may be good, bad, or indifferent, it does not, and cannot involve a transfer of property from one group of owners to another, the commonest objection is that I have overlooked the collection of taxes by the conqueror. While it may be true, say these critics, that a modern conqueror must respect titles to property since the insolvencies and insecurities produced by their destruction might well (almost inevitably would), affect securities, instruments of credits, loans, or what not,

held by persons of the victor State; produce, in other words, insolvencies, which would have dangerous repercussions —while all that may be true, it is said, I have overlooked the fact that the conqueror collects the taxes. It may be true that the Alsatians retained their farms and houses when the Germans took over the Province; they paid their taxes to Germany instead of France. Thus a writer in the *Daily Mail* argues: "If Alsace-Lorraine had remained French it would have yielded at the present rate of French taxation a revenue of eight millions a year to the state. That revenue is lost to France and placed at the disposal of Germany," and on the basis of this, the *Daily Mail* financier works out the "cash value" of the asset which France has lost and Germany gained.

Not once or twice since this book first appeared has that particular criticism been made. On hundreds of occasions have educated people written to me to point out this "oversight." I really had not thought this matter out sufficiently: obviously a nation was enriched by an addition to the receipts of its treasury. And never, in these criticisms, is there any awareness that it constitutes a sort of Irish bull.

"Germany," says the *Daily Mail* critic, is now richer by eight millions a year which, but for the conquest, would have gone to "France." But who or what is "Germany" after the annexation? "Germany" now includes the people of Alsace-Lorraine, who not only pay the taxes but receive them—receive them, that is, as much as any other German. They belong to the new entity which "owns" the asset. The number of recipients have been increased in exact proportion to the number of the contributors.

To this particular critic I replied as follows:

"Conquest multiplied by X it is true, but we overlook the fact that it also has to divide by X, and that the result is consequently, so far as the individual is con-

cerned, exactly what it was before. My critic remembered the multiplication all right, but he forgot the division. The matricular contribution (*Matrikularbeitrag*) of Alsace-Lorraine to the Imperial treasury (which incidentally is neither three millions nor eight, but just about one) is fixed on exactly the same scale as that of the other States of the Empire. Prussia, the conqueror, pays *per capita* just as much as, and no less than, Alsace, the conquered, who, if she were not paying this million to Germany, would be paying it—or, according to my critic, a much larger sum—to France; and if Germany did not 'own' Alsace-Lorraine, she would be relieved of charges that amount not to one but several millions. The change of 'ownership' does not therefore of itself change the money position (which is what we are now discussing) of either owner or owned.

"If a great country benefits every time it annexes a province, and her people are the richer for the widened territory, the small nations ought to be immeasurably poorer than the great, instead of which, by every test which you like to apply—public credit, amounts in savings banks, standard of living, social progress, general well-being—citizens of small States are, other things being equal, as well off as, or better off than, the citizens of great States.

"If the Germans are enriched by eight millions a year through the conquest of a province like Alsace-Lorraine, how much should the English people draw from their 'possessions'? On the basis of population, somewhere in the region of a thousand million; on the basis of area, still more—enough not only to pay all our taxes, wipe out our National Debt, support the army and navy, but give every family in the land a fat income into the bargain. There is evidently something wrong.

"In every civilised State, revenues which are drawn from a territory are expended on that territory, and there is no process known to modern government by which wealth may first be drawn from a territory into the treasury and then be redistributed with a profit to the individuals who have contributed it or to others.

It would be just as reasonable to say that the citizens of London are richer than the citizens of Birmingham because London has a richer treasury; or that Londoners would become richer if the London County Council were to annex the county of Hertford, as to say that people's wealth varies according to the size of the administrative area which they inhabit. The whole thing is, as I have called it, an optical illusion, due to the hypnotism of an obsolete terminology. Just as poverty may be greater in the large city than in the small one, and taxation heavier, so the citizens of a great State may be poorer than the citizens of a small one, as they very often are."

But there is another phase of this confusion, characterized by a strange contradiction. In the militarist view we must fight others for trade—fight them in a literal military sense, since the need of protecting our trade is invoked as the justification of a great navy. Their trade must be checked, restrained, their goods kept from our shores. Also, we add to our wealth when we conquer their territory. But if we conquer their territory we don't keep out their trade: the barriers against their goods are wiped away. The goods enter freely without let or hindrance. Conquest has not destroyed competition, it has wiped away all restraints upon it. We heard a good deal betimes from Americans of the competition of Canadian trade, the need for barriers to keep out goods made in the factories of Ontario and Quebec. America is damaged by the free entry of those goods from those factories. So be it. But Americans of the nationalist and militarist type of mind talk of the ultimate conquest of Canada "and all its riches added to our nation's heritage." But it would mean that those same goods made by the same hands in the same factories owned by the same people would now compete freely with the goods of the conquerors. No American would dream of complaining any more than the people of Pennsylvania complain about the competition of

Massachusetts (or those of Lancashire about the competition of Yorkshire). It would seem that it is the political status of the trader or manufacturer, not any economic fact, which determines whether he is a competitor or not. But then we do indeed labour under a delusion: the economic fight, the "inevitable biological struggle," has given place to a quarrel about flags. The "grim struggle for bread" ceases the moment that the rival comes under our flag. Is it not time we made up our minds what we are preparing to fight about: economic needs or national insignia?

We have never perhaps asked ourselves what it is we are really fighting about; as we certainly do not for the most part examine the nature of that wealth which we declare to be the object of the conquest. Let us examine it.

CHAPTER IV

THE NEW WORLD AND THE OLD POLITICS

Wealth in the modern world is not a limited stock of goods, any part of which if taken by one is lost to others, but is the product of a flow or process. The great danger of the modern world is not absolute shortage but dislocation of the process of exchange by which alone in our economy the fruits of the earth can be made available for human consumption. To represent the struggle of nations as arising from lack of resources at present available is to ignore the plain facts of modern economics; every nation is trying to keep out the products of others, and get rid of its own, for the reason that in a world of division of labour produce is only wealth if you can get rid of it.

DURING the last quarter of the tenth century, Anlaf the Viking came thrice into Essex and on each occasion he made a pretty good thing of it: his ships, to the number of ninety, moved out of the estuaries deeply laden with corn, and hides, with fine cloth from the monasteries, with plate and ornaments, sometines with women and slaves.

Obedient to the injunction to remember that the underlying forces of history and the motives of men remain unchanged, I have tried to imagine the British, now that we have the upper hand, returning the compliment ten centuries later: our navy loading up a goodly part of our mercantile marine with the agricultural and industrial wealth of the Scandinavian peninsula, and pouring into Britain shipload upon shipload of butter, bacon and milk products: of Swedish wood pulp, paper, iron, furniture, hardware, textiles. And then . . .

Yes, and what then? . . .

. . . *Dumping them upon the British Market.*

Our troubles would begin.

One remembers what happened when some of our own producers discovered that foreign governments were subsidising the shipment to this country of certain products, e.g., sugar. We called international conferences for the purpose of preventing the entrance into this country of foreign goods at something below cost of production. But what would happen if some modern British Anlaf obtained vast quantities of foreign goods for nothing more than the cost of seizing them and began dumping them on the market?

The British farmer and industrialist would immediately with strident and insistent clamour, insist upon a tariff or a convention to prohibit this somewhat too simple manifestation of the "struggle for bread." We should be deafened with shouts about the ruin of British agriculture and industry, the passing of our yoeman prosperity. . . . We have plainly here a complication that Anlaf did not have to face. The fluctuations of the produce markets, agricultural prices, the political pull of the Manufacturers' Associations did not particularly embarrass *him*.

But these would not be the only complications which would follow upon a sort of Attila raid into the Baltic and wholesale confiscations by invading British hordes. The British coal trade with Scandinavia and the Baltic is an extremely important one; and on that trade depends also some of our shipping industry: it is the fact of taking out coal and getting a cargo both ways that has given to us so much of the carrying trade of the world: and if our modern sea rovers began sacking Stockholm or Copenhagen or Christiania they would in fact be sacking the working-class homes of Newcastle or Barrow or Cardiff almost as disastrously, reducing to unemployment and starvation *British* miners, *British* factory hands, *British* shipbuilders, *British* sailors.

I doubt whether, when Anlaf sacked Maldon or Colchester, the Scandinavian carrying trade was greatly

affected, or the unemployment rate increased. But this is only the beginning of the complications which a modern British Anlaf would have to face. British insurance companies have insured the very buildings that our British Vikings would be burning; and shares in the businesses thus brought to ruin are held by *British* investors; *British* banks have lent money to the now ruined merchants, or discounted their bills; or lent money to other merchants who had discounted the bills; and if the sacking across the North Sea were at all extensive, we should find *British* banks gravely embarrassed, and for safety's sake calling in loans extended to *British* business men, raising the *British* bank rate, increasing the cost and difficulty of financing *British* business and *British* enterprise, thus depriving *British* investors of their property, *British* workmen of their jobs.

I have not studied Viking history very carefully, but I doubt very much whether the Scandinavian stock exchanges of the tenth century were greatly affected when Anlaf ravaged Essex.

Still, very learned people, writers of histories and books on statecraft tell me that "the same struggle," which more than a thousand years ago "drove the Teutonic warriors across the Rhine," must still go on in much the same way. Well, I suggest there will be complications.

A fiery patriot sent to a London paper the following letter:

> "When the German army is looting the cellars of the Bank of England, and carrying off the foundations of our whole national fortune, perhaps the twaddlers who are now screaming about the wastefulness of building four more *Dreadnoughts* will understand why sane men are regarding this opposition as treasonable nonsense."[1]

[1] It has been interesting to observe that at various times in the post-war period, notably in July and August, 1931, foreigners *were*

Let us consider quite soberly for a moment, what would be the result of such an action on the part of a German army in London? The first effect, of course, would be that, as the Bank of England is the banker of all other banks, every bank would suspend specie payment; our money would become paper money, no one knowing what it would be worth a week hence. Very probably there would be a run on every bank in England, and all would suspend payment. But London being the clearing-house of the world, bills drawn thereon, but held by foreigners, would not be met; the loanable value of money in foreign centres would be enormously raised, and instruments of credit enormously depreciated; prices of all kinds of stocks would fall, and holders would be threatened by ruin and insolvency. German finance would represent a condition as chaotic as that of Great Britain. Whatever advantage German credit might gain by holding Britain's gold it would certainly be more than offset by the fact that it was the ruthless action of the German Government that had produced the general catastrophe. A country that could sack bank reserves would be a good one for foreign investors to avoid. The essential of credit is confidence, and those who repudiate it pay dearly for their action. The German Generalissimo in London might be no more civilized than Anlaf himself, but he would soon find the difference between himself and Anlaf. Anlaf did not have to worry about a bank rate and such-like complications; but the German general, while trying to sack the Bank of England, might find the value of even the best of his investments reduced; and that for the sake of loot, amounting to a few sovereigns apiece among

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taking the gold out of the cellars of the Bank of England, taking it to such a degree as truly to shake what this correspondent calls "the foundations of our whole national fortune," and by pushing us off the gold standard to disorganise the whole financial apparatus and economic life of the nation. But what were the Dreadnoughts, of which the correspondent speaks, and which *did* get built, doing to prevent this catastrophe? What *could* our navy do?

his soldiery, he would have sacrificed a considerable part of his own personal fortune. It is as certain as anything can be that, were the German army guilty of such economic vandalism, there is no considerable institution in Germany that would escape grave damage—a damage in credit and security so serious as to constitute a loss immensely greater[1] than the value of the loot obtained.

There are certain simple facts which indicate the way in which the nature of wealth has changed since the industrial revolution that will be more fully developed in later chapters, but some of which should be indicated at this point. In a world which lives by an economy based upon the division of labour—and machine production implies essentially division of labour—a product like timber, or coal, or iron ore, or copper, or coffee, or even wheat, is only wealth on one condition: that the producer gets rid of it. That is the paradox of modern wealth. Every producer is trying to get rid of his produce. The miner cannot eat coal, nor wear it, nor furnish his house with it. If he is to turn it into food and clothing and furniture he must exchange it, which means in practice exchanging it for money; sell it. But in order to sell it the purchaser must have money, which he can obtain in only one way: by getting rid of *his* produce or services for money, to a purchaser whose only means of obtaining money is to get rid of *his* produce for money, who in order to have money . . . and so on round the world.

Now, if you look about you, you will see that that is the outstanding characteristic of modern wealth-getting. It is not a scramble for the material itself, material of which each fears a shortage. Threatened shortage of material is *not* the problem. In our industrial economy, *markets* are the main problem. And markets depend upon people having money to buy your goods, money which they can obtain only by getting rid of *their* goods. Which

[1] Very many times greater, because the bullion reserve in the Bank of England is relatively small.

means that markets and money are dependent upon a flow, the smooth running of an elaborate apparatus of exchange, the maintenance of a certain process. *The great danger of the modern world is not absolute shortage, but dislocation of the process of exchange, by which alone the fruits of the earth can be made available for human consumption*, by which production can be translated into wealth. The problem is to keep the traffic moving on the commercial highways of the world, to prevent traffic congestion, traffic jams. Only on that condition can we use the highways at all and get our goods to market. And jams and congestion will not be prevented by the method of each arming his lorry or his motor-car and trying to dictate to all the other users of the road, nor by the method of each having a car bigger than any that he is likely to collide with. In the long run that simply won't work. Nor will it serve any purpose to forbid others the use of the road. For if others don't use the road there will be no market to which to take your goods: that market only exists because your customers are able to take *their* goods to market.

If the main object is to keep the traffic freely moving, if the flow of wealth stops immediately the traffic stops, the very worst method of keeping it clear is for each to arm his vehicle in order to "protect himself against the interference of the other users of the road." There is only one way really to keep the traffic moving, and that is to have traffic rules, which must be largely a matter of common agreement. And the more that the characteristic feature of modern wealth develops—the more, that is, that the apparatus of our modern economy becomes elaborated, intricate, vulnerable—the more does this generalization become true, and the need for rules increase. In the past the need for rules was not great. If Anlaf's ox-cart, moving over his tenth-century tracks, met a Saxon ox-cart, and one drove to the left and the other to the right, and the two became entangled, the teams could doubt-

less, after the appropriate blasphemy, be duly separated and each go on his way. But if on the modern motor-car road, you do not know whether the other car, travelling at fifty miles an hour, is driving to the left, as in England, or to the right, as on the Continent . . . the discussion, after the misunderstanding has produced a collision, would be largely academic. The absence of rule would quickly banish cars from our roads altogether. And really it would not solve that problem for everybody to start building dreadnought cars.

These are the facts, and, in the light of them, it would be interesting to know how those who talk as though piracy on the national scale were still an economic possibility would proceed to effect it. As material property in the form of that booty which used to constitute the spoils of victory in ancient times, the gold and silver goblets, etc., would be quite inconsiderable, and as Germans could not carry away parts of the London Underground nor we carry away sections of Berlin and Hamburg, we could only annex the paper tokens of wealth—shares and bonds of railways and industrial concerns. But the value of those securities depends, first, upon the life of the people going on normally and actively; secondly, upon the reliance which can be placed upon the execution of the contracts which they embody.

Let us try to see what has happened in the period which separates Anlaf's time from ours—though most, which is important in this connection, has happened in the last fifty of the thousand years which separate us from him.

When the division of labour was so little developed that every homestead produced all that it needed, it mattered nothing if it were cut off from the world for weeks and months at a time. The inhabitants of neighbouring villages or homesteads might be slain or harassed, and no inconvenience resulted. But if to-day an English

county is cut off by a general railroad strike for so much as forty-eight hours from the rest of the world we know that whole sections of its population are threatened with famine. If, in the time of Anlaf, England could by some magic have killed all foreigners, she would presumably have been the better off. If she could do the same thing to-day, half her population would starve to death. If on one side of the frontier a community is, say, wheat-producing, and on the other coal-producing, each is dependent for its very existence on the fact of the other being able to carry on its labour. The miner, who cannot eat coal, is unable in a week to set to and grow a crop of wheat. The process of exchange must go on, and each party have fair expectation that he will in due course be able to reap the fruits of his labour, or both must starve. That exchange, that expectation, is merely the expression in its simplest form of commerce and credit; and the interdependence here indicated has, by the countless developments of rapid communication, reached such a condition of complexity that the interference with any given operation affects not merely the parties directly involved, but numberless others having at first sight no connection therewith.

The vital interdependence here indicated, cutting athwart frontiers, is largely the work of the last forty or fifty years; and it has, during that time, so developed as to have set up a financial interdependence of the capitals of the world, so complex that disturbance in New York involves financial and commercial disturbance in London, and, if sufficiently grave, compels financiers of London to co-operate with those of New York to put an end to the crisis, not as a matter of altruism, but as a matter of commercial self-protection. The complexity of modern finance makes New York dependent on London, London upon Berlin, Berlin upon Paris, to a greater degree than has ever yet been the case in history. This interdependence is the result of the daily use of those contrivances of civiliza-

tion which date from yesterday—the rapid post, the instantaneous dissemination of financial and commercial information by means of telegraphy, and generally the amazing increase in the rapidity of communication which has put the half-dozen chief capitals of Christendom in closer contact financially, and has rendered them more dependent the one upon the other than were the chief cities of Great Britain less than a hundred years ago.

The world organization has been given a sensory nerve —a nerve which when one part is injured conveys to the whole a sense of injury. It is this mainly which makes the confiscation of wealth on a large national scale practically impossible. The damage would react on the confiscator by virtue of the forces which modern finance embodies, and by virtue of the fact, again owing to the development of finance, that the immense bulk of wealth now consists, not in chattels which can be carried off—transferred by force from one party to another—but in multifarious activities of the community which must imply freedom not only to produce, but to enjoy and to consume. "The glittering wealth of this golden isle," which some political poetaster tells us is so tempting to invaders, consists for the most part in the fact that the population travel a great deal by train, ride in motor-cars with rubber tyres, propelled by petrol from Russian wells, eat meat carried on Argentine rivers, and wheat on Canadian railways. If the invader reduced the population of these islands to starvation—the "*was für Plunder*" of old Blücher's phrase—this booty which so tempts the invader would have simply vanished into thin air, and with it, be it noted, a most important fact, a good deal of the invader's as well.

I once asked a chartered accountant, very subject to attacks of Germanophobia, how he supposed the Germans would profit by the invasion of Great Britain. He had a very simple programme. Admitting the impossibility of sacking the Bank of England, he indicated that the Germans would reduce the British population to practical slavery,

and make them work for their foreign task-masters, as he put it, "under the rifle and lash." He had it all worked out in figures as to what the profit would be to the conqueror.

Very well, let us follow the process. The population of this country are not allowed to spend their income, or at least are only allowed to spend a portion of it, on themselves. Their dietary is reduced more or less to a slave dietary, and the bulk of what they earn is to be taken by their "owners." But how is this income, which so tempts the Germans, created—these dividends on the railroad shares, the profits of the mills and mines and provision companies and amusement concerns? The dividends are due to the fact that the population eat heartily, clothe themselves well, travel on railroads, and go to theatres and music-halls. If they are not allowed to do these things, if, in other words, they cannot spend their money on these things, the dividends disappear. If the German task-masters are to take these dividends, they must allow them to be earned. If they allow them to be earned, they must let the population live as it lived before—spending most of their income on themselves; and if they spend their income on themselves, what is there for the task-masters? In other words, consumption by those who constitute the market is a necessary factor of the whole thing. Cut out consumption and you cut out the profits. This glittering wealth, which so tempted the invader, has disappeared. If this is not intangibility, the word has no meaning. Speaking broadly and generally, the conqueror in our day has before him two alternatives: to leave things alone, and in order to do that he need not have left his shores; or to interfere by confiscation in some form, in which case he dries up the source of the profit which tempted him.

The economist may object that the decreased consumption of the dispossessed English community would be made up by the increased consumption of the "owning" Germans.

If the political control of economic operations were as simple a matter as in our minds we generally make it, this objection might be sound. As it is, it would not in practice invalidate the general proposition I have laid down. The division of labour in the modern world is so complex —the simplest operation of foreign trade involving not two nations merely, but many—that the mere military control of one party to an operation where many are concerned could ensure neither shifting of the consumption nor the monopolization of the profit within the limits of the conquering group.

Here is a German manufacturer selling cinematograph machines to a Glasgow suburb (which incidentally lives by selling tools to Argentine ranchers, who live by selling wheat to Newcastle boiler-makers). Assuming even that Germany could transfer the surplus spent in cinematograph shows to Germany, what assurance has the German manufacturer in question that the enriched Germans will want cinematograph films? They may insist upon champagne and cigars, coffee and Cognac ; and the French, Cubans, and Brazilians, to whom this "loot" eventually goes, may not buy their machinery from Germany at all, much less from the particular German manufacturer, but in the United States or Switzerland. The redistribution of the industrial rôles might leave German industry in the lurch, because at best the military power would only be controlling one section of a complex operation, one party to it out of many. When wealth was corn or cattle, the transference by political or military force of the possessions of one community to another may have been possible, although even then or in a slightly more developed form, we saw the Roman peasantry ruined by the slave exploitation of foreign territory. How far this complexity of the internation division of labour tends to render futile the other contrivances of conquest, such as exclusive markets, tribute, money indemnity, etc., succeeding chapters may help to show.

For the moment it is important to note the bearing that the characteristic modern developments have upon the very popular conception of war as "a struggle for bread"; what light they throw upon the proposition that that struggle is the fundamental cause of war. It is evident that to represent the modern economic problem as one of a scarcity of available material, as the problem of resources so limited that if one gets them another is deprived of them; to represent the real struggle of man as a scramble for this diminishing stock of wealth, is simply to deny the evidence of our eyes if we turn them to the international field. What, as a simple matter of economic fact, is it that injects so much bitterness into the economic relations of states? The fact that the products of a given territory are not available to other nations, that nations keep their goods to themselves? Is there a nation in the world that refuses to part with its products to others? There is not one nation that is not anxious to let its goods go out; every nation in the world save this (and that exception may soon disappear) is making desperate efforts by tariffs, exclusions, bonuses, not to take the products of other states, but to keep them *away from* its own people; and the great source of bitterness between nations to-day is that other nations give us of their resources too readily, sell them to us too cheaply. War has actually arisen in our day because one nation tried, not to take another's goods, but to prevent the other from giving too freely of its produce, tried to keep that produce out. We do not need to fight any nation in order to have free access to its natural resources, in order to get its corn, or timber, or cotton. Our economic quarrels are all the other way: each angrily accusing others of trying to foist unwanted goods upon it. In our own country it is precisely those who take warlike views that want us to keep out the foreigner's goods. The way to wealth, we are assured so often, is just that: keep foreign goods out. The "open door" for which we fight is not for the purpose of going

into the other's house and taking things from it, but for the purpose of enabling us to take our goods into it.

Yet in face of all this, our learned authorities still declare that our danger arises from the need of hungry nations to capture food, and that the purpose of our army and navy is to bolt and bar our door against the attempt of neighbours to enter our house and empty it of its contents! Of course, it is "their money we want," not their goods; markets. But how are those to whom we sell our goods to get the money to pay for them except by selling *their* goods? You cannot go to foreign countries and "seize" their money as the Danes used to come to seize our goods. In the act of "seizing" the "money" would take wings unto itself and disappear. If you seized gold (and only a tiny fraction of the money in the world is gold), that seizure would itself cause the process of exchange which constitutes modern wealth to stop; traffic would be hopelessly jammed on the world's commercial highways, and conquerors and conquered alike might well starve in the midst of plenty.

If we are to do the best with our world's resources—if we are to do the best with our nation's—we must, to revert to our earlier illustration, so organize the traffic on the commercial highways of the world that there are no traffic blocks, stoppage jams, no confusions, congestions, fights, wrangles, uncertainties as to what the other will do when he drives his powerful car. Otherwise the particular product of each becomes valueless. Plainly, the need here is agreement as to what the traffic rules shall be; system, organization. But all the great authorities, the learned university professors, the popular newspaper editors, the statesmen, the generals, the admirals, all tell us with one voice that agreement, traffic rules, are perfectly hopeless, and that the only really feasible policy is for each to have a motor car, bigger and more powerful than any likely to collide with it. And when you point out that each cannot well be stronger than the others, you are told,

again with very great learning, that life is a struggle, that man is naturally pugnacious, and the popular editors ask you whether you intend pusillanimously to let foreigners dictate what your conduct shall be.

The real trouble of the modern world is not scarcity, not the inadequacy of our machinery of production, if used to the full, to supply our needs. We may one day face the Malthusian monster (though the present writer, for one, doubts it exceedingly), but that day is not yet. The real difficulty is dislocation of the processes of co-operation by which the flow of wealth is maintained; the problem is to improve the co-operation, cure the dislocations to which it is subject in the international world. And the risk is that instead of improving the co-operation we shall by our false philosophy of war utterly throw it out of gear, make it impossible.

Where it is a problem of keeping an elaborate machinery going, mere "force" or "power" may be of no avail at all. You may have "power" over your motor car if you have a crowbar sufficiently heavy to smash it to pieces. Much good may it do you if you ignore the nature of its mechanism in the use of your crowbar. And, to extend the analogy, the power which the crowbar gives you over the driver, if you are travelling at sixty miles an hour, is a very limited one. You cannot use the crowbar to *him* either, since a crack over the skull will be likely to land you both in the ditch. You cannot compel him by force to make the car go if he is ignorant of its mechanism; and, if he is competent enough to know more of the mechanism perhaps than you, he will find means of resisting your threats.

To the degree to which we are really dependent upon someone, our physical power over him is limited; to the degree to which the service we demand of him is difficult, needing for its performance knowledge, tools, freedom of movement, he can use those things to resist the power we try to exercise over him. To the degree

to which he is powerful to fill your need, he is powerful to resist you. Very simple forms of service like the pulling of a galley oar, the cutting of sugar cane, can be compelled by the sheer compulsion of the slave-driver's whip. But you cannot get your appendix cut that way. It is not much use threatening the penalties which you will visit upon the surgeon if he is clumsy: you may not have the last word on the subject. In that circumstance you come to voluntary agreement, bargain, contract, fees.

Coercion in the relation of states directed at securing economic advantage comes within this category.[1] If we need a subject province or colony as a market, we must allow it economic and industrial development along modern lines. But that means an active self-conscious community with industrial populations, newspapers, parliaments, and very soon claims for self-government, the right to manage its own fiscal affairs, to impose tariffs against the metropolis: the story, in fact, of the British Dominions. Military opinion even is unanimous in the view that you cannot "hold down" or occupy permanently a modern

[1] Indeed, the principle is not confined to the relation of states. Elsewhere I have written: Take two situations in both of which the central governmental apparatus has either broken down or been captured by revolutionary forces. The first case is that of the peasants who had lived heretofore upon a landlord's estates, ground by his exactions, surrendering to him a large part of the fruits of their toil. They can solve the major part of their problem, can transfer to themselves the source of livelihood in an extremely simple fashion by an act of physical coercion, which demands very little social co-ordination for its performance. They can go to the landlord's house, slit his throat or hang him to a lamp-post, divide up his land among themselves, and each of them work his bit for himself without any elaborate social organization. The more the landlord's State apparatus has broken down, the easier the transfer of the source of livelihood, the tangible, visible and divisible soil, becomes; and the more secure is the peasants' position, provided that the soil will support them by simple methods of culture and each cultivator has learned to be self-subsistent.

In that kind of situation, the condition, that is, of primitive society wealth and means of production, embodied as they are in cattle, agricultural tools, land, can be transferred by the simple process of

industrialized civilized state. And to the degree to which you limit its development, you limit it as a market.

It is a fact in human nature, however (and upon that, too, something will be said later), that we only abandon coercion in favour of contract and co-operation to the degree to which we see that coercion won't work. We would all rather be the master and lay down the law than have to bargain and haggle on equal terms with an associate. Only to the degree to which we see the fallacies underlying the widespread, popular (and pretentious) philosophy which gives to anti-social instincts an appearance of realism or inevitability, shall we face the difficulties of co-operation and turn from the way of destruction to the way of life.

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overcoming physically the persons in possession of them. But everything is reversed when you come, say, to the problem of the workers on a railroad.

They cannot ensure the transfer of that wealth to themselves by dropping a bomb into the office of the chairman and board of directors, blowing them into the air and dividing the railroad among themselves, each man taking a bit of steel rail or a coal truck. If wages are to be paid to the workers at the end of the week, the railroad must continue to function. This does not mean merely that the workers must be in a position to take over administration and all the technical functions. There must be freight and passengers to carry—which means that the life and activity of the country as a whole must be going on as before. If links in the long chain are missing; if banking disorganization has compelled the creation of a revolutionary fiat money, or such inflation that higher nominal wages for the railroad workers mean in fact much lower wages than before; if the confiscation of securities and the repudiation of loans (which the Communists insist must be "ruthless" —the more ruthless the better, apparently) have so disorganized credit that in fact the purchase of American cotton or overseas foodstuffs cannot be financed; and manufacturing in consequence is so disorganized that foreign sales cannot be effected—then, in that case, there will not be freights to carry for the railroad, and the workers' "possession" of it avail exceedingly little. The wealth which is the source of life for them is not a material object to be taken by physical coercion from hands that now hold it (which is broadly the case of peasants taking a landlord's estate); it is a very complex process to be maintained, a constantly moving and shifting stream to be diverted from one direction to another, a stream that can only be controlled by the co-ordinated efforts of vast masses of men.

In a previous chapter I have quoted, *ad nauseam*, from all spheres of political, literary and scientific activity, numberless expressions of this belief that war is the "ultimate struggle for life or bread," a contest of indefinitely increasing number of mouths in a definitely limited world. I suggest that all those expressions ignore certain obvious truths, particularly those relating to the fact of co-operation which differentiates man from plant and animal, in that the resources available for life are not for him fixed in quantity, but can be increased incalculably—in practice indefinitely—by his own activities; activities, however, which are impossible without the capacity to work with instead of fighting against his fellows.

In the territory where originally a few hundred thousand Indians found precarious livelihood, tribe fighting with tribe for the hunting grounds, there now live in great plenty a hundred million modern Americans. The Indian's failure to increase and flourish was not due to lack of martial vigour, to any refusal to fight. He was at war all the time, and was a magnificent fighter. The European who replaced him would equally have failed to make that territory support a hundred million people if what is now the American Union had split into hundreds of tribes—or even a score of nations. The European relatively succeeded where the Indian relatively failed, not because the former was more pugnacious, more warlike than the latter, but because the former knew better how to co-operate.

This means that man's ultimate struggle is not with man but with nature, which includes human nature. Broadly speaking, to the degree that man fights man, he becomes the victim of nature and outside circumstance; to the degree that man can combine his forces against the common enemy, he strengthens his chances of survival. It is in increasing the effectiveness of co-operation that we shall find the key to this problem, not merely because co-operation provides the mechanism of wealth production, but also because it sets up social habits,

compels social behaviour, teaches us to discipline anti-social impulses, which, indulged, must chain us as slaves to nature—to cold and drought, to disease and scarcity.

Struggle may be the law of survival in the case of man as elsewhere; but it is the struggle of man with the universe, not man with man.[1]

If the human pack is riven by internecine struggle, then his fight is by that much less effective. "Dog does not eat dog." The pack which survives is the pack that has, on the whole, the greatest cohesion in facing its prey or its enemy. The prey of mankind is the earth; his enemy, error and wild nature.

It is true that this does not tell the whole story, for it may be argued that force, compulsion, war, has often been a means of ensuring and widening the process of co-operation; the *pax Romana* in the ancient world, like the *pax Britannica* in India, made possible a degree of co-operation that could never have been achieved without.

[1] It is true that there are still scientists who argue that war is a process by which the fit survive. Yet what plainly is its selective process? The two sides carefully choose their best biological specimens and send them to kill each other off on the battlefield, the second best and the third best being left to carry the race. To call this "the survival of the fit" is to play with words.

Nor do we eliminate the "lower" races (whoever they may be) by going to war with them.

When we overcome the "servile" races, far from eliminating them, we give them added chances of life by introducing order, etc., so that the lower human quality tends to be perpetuated by victory of the higher. If ever it happens that the Asiatic races challenge the white in the industrial or military field, it will be in large part thanks to the work of race conservation, which has been the result of England's conquest in India, Egypt, and Asia generally, and her action in China when she imposed commercial contact on the Chinese by virtue of military power. Nor do the facts of the modern world lend any support to the theory that preparation for war under modern conditions tends to preserve virility, since those conditions involve an artificial barrack life, a highly mechanical training favourable to the destruction of initiative, and a mechanical uniformity and sterilization of individuality.

It was because Egbert established a sovereignty of the seven kingdoms in this country that something like relative peace was established between them.

Concerning this aspect of the question I shall have a word to say presently, especially as it involves crude confusion between the functions of the police and the functions of armies and navies. Let us consider first how the general principles just outlined work in practice.

CHAPTER V

FOREIGN TRADE AND MILITARY POWER

How do battleships capture trade? By what technique can a navy compel people to buy our goods if they have no money? The questions which are never answered. In what respect it is true to say that there is no such thing as "German" trade or "British" trade, or even international trade; there is only transnational trade between individuals. If we benefit by the "extinction" of foreigners, what would happen if all were "extinguished"?

A FEW more quotations from our popular political philosophers:

"Let us conceive of a decisive defeat of the British fleet, and that Great Britain be humbled from her proud position as mistress of the seas. . . . How long before Germany landed troops at Cape Town and Port Elizabeth? And how long before our American cousins discovered that it was the manifest destinies of Canada and the West India Isles to become parts of the American Union? From every quarter of the globe the rats would gather to devour the dying carcase, and how would this affect British industry? The capture of our Australian trade by Japan, the capture of our Indian trade by Russia, the capture of our Canadian trade by America, an enormous war indemnity to pay off, and the markets in confusion. Ruined capitalists, silent factories and unemployed—that is the answer.

"The teaching of all history is that commerce grows under the shadow of armed strength. Did we not fight with Dutch and French to capture the Indian trade? Did we not beat Dutch and French because we happened to be the strongest? Could we have beaten either Dutch or French but for the fact that we had

gained command of the sea?" (*The Struggle for Bread*, by A. Rifleman.)

"If Germany were extinguished to-morrow, the day after to-morrow, there is not an Englishman in the world who would not be the richer. Nations have fought for years over a city or right of succession. Must they not fight for two hundred and fifty million pounds of yearly commerce?" (*Saturday Review.*)

Let us see.

All these authors, like the many quoted in Chapter II, say or imply that Germany is preparing to fight us in order to capture our trade.

But for ten years or so now, our Press has been full of the way in which Germans have been capturing our trade over the world: in the Far East, in the Near East; in Brazil, in Argentina; in Egypt, in our own Empire in India. Everywhere, relatively, German trade has been growing and ours relatively declining.

But note that it is not Germany's navy that has accomplished this result; and that ours has not been able to prevent it.

Germany has no need to conquer us to achieve this result: To the ranchers of the Argentine, to the coffee-grower of Brazil, she offers cutlery and machinery which is cheaper or more attractive than ours and gets the order. Why does she need to sink our navy in order to continue the process? What has our navy to do with it one way or the other? How does our navy prevent her going on with this process? *How can it prevent her?*

Let us consider it from the other point of view. We don't like this process by which Germany is walking off with our trade, so we will fight her and "extinguish" her, and "every Englishman in the world" will be richer for the extinction. It sounds glorious. But I want to know what it means.

"Extinction," for instance. Assume we have gone to war with Germany, or she with us; her navy has been

sunk; she has to admit herself thoroughly beaten—"extinguished."

But sixty-five million people remain. Not extinguished at all. I don't suppose that even the Navy League proposes that we should on the morrow of victory proceed to butcher sixty-five millions of men, women and children. One sees difficulties. I don't think naval officers—or our Tommies—would really like the job, however much encouraged by certain popular newspapers. So there the population would remain, the scientists, the engineers, the chemists, the workers hard at work as before—inventing new machinery, discovering new processes, learning new ways of doing things, cheaper ways of producing the things we produce, and offering those cheaper things as of yore to the Brazilian, the Turk, the Russian, the Scandinavian. What should we do about it—with our navy?

"Bottle them up by maintaining a permanent blockade."

Well, let us examine that. Our navy won't keep their trade out of Russia, Siberia, and thence into Asia; nor from Scandinavia; nor the Low Countries; nor from South Eastern Europe, even if it were possible, which we all know it would not be, to forbid the world's ships to enter German harbours. And it would not be a matter merely of blockading Germany. If Germany were not allowed to export goods direct we know that in about a week there would be Dutch, Swedish, Danish, Greek, Turkish merchants handling German goods and exporting them, if necessary, as Dutch, Swedish, Danish, Belgian, French, Swiss, Italian, Spanish or Turkish goods, to every corner of the world. Are we going to establish a new right of search for peacetime—the right to stop any ship of any nation on the high seas to examine its cargo and decide whether the goods professing to be Dutch or Spanish or Italian are so in fact? Remember the mess in which even the temporary blockades of war time have landed

us in the past; it is unlikely that even the Navy League would argue for this new law of the sea. If such a law were instituted, one of the very first results would be the transfer of most of the carrying trade of the world to non-British bottoms; to bring a cargo under British authority would be to subject it to risks of seizure on the ground of "enemy origin." So our shipping trade might have some things to say about the "bottling up" of Germany. But there are others. There is the coal trade which is bound up inextricably with shipping. Our carrying trade is largely dependent upon the fact that our coal exports make possible a two-way cargo. Destroy the shipping and much of our coal trade goes too. And then there is our export trade to Germany itself—about as great as that to Canada. Which reminds one that Canada sells a large part of her wheat to Germany, Australia her wool, India her jute. Is our "extinction" of Germany to include the extinction of that trade too? And if we propose to allow Canada to sell her wheat and Australia her wool, India her jute, to Germany, how is Germany to find the money to pay for these products of British Dominions, if we forbid German exports? Gold? But all the gold in Germany would not pay for a single year's foreign purchases. And then? The trade—British trade, Canadian trade, Australian trade, Indian trade—must come to a full stop or Germany must be allowed to get money to pay for the wheat and wool and jute by the only way known to economic science —by selling something herself.

The reader explodes with impatience: no one proposes such preposterous nonsense as permanent peace blockades. I share the reader's irritations, but I am trying with such patience as may be to read some meaning into these words and phrases, bandied about so freely by journalists, by authors of books on foreign policy, by our navy men, by authorities like those I have quoted. Everyone who discusses this subject tells us that but for our navy our trade would disappear; that Germany proposes to "take"

it by destroying our navy; that we must prevent her; that, as part of the struggle for commercial survival we must "extinguish" her by war. And I want to know how we should do it; what is the process; what the words mean: what is in the minds of those who use those words. They are employed usually with enormous assurance; with an air of "facing the real facts of the world," of being first and last realist, practical, definite. Yet immediately one asks workaday details, wants to know *how* the navy is to be employed to promote trade, in what precise fashion we are to turn victory to commercial account, the explanations are never forthcoming. We are allowed to infer that in some not clearly defined way a great Power can aid the trade of its citizens by the use of the prestige which a great navy and a great army bring, and by exercising bargaining powers in the matter of tariffs with other nations. But again the condition of the small nations in Europe gives the lie to this assumption.

It is evident that the foreigner does not buy our products and refuse Germany's because we have a larger navy. If one can imagine the representatives of a British and a German firm meeting in the office of a merchant in Argentina, or Brazil, or Bulgaria, or Finland, both of them selling cutlery, the German is not going to secure the order because he is able to show the Argentinian, or the Brazilian, or the Bulgarian, or the Finn that Germany has twelve Dreadnoughts and Great Britain only eight. The German will take the order if, on the whole, he can make a more advantageous offer to the prospective buyer, and for no other reason whatsoever; and the buyer will go to the merchant of any nation whatever, whether he be German, or Swiss, or Belgian, or British, irrespective of the armies and navies which may lie behind the nationality of the seller. Nor does it appear that armies and navies weigh very much when it comes to a question of a tariff bargain. Switzerland wages a tariff war with Germany, and wins. The whole history of the trade of

the small nations shows that the political prestige of the great ones gives them in the long run extremely little commercial advantage.

We continually talk as though our carrying trade were in some special sense the result of the growth of our great navy, but Norway has a carrying trade which, relatively to her population, is nearly three times as great as ours, and the same reasons which would make it impossible for a foreign nation to confiscate the gold reserve of the Bank of England, would make it impossible for a foreign nation to confiscate British shipping on the morrow of a British naval defeat. In what way can our carrying trade or any other trade be said to depend upon military power?

If the statesmen of Europe would tell us *how* the military power of a great nation is used to advance the commercial interest of its citizens, would explain to us the *modus operandi*, and not refer us to large and vague phrases about "exercising due weight in the councils of the nations," I might accept their philosophy. But until they do so we are surely justified in assuming that their political terminology is simply a survival—an inheritance from a state of things which has, in fact, passed away.

One writer implies that on the morrow of Germany's defeat, "she" would disappear by being simply absorbed into her neighbours: a bit going to France, another to Denmark and so forth. And so "German" competition would be disposed of! The same factories would still function full blast, the same goods would still be turned out by the same hands, still be poured into the markets of the world, but they would not be "German"—they would be Danish, or French, or Swiss. Is this really what we are going to fight for?

In the quotations at the head of this chapter is one from a prophet who foresees, as one result of the defeat of the British navy, the "seizure" of Canada by the United States. At this moment powerful groups in Ameri

are agitating for an increase in the American tariff in order to keep out the Canadian goods—all part, we are told, of the impending commercial struggle between America and the British Empire. Canadian goods injure "America." But, if what our prophet foresees as the result of the British naval defeat comes true, and Canada is annexed, then those Canadian goods will *not* be kept out. They will compete quite freely with American. If that competition were bad before the defeat of the British navy, why should it be good after? The purpose of power, we are told, is to oppose the competition of foreign nations; but in this case, by annexing Canada, the United States would be using its power to increase that competition.

The final test is one of progression. Trade is a struggle "to the death" of one nation with another. What other nations get, we lose. Foreigners are our rivals. So be it. Let us "extinguish" not merely Germany—an act which we are told would make all Englishmen the richer—but *all* foreigners. We should then be rich indeed. But should we? Half our population would starve to death. If we could by some magic "extinguish" all foreigners our foreign trade would have completely disappeared, and then something like half our population would face literally and truly extinction by the simple process of going without food.

So obviously we cannot afford to "extinguish" all foreigners or all foreign nations. We need some—some who are solvent, have money to spend, and consequently are earning money, which they can only do in one way, by producing things. But in that case who are the "bad" foreigners we must "extinguish," and who the "good" that need to be preserved in order for us to have a foreign trade at all? How are we to distinguish between the customer and the rival?

Much of our confusion in this matter arises from the habit of treating each nation as a complete economic unit, as though nations were competing commercial corporations.

Take one of our biggest export trades—cotton. A trading corporation called "Britain," does not buy cotton from another corporation called "America." A manufacturer in Manchester strikes a bargain with a merchant in Louisiana in order to keep a bargain with a dyer in Germany, and three or a much larger number of parties enter into virtual, or perhaps actual contract, and form a mutually dependent economic community (numbering, it may be, with the workpeople in the group of industries involved, some millions of individuals)—an economic entity so far as one can exist which does not include all organized society. The special interests of such a community may become hostile to those of another community, but it will almost certainly not be a "national" one, but one of a like nature, say a shipping ring or groups of international bankers or Stock Exchange speculators. The frontiers of such communities do not coincide with the areas in which operate the functions of the state. How could a state, say, Britain, act on behalf of an economic entity such as that just indicated? By pressure against America or Germany? But the community against which the British manufacturer, in this case, wants pressure exercised is not "America" or "Germany"—both Americans and Germans are his partners in the matter. He wants it exercised against the shipping ring or the speculators or the bankers who in part are British. If Britain injures America and Germany as a whole, she injures necessarily the economic entity which it was her object to protect.

We talk and think of "British" trade as competing with "German" trade. But, in fact, that is not the grouping at all. There is, properly speaking, no such national conflict, no such thing as "British" trade or "German" trade in this sense. An ironmaster in Birmingham may have his trade taken away by the competition of an ironmaster in Essen, just as he may have it taken away by one in Glasgow, or Belfast, or Pittsburgh, but in the present condition of the division of labour in the world it would

be about as true to speak of Britain suffering by the competition of Germany as it would be to talk of light-haired people suffering by the competition of the dark-haired people, or of the fact that those who live in houses with even numbers are being driven out of business by those who live in odd-numbered houses. Such delimitations do not mark the economic delimitations; the economic function cuts athwart them; the frontiers of the two do not coincide; and though we may quite legitimately prefer to see a British house beat a German one in trade, that victory will not necessarily help our group as a whole against his group as a whole.

When we talk of "German" trade in the international field, what do we mean? Here is an ironmaster in Essen making locomotives for a light railway in an Argentine province (the capital for which has been subscribed in Paris)—which has become necessary because of the export of wool to Bradford, where the trade has developed owing to sales in the United States, due to high prices, produced by the destruction of sheep-runs, owing to the agricultural development of the West. But for the money found in Paris (due, perhaps, to good crops in wine and olives, sold mainly in London and New York), and the wool needed by the Bradford manufacturer (who has found a market for blankets among miners in Montana, who are smelting copper for a cable to China, which is needed because the encouragement given to education by the Chinese Republic has caused Chinese newspapers to print cable news from Europe)—but for such factors as these, and a whole chain of equally interdependent ones throughout the world, the ironmaster in Essen would not have been able to sell his locomotives. How, therefore, can you describe it as part of the trade of "Germany" which is in competition with the trade of "Britain" or "France" or "America"? But for the British, French or American trade, it could not have existed at all. You may say that if the Essen ironmaster could have been

prevented from selling his locomotives, the trade would have gone to a British one. But this community of German workmen, called into existence by the Argentine trade, maintains by its consumption of coffee a plantation in Brazil, which buys its machinery in Sheffield. The destruction, therefore, of the Essen trade, while it might have given business to the British locomotive maker, would have taken it from, say, a British agricultural-implement maker. The economic interests involved sort themselves, irrespective of the national groupings.

Why, by the way, do we never hear Americans talking about the deadly competition of the trade of Massachusetts with that of Pennsylvania or New Jersey? If the original thirteen colonies had failed to "hang together" and those states had become separate nations, we *should* have heard about the way in which the advance of Pennsylvania was damaging the trade of New Jersey or *vice versa*, of the way in which nations compete with each other for trade. As already pointed out, American manufacturers complain bitterly betimes of the competition of Canada in certain fields and lobby and agitate for a high tariff on Canadian goods, which they duly get. But if Canada were annexed and became part of the Union there would be no question of a tariff; we should hear nothing about the damage done to "American" trade and the throwing out of work of American workers in favour of foreigners. Yet the self-same competition would exist: the same goods turned out in the same factories, by the same workmen paying profits to the same owners, would still be purchased. But then we should not hear one word about it, and not a single American would be disturbed by the "competition of Canada."

It comes to this: We don't mind the competition if it is competition of our own countrymen; but we do if the competitors are foreigners. It is a matter, in other words, of political preference. But in any case how do battleships help?

The following correspondence, provoked by the first edition of this book, may throw light on some of the points dealt with in this chapter. A correspondent of *Public Opinion* criticized a part of the thesis here dealt with as a "series of half-truths," questioning as follows:

"What is 'natural wealth,' and how can trade be carried on with it unless there are markets for it when worked? Would the writer maintain that markets cannot be permanently or seriously affected by military conquests, especially if conquest be followed by the imposition upon the vanquished of commercial conditions framed in the interests of the victor? . . . Germany has derived, and continues to derive, great advantages from the most-favoured-nation clause which she compelled France to insert in the Treaty of Frankfurt. . . . Bismarck, it is true, underestimated the financial resilience of France, and was sorely disappointed when the French paid off the indemnity with such astonishing rapidity, and thus liberated themselves from the equally crushing burden of having to maintain the German army of occupation. He regretted not having demanded an indemnity twice as large. Germany would not repeat the mistake, and any country having the misfortune to be vanquished by her in future will be likely to find its commercial prosperity compromised for decades."

To which I replied:

"Will your correspondent forgive my saying that while he talks of half-truths, the whole of this passage indicates the domination of that particular half-truth which lies at the bottom of the illusion with which my book deals?

"What is a market? Your correspondent evidently conceives it as a place where things are sold. That is only half the truth. It is a place where things are bought and sold, and one operation is impossible without the other, and the notion that one nation can sell for

ever and never buy is simply the theory of perpetual motion applied to economics; and international trade can no more be based upon perpetual motion than can engineering. As between economically highly-organized nations a customer must also be a competitor, a fact which bayonets cannot alter. To the extent to which they destroy him as a competitor, they destroy him, speaking generally, and largely as a customer.

"The late Mr. Seddon conceived England as making her purchases with 'a stream of golden sovereigns' flowing from a stock all the time getting smaller. That 'practical' man, however, who so despised 'mere theories,' was himself the victim of a pure theory, and the picture which he conjured up from his inner consciousness has no existence in fact. Great Britain has hardly enough gold to pay one year's taxes, and if she paid for her imports in gold she would exhaust her stock in three months; and the process by which she really pays has been going on for sixty years. She is a buyer just as long as she is a seller, and if she is to afford a market to Germany she must procure the money wherewith to pay for Germany's goods by selling goods to Germany or elsewhere, and if that process of sale stops, Germany loses a market, not only the British market, but also those markets which depend in their turn upon Great Britain's capacity to buy—that is to say, to sell, for, again, the one operation is impossible without the other.

"If your correspondent had had the whole process in his mind instead of half of it, I do not think that he would have written the passages I have quoted. In his endorsement of the Bismarckian conception of political economy he evidently deems that one nation's gain is the measure of another nation's loss, and that nations live by robbing their neighbours in a lesser or greater degree. This is economics in the style of Tamerlane and the Red Indian and, happily, has no relation to the real facts of modern commercial intercourse.

"The conception of one-half of the case only, dominates your correspondent's letter throughout. He says, 'Germany has derived, and continues to derive,

great advantage from the most-favoured-nation clause which she compelled France to insert in the Treaty of Frankfurt,' which is quite true, but leaves out the other half of the truth, somewhat important to our discussion—viz., that France has also greatly benefited, in that scope of fruitless tariff war has been by so much restricted.

"A further illustration: Why should Germany have been sorely disappointed at France's rapid recovery? The German people are not going to be the richer for having a poor neighbour—on the contrary, they are going to be the poorer, and there is not an economist with a reputation to lose, whatever his views of fiscal policy, who would challenge this for a moment.

"How would Germany impose upon a vanquished Britain commercial arrangements which would impoverish the vanquished and enrich the victor? By enforcing another Frankfurt treaty, by which English ports should be kept open to German goods? But that is precisely what British ports have been for sixty years, and Germany has not been obliged to wage a costly war to effect it. Would Germany close her own markets to our goods? But, again, that is precisely what she has done—again without war, and by a right which we never dream of challenging. How is war going to affect the question one way or another? I have been asking for a detailed answer to that question from European publicists and statesmen for the last ten years, and I have never yet been answered, save by much vagueness, much fine phrasing concerning commercial supremacy, a spirited foreign policy, national prestige, and much else, which no one seems able to define, but a real policy a *modus operandi*, a balance-sheet which one can analyse, never. And until such is forthcoming I shall continue to believe that the whole thing is based upon an illusion."

Let us summarize as briefly as may be the most salient facts of Britain's economic position in relation to the rest of the world. I suggest they are these:

There are living on these islands about twice as many

people as the soil can support at any standard adequate to what we know as civilization. In the lifetime of the children now at school our soil may be called upon to support a population of fifty, perhaps sixty, millions. When we have exhausted all the feasible possibilities of intensive culture, French gardening, State-aided emigration to the Colonies, and the rest, the obvious fact remains that most of that population will only be able to live, as most of it lives to-day: by turning coal into bread through the alchemy of foreign trade. That is to say, we must exchange our coal, or manufactures, or services based on it, for the surplus of raw material, and food produced by foreigners.

The coal, manufactures, services, can only be a means of supporting this excess population (which is most of it) so long as the overseas world produces a surplus of food and raw materials over and above its own need, and is content to exchange it for the services we perform instead of performing those services itself. One of the main factors determining the value of our coal as a means of buying foreign food or material is the extent of the foreign surplus. If there were no surplus, if the productivity of the overseas world so fell that it had only enough for itself, we should offer our coal in vain. The foreigner would be too poor to furnish a market. Half our population would have to starve or emigrate. To the extent to which that surplus declines, food or material becomes more costly in terms of the things which we give for it.

A constant and steady overseas surplus (or, in other terms, a high general productivity) can only be assured if each area does that for which it is best fitted and exchanges the result. This means assured access by each nation to the raw materials of others, transport across political frontiers sufficiently unimpeded to secure large-scale production in certain basic industries, reciprocal inviolability of commercial contract and immunity of property, a stable monetary and credit system.

The disintegration of this essentially international system is threatened mainly by political nationalism and its results in threatened war; the struggle of nations towards individual independence based on their isolated strength and economic self-sufficiency; the effort to make the political also the economic unit. The consequent failure to maintain the most economical division of labour not only reduces that surplus from which is derived the value of our coal as a means of buying food and raw material, but deprives us of our economic *raison d'être:* foreigners insist on being their own manufacturers.

We cannot ensure the stability of the present system by the political or military preponderance of our nation or alliance imposing its will on a rival. The factors enumerated above are of the kind that cannot be secured by physical coercion, which fails for a simple reason. If others are to pay or buy they must actively produce—be, that is, economically strong and in a position sooner or later to resist our coercion. If we make them weak they cannot pay; if they are strong they will pay what they deem fair or spend their money finding means to resist us. That is why, though preponderance of power can, and generally does, paralyse trade and production, it cannot ensure them.

CHAPTER VI

HOW COLONIES ARE OWNED

We "own," we are told, a fifth of the world's surface and a fourth of the world's population. Why, then, is the Chancellor of the Exchequer at his wit's end for a few millions for our social services? We do not "own" the Empire at all. So far as most of it is concerned it has come to an end and has been transformed into a mere alliance of independent states. The paradox of "Empire": Britain is in a worse position in regard to her own colonies[1] than in regard to foreign nations—yet she is the most practical colonizer in history. Could Germany hope to do what England cannot do? Both Britain and Germany face severe economic problems; but the empire does not give to Britain means of solution not available to Germany.

NATIONS fight each other for territory, bitterly, endlessly, to the exclusion of most other vital activities, because in adding territory it is assumed a nation adds wealth, the means of feeding and enriching its people.

During the Jubilee procession an English beggar was heard to say:

[1] The reader will recall that *The Great Illusion* was written nearly twenty-five years before the passing of the Statute of Westminster by the British House of Commons, an Act which has crystallized into formal legislation the condition which had become a political fact at the time that this chapter was written, although at that time a largely unrecognized condition. I have deemed it worth while to republish this chapter, because it is extremely doubtful whether the true facts about our "ownership" of "colonies" are yet fully realized. Certainly the full political significance affecting international relations is not recognized. Since the Statute of Westminster we have a distinction, not at that time common, between Dominions and Colonies. It was customary to speak generally of all our overseas empire as "colonies." The older terms have been retained because the process of turning "colonies" into Dominions still goes on. India with its own tariff-making powers since 1919 is more than half the way towards Dominion status; and other "colonies" will follow.

"I own Australia, Canada, New Zealand, India, Burma, and the Islands of the Far Pacific, and I am starving for want of a crust of bread. I am a citizen of the greatest power of the modern world, and all people should bow to my greatness. And yesterday I cringed for alms to a negro savage, who repulsed me with digust."

If we wanted to use our imperial power to "take" the wealth of our subject people in order to feed our own, is there any means by which we could do it?

Well, it will be said, there is emigration; our "beggar" might emigrate. The reply to which is that there is not a single British colony suitable for settlement by the northern races where a British subject from Britain may settle as of right; not one Dominion whose legislation has not deprived Britons of the right of unimpeded access to its territory. The British worker, as distinct from the possessor of capital, is more subject to restriction in entrance to Australia than he is in entrance to Argentina or Mexico. His labour is subject to restrictions as harassing as are the products of his labour. Nowhere do these words we use about "owning," about our "possessions," need more careful reconsideration than in their application to the modern kind of "Empire."

What are the facts? Great Britain is the most successful colonizing nation in the world, and the policy into which her experience has driven her is that outlined by Sir C. P. Lucas, one of the greatest authorities on colonial questions. He writes, speaking of the history of the British Colonies on the American continent, thus:

"It was seen—but it might not have been seen had the United States not won their independence—that English colonists, like Greek Colonies of old, go out on terms of being equal, not subordinate, to those who are left behind; that when they have effectively

planted another and a distant land, they must, within the widest limits, be left to rule themselves; that, whether they are right, or whether they are wrong—more, perhaps, when they are wrong than when they are right—they cannot be made amenable by force; that mutual good feeling, community of interest, and abstention from pressing rightful claims to their logical conclusion, can alone hold together a true Colonial Empire."

But what in the name of common sense would be the advantage for Germany of conquering them if the only policy is to let them do as they like, "whether they are right or whether they are wrong—more, perhaps, when they are wrong than when they are right"? And what would it avail to conquer them if they cannot be made amenable to force? Surely this makes the whole thing a *reductio ad absurdum*. Were a Power like Germany to use force to conquer colonies, she would find out that they were not amenable to force, and that the only working policy was to let them do exactly as they did before she conquered them, and to allow them, if they chose—and many of the British Colonies do so choose—to treat the Mother Country as a foreign country.

There has recently been going on in Canada a discussion as to the position which that Dominion should hold with reference to the Mother Country in the event of war, and that discussion has made Canada's position quite plain. It has been summarized thus: "We must always be free to give or refuse support."[1]

Could a foreign nation say more? Mr. Asquith formally endorses this conception.[2]

[1] The Montreal *Presse*, March 27th, 1909.

[2] Speech, House of Commons, August 26th, 1909. The New York papers of November 16th, 1909, report the following from Sir Wilfrid Laurier in the Dominion Parliament during the debate on the Canadian Navy; "If now we have to organize a naval force it is because we are growing as a nation—it is the penalty of being a nation. I know of no nation having a sea-coast of its own which has no navy, except Nor-

This means that the British Empire is a loose alliance of independent Sovereign States, not even bound to help each other in case of war. The military alliance between Austria and Germany is far more stringent than the tie which unites, for purposes of war, the component parts of the British Empire.

One critic, commenting on this, says:

> "Whatever language is used to describe this new movement of Imperial defence, it is virtually one more step towards complete national independence on the part of the Colonies. For not only will the consciousness of the assumption of this task of self-defence feed with new vigour the spirit of nationality, it will entail the further power of full control over foreign relations. This has already been virtually admitted in the case of Canada, now entitled to a determinant voice in all treaties or other engagements in which her interests are especially involved. The extension of this right to the other colonial nations may be taken as a matter of course. Home rule in national defence thus established reduces the Imperial connection to its thinnest terms."[1]

Still more significant, perhaps, is the following emphatic declaration from Mr. Balfour himself. Speaking in London, on November 6th, 1911, he said:

> "We depend as an Empire upon the co-operation of absolutely independent Parliaments. I am not talking

way; but Norway will never tempt the invader. Canada has its coal-mines, its gold-mines, its wheat-fields, and its vast wealth may offer a temptation to the invader."

[1] The recent tariff negotiations between Canada and the United States were carried on directly between Ottawa and Washington, without the intervention of London. South Africa takes a like attitude. The *Volkstein* of July 10th, 1911, says: "The Union Constitution is in full accord with the principle that neutrality is permissible in the case of a war in which England and other independent States of the Empire are involved. . . . England, as well as South Africa, would best be served by South Africa's neutrality" (quoted in *Times*, July 11th, 1911). Note the phrase "independent States of the Empire."

as a lawyer; I am talking as a politician. I believe from a legal point of view that the British Parliament is supreme over the Parliament of Canada or Australasia or the Cape or South Africa, but in fact they are independent Parliaments, absolutely independent, and it is our business to recognize that and to frame the British Empire upon the co-operation of absolutely independent Parliaments."

Which means, of course, that Great Britain's position with regard to Canada or Australia is just Great Britain's position with regard to any other independent State, that she has no more "ownership" of Australia than she has of Arkansas. Indeed, facts of very recent British history have established quite incontrovertibly this ridiculous paradox: we have more influence—that is to say, a freer opportunity of enforcing our point of view—with foreign nations than with our own Colonies. Sir C. P. Lucas's statement that "whether they are right or wrong—still more, perhaps, when they are wrong," they must be left alone, necessarily means that our position with the Colonies is weaker than our position with foreign nations. In the present state of international feeling we should never dream of advocating that we submit to foreign nations when they are wrong. Recent history is illuminating on this point.

It is, argued, I know, that much more than economics is involved: Pride, the preservation of British ideals in the world, the building up of communities where the British way of life rather than an alien way, will rule.

Again, how far in the modern world can conquest achieve those ends? How far *has* it achieved those ends in our own more recent cases of Imperial expansion?

Take the conquest of the Boer republics.

What were the larger motives that pushed England into war with the Dutch Republics? To vindicate the supremacy of the British race in South Africa, to enforce

British ideals as against Boer ideals, to secure the rights of British Indians and other British subjects, to protect the native against Boer oppression, to take the government of the country generally from a people whom, at that date, we were apt to describe as "inherently incapable of civilization." What, however, is the outcome of spending two hundred and fifty millions upon the accomplishments of these objects? The present Government of the Transvaal is in the hands of the Boer party.[1] Great Britain has achieved the union of South Africa in which the Boer element is predominant. Britain has enforced against the British Indian in the Transvaal and Natal the same Boer regulations which were one of our grievances before the war, and the Houses of Parliament have just ratified an Act of Union in which the Boer attitude with reference to the native is codified and made permanent. Sir Charles Dilke, in the debate in the House of Commons on the South African Bill, made this quite clear. He said: "The old British principle in South Africa, as distinct from the Boer principle, in regard to the treatment of natives, was equal rights for all civilized men. At the beginning of the South African War the country was told that one of its main objects and certainly that the one predominant factor in any treaty of peace, would be the assertion of the British principle as against the Boer principle. Now the Boer principle dominates throughout the whole of South Africa." Mr. Asquith, as representing the British Government, admitted that this was the case, and that

[1] The *World*, an Imperialist organ, puts it thus: "The electoral process of reversing the results of the war is completed in South Africa. By the result of last week's contests Mr. Merriman has secured a strong working majority in both Houses. The triumph of the Bond at Cape Town is no less sweeping than was that of Het Volk at Pretoria. The three territories upon which the future of the subcontinent depends are linked together under Boer supremacy . . . the future federated or uniformed system will be raised upon a Dutch basis. If this was what we wanted, we might have bought it cheaper than with two hundred and fifty millions of money and twenty thousand lives."

"the opinion of this country is almost unanimous in objecting to the colour bar in the Union Parliament." He went on to say that "the opinion of the British Government and the opinion of the British people must not be allowed to lead to any interference with a self-governing Colony." So that, having expended in the conquest of the Transvaal a greater sum than Germany exacted from France at the close of the Franco-Prussian War, Great Britain is unable to enforce upon the conquered people one of the very principles which the war was fought to vindicate.

A year or so since there was in London a deputation from the British Indians in the Transvaal pointing out that the regulations there deprive them of the ordinary rights of British citizens. The British Government informed them that the Transvaal being a self-governing Colony, the Imperial Government could do nothing for them.[1] Now, it will not be forgotten that, at a time when we were quarrelling with Paul Krüger, one of the liveliest of our grievances was the treatment of British Indians. Having conquered Krüger, and now "owning" his country, do we ourselves act as we were trying to compel Paul Krüger as a foreign ruler to act? We do not. We (or rather the responsible Government of the Colony, with whom we dare not interfere, although we were ready enough to make representations to Krüger) simply and purely enforce his own regulations. Moreover, Australia and British Columbia have since taken the view with reference to British Indians which President Krüger took and which view we made part of the *casus belli*. So the process is this: The Government of a foreign territory

[1] A Bill has been introduced into the Indian Legislative Council enabling the Government to prohibit emigration to any country where the treatment accorded to British Indian subjects was not such as met with the approval of the Governor-General. "As just treatment for free Indians has not been secured," says *The Times*, "prohibition will undoubtedly be applied against Natal unless the position of free Indians there is ameliorated."

does something which we ask it to cease doing. The refusal of the foreign Government constitutes a *casus belli*. We fight, we conquer, and the territory in question becomes one of our Colonies, and we allow the Government of that Colony to continue doing the very thing which constituted, in the case of a foreign nation, a *casus belli*. Do we not arrive, therefore, at the absurdity I have already indicated—*that we are in a worse position to enforce our views in our own territory—that is to say, in our Colonies—than in foreign territory?* Would we submit tamely if a foreign Government should exercise permanently gross oppression on an important section of our citizens? Certainly we should not. But when the Government exercising that oppression happens to be the Government of our own Colonies we do nothing, and a great British authority lays it down that, even more when the Colonial Government is wrong than when it is right, must we do nothing, and that, though wrong, the Colonial Government cannot be amenable to force. Nor can it be said that Crown Colonies differ essentially in this matter from self-governing Colonies. Not only is there an irresistible tendency for Crown Colonies to acquire the practical rights of self-governing Colonies, but it has become impossible to disregard their special interests.

It may be objected that Germany might, on the morrow of conquest, attempt to enforce a policy which gave her a material advantage in the Colonies, such as Spain and Portugal attempted to create for themselves. But in that case, it is likely that Germany, without colonial experience, would be able to carry out a policy which Great Britain was obliged to abandon a hundred years ago? If Great Britain has been utterly unable to maintain a policy by which the Colonies shall pay anything resembling tribute to the Mother Country, is it imaginable that Germany, without experience, and at an enormous disadvantage in the matter of language, tradition, racial

tie, and the rest, would be able to succeed where we had failed?

For of course no one pretends that the present system of British Colony-holding is due to British philanthropy, or high-mindedness. It is due to the fact that the older system of exploitation by monopoly broke down. It was a complete social, commercial, and political failure long before it was abolished by law. If Great Britain had persisted in the use of force to impose a disadvantageous situation on the Colonies, she would have followed in the trail of Spain, Portugal, and France, and she would have lost her Colonies, and her empire would have broken up.

One heard a good deal at the outbreak of the South African War of the part that the gold-mines played in precipitating that conflict. Alike in England and on the Continent, it was generally assumed that Great Britain was "after the gold-mines." A long correspondence took place in *The Times* as to the real value of the mines, and speculation as to the amount of money which it was worth Great Britain's while to spend in their "capture."[1] Well, now that Great Britain has won the war, how many gold-mines has she captured? In other words, how many shares in the gold-mines does the British Government hold? How many mines have been transferred from their then owners to the British Government, as the result of British victory? How much tribute does the Government of Westminster exact as the result of investing two hundred and fifty millions in the enterprise?

[1] It is a little encouraging, perhaps, for those of us who are doing what we may towards the dissemination of saner ideas, that an early edition of this book seems to have played some part in bringing about the change in French colonial policy here indicated. The French Colonial Minister on two or three occasions called pointed attention to the first French edition of this book. In the official report of the Colonial Budget for 1911, a large part of this chapter is reprinted. In the Senate (see *Journal Officiel de la République Française*, July 2nd, 1911) the Rapporteur again quoted from this book at length, and devoted a great part of his speech towards emphasizing the thesis here set out. (Note of the 1912 Edition.)

The fact is, of course, that the British Government does not hold a pennyworth of the property. The mines belong to the shareholders and to no one else, and in the conditions of the modern world it would not be profitable, if indeed possible, for a Government to "capture" a pound's worth of such property as the result of a war of conquest.

Furthermore, and this is in fact the chief point, the *political* control of the area containing one of the great sources of the world's gold is in process of passing out of the hands of Britain. There is happening in South Africa what has already happened in Canada and Australia: political independence. A little while and the Act of the British House of Commons will no longer have validity in South Africa. "British" control of the gold-mines will in fact have passed. Britain will have surrendered control as completely and absolutely as though some foreign power had "conquered" the mines.

Our present misleading terminology sets up the impression that Britain, by being early in the field of imperial conquest, has solved problems of expansion and outlets for trade which are still unsolved for Germany and other less fortunate states. But that is to falsify the real situation. Germany faces difficulties of expansion—of markets and means of prosperity. But Britain faces similar difficulties, and to imply that Britain, by virtue of "possession" of empire, has means of solution not open to Germany is a gross distortion of the facts. Germany's case differs very much less from that of Britain than the misleading terminology we use would lead us to suppose.

Britain, Germans have so often told me, has a "vast empire" providing a market for her industries, and an outlet for her redundant population. Britain has no such thing. More and more, British trade is being shut out by the tariffs of colonies determined to become their own manufacturers. The problem of hostile Dominion tariffs

is as severe a one for our industry as are the tariffs of foreign countries, the preferences notwithstanding. Foreigners simply don't believe this. I have known educated Germans, in German universities, flatly deny that the Dominions are fiscally autonomous and point out privy council decisions which "prove" that Britain preserves the right of veto. This, of course, is just learned nonsense, as Mr. Balfour has so rightly pointed out. The Dominions are supreme in the matter of imposing their tariffs, and the Empire as a preserve for the trade of the Mother Country has come to an end; the imperial method of preserving trade has broken down. If this were realised it might also be realised that the situation as painted by Germans (and by many British) of Britain in a brilliantly favourable position, having collared all the plums, while Germany is left out in the cold with nothing to eat, is a mere fantasy having little relation to the facts. The fact is that both nations have to meet, in the problem of finding work for increasing populations, the same kind of difficulty and pretty much the same degree of difficulty. It is not a problem which can be solved along "imperial" lines at all, by the conquest of territory, that is, but by extending and rendering secure that characteristically modern process by which an industrial state is able to feed its population by the exploitation of territory, which it does not own nor politically control.

It is the case with every modern nation, actually, that the outside territories which it exploits most successfully are precisely those of which it does not "own" a foot. Even with the most characteristically colonial of all—Great Britain—the greater part of her overseas trade is done with countries which she makes no attempt to "own," control, coerce, or dominate—and incidentally she has ceased to do any of those things with her colonies.

Millions of Germans in Prussia and Westphalia derive profit or make their living out of countries to which their

political dominion in no way extends. The modern German exploits South America by remaining at home. Where, forsaking this principle, he attempts to work through political power, he approaches futility. German colonies are colonies *pour rire*. The Government has to bribe Germans to go to them; her trade with them is microscopic; and if the twenty millions who have been added to Germany's population since the war had had to depend on their country's political conquest, they would have had to starve. What feeds them are countries which Germany has never "owned," and never hopes to "own": Brazil, Argentina, the United States, India, Australia, Canada, Russia, France, and Great Britain. (Germany, which never spent a mark on its political conquest, to-day draws more tribute from South America than does Spain, which has poured out mountains of treasure and oceans of blood in its conquest.) These are Germany's real colonies. Yet the immense interests which they represent, of really primordial concern to Germany, without which so many of her people would be actually without food, are for the diplomats and the soldiers quite secondary ones; the immense trade which they represent owes nothing to the diplomat, to Agadir incidents, to *Dreadnoughts:* it is the unaided work of the merchant and the manufacturer. All this diplomatic and military conflict and rivalry, this waste of wealth, the unspeakable foulness which Tripoli is revealing, are reserved for things which both sides to the quarrel could sacrifice, not merely without loss, but with profit. And Italy, whose statesmen have been faithful to all the old "axioms" (Heaven save the mark!) will discover it rapidly enough. Even her defenders are ceasing now to urge that she can possibly derive any real benefit from this colossal ineptitude.

Is it not time that the man in the street—verily, I believe, less deluded by diplomatic jargon than his betters, less the slave of an obsolete phraseology—insists that the experts

in the high places acquired some sense of the reality of things, of proportions, some sense of figures, a little knowledge of industrial history, of the real processes of human co-operation?

If we could free ourselves of the hypnotizing effect of this "mirage of the map," we should abandon these futile struggles, which, even when successful, do not solve any real problem, and liberate our common power for application to vital needs, the overcoming of real difficulties.

For the modern world does face a population problem, and one in which force may well have to play a rôle—a rôle to be indicated in a further chapter.

CHAPTER VII

CONQUEST AND THE POPULATION QUESTION

There is truly a population question, for Britain as well as Germany, but conquest of British colonies would not solve it for Germany, any more than the "possession" of those colonies solves it now for Britain. Juggling with flags by conquest leaves the fundamental economic problem unaltered, and offers in practice no solution of the population question.

AMONG the quotations given in Chapter II is one in which we are told that the expanding population of Germany needs the wheat of Canada and the wool of Australia. and in which the writer goes on to imply that consequently Germany must conquer those territories.

But is not the wheat of Canada and wool of Australia available for Germany now? Do the farmers and graziers of those countries refuse to sell their produce to Germany? Do the Germans have to pay a bigger price for Canadian wheat or Australian wool than we do?

"Well . . . but . . . if Germany owned Canada or Australia" . . .

You, dear reader (assuming you to be a British one), "own" Canada. (A fact which, when your bank overdraft has passed the limits, you might recall.) Do you then get the wheat of Canada and the wool of Australia for nothing? You do not. Every bushel of wheat and pound of wool that you get from this Canada that you "own" must be paid for, just as though it came from lesser tribes in Argentina or the U.S.A. Can you get it cheaper from Canada than a German can?

If Germany conquered Canada, could the Germans get the wheat for nothing? Would not the Germans

have to pay for it just as they do now? Would conquest make economically any real difference?

More, is not the rhetoric about the "Teutonic Waves" and the "struggle for life" mere bombastic theory divorced from the realities of present-day politics? Is our problem the difficulty of obtaining wheat or wool? Do nations tend to withhold their produce from the others? Why, the complaint everywhere is not that wheat and wool and other primary products are inaccessible, are withheld, but that they are "dumped" too readily. Every nation is engaged, not in trying to seize bread or raiment, but in trying to keep those things from its shores.

But the divorce from reality gets worse as we go on. The implication is that while Australia and Canada are closed to German expansion, they are open to British. Are they? Can our people go to these "colonies" which "we" "own" without let or hindrance? Can we sell our goods there freely? We "own" these territories of course; and they can be "taken" from "us," because every political writer who discusses the subject uses just those terms. But, by a strange contradiction, we find that Britain's law does not run there at all; that these "British possessions" can exclude British goods and British subjects, discriminate against our trade, forbid our ships their ports (for some purposes at least, as for carriage between coastal points), forbid our workers to seek work in these "British possessions," deport British subjects for offences which in Britain would be no offences at all. . . . Still we "own" them, and Germany is trying to "take" them from us.

I suggest that those terms, "ownership," "possessions" which may be "lost," "taken" from "us," are, when applied to territories of the British Commonwealth, utterly meaningless; that these "possessions" have become independent nations, no more amenable to our power than any other independent nation: that we own Australia about as much as, and in about the same way that, we own

Argentina or Arkansas or Arizona, and the resources of the one are no more and no less accessible for our expanding population—or for Germany's expanding population—than the resources of the other; that Germany is as free to feed her population by the resources of Canada and Australia to the same extent and in about the same way that we are.

It is hardly possible to discuss this matter for ten minutes without it being urged that as Great Britain has acquired her Colonies by the sword, it is evident that the sword may do a like service for modern States desiring Colonies. About as reasonably could one say that, as certain tribes and nations in the past enriched themselves by capturing slaves and women among neighbouring tribes, the desire to capture slaves and women will always be an operative motive in warfare between nations.

What was the problem confronting the merchant adventurer of the sixteenth century? There were newly-discovered foreign lands containing, as he believed, precious metals and stones and spices and inhabited by savages or semi-savages. If other traders got those stones, it was quite evident that he could not. His colonial policy, therefore, had to be directed to two ends: first, such effective political occupation of the country that he could keep the savage or semi-savage population in check, and could exploit the territory for its wealth; and, secondly, such arrangements as would prevent other nations from searching for this wealth in precious metals, spices, etc., since, if they obtained it, he could not.

That is the story of the French and Dutch in India, and of the Spanish in South America. But as soon as there grew up in those countries an organized community living in the country itself, the whole problem changed. The Colonies, in this later stage of development then, have a value to the Mother Country mainly as a market and a source of food and raw material, and if their value in those respects is to be developed to the full, they inevit-

ably become self-governing communities in greater or less degree, and the Mother Country exploits them exactly as she exploits any other community with which she may be trading. Germany might acquire Canada, but it could no longer be a question of her taking Canada's wealth in precious metals or in any other form to the exclusion of other nations. Could Germany "own" Canada, she would have to "own" it in the same way that we do; the Germans would have to pay for every sack of wheat and every pound of beef that they might buy just as though Canada "belonged" to Great Britain or to anybody else. Germany could not have even the meagre satisfaction of Germanizing these great communities, for one knows that they are far too firmly "set." Their language, law, morals, would have to be, after German conquest, what they are now; just as we have had to leave Dutch language and law in South Africa, French in Quebec. Germany would find that the German Canada was pretty much the Canada that it is now—a country where Germans are free to go and do go; a field for Germany's expanding population.

As a matter of fact, Germany feeds her expanding population from territories like Canada and the United States and South America without sending her citizens there. The era of emigration from Germany has stopped because the compound steam engine has rendered emigration largely unnecessary.[1] And it is the developments which are the necessary outcome of such forces that have made the whole colonial problem of the twentieth century radically different from that of the eighteenth or seventeenth.

But let us assume for a moment that the *National Review* theory is absolutely and completely true: Germany needs to conquer Australia or Canada to feed her people; we need to keep those territories to feed ours. The struggle

[1] In 1932 the migration *from* the Dominions *to* Great Britain exceeded the contrary current.

is a biological struggle, and fight is inevitable. Very well, we fight, and we British win. Is the biological problem solved? But those million babies still remain. What are we going to do about it? Do we propose to say to Germany after our victory: "We are victorious. Your navy is sunk. Such colonies as you have shall be taken from you. Our navy now controls the earth. Keep out. As to your babies—no affair of ours. Nothing to do with us."

Yes, but . . . the babies are still there, and in terms of my critic's hypothesis, without bread. Do we suggest that these highly-organized people in Central Europe, so closely allied to us in race, religion, culture, civilization, shall treat their excess population as the thrifty householder sometimes treats the inconveniently frequent progeny of the family cat? Shall we say to them: "This Empire of three-fifths of the Earth's surface is run on the principle that those outside it have no rights, not even the right to existence, to food. The Bengali, the Madrassi, the Malays, the African negroes, all these may live and, under our ægis, flourish and increase; but not Germans. They must die."

Well, do we expect the Germans to accept it? Does anyone out of a lunatic asylum expect that that would be the last word?

That, of course, is a question our militarist never answers. His mind stops working at the point of victory, because victory is the one thing in which the military-minded is really interested. What happens afterwards does not concern him. Victory is for him an end, not a means, however much he may rationalize to the contrary.

When, in a debate the other day, the question "What would happen after victory?" was put, the reply was that Germany would be "wiped from the map," that she would be resolved back into her original small states. And this was supposed to answer the biological question. But, again, that million babies would remain: you might

baptize them Bavarians, Prussians, Württembergers, Rhinelanders, but they would be the same babies; there would be the same number of mouths to feed. The man eats just as much whether you call him a Rhinelander or a German.

How would this juggling with frontiers have altered the ratio of stomachs to food?

The truth is that the military method as the solution of the problem of the struggle for bread, would only be effective if we were prepared to slit the throats of a whole population, a hundred million folk, women and children included. And that method has practical and æsthetic disadvantages into which we need not enter.

So the population remain. We forbid them the resources of our Empire, and by that fact compel them to live at, shall we say, a coolie standard of life. Now a highly organized, disciplined, civilized, regimented, highly educated, scientific, industrialized population living at a coolie standard of life is likely to prove an awkward element in the very heart of Europe. Not merely would the German population remain after being "wiped from the map," but German competition would very much remain. "Made in Germany" is already something of a terror to our industrialists; and Lancashire is extremely uneasy at the new cotton industry based upon cheap coolie labour springing up in India. How, ask the masters of our textile industry, are we to compete in the markets of the world—and our textile industry lives by export—with wages of a few pence a day? But imagine the Indian coolie to be a German coolie, highly educated, scientific, trained, drilled with that amazing gift for organization which modern Germany has developed, and so very near at hand. Yellow peril indeed! The militarists would have us make Germany herself the Yellow Peril.

However, perhaps our politico-biologists, who talk of war as "the struggle for bread," would, in fact, after victory, leave things as they are; let Germans continue

to have access to the wheat and wool and the rest of it; and let the babies flourish, although we had defeated the German navy at sea. We would merely deny them the right to be a unified State. They might shift their ground from the biological to the political plane. Victory would be used to undo unification.

Very well. How long would *that* last? The one outstanding fact in international politics is the extreme ease with which the enemy of yesterday becomes the ally of to-day, and the ally of to-day the enemy of to-morrow. The great wars are not the wars of single states; they are the wars of alliances. And a Germany humbled, dismembered, deprived of rights, would, of course, look eastward: those hundred and sixty million Russians just waiting to be drilled, and behind them, with all sorts of possibilities, four hundred million Chinese. If victory does not solve the economic question, neither does it the political.

The political situation has, of course, a vital bearing upon the population question, but in a way which is almost the exact reverse of that which the militarists would have us believe. If political rivalry, the desire for power as an end in itself, sets up ferment and unrest, you then get conditions which make effective economic co-operation impossible—you get through political Balkanization an economic disintegration. Let me recall an illustration suggested in a previous chapter.

In the time of Columbus, the territory, which is now the United States, supported very precariously a few hundred thousand Indians, mainly by the chase. The tribes fought each other for the hunting grounds, and doubtless their philosophers pointed out that this fighting of tribe with tribe was an inevitable part of the struggle for life in a world of limited resources. The territory about which these few thousands fought, now supports considerably over a hundred million people at a very much higher standard of life who do not fight at all. The fact

that a hundred million can now live at an extremely high standard of life upon a territory which originally fed precariously a hundred thousand, would have been made utterly impossible if the population which succeeded the Indians had followed the Indian example of forming groups perpetually at war (as for a time its very varied elements of English, Dutch, French, Negro and Spanish threatened to do). If, out of that mixture, small tribes, or even small nations, had formed and gone on fighting, the United States would have been immeasurably less prosperous, less able to face the economic future than it is. If, with all its failures, the population is to-day a great one and relatively very rich, it is because it has learned how *not* to fight, but how, instead, to maintain large-scale economic co-operation.

Let us look nearer home.

Up to the time of Heptarchy Britain supported precariously, with frequent famine and scarcity, perhaps a million inhabitants. The little kingdoms fought perpetually, and the Picts and Scots, Saxons and Danes, raided and sacked, and all struggled with each other for the possession of such wealth as the pastures and ill-tilled fields produced. To-day that territory supports forty-five million people with a comfort and material security for the meanest workman that the very kings in Egbert's day did not know. But if Mercia and Wessex and Northumbria and the other kingdoms had persisted in the view that their conflicts were "biologically inevitable" (and, as a matter of fact, that is pretty much what their bards sang), and had continued to regard the war of one British state against another as the highest and noblest activity to which a Briton could consecrate his life; if the Ruskins and Roosevelts of early England had in fact managed to maintain the military philosophy, if the Island had remained seven nations, each arming against the other, and the war had raged in this Balkanized territory as it rages so often in the other Balkans—then the British population to-day would be

very small and very poverty-stricken; it would be quite out of the question to maintain forty-five million people on the Islands. Civilized life is only possible for them by virtue of co-operation which is not merely insular, but now covers the world itself; only by virtue of the fact that it does cover the world, despite temporary breakdown, can our people live.

What is the real "primordial need" of the densely packed populations of modern Europe? It is that the process of industrial development, all the vast economics of a large-scale geographical division of labour, shall be made secure and carried on to the best advantage. If that is done there are resources enough so to raise the standard of life that the population problem, at least of the western world, will settle itself. For it is one of the contradictions of that problem that a rising standard of life causes the birth-rate to diminish. It is in peasant countries of a low standard—in Russia, in Ireland, Quebec, the Balkans—where the rate of increase is high. Where the standard of life is good and civilization is urbanized the rate almost invariably falls. That fact, together with the immense potentialities of increased production owing to labour-saving machinery, and geographical division of labour, and the new sources of power, show sufficiently the lines along which the demon of scarcity may be exorcised.

The issue is clear. We can solve our problem in one way: there is no scarcity, there is not likely to be scarcity, given the relation between high standards and the birth-rate just touched upon, if we avail ourselves of the vast potentialities of modern machine and mass production, of large-scale industry. But there is one thing which will make that impossible: a continuation of our nationalist military rivalries, the Balkanization of the world. The wealth which awaits us is available only if we can somehow manage to organize our co-operations on a world-wide basis. It is not merely a matter of trade and industry. Even

if by some miracle we could organize our economic life on a basis of national self-sufficiency, there remain money and finance, inextricably bound up with trade and industry and inextricably international; and extremely vulnerable. We cannot work the machine which might feed us if we go on fighting. It is not a choice of "fight or starve." We risk starvation because we have the obsession of fighting: "We shall perish of hunger in order to have success in murder."

Let us summarize the very simple, very elementary truths concerning the relation of conquest to the population question so far established in this and previous chapters.

1. The real problem of our modern economy is not any absolute shortage, given the immense potential productivity of modern processes. The real problem is to prevent the dislocation of those processes, especially the processes of exchange. War creates a degree of dislocation far more costly than any possible "loot" can compensate.

2. It is a simple statement of history that to the extent to which groups fight each other they fail to make such good use of the common resources available for sustenance as when they stop fighting and co-operate. Where four hundred thousand Red Indians, divided, into tiny nations perpetually fighting each other, starved, a hundred million modern Americans organized into one nation do not fight, but live in plenty.

3. Conquest in the modern world, for all the reasons connected with markets, etc., already elaborated, does not mean a reduction in the number of mouths to feed: usually, as in India, it means an increase.

4. The potential productivity of modern machine and large-scale methods is so enormous, if made effective by proper co-ordinations, that there is far more hope of relief for population pressure by perfecting those co-ordinations than by exchanging British sovereignty for German in Asia or America.

5. The disorganization in that apparatus of production caused by war and the frictions set up by conquest would make the support of expanding population more, not less difficult, after conquest than before.[1]

Certain specific cases usually cited in this discussion as completely disproving the foregoing conclusions may need a further word. The case of Australia confronting the power of Japan is perhaps the commonest: "But for the British navy Japan would seize Australia and turn it into a Yellow Land and the White would be swamped. It is power which preserves Australia for the British." And that is supposed to dispose of the whole case for international co-operation as against international rivalry of power.

First, let us note what the question is that we need to examine; and what it is not. It is not whether a single power in an armed world should place itself at the mercy of the rest who remain armed; but whether the advantages of victory (purchased at the price at which victory must be purchased in an armed world) are so greatly superior to those obtained by peaceful co-operation that states guided by considerations of advantage would never be brought to adopt the latter policy.

If we put the question in that form: which kind of world will best help Japan to solve her population question, a world of competition for military power, or one which had recognized the futility of that method and was turning to more effective co-operation? there can, in my view, be no doubt at all as to the answer. It is the latter kind of world which would suit best the circumstances of a country like Japan.

Usually this problem is discussed in complete disregard of the considerations which have been elaborated in previous

[1]How far these generalizations and others in this chapter apply to the case of Japan in Manchuria is indicated in notes at the end of the book.

chapters; discussed as though it were true that unless the Japanese actually settled in Australia the resources of that country would not be available to feed the Japanese population. But what has been written in preceding chapters about the relation of Lancashire to the cotton of Louisiana; the fact that "Argentina is Britain's granary," and coming to be Germany's, though neither of those European states "own" in a political sense the South American state; the fact that vast industrial populations live by means of foodstuffs produced in foreign countries on the other side of the world—all this is disregarded, though it is just as true of the industrialized section of the Japanese population as the industrialized populations of Germany or England. It is true that Japan, like England of the eighteenth century, is very largely agricultural; but the transformation which England underwent in the nineteenth, Japan seems to be undergoing in the twentieth century. (And in keeping with the tendency we have seen elsewhere, as industrialization increases and the standard of life rises, we may expect the birth-rate to fall.) It is well to remember that the pressure of a fifteen million population at the opening of the nineteenth century was much greater than the pressure of a forty-five million one in England at the opening of the twentieth. This century, with its enormous cheapening of transport, has proved that it is becoming of less and less importance at what particular spot on the earth a man carries on his daily task. It might well be economically advantageous for the New Zealander to wear clothes made from wool grown in his own country but woven in England: the carriage of the wool twice across the earth might well be economically justified. It is facts of this character which may explain, in part, the lessening of what one might call the migration impulse: for it has lessened. As we saw in the case of Germany, the period of emigration seems almost to have ceased, and there are signs that the Japanese are showing the same hesitation about leaving their own country. (The actual numbers going to

the Pacific States of America are microscopic despite the absurd din raised over the matter.) Certainly the figures of emigration suggest that a redistribution of population is not the lines along which the modern world is solving or can solve its population problem.

And Japan would certainly fail to solve her problem by any such method as an attempted military conquest of Australia, which is evident enough if we look at another group of facts also usually completely disregarded when this instance of Japan and Australia is cited.

It seems to be commonly assumed that, but for the domination of the seas by the British navy, Japan could simply stretch out an arm and Australia would become a Japanese colony.

Well, the British Empire itself has recently had rather striking proof of the fact that seizure of nearly empty land is not quite so simple as that. An arithmetical sum in Rule of Three will suffice to produce some interesting reflections.

The population of the Boer Republics was about one twentieth of that of Australia, and could never at any one time put fifty thousand men into the field. The Boer territories had no arms industries at all. They could not manufacture a rifle or a field gun. Nevertheless, it took the greatest Empire in the world three years, half a million men and two hundred and fifty millions of money to overcome that little band of farmers, with their lack of technical equipment and without an ally in the world. On this basis, how many men, how much money, and how many years would it require of Japan to overcome a population twenty times as great, already largely industrialized, able to manufacture military equipment, possessing technicians of all kinds, completely self-sufficing as to food and strategically in an immeasurably better position to resist Japan than the Boers were to resist Britain? Britain had in the Cape already a very strong foothold and base on South African territory itself. Japan has no such foothold

in Australia. The Boer territory was not a sea-board territory, enabling its inhabitants to resist the landing of invaders. The difficulties of effecting landings on distant coasts with all the enormous paraphernalia of modern war necessary for coping with a population possessing the elements of resistance that the Australians possess have been proven again and again, and many military authorities regard such enterprise as quite impossible of success. At the very best, in the light of such history as that of Boer resistance, the seizure of Australia would be a desperately costly, dangerous and doubtful enterprise. At the end of such an effort Japan—still an extremely poor country by European standards—would be utterly exhausted financially and in no position to provide the very large funds necessary for the settlement of any large Japanese population.

And then the occupation of the country would only be beginning. Note the analogy with the Boer states. In a very few years the British forces and British Government had withdrawn, the Boers were once more politically uppermost; the commander of the forces which had been in the field against Britain had become Prime Minister, able to expel British subjects; and, as we have seen in a previous chapter, the all-powerful British Empire had no recourse against him. Would five million Australians be less resistant than a quarter of a million Boers?

In the light of quite unmistakable experience we may say that the permanent conquest of Australia by Japan is utterly outside the range of practical politics, and would be, even though the British navy did not exist; that such an attempted conquest would be the least effective way for Japan to tackle her population problem, and that a stable and internationally organized world, giving her some assurance of foreign markets, would place her in a far more favourable position than military adventure could possibly do.

Which does not at all rule out the hope that one day

Australia may be wise enough to forestall mischievous dreams on Japan's part by setting aside for Japanese settlement, under all necessary safeguards, some part of the empty spaces of Northern Australia. It is doubtful whether in fact we should see much Japanese use of such territory. But mutually beneficial arrangements of that kind—not now possible, it is true, but which may later become possible—would allay a certain sense of grievance and add to the security and welfare of all concerned.

CHAPTER VIII

"BUT SOME PROFIT BY WAR"

Undoubtedly some interests profit by war as some interests would profit by an epidemic of smallpox; but those who profit by smallpox are powerless to promote it, and those who benefit by war sometimes very powerful to promote the latter sickness, because our views as to how war many promote the interests of a nation, are so different from our views about smallpox. The idea that "capitalism" is the cause of wars and is inherent in the system disregards the facts, and can be shown to be simply untrue. These arguments and "the class war."

CERTAINLY. Some profit by smallpox—lymph-makers, chemists, doctors. But those isolated interests who benefit by smallpox are not able to use as much influence to promote it as armament-makers and others sometimes undoubtedly use to promote wars. Why are the smallpox profiteers powerless and the war profiteers powerful?

Broadly because no one is able really to persuade the nation that it benefits by smallpox, or that it is a duty to get it, or noble, or patriotic. But those who profit by war are powerful because they *can* very easily persuade a whole nation that war is to its advantage, right and glorious. If we would reduce the war traders to the same powerlesness that the smallpox traders reveal, there is only one means of so doing—to bring home to the public, which they exploit, the same sense of futility of war, to create in the public mind pretty much the same feeling about war which it now possesses about smallpox. The war traders can only act through the public mind—its beliefs, fears, cupidities, prejudices, hates, pugnacities, animosities. So long as these lie beneath the surface of the ordinary man's thought he will be an easy victim of the war trader's exploitation.

In other words, even if it be true that some interests do promote war, the only thing to do in the face of that truth is to undermine the widespread fallacies which the interests use and upon which their power is based.

But this argument of "vested interests being the cause of war" is sometimes enlarged into something wider, into the proposition that capitalism is the cause of war; that war is inherent in the capitalist system.

Even if that were true, it would still be true to say that the capitalist can only make a whole people go to war—want war, clamour for war as, again and again, we have seen whole peoples doing—by capturing the popular will, and that the only prophylactic against that situation is to make the public aware of the way in which it is being misled. So long as the public is obsessed by the fallacies here discussed they will always be at the mercy of any interested group.

In fact, however, it can be shown, quite indubitably, that capitalism is not the cause of war. The case can be put very simply. Suppose the original thirteen colonies of North America had failed in their efforts at federation and after their separation from Britain had followed more the line that the South American colonies of Spain followed, breaking into separate nations, so that what is now the United States made half a dozen different nations; a French-speaking one perhaps in Louisiana, a Spanish-speaking one on the West coast, a Dutch in the Hudson Valley, and English in New England. (And, after all, it does not require much imagination to conceive happening north of the Mexican border what actually did happen south of it.) If, during this last hundred and fifty years, Pennsylvania or Ohio had been one nation, Louisiana another, each with its separate army and navy, tariff, currency, quarrels about rights on the rivers and lakes, we know what would have happened: There would have been war between Ohio and Louisiana, just as there has been war between Chile and Peru; there would exist

between the independent American states what exists between the independent European states, such as France and Germany—historical grievances, bitter national feuds, lying school history books.

What would have been the cause? Capitalism? But does not capitalism exist in Ohio, Pennsylvania or Louisiana now? Yet they do not fight each other. They do not fight each other because they are not independent nations. They would have fought if they had been. Put the same suggestion in another form: Suppose that the central authority, which once united most of Europe, had been maintained in one form or another, through the Church or through the Empire, so that to-day France and Germany occupied in the European system much the position that Pennsylvania holds to Louisiana (or as the German cantons of Switzerland do to the French). The European Pennsylvania and Louisiana would no more fight than the American states do, though capitalism might flourish as abundantly in the United States of Europe as it does in the United States of America. We have war between the states of Europe and peace between the states of North America, not because there is capitalism in Europe and no capitalism in America, but because, though there is capitalism in both continents, there is a federal bond in North America and not in Europe. The cause of war is, not separate nationality, but anarchic nationalism.

Now the separatist tendency, the movements towards the political independence of nationalities, are not "capitalist" movements, they are popular movements. Nationalism, whether in South America or Ireland or in the Balkans, is essentially popular. It is not that the peoples want war; they want independence, "ourselves alone," and do not realize that "independence" means anarchy and that anarchy means war. Anarchy in the international field means, in practice, the attempt of dense traffic to travel the highways of the world without traffic rules or traffic cops. The inevitable collisions are

always, of course, attributed to the wickedness of the other fellow.

"But the people don't want war." The people in the East don't want cholera. But they don't see the relation between mediæval sanitary conditions and the disease which kills them, as the people in the West don't see the relation between war and "complete national independence"—that is to say, the right of each to be his own judge of what his rights are (which means the right to be the judge of others' rights as well), so that each is always asking others to occupy a position which he refuses to occupy when others ask him.

Anarchy involves war, not because anybody is particularly wicked, or wants it or plots it, but for the same reason that there would be death at every passing on the automobile road if each driver were free to choose whether he should drive to the left, as in England, or to the right as elsewhere; and if it were regarded as a dereliction of dignity to discuss how he would drive his own car. War arises because the people do not see the relevance of that analogy; do not see the need of rule; believe that anarchy in the international relation is preferable; that the advantages of conquest, of being top dog in our relations with others, far outweigh any advantage which could come from making our power a mere contribution to the general power of civilisation; believe that the sacrifice of national independence involved in international arrangements outweigh any counterfailing advantage of an international order.

I say that the public think that. It would be truer, perhaps, to say that they feel it as the total result of holding to the general assumptions which these pages attack.

Capitalists themselves feel it. In arguing that capitalism as such is not the cause of war, I must not be taken as arguing that capitalists do not often believe in war, believe they and their country benefit by it. The capitalist is as

subject to error about his own interest as other folk; is not at all that being of steel-like brain and unerring capacity to read aright his own interest which it is the habit of socialists to paint him.

What is the quite evident and simple truth in this matter? It is *that a relatively infinitesimal group of capitalists is able, by manipulating a mass of ignorance and blind prejudice, to profit at the expense of all other capitalists whatsoever.* And that is even truer if we substitute for capitalist, financier. The theory that "international financier" has some special interest in war defies nearly all the facts.

What is "international finance"? Is it a small band of Frankfort bankers with Hebraic names living by the exploitation of people less unscrupulous than themselves? That is a picture lending itself to dramatic and sensational treatment, but it does not happen to be true. All bankers, merchants, investors, those who insure their lives, who have holdings in stocks or shares of any kind, are financiers in the sense that they are interested in the security of wealth and the better organization of finance. Even when we use the term "financier" in its narrow sense we imply generally a man whose fortune is based upon the general prosperity: if the world as a whole did not make and save and invest money financiers could not make it—their occupation would be gone. And more and more is it true that modern finance, whether in the large or in the limited sense, is bound up with general security and prosperity; the more that that becomes evident the less is the incentive to oppose any special interest to the general one.

It is true, of course, that wherever you get conditions in which, on the one hand, the general interest is very ill-conceived and uninformed, subject to gusts of blind prejudice readily and easily stirred into life, and where, on the other, you get a particular interest well conceived subject to no such influence, you will get the particular interest controlling the general; five or fifty or five hundred men manipulating as many millions to their own personal

advantage. But no mechanical re-shaping of society could ever prevent such a result if you get these two elements in juxtaposition. And that is true, not merely in the domains of finance and politics, but in things like religion or medicine. It is the story of priest-craft, quackery, demagogism, through all the ages.

There was a time in Europe when massacre and cruelties of all sorts, credulity, and quaking fear of the unseen, passed for religion with great masses of the population. And while that was true a camarilla of priests could make playthings of nations. And the relation which that sort of "religion" bore to morals in Europe in the past, the wicked rubbish that too often passes for patriotism bears to politics to-day.

This is a chapter addressed rather particularly to Socialists and other Progressives, who pride themselves upon being able to shake themselves free from old prepossessions, old ways of political thought. I fear it is a necessary chapter because, much to my surprise, I have found very many Socialists accepting in common with the completest Tory the old nationalist notions of "ownership" of territory, the possibility of the military transfer of wealth, the reality of the "possession" of colonies, and all the rest of it.

It was the incident of the Boer War which revealed to this present writer the intellectual Conservatism and traditionalism of much Socialist thought, the uncritical acceptance of certain terms at their face value. Everywhere I found Socialists not only echoing the popular continental view that the fundamental motive force behind the Boer War was the "capture of the Rand mines," but really believing that British conquest would bring the mines under the control of the British Government—indeed, at that time, most Englishmen believed it. Whereas, it was quite plain that a South African Union would go the way of other British Dominions and the mines pass completely from the control of the British Government. Which is what has happened.

It would, perhaps, help to make some of the points clear to summarize an actual controversy with a German and an English Socialist in which this writer happened to be engaged last year.[1] A writer in *Die Neue Zeit*, in answer to the contention that conquest of foreign territory can bring no possible benefit to the mass of the conquering nation, replied in effect that in the event of, for instance, the German conquest of India:

" . . . The German bankocracy would divert from England to Germany the millions of the profits of exploitation which are to be made in the future by the further capitalistic development of India. . . . It is true enough that in the conquered country we no longer employ the simple method of direct spoliation; but in its place, capitalist exploitation everywhere flourishes. The only question is, to the capitalists of which nation shall accrue the surplus value which is to be obtained from the population of any particular country? For the modern *bourgeoisie*, this is the upshot of all 'national questions' and 'national contrasts.' . . . Norman Angell will never succeed in convincing the capitalists and their hangers-on that they have nothing to gain by extending the area of their dominion since they desire it in order to ensure that an ever-greater proportion of the surplus value of the world shall flow into their 'national' coffers."

First, as to facts. My critic says the German bankocracy would, in the event of the German conquest of India, divert from England to Germany the profits of the capitalistic exploitation of the possession.

Does he seriously mean by this that the stocks and bonds of Indian railroads, mines, etc., now held by English capitalists would, in the case of the German conquest of India, be confiscated by the German Government and transferred to German capitalists? But he must know that such a thing is impossible. The interlocking of interest is

[1] i.e., 1911.

so great that German financial institutions would be hit by such confiscations in the long run as much as British. When England conquered the Transvaal, how many mining shares did England "capture"? Not sixpenny worthy, and the dividends of the mines continued to go to the owners of the stock—Russian, German, French, American, Turkish, or Hindu.

Or does the phrase I have quoted mean that the German "owners" of India would, after the conquest, prevent British capitalists from investing money in India? That, of course, is equally absurd. After a war Germany would be more hard up for money than she is now, and would take it wherever she could get it; and in order to get it she would have to give security, which she would give in the shape of bonds and shares. In all probability she would, if she wanted to carry on the capitalistic exploitation of India, have to come to London and Paris for the money; which means that the profits of the capitalistic exploitation would go to those centres in just the proportion in which they found the money. There would be no "diversion" by mere virtue of conquest.

What is evidently in his mind is that the destination of capitalists' profits is determined not by the source of the capital, but by the nationality of the government of the territory in which the exploitation takes place. Such a notion is childish—none the less so because it is due to a confusion still dominating the mind of the older type of politician in Europe. In order that there shall be no doubt as to this conclusion he adds this, that in war the real question is:

> "To the capitalist of which nation shall accrue the surplus value to be obtained from the population of any particular country?"

It is a necessary corollary, of course, of the first confusion; Kauski would imply that the area of capitalistic exploitation is determined by the political dominion of

the Capitalist Government; that a German capitalist cannot invest money in a country unless his Government conquered it. And this is written in a country and of the country which has given us the Rothschilds, Cassels, Sterns, Oppenheims, Mendelssohns, and Bleichroeders—men whose activities disregard completely national and political divisions; and written also of a country whose capitalists operate on a vast scale in Brazil, Argentina, China, Egypt, Turkey, Russia, and India !

After all capital is a good deal more international than Labour, and the capitalist at bottom much less affected by nationalist prepossessions. The labourer cannot labour (except in a very indirect sense) simultaneously in half a dozen quarters of the globe, under half a dozen governments. The captialist can and does so set his capital to work. Most large capitalists, especially since "geographical distribution" of capital has come into favour, exploit by their operations a dozen different countries, and the "flag" under which the dividend is paid is a matter of complete indifference to them as long as it is paid.

It is true, of course, that many German capitalists would rather see India a German "possession" than a British one, partly because capitalists share with other humans the weakness for the kind of vanity and vainglory which is so large a motive pushing to these territorial acquisitions, because, in other words, capitalists so often think—and act—as nationalists rather than as capitalists. And doubtless there are German industrialists who think that, if India were a German "possession," special advantages for German trade could be wangled, although that type of closed Empire, keeping special advantages for the producers of the home country, has in the past utterly failed and has been abandoned as a workable method by the most successful of all Imperialists—the British.

But the question is not whether German merchants to-day would rather have Canada or New Zealand German or British. The question is whether, thinking in terms of

financial and capitalist gain, the advantages of a war waged to secure the change from British to German "ownership" would justify the risks and costs. And I do not hesitate for a minute to say that anyone knowing at first hand the temper and misgivings of present-day financiers, knows also that those financiers feel that the risks of European war infinitely, immeasurably outweigh any of the very doubtful advantages which might be gained. Ask a banker in Wall Street, who now is perfectly free to invest his money in Canada and to draw the dividends of the investments (incidentally Wall, not Lombard Street is becoming the financial centre of Canada), whether the advantages to be gained by having the American flag fly in Ottawa are sufficient to justify the risks of an Anglo-American war. Anyone who believes that Wall Street would dream of "plotting" such a war is believing romantic rubbish. I will go further. If the American investor in Mexico could have guaranteed to him the same stability that exists in Canada he would much prefer that Mexico should remain under some other than the United States Government, since under the latter régime he would have to meet anti-trust laws, laws of industrial protection of the worker, Trade Union habits and much else that capitalists do not like.[1]

[1] "No doubt commercial rivalry between England and Germany had a great deal to do with causing the war, but rivalry is a different thing from profit-seeking. Probably by combination English and German capitalists could have made more than they did out of rivalry, but the rivalry was instinctive, and its economic form was accidental. The capitalists were in the grip of nationalist instinct as much as their proletarian 'dupes.' In both classes some have gained by the war, but the universal will to war was not produced by the hope of gain. It was produced by a different set of instincts, one which Marxian psychology fails to recognize adequately. . . .

"Men desire power, they desire satisfaction for their pride and their self-respect. They desire victory over their rivals so profoundly that they will invent a rivalry for the unconscious purpose of making a victory possible. All these motives cut across the pure economic motive in ways that are practically important.

"There is a need of a treatment of political motives by the methods of psycho-analysis. In politics, as in private life, men invent myths

What is the truth in this matter? That the forces, both economic and psychological, making for war, cut clean athwart class division. Large sections of the *bourgeoisie*, both by interest and temperament, are anti-militarist, just as some sections of the democracy are militarist. Some of us have seen a pro-Boer aristocrat running for his life before a howling mob of working-class "patriots." In Australia and New Zealand the democracies, in some respects the most advanced in the world, are not anti-militarist either in practice or in spirit; they are, for the most part, truculently militarist, and it is under a Labour Government that has been enforced the first compulsory military service under the British flag, and such feeble protest as we do find comes from *bourgeois* sources.

Why run one's head against these obvious facts? Capitalism in its economic theory is just as international as Socialism; in its practice, it is a good deal more so. The definite repudiation of the doctrine of Universal Brotherhood, a repudiation embodied in legislation of a rigid, harsh, and sometimes cruel character, has come first from advanced democrats—I refer to the anti-Alien, anti-Negro, anti-Chinese, anti-Japanese legislation of Australia, Canada and the United States. The capitalist classes opposed such legislation; the working classes imposed it. I am not discussing the respective motives or saying that the working classes are wrong. *Je constate.* In this, as in so many other respects, it is capitalism which is non-nationalist, universal, cosmopolitan; Socialism or

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to rationalize their conduct. If a man thinks that the only reasonable motive in politics is economic self-advancement, he will persuade himself that the things he wishes to do will make him rich. When he wants to fight the Germans, he tells himself that their competition is ruining his trade. If, on the other hand, he is an 'idealist,' who holds that his politics should aim at the advancement of the human race, he will tell himself that the crimes of the Germans demand their humiliation. The Marxian sees through this latter camouflage, but not through the former."—Mr. Bertrand Russell in *The New Republic*, September 15th, 1920.

organized Labour which is racial, nationalist, exclusive. And, incidentally, it is the Nationalistic, not the capitalistic, attitude and legislation which augurs ill for the disappearance of conflict and armaments.

Surely good sense and good strategy dictate that the Socialist should make common cause with such of the enemy as believe themselves to have common interest with him in this matter; to refuse to do so is to consolidate the strength of the enemy, and to weaken his own. It is as though Keir Hardie and other Socialists should refuse to associate themselves with the campaign for Women's Suffrage because some Conservative ladies of title are in favour of it.

Into this matter of the fight against armaments, the quarrel between Socialists and capitalists does not enter at all. And if a very superficial reading of class antagonism leads Socialists to take the view that this is a capitalistic matter in which they are not interested, that it is merely part of the general fight against capitalism, and that it is not worth while so long as the present régime lasts to interest themselves in the matter, well, the proletariat as a whole will pay very dearly for its error.

There is a dangerous tendency always to find the easy "scapegoat theory" of all our troubles. Always in war does each side blame the other for being the sole cause of it. It is thus not the result of wrong ideas about human society or human institutions common to both, but some "criminal nation." Now we want to make the cause a criminal class: the capitalists. It is easy, simple, provides a scapegoat; keeps agreeable passions awake and sends the public mind completely to sleep. There is no problem—nothing for the virtuous Socialist to do about it except suppress capitalist wickedness. We substitute for "Our Nation *v.* the Enemy," "The Virtuous People *v.* The Wicked Capitalist." With a very great many among the political Left it is impossible to get any serious attention paid to problems of nationalism or the

political anarchy which arise therefrom at all; there is an implied flat denial that, in grappling with this ancient evil which antedates not only capitalism, but history itself, "the people" need do nothing at all in the way of revising old ideas or disciplining old passions.

War, more ancient than history, is the outcome of passions, of follies, fallacies, misconceptions, and defective political institutions common to the great mass of men. They are not incurable misconceptions, not incurable follies. But they may well become so if we persist in assuming that they don't exist; that we need not trouble ourselves about them, because war is due to a little clique of evil "interests." So long as we take the line that "the People" (i.e., we ourselves) are innocent of error, then we might hang every war-profiteer in existence, and find, on the morrow, human society as helplessly as ever in the grip of some new folly, stimulated by a new group interested in exploiting it.

CHAPTER IX

HUMAN NATURE AND HUMAN INSTITUTIONS

The "human nature" argument is usually turned completely upside-down. The fact that man is naturally so quarrelsome and unreasonable is just why it is so important to talk reason, clear up confusion, agree beforehand on rules, devise suitable disciplines, and create suitable institutions.

"You forget," says the retired major-general, with the kind of smile that indicates that he possesses the final, the complete, the annihilating answer to the advocates of peace, arbitration, international courts, disarmament, internationalism, "you forget human nature. Man is a fighting animal; pugnacious, quarrelsome, irrational, ready to fight for a sign, rarely guided by reason."

Precisely. That is why it is so important to talk reason and devise new institutions. It is the only justification for so doing. The fact which is the very basis of the internationalist's case is precisely the fact which the major-general invokes with such finality against it. For if man were not the kind of creature he describes, but was "naturally" social in his impulses, always ready to see the point of view of the other party, never lost his temper and called it patriotism, always capable of being his own judge in his own cause—why, of course, we should not want peace conferences nor international institutions. But neither should we want national constitutions, legislatures, courts, police, or, for that matter, ten commandments and churches. All those things are institutional means of dealing with the imperfections of human nature. And the time has now come when the development and multiplication of human contacts demand that we add to

the institutions. They have become necessary just because mechanical development has increased our contacts, enlarged their area. Those contacts do not of themselves make for peace: they may quite as easily make for war, "human nature being what it is," unless we get new rules of the road (as we had to have with the coming of the motor car), subject mere instinct to the discipline of a social intelligence.

The active Pacifist or Internationalist is not one who believes, as the major-general seems to think, that war is not likely to come, but that it will certainly do so unless we take precaution against it. If unconscious, innate tendencies, "*la force des choses*," made for peace, there would be no sense in Pacifist activity; all we should have to do would be to sit down and leave things alone. Reason is urged, not because men are easily and readily guided by reason, but because they are not. If men saw what was reasonable without much discussion about it, what would be the sense of discussing it? The major-general has got the "human nature" argument turned completely upside-down, and usually goes his life through without realizing it. It is not a question of changing human nature (whatever that may mean), but of changing human behaviour; which all instructed psychologists, everyday experience, all history, show can be changed enormously by conditions, institutions, tradition, moral values, suggestion, education, as witness slight changes in the matter of cannibalism, human sacrifice, polygamy, slavery, the burning of heretics, the torture of witnesses, the duel and a thousand commonplaces of human life. If the phrase about human nature is altered to "you cannot change human behaviour," how does one explain the vast changes just indicated in the daily life of the West?

The "human nature" argument is often characterized on the lips of militarists, by a *nonsequitur* even more serious. The argument usually runs:

Men are bloodthirsty, quarrelsome, irrational crea-

tures, especially when organized into nations. They will fight, for a word, a sign, incalculably. Therefore, each should be highly armed with weapons as destructive as possible. To take those arms away, to reduce them, would be a highly dangerous proceeding.

I suggest, again, that the right conclusion is the exact contrary.

What is meant by saying that instinct must be brought under the domain of social intelligence?

Once in an American theatre one of the audience raised the cry of "Fire." The audience obeyed their instinct—their instinct of self-preservation; and if there is one instinct which presumably it is safe to obey, it is that of self-preservation. They did so, rose in a mass, rushed to the doors; these happened to be closed, and ten people were trampled to death. There was no fire. It was a false alarm. These people died by reason of an ill-controlled reaction to a momentary impulse or instinct. A few days later in another theatre the cry of fire was also raised. But the manager happened to be there, and jumping on the stage cried out dramatically and arrestingly: "Keep your seats. There is plenty of time. Rise slowly, choose your nearest entrance and WALK. No one runs." That theatre was emptied in perfect order; no one was hurt although this time there was a fire and the place was burned to the ground.

What happened in the second case? Disciplined intelligence, based upon experience of what results from blind obedience to instinct, was made to guide behaviour. The knowledge, "This will happen if I do that thing," was added to the factors of behaviour.

These social disciplines form habits, habits which became not second nature, as someone has said, but first.[1]

[1] H. C. Nixon, Secretary of the Institute of International Affairs, New Orleans, gave recently in *The New Republic* the results of a questionnaire. He writes:

"Do you as a psychologist hold that there are present in human nature ineradicable, instinctive factors that make war between nations

The discussion of what is necessary for the stability and security of the world's life is often vitiated by invoking curious and childish absolutes. When you point out that the world direly needs to put some sort of system in place of the muddles that threaten our whole civilization, you are usually met with some such retort, even from educated people, as that "it is man's nature to fight"; or that "we *must* have force—would you abolish the police?"; or an attempt is made to find some obscure case where conquest in modern times did actually involve some transfer of property or benefit to someone.

This book is entirely unconcerned with absolutes. To wipe out cancer is not a less desirable achievement because men die of tuberculosis. Whether we can, by some plan or other, make completely certain that no war of any kind between any people anywhere on the earth shall ever take place again, is not the sort of question with which this book is concerned. Nor does it try to prove that no war could ever, in any circumstances, be of advantage to the victors or to mankind; still less that force can never in any circumstances have a social purpose, or should never be used.

War may be inevitable. Perhaps. I do not know. Nobody knows. Does it mean that any war proposed at any time by any interested party—silly and irresponsible

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inevitable?" To that question, submitted to more than five hundred members of the American Psychological Association, Professor John M. Fletcher, of Tulane University, has received 345 answers in the distinct form of "No," with only eleven marked "Yes" and twenty-two inconclusive or indeterminate. He has just completed such a poll and given the results with his interpretation in a paper before our local Institute of International Affairs, which has just completed its first annual session with a programme on the general subject of reduction of armaments. This paper seemed to be the most insignificant feature of our successful series of meetings and we are planning to have it reproduced and circulated, for this answer to the proverbial human-nature-inevitability explanation of war should be put before a wider group than psychological specialists or our local Institute membership.

newspapers, demagogic politicians, armament firms—is inevitable? Disease is certainly inevitable; yet in the West, plague, cholera, leprosy have been wiped out. Is that no gain? It is a gain we could not possibly have made if men had said (as they do say in the East, and consequently do not abolish these pestilences), "Pestilence is fate."

The purpose of this book is to point out that, in a vitally important field of human activity—the relations between States which are daily becoming more closely concerned with the maintenance of any orderly civilization—we proceed upon assumptions which prove, on examination, to be utterly unsound; often in plain violation of self-evident fact, of commonsense, of arithmetic, of any decent workable code of conduct.

It is quite irrelevant to such a case to say that perfection cannot be obtained and that man is naturally a perverse creature. Because some sewage is bound to creep into all water is no reason for killing ourselves by drinking typhoid germs. The question is: do you believe in the general sanitary principle of keeping sewage out of drinking water? If you do, there is a chance at least that we shall not get a repetition of the pestilence of the Middle Ages. If you don't, it is certain that we shall. In the face of that broad fact, all talk about the inevitability of disease, the hazards of human life, the common fate, and the rest is just muddle-headed evasion of the issue. There will always be crime; always undetected murders. But do you believe in the maintenance of a police, or do you say that as crime is inevitable police systems are a mistake?

With our best endeavours we may have war. Our national constitutions frequently break down and we get civil war. That does not mean that every State must inevitably drift to the condition of South American Republics where every general election is a civil war; nor that, because a national constitution *may* fail, therefore constitutions are no good and perpetual civil war is the

proper or inevitable method. Our social organization is so imperfect that we may well, at some juncture, find war unavoidable in the defence of our national right. But that is simply no reason at all why efforts should not be made to render the contingency less likely, to avoid drifting into that situation; nor does the fact that, in certain extremely unlikely situations, we might have to wage war, make it any the less advisable to take measures to avoid positively imbecile and futile war; nor that no efforts of ours can check a drift back to chaos and savagery. It is a strange commentary upon our educational preparation for life that educated folk are perpetually guilty of childish errors of thought of this kind.

CHAPTER X

FAITH, FORCE AND THE WORLD'S ORDER

The world could not get along without police, but it could not get police without something other than "force"—intelligence and discipline and the reasoned guidance of instinct, nor without "faith", reliance upon contract; and police forces do not arrest each other. Armies are instruments used by rival litigants; police the power behind the judge. Transfer armies from the litigants to the support of an agreed law and they become police. We do not need to police Germany, nor the Germans England, though both countries have a common interest in the maintenance of order in certain disorderly areas of the world. Let all combine to uphold a commonly agreed rule of life for nations.

THIS book is not a plea for defencelessness; it is not a plea for non-resistance. It is an attempt to undermine the impulses which at present make it impossible to use force for the effective defence of the nation and of civilization.

The whole experience of organized society proves that if force is to be used effectively for the security of the individual, one clear principle must be observed: the defence of the individual must be the obligation of the whole community, using its force to support that body of rights, or law, which gives the individual security.

If the individual cannot invoke the power of the law to defend him, but must rely upon his own force, two things happen: first, he must be stronger than anyone likely to attack him, in which case the weaker is deprived of defence, and the security of one becomes the insecurity of another; and secondly, if in a dispute with another he can only defend himself by being stronger than that other he becomes the judge of the dispute; judge that is, not only of his own rights, but of the rights of the other. The litigant is judge. If I claim the right to be judge of

a dispute, I deny to the other party the right which I claim for myself.

The only way out of this dilemma is for neither to be judge; for both to accept third-party judgment—which bears equally upon both—and for such force as enters to be, not the force of one litigant facing another, but the overwhelming force of the community standing behind the law.

If force is to be effective for the defence of the individual, it must be the result of the co-operation of the community to the ends just indicated.

But if the commonly accepted views of the advantages of conquest and of the nature of war as a necessary struggle for bread (views which this book attacks) are sound, then the nations will quite rightly and quite logically reject co-operation as a sacrifice made by the strong to the weak. Co-operation will be rejected on the ground that the advantages of victory are so vastly superior to those obtained by co-operation for the enforcement of law, that a state guided by consideration of advantage should not accept the latter policy.

If what another nation obtains in the way of the world's resources is merely so much taken from resources which may be needed by our children, we naturally and logically conceive of the problem, not as one of organizing a world order, but as a battle to be fought, the never-ending battle, it may be, which we come to regard as part of the rhythm of life. If we start from that view, we follow naturally with the conclusion, as already stated, that anarchy in the international field is preferable to order; that the advantages of conquest, of being top dog in our relation with others, far outweigh any advantage which would come from making our power a mere contribution to the general power of civilization; come to believe that the sacrifices of national independence involved in international arrangements outweigh any countervailing advantages which an international order could offer.

But opposition to any new order proceeds more commonly from sheer confusion of thought as to the aims of the internationalist, from the belief, not that he desires the greater security of his country, but that he is indifferent to it; from confusing a proposal to organize power internationally for the defence of law, with the surrender of power altogether. The plea for doing in the international field what has been done within the nation—basing defence not upon the isolated power of each, but the combined power of organized civilization—is so often confused with a plea for defencelessness that certain clarifications are indispensable.

Two major fallacies seem all but universal: the confusion of the functions of a national army with the function of police; and the right conclusion to be drawn from the undoubted fact that man is a quarrelsome, irrational creature. One perpetually hears, "We need armies for the same reason that we need police." But the police forces do not arrest each other, are not organized to fight each other. Armies are. The safety of London does not become threatened every time the police force of Manchester increases its numbers. But every time a rival army or navy is increased, the protective power of ours is decreased. Obviously the whole analogy of army and police is false and misleading. It is not difficult to see where it goes astray.

Two nations disagree as to their respective rights in a given matter. Each insists on its own view and seeks by its superior national power to be in a position to enforce that view. The army in each case is the instrument which one disputant, one party to a quarrel, uses against the other in order to be its own judge in its own cause. Police forces are powers behind the judge, the law, to prevent either of the parties from imposing his view on the other. That is to say, the purpose or function of the police, as the power behind a commonly agreed law, which prevents the litigant being the judge, is the

exact contrary of the purpose or function of armies, as we have known them heretofore, which is to enable a nation, party to a quarrel, to say what the settlement of that quarrel shall be. The purpose of the police is the prevention of settlement by the preponderant force, and to ensure impartial consideration of the merits of the case; the purpose of a nation's army is to secure by virtue of its superior force settlement favourable to itself, irrespective of the view of the other party, or of any third-party judgment.

The essence of the police situation, when force is taken from the litigants and put behind the law, is that neither makes a claim which he denies to the other. If I say to you: "Let us accept third-party judgment in this dispute," I offer you the same rights I claim; there is an equal chance for both, equal rights for each. If I say: "I intend to be my own defender, to be stronger than you in order that my rights may be protected," then I refuse to you the right I claim—the right to be judge of the dispute. If my rights are protected, yours are not. Under that system of putting force behind the litigants there can be no general security of right: the security of one is the insecurity of another. Armies may give justice to one (assuming that the victor is fit to be his own judge, which is asking a great deal of that human nature which we are told is so fallible) at the cost of denying equal chance of it to another. A police force gives equal rights to both.

What becomes of the contention that "armies have the same purpose as the police"?

The more we add to the power of the police supporting a just law the greater is the security of the whole community: the more the power of one nation or alliance is increased the greater does the danger to the rival nation or alliance become. The second is bound to resist the increasing power of the first, because it does not know to what end its rival will use its preponderant power.

It is irresponsible power. The law or rule which the more powerful is likely to lay down is the kind of law or rule which every peace treaty reveals: a gross disregard of the right of the beaten party to things which the victor claims for himself. There is, in fact, no adequate law governing the intercourse of nations; each is attempting to be its own law. And that must produce a chaos on the highways of the world.

If the complicated processes by which we live are to function effectively and well, we must have some rule and system: traffic rules, to revert to an earlier illustration. If we are ever to get such a system, two things are necessary: a general perception of their need, and the discipline to agree upon a few fundamental rules and to co-operate in the creation of a common power to stand behind them, behind the traffic cop. Such a power may well be merely the pooled power of nations pledged to that specific and single purpose.

A rule is indispensable, not because men are necessarily evil, but rather because they may honestly differ, not merely as to rights, but the right way to conduct daily life. The modern motor-car road would soon become completely unusable if instead of rules and system we trusted to the "innate goodness" of the users, letting each drive as he saw fit, guided only by the light of nature and a good heart. It is just when each party to a quarrel is honestly, sincerely, and passionately convinced that he is right (and the other wrong) that the danger of collision is greatest. Yet usually both sides in discussion of war and peace seem to overlook this fact: the militarist who says that "of course we should be fair. I want my country to be just, and it always is, and so foreigners can trust to my strength"; and the Pacifist who implies that if only men observed the moral law there would be no collision. But what *is* the moral law in its application to a given case? How does it determine whether we should drive to the right or to the left?

The question at this stage of society's development is not whether there should be no force, but whether it should be the competitive force of individuals each asserting his own view, or the common power of the community restraining individual violation of the common rule; whether the force should be in the hands of rival litigants or in the hands of the judge, the law.

This same falsification of issue, the presentation of "Force or Faith," as rival or alternative policies, is at the root of the confusion involved in the case of the militarist who says:

> I don't want war, but neither do I want—nor do I intend—to put my country's rights in jeopardy; and to prevent that I will risk war.
>
> You Pacifists apparently won't. You are prepared, so far as I can judge, to surrender your country's rights, to leave them at the mercy of foreigners; to trust to their kindness. I am not. War is bad, but supine surrender of your right is worse.

The Pacifist has allowed the assumption to grow up that his method *does* take greater risks with national security than does the militarist's. But, as we have seen, it is the militarist's which, in the end, must by its very nature, fail, all-round security by the method of national predominance being a physical impossibility. The Pacifist, the international case, ought to be based, first and foremost, upon the needs of National Defence; on the fact that only by its method can national defence be permanently achieved.

When the militarist argues that "you cannot depend on paper guarantees but must trust to manly fists," he quite overlooks the fact, of course, that whether the manly fists fight with you or against you depends upon contracts —paper guarantees. Indeed, whether our army or navy is loyal, or mutinies against its officers, depends not on physical force (the officers are inferior in force to the men)

but upon moral things—discipline, tradition, contract. Whether our army or navy is adequate depends on the force which it has to meet. A nation with two ships, while its enemy had one, would be strong; with two hundred it would be weak, if its enemy had three hundred. But the force which our navy has to meet depends upon alliances—whether this or that navy is going to fight with us or against us. And that depends upon the keeping of contracts, the reliance that can be placed upon an undertaking given, upon the moral factor behind force. It is this moral factor which decides the effectiveness of power, the social or anti-social quality of force; a fact which runs through the whole problem of the employment of physical force. Physical force can only be set in motion in human affairs by human wills. Battleships don't get built and guns fired off without the intervention of human intelligence pursuing certain ends.

Any employment of physical force where bodies of men are concerned involves reliance upon "paper guarantees," "faith," "moral power," whether it be a question of organizing a pirate crew or a metropolitan police force. Unless a pirate crew can be depended upon not to wreak private vengeance against its own members when in the midst of a fight; unless the captain keeps faith as to the division of the loot, it will go to pieces in a week. The success of piracy depends upon the ability of men to abide by a contract, particularly the undertaking not to use force against each other. And as for each nation "depending upon its own strength," the veriest tyro in diplomacy knows that to be rubbish. For the nation which can depend upon itself alone is at the mercy of the first alliance combination that rivals care to create. The great modern wars are not between single States but between alliances, and the preparation for every war is the arrangement of alliances. Upon the success with which the diplomats can exercise moral, argumentative force, the ultimate outcome usually depends. "Talk

and arguments are useless in the face of bayonets," says the major-general. But only by talk and arguments could the bayonets be brought there—arguments in newspapers to support the war, arguments in Parliament for the voting of conscription, arguments with other states to become our allies, arguments of the recruiting sergeant, arguments between the general staff; and, in fact, whether the bayonets are to be used to fight for us or against us depends also upon argument.

Before police is possible there must enter something other than force: agreement to create the police. That agreement, that moral factor, must precede the factor of force; police forces cannot act to get themselves created. But one may go further. If the general recognition of the utility of traffic rules were so defective that we had to have a policeman on every car to see that its driver observed the rules, then the use of motor cars would be impossible. Our lives on the road to-day depend on the other man having sense enough to see the virtue of keeping to his own side of the road. Police are indispensable, but they would be quite useless without a general recognition of the value of traffic rules; indeed, the police could not be there at all except as the result of previous organization of society—a piece of social co-operation which was not, and could not have arisen as the result of coercion. We talk of power as being the ultimate fact in the State; but the thing which produces the power, which makes it possible to create a common power, to establish police forces, is a moral thing, the recognition of a social truth. Furthermore, if the police themselves did not see the advantage of keeping their contracts, but had to be coerced in every situation, we should then have to have a police to police the police, and then another to police that police, and so on. The answer to the old Roman's question as to who guards the guardians is that the final guardian is and can only be public understanding and intelligence, the assumption that mutually advantageous contracts are, on

the whole, likely to be kept. But the parties to the contract must see the common advantage.

No society like ours—densely packed, with a high standard of living—could carry on if members had to be forced to their tasks, or could not be depended upon to perform them without compulsion. If every railway signalman had to have a policeman standing over him to see that he did not go to sleep, one half of the population would be policing the other half. And who would then see that the policeman were on duty? The proposition that "the State is force" is a patent fallacy. Force is an instrument which the State is able to use within definite limits by virtue of certain pre-existing traditions, moral assumptions on the part of its subjects. Without those moral premises the State could not function at all, could not use its "force." Socicty, indeed, at one point is dependent upon adherence to an implied agreement not to use force. If a government in power decided to disregard an adverse vote and to proclaim itself dictators for life, what would a nation do? Raise an army of rebellion? Very well. What if the chiefs of that victorious army, or the politicians behind it, in their turn refused to abide by the contract to vacate power when the elections went against them? More "force" in the shape of a new army of rebellion? But that in its turn will become the tyrant unless it decides to refrain from using its power and obey the will of the nation. No "force" can protect the nation here from the tyranny of governmental power (it does not protect the South American Republics, where the conditions just described obtain); only a tradition of political contract-keeping can do that.

Note, too, that the effectiveness of any "sanction," the restraining influence of punishment under law, depends upon the existence of a certain moral quality on the part of the prospective criminal, namely, the capacity to balance advantages, interests. A visitor to Macedonia, in the old days, asked a Turkish official why every traveller or mail-

cart had to be protected with a guard of soldiers. "Why not establish a *gendarmerie* and police the country properly, and you would not have to send soldiers with every mail-cart or travellers' wagon?" To which the Turkish official in effect replied: "But brigands, seeing a traveller unprotected, will inevitably attack him. Brigands are not people capable of carrying on a complicated process of reasoning: 'If I attack, I shall probably get caught, and if I get caught, I shall be tried, and if I'm tried I shall be convicted, and if I'm convicted I shall be hung.' Why, if brigands could argue like that they would not be brigands; they would be university professors predicting the future."

Yet the whole penal system of the western world is based on the assumption that even the criminal is capable of the degree of "rationalism" which so amazed the Turkish official. Indeed, without it our civilization would completely fail to "work"; even its "force" would fail to work.

I am not here re-stating the "social contract" theory of society. It is true that the State has grown out of the fact of some central power gradually enlarging itself, by overcoming smaller, and so creating a centre of authority. But even in the development of the modern state from feudal authority, agreement between feudal chiefs had to play a rôle; and my point is that this agreement must play an increasing rôle, and sheer domination a diminishing role, in the conditions of the modern world, for the reasons that I have already touched upon: the complications of modern society give the persons or parties or nations we would dominate a power of resistance not before possessed; and they constitute part of a whole, a machine, to which we belong and which we cannot afford to throw out of gear. Even if we did fight Germany we could not dominate her nor she us, as we have dominated, say, India. We do not need so to dominate Germany. Our work in India has, on the whole, been truly a police work: the maintenance of order between warring small states and factions. But we

do not need to keep order in Germany, and Germany does not need to keep order in Britain.

The latent struggle, therefore, between these two countries is futile. It is not the result of any inherent necessity of either people; it is the result merely of that woeful confusion which so bedevils statecraft to-day.

Where the condition of a territory is such that the social and economic co-operation of other countries with it is impossible, we may expect the intervention of military force, not as the result of the "annexationist illusion," but as the outcome of real need for the maintenance of order. That is the story of Great Britain in Egypt, or, for that matter, in India. But foreign nations have no need to maintain order in the British Colonies, nor in the United States; and though there might be such necessity in the case of countries like Venezuela, the last few years have taught us that by bringing these countries into the great economic currents of the world, and so setting up in them a whole body of interests in favour of order, more can be done than by forcible conquest. We occasionally hear rumours of German designs in Brazil and elsewhere, but even the modicum of education possessed by the average European statesman makes it plain to him that these nations are, like the others, "too firmly set" for military occupation and conquest by an alien people.

It is one of the humours of the whole Anglo-German conflict that so much has the British public been concerned with the myths and bogies of the matter that it seems calmly to have ignored the realities. While even the wildest Pan-German has never cast his eyes in the direction of Canada, he has cast them, and does cast them, in the direction of Asia Minor; and the political activities of Germany may centre on that area for precisely the reasons which result from the distinction between policing and conquest which I have drawn. German industry is coming to have a dominating situation in the Near East, and as those interests—markets and investments—increase, the necessity

for better order in, and the better organization of, those territories increases in corresponding degree. Germany may need to police Asia Minor.

What interest have we in attempting to prevent her? Provided always that power obtained for police purposes or in fulfilment of a police function, for enforcing that is to say the law, the rule of the road, is not used for the purpose of enabling the police to be above the law, to dominate it.

We do not readily come to agreements about the tasks of policing the world, because we have not the habit of regarding our problem as the common task of the maintenance of equal traffic rules for each. We still think of power as the instrument by which each may capture for himself exclusive "possessions."

It is because the work of policing backward, or disorderly populations is so often distorted by the annexationist illusion that the danger of squabbles in the matter is a real one. Not the fact that England is doing a real and useful work for the world at large in policing India creates jealousy of her work there, but the notion that she in some way "possesses" this territory, and draws tribute and exclusive advantage therefrom.

Other nations can only have access to the territory which Britain rules by her grace. There is a fear that she might exclude others. There are no established international rights, no clearly and formally recognized obligations to the rest of the world. That, nations feel, is hardly good enough as the basis of what may prove indispensable economic needs. So each wants if possible to occupy the position of "possessor" and do the policing, and out of this competition arises the ridiculous and dreadful see-saw of power that we know.

Instead of the users of the highway sitting down together to establish workable rules of the road so that all can travel it in peace and safety, each tries to grab his bit; to exercise exclusive sovereignty over that bit and assert the right to keep other users off it.

Note how the thing works out in practice:

Here are two states. One of them is, we will suppose, a seaboard state, commanding ice-free harbours, rivers, lines of communication, or raw materials, indispensable, it may be, to the economic expansion, or well-being, of life of a neighbouring state situated in the hinterland. Some dispute occurs with reference to the use of these harbours or rivers, and the seaboard state, being sovereign and independent, at some stage of the discussion says in effect to its neighbour:

> "You need the use of these harbours, rivers, roads, canals, raw materials. Note that we alone shall be judge as to whether you shall have such use, or upon what conditions. Since we are an independent sovereign State we can forbid such use if and when it seems good to us. If we care in our harbours to charge your ships twice or ten times the dues that we charge our own ships, that is entirely our affair. Are we not a sovereign and independent state? If, in the case of this inter-oceanic canal, indispensable as it may be to your commerce, we care to denounce existing treaties, and to exempt our ships from tolls altogether, in order that the upkeep of the canal shall be thrown upon you, that again is entirely our affair. Isn't it *our* canal? Don't we own it?"

Or words with the proper diplomatic (though, in the case of inter-oceanic canals, sometimes transatlantic) accent to that effect.

Does the state of the hinterland accept this? Sooner or later it will say:

> "In a difference over things indispensable to the life of our people, in a dispute in which you are an interested party, you claim to be sole judge as to what is fair. Such a claim threatens our vital interest, threatens, indeed, our indispensable freedom and security."

We have here, of course, the raw materials of a very petty quarrel. The dispute gets heated; both sides lose

their tempers badly, both sides call it patriotism, and there results, sooner or later, war.

We will assume that the state of the hinterland, having made sure of allies by promising them bits of its enemy's territory, is victorious, annexes what it needs and secures warm-water harbours, both sides of the river, canals, main artery railroads, ore fields, oil wells, or what not, the things necessary for its economic expansion.

Well, you may say, here is a clear case of military power being economically effective, a means of obtaining most desirable economic ends.

But is this the end of the drama? It is only the first act. What is the next stage? We have now, of course, an irredentist territory: an Alsace, an Ireland, a Bohemia. The hinterland state has done violence to the principles of nationality, and there begin among its new subject nationalities, agitations, plots. Poets sing, orators declaim, patriots assassinate, and this time it is the seaboard state that may have the best of the alliance combinations.

And if you would get an idea of how strong may be the means of resistance possessed by even a small state, and what forces, during a period of years, it can mobilize against a great one, just examine the history of, say, the Irish during the last fifty years.

Mighty as were the conquerors in the case of this little prisoner, he made it extremely difficult for them to go about their own business in peace. Whether the Irish were at Westminster or at war, English politics were again and again complicated by this everlasting question. When Englishmen ought to have been deciding their own issues, they were decided by the Irish. Ireland came between us and the Americans. She rendered difficult the shaping of foreign policy, created obstacles for us in things as apparently remote as the Panama tolls question and American coastwise shipping laws. In such ways as these, among others, Ireland organized a resistance extremely costly to overcome. In the end we gave up

the method of perpetual coercion, and, again, like the conqueror in Spencer's allegory, found it wise to come to a bargain.

And so, in our story of the two states, the conquest of the seaboard state by the hinterland is only the first act. The second is the story of the conquered state's resistance in the fashion of Alsace, Ireland: the resistance which sooner or later provokes a new war. In this new war we will suppose it is the border state which is successful. It is now "liberated," is once more a free, independent, and sovereign state.

Begins now Act III. What does our seaboard state do with its new freedom, independence, sovereignty, with victory? It reasserts—with greater violence than ever, of course, because it has now old scores to pay off, old oppressions to avenge, and a new authority to exercise—the very selfsame attitude, the selfsame claims—with a few added—which led to war in Act I. Once more it says to its neighbour of the hinterland:

> "You need access to the sea, along our rivers, the use of our harbours, canals, railroads; access to iron, nitrates, palm nuts, markets, colonies, undeveloped territories. We shall be judge of whether you shall have it, and on what conditions. You cannot live without this iron? We have taken your arms and yet give you no protection against your armed neighbours. And you must live. We do not see the necessity. And, in any case, we shall be judge."

And so, of course, the fundamental difficulty is more acute than ever. For the victor has probably taken such iron or colonies or ice-free ports which the hinterland had, by way of "larning it to be a toad."

Does anyone suppose that Act III is the last act? That this new distribution of irresponsible power is at last the "permanent solution" for mankind? If it is possible for a little state to resist a big so successfully, why should

the big, when placed in the position originally occupied by the little, be any less successful? Of course, the game goes on. New plots, new alliances, new war; new punitive treaties, more scores to pay off, more revenge due, and the last punitive treaty which was to punish the previous war, arising out of the previous punitive treaty, which was vengeance for the war before that . . . *da capo, ad infinitum* —I had almost written *ad nauseum*, but vengeance knows no nausea.[1]

Of course, the fatal and infernal cycle of futility, falsehood and death might be broken, if, on the morrow of war, the victor, whichever of the two it might be, were to say:

> "We have quarrelled over certain things—security, strategic frontiers, undeveloped territory, raw materials, lines of communication—for a hundred years, or five hundred years. We might go on quarrelling to the end of time. We realize that you need access to certain things over which we have control, certain freedoms of movement in areas under our political dominion. Let us come to a bargain about all this. We will agree upon certain mutual conditions, devise a Bill of Economic Rights. And as there are several of us concerned (there always are several), instead of pitting our force one against the other, everybody trying to be stronger than everybody else, we will pool our power, and put it behind that Bill of Rights or that body of law."

If that happened, the two parties would have taken the first step towards doing, for the society of nations, what has already been done for the society of individuals within each state. Power would stand as the commonly possessed

[1] "In fixing reparations," says M. Clemenceau in the preface to M. Tardieu's book, "we must take into consideration Sedan and Waterloo, *to go no further back*." (My italics.) ("Waterloo et Sedan, pour ne pas remonter plus haut, nous imposaient, d'abord les douloureux soucis d'une politique de réparation.")

In the next war the punitive treaty will be based on the need of securing punishment and reparation for the burning of Joan of Arc.

instrument for the impartial enforcement of the common body of law, instead of being, as it is among nations, the instrument by which each tries to impose his own view of his own rights.

Why is not such a step taken? Why do we not adopt what is plainly the wise, the simple, effective, and only solution of the greatest failure of human wisdom and intelligence that our life on the planet can show?

CHAPTER XI

WHAT MAKES US FIGHT? AND NEED WE?

Men love power and domination so much that they never abandon it so long as they believe that they can achieve desired ends by its means. But when we realize that it simply won't give us what we want we turn to co-operation instead; and our wants change. That men should fight is perhaps part of their nature; but what they fight about is part of their nurture, habit, training, tradition, ways of thought. We now see that it is irrelevant and unworthy to fight about religion; we could as readily come to see that it is irrelevant and self-defeating to fight about our nationalisms.

WELL, why do we not do it?

First, because we refuse to face its need, and refuse to face the failure of the old method. Without any sort of doubt, there is a strong instinctive push everywhere to preserve the military method for its own sake, quite apart from anything it really achieves in the way of security or advantage. (And, incidentally, one of the advantages of this discussion is that it compels us at all points to ask what it is we really want—prosperity, economic security, the satisfaction of pride, or what; and particularly if one of these wants is in conflict with others, how much we want it.) For it is quite obvious that with very many whose attitude determines public policy, these very rudimentary questions have not been asked.

Those who have followed at all closely the peace advocacy of the last few years will have observed a curious shifting of ground on the part of its opponents. Until quite recently pacifists were generally criticized as unduly idealistic, sentimental, oblivious to the hard necessities of men in a cruel world of struggle, and disposed to ask too much of human nature in the way of altruistic self-sacrifice

on behalf of "a Sunday-school view of life." We were given to understand that while peace might represent a great moral ideal, man's evil passions and cupidity would always stand in the way of its achievement. The citations I have given in Chapter II of this book prove sufficiently, I think, that this was, until quite recently, overwhelmingly the position of those who took the view that war is an unavoidable part of human struggle.

During the last few years, however, the militarist position has shifted. Peace, we are told by those who oppose the pacifist movement, may ensure the material interests of men, but the spiritual nature will stand in the way of its ever being achieved ! Pacifism, far from being branded as too idealistic and sentimental, is now scorned as "sordidly material."

It is not for the purpose of a cheap jibe that attention is called to this change of position. Throughout, as the reader may testify, this book has insisted upon the importance of doing justice to the moral case for war.

My object in calling attention to this unconscious shifting of ground, is to suggest that the economic case for war has become practically untenable, and that this has consequently compelled those who defend war to shift their ground.

Writing in 1912, Admiral Mahan criticizes this book as follows:

> "The purpose of armaments, in the minds of those maintaining them, is not primarily an economical advantage, in the sense of depriving a neighbouring State of its own, or fear of such consequences to itself through the deliberate aggression of a rival having that particular end in view. . . . The fundamental proposition of the book is a mistake. Nations are under no illusion as to the unprofitableness of war in itself. . . . The entire conception of the work is itself an illusion, based upon a profound misreading of human action. To regard the world as governed by self-interest only is to live in a

non-existent world, an ideal world, a world possessed by an idea much less worthy than those which mankind, to do it bare justice, persistently entertains."[1]

Yet hardly four years previously Admiral Mahan had himself outlined the elements of international politics as follows:

"It is as true now as when Washington penned the words, and will always be true, that it is vain to expect nations to act consistently from any motive other than that of interest. This under the name of Realism is the frankly avowed motive of German statecraft. It follows from this directly that the study of interests—international interest—is the one basis of sound, of provident, policy for statesmen . . .

"The old predatory instinct, that he should take who has the power, survives . . . and moral force is not sufficient to determine issues unless supported by physical. Governments are corporations, and corporations have no souls . . . they must put first the rival interests of their own wards . . . their own people, commercial and industrial. Predominance forces a nation to seek markets, and, where possible, to control them to its own advantage by preponderating force, the ultimate expression of which is possession . . . an inevitable link in a chain of logical sequences: industry, markets, control, navy bases."[2]

Admiral Mahan, it is true, anticipates this criticism by pleading the complex character of human nature (which no one denies). He says: "Bronze is copper, and bronze is tin." But he overlooks the fact that if one withholds copper or one withholds tin it is no longer bronze.

The present author has never taken the ground that all international action can be explained in the terms of

[1] *North American Review*, March, 1912. The reader may be reminded that the replies to criticisms here printed are of the pre-war period.

[2] *The Interest of America in International Conditions.* London: Sampson Low, 1908.

one narrow motive, but he does take the ground that if you can profoundly modify the bearing of a constituent as important as the one to which Admiral Mahan has himself, in his own work, attributed such weight, you will profoundly modify the whole texture and character of international relations. Thus, even though it were true that the thesis here elaborated were as narrowly economic as the criticism I have quoted would imply, it would, nevertheless, have, on Admiral Mahan's own showing, a very profound bearing on the problems of international state-craft.

Much mischief arises from confusing the term "economic" with "selfish." The long-sustained efforts of parents to provide fittingly for their children—efforts continued, it may be, through half a lifetime—are certainly economic. Just as certainly they are not selfish in any exact sense of the term.

What picture is summoned to our minds by the word "economics" in relation to war? To the critics whose indignation is so excited at the introduction of the subject at all into the discussion of war—and they include, unhappily, some of the great names of English literature—"economic" seems to carry no picture but that of an obese Semitic stockbroker in quaking fear for his profits. This view cannot be said to imply either much imagination or much sense of reality. For the economic futility of war expresses itself otherwise: in hunger, disease, dying children —millions rendered greedy, selfish, violent, by the constant strain of hunger; resulting in social unrest that may mean the disintegration of civilization.

Speaking broadly, I do not believe that men ever go to war from a cold calculation of personal advantage or profit. I never have believed it. It seems to me an obvious and childish misreading of human psychology. I cannot see how it is possible to imagine a man laying down his life on the battlefield for personal gain, unless he is quite unusually certain of his mansions in the skies. Nations

do not fight for their money or investments, they fight for their rights, or what they believe to be their rights, particularly the most elementary of all rights, the right to existence, the right of a population to bread and a decent livelihood.

Perhaps the true explanation of Admiral Mahan's emphatic contradiction of himself is that none of us knows really just what motive he is obeying. The whole tendency of modern psychological research would seem to show that we do something because we want to, and then try to find reasons for making it appear reasonable. This would seem to apply particularly to collective acts and policies, where the sense of responsibility is watered down; watered down by a process in which A justifies himself because B is taking the same line and B because A is taking it.

In an earlier work of the present writer,[1] an attempt was made to reveal the nature of patriotism by analysing certain violent manifestations of it: the explosions of American Anglophobia over the Venezuelan dispute, the American war on Spain, the Dreyfus case in France, and the Boer War in England. In each case we saw a whole people violently moved by what they declared to be patriotism—desire for the welfare of their country. But it was obvious that the American people were not thinking of the national welfare in risking war with Britain over the boundary line between British Guiana and Venezuela, and then a few months later actually going to war with Spain for the independence of Cuba, which would shortly in any case have been achieved without war. Such policies were not, in fact, dictated by a desire to better the condition of the American people. The Americans at that time were excited about war as, at other times, they become excited about baseball; they wanted war as the British people a little later wanted war against the Boers, and certain

[1] *Patriotism Under Three Flags: A Plea for Rationalism in Politics.* London, 1903.

sections of the French public wanted the condemnation of Dreyfus because they did not like Jews. They all attempted to justify to themselves and to others, the doing of what they wanted, by invoking considerations which sounded reasonable and realistic.

Having got thus far in analysing the causes of war, the popular conclusion is that you can do nothing about it; that since men act from motives which have little relation to advantage, it is useless to discuss the disadvantages of a given line of conduct; that conduct which has its roots in instinctive and unexamined impulse cannot be modified; that psychological "wants" are unchangeable. But daily experience and the facts of history, to say nothing of modern psychology, show such a conclusion to be quite unsound. Unexamined impulses may be examined; first thoughts may give place to second. As a society, we certainly do not continue to want the same things which we did in the past. A thing which at one time may seem good may, as the result of discussion of whether it is really good, come to seem horrible. At one time we want to eat our enemies, to burn heretics, kill our neighbours in duels, burn negroes. But we come to look at the thing a second time and find we don't want those things at all. A given course is far more destructive or injurious to us that we had at first supposed; we find that we don't want it as much as we did. This does not mean that human nature has changed in the sense of there being a change of biological make-up, but that the fact of seeing more things, seeing them differently, things we had at first overlooked, giving a different interpretation to what we see—this different way of looking at things causes instinct and impulse to take different directions. The progress from savagery to civilization might be described as a process of bringing the first thought under the discipline of the second, of guiding instinct by bringing it increasingly under the domain of social intelligence. This does not necessarily mean refraining from doing what we

want to do; it means getting new wants because we see facts somewhat differently.

It is a commonplace of daily observation that different persons will act differently to the same stimulus owing to a difference of early suggestion, habit, training, estimate of values. Both the Briton and the Hindu are alike in that when they go without food both are hungry. But the first thinks of juicy beef steaks; the second, if he had beef steaks, would vomit. It is not that the second differs physiologically from the first. The lining of the Hindu's stomach is just the same as the Briton's, but habit and suggestion have caused the former to want and like different things; to get his satisfaction in ways which differ from the Briton's. It is equally "human nature" for the one to take pleasure in the thought of beef steak and for the other to be revolted.

To talk as though man must always gratify his animosities and pugnacities in exactly the way he has done in the past, as though wants remain the same, is surely to challenge all human experience.

Nor is it a question of attempting to "dominate strong emotions by feeble reason." The power of reason is, if you will, feeble. So is the "power" which swings the needle of a ship's compass: microscopic compared to the twenty thousand horse-power developed in the ship's engines. Yet whether the force of those engines is to save or wreck the ship will depend at times upon the feeble power of the compass. If the needle, feeble as is its power, points truly, the greater the power developed in the engines; the greater will be the chance of the ship's riding out the gale and keeping off the rocks. If the compass is deflected, the greater will be the smash when the error piles the ship upon the reef. Our reason and will are the compass; our emotions the engine.

Across the street I see a lifelong enemy whom for years I have been plotting to murder. My passion has become mania. No appeal to sweet reasonableness can possibly

divert me from my course. I am quite beyond reason and argument. Yet a piece of logic causes my passion instantly to be diverted. A friend with me points out that the man has five fingers on his right hand: my enemy had only four. This piece of reasoning, of pure logic, reveals to me that it is a case of mistaken identity, and I no longer wish to kill this particular man; my wish is completely altered by the different way in which I am brought to see facts.

It is true that we want to satisfy national pride of place, satisfy our dislike of foreigners. These are strong impulses, it may well be. But we also want not to ruin our trade, our national prosperity, and if it is brought clearly before us that the result of indulging the impulse will be just that ruin, the one want will counterbalance the other. And the way we feel about it will be largely determined by the way we think about it, by the degree of clarity and force with which we see what is indispensable to our nation's happiness.

At this stage of man's development in the West he has one outstanding need in order to solve him gravest social problems: a closer co-operation between the political groups. Yet the tendency is to rivalry, a contest for domination of the one by the other. And I suggest that that contest will go on, just because it has such strong instinctive roots, until we realize clearly and vividly that it won't work, will not fulfil what, after all, have become our permanent needs. To the degree to which we realize the futility of individual coercion and domination we shall turn to partnership. But only to such degree.

An American sociologist (Professor Giddings of Columbia University) has written thus:

> "So long as we can confidently act, we do not argue; but when we face conditions abounding in uncertainty, or when we are confronted by alternative possibilities, we first hesitate, then feel our way, then guess, and at

length venture to reason. Reasoning, accordingly, is that action of the mind to which we resort when the possibilities before us and about us are distributed substantially according to the law of chance occurrence, or, as the mathematician would say, in accordance with 'the normal curves' of random frequency. The moment the curve is obviously skewed we decide; if it is obviously skewed from the beginning, by authority, or coercion, our reasoning is futile, or imperfect. So, in the State, if any interest or coalition of interests is dominant, and can act promptly, it rules by absolutist methods. Whether it is benevolent or cruel, it wastes neither time nor resources upon government by discussion; but if interests are innumerable, and so distributed as to offset one another, and if no great bias or overweighting anywhere appears, government by discussion inevitably arises. The interests can get together only if they talk. If power shall be able to dictate, it will also rule, and the appeal to reason will be vain."

This means that a realization of interdependence—even though it be subconscious—is the basis of the social sense, the feeling and tradition which make possible a democratic society in which freedom is voluntarily limited for the purpose of preserving any freedom at all.

It indicates, also, the relation of certain economic truths to the impulses and instincts that underlie international conflict. We shall excuse or justify or fail to restrain those instincts, unless and until we see that their indulgence stands in the way of the things which we need and must have if society is to live. We shall then discredit them as anti-social, as we have discredited religious fanaticism, and build up a controlling *Sittlichkeit.*

As Lecky has pointed out, the preoccupation which "for numberless generations was the centre round which all other interests revolved has simply and purely disappeared. Coalitions which were once the most serious occupation of statesmen now exist only in the speculations of the expounders of prophecy. Among all the elements

of affinity and repulsion that regulate the combinations of nations, dogmatic influences which were once supreme can scarcely be said to exist. There is a change here reaching down into the most fundamental impulses of the human mind. Until the seventeenth century every mental virtue, which philosophy pronounces to be essential to legitimate research, was almost uniformly branded as a sin, and a large proportion of the most deadly intellectual vices were deliberately inculcated as virtues."

Anyone who argued that the differences between Catholics and Protestants were not such as force could settle, and that the time would come when man would realize this truth, and regard a religious war between European states as a wild and unimaginable anachronism, would have been put down as a futile doctrinaire, completely ignoring the most elementary facts of "unchanging human nature."

"Never," said a great Cardinal once, in the times of religious wars, "will men cease to fight about the most important thing which concerns them—their eternal salvation." That was why, he continued, the Catholic felt such deadly hatred for the Heretic and the Heretic for the Catholic. Such passions were inevitable, natural and even meritorious. The fires of the *auto-da-fé* would never cease to burn until the world was all Christian or all infidel.

Well, the Cardinal could cite many facts in his time in support of his argument. Yet men no longer burn each other on the grounds of faith, and even the Klu Klux Klan has hard work trying not to be a vaudeville joke. Something very important touching the way in which human nature manifests itself has been changed here. How has that change been brought about? It may be argued that it is because we no longer take religion seriously, that men have become sceptical. But that only pushes the question further back. Why have we become more sceptical, and why has that change attenuated, abolished or changed the direction of hates and passions which certainly had the appearance of being "natural"? If "talk"—

the talk of the higher critics, or what not—has not altered human nature, it has altered human behaviour. And that is the all-important thing.

There is one striking incident of the religious struggle of states which illustrates vividly the change which has come over the spirit of man. For over two hundred years Christians fought the Infidel for the conquest of the Holy Sepulchre. All the nations of Europe joined in this great endeavour. It seemed to be the one thing which could unite them, and for generations, so profound was the impulse which produced the movement, the struggle went on. There is nothing in history, perhaps, quite comparable to it. Suppose that during this struggle one had told a European statesman of that age that the time would come when, assembled in a room, the representatives of a Europe, which had made itself the absolute master of the Infidel, could by a single stroke of the pen secure the Holy Sepulchre for all time to Christendom, but that, having discussed the matter cursorily twenty minutes or so, they would decide that on the whole it was not worth while! Had such a thing been told to a mediæval statesman he would certainly have regarded the prophecy as that of a madman. Yet this, of course, is precisely what has taken place.[1]

A glance over the common incidents of Europe's history will show the profound change which has visibly taken place, not only in the minds, but in the hearts of men.

[1] In his *History of the Rise and Influence of the Spirit of Rationalism in Europe*, Lecky says: "It was no political anxiety about the balance of power, but an intense religious enthusiasm that impelled the inhabitants of Christendom towards the site which was at once the cradle and the symbol of their faith. All interests were then absorbed, all classes were governed, all passions subdued or coloured, by religious fervour. National animosities that had raged for centuries were pacified by its power. The intrigues of statesmen and the jealousies of kings disappeared beneath its influence. Nearly two million lives are said to have been sacrificed in the cause. Neglected governments, exhausted finances, depopulated countries, were cheerfully accepted as the price of success. No wars the world has ever before seen were so popular as these, which were at the same time the most disastrous and the most unselfish."

Things which even in our stage of civilization would no longer be possible, owing to that change in human nature which the military dogmatist denies, were commonplace incidents with our grandfathers. Indeed, the modifications in the religious attitude just touched on assuredly arise from an emotional as much as from an intellectual change. A theology which could declare that the unborn child would suffer eternal torment in the fires of hell for no crime other than that of its conception, would be in our day impossible on merely emotional grounds.[1] What was once deemed a mere truism would now be viewed with horror and indignation. Again as Lecky says, "For a great change has silently swept over Christendom. Without disturbance, an old doctrine has passed away from among the realizations of mankind."

But it is not true that a change such as that involved here necessarily "takes thousands of years." How would most of us feel to-day if we were invited to participate in the scene painted by a Spanish artist of the Court and nobles and populace in a great European city, gathered

[1] "Be assured," writes St. Augustine, "and doubt not that not only men who have obtained the use of their reason, but also little children who have begun to live in their mother's womb and there died, or who, having been just born, have passed away from the world without the Sacrament of Holy Baptism, must be punished by the eternal torture of undying fire." To make the doctrine clearer, he illustrates it by the case of a mother who had two children. Each of these is but a lump of perdition. Neither had ever performed a moral or immoral act. The mother overlies one, and it perishes unbaptized. It goes to eternal torment. The other is baptized and saved.

Autos-da-fé were evidently regarded as suitable subjects for public holidays. In the Gallery of Madrid there is a painting by Francisco Rizzi representing the execution, or rather the procession to the stake, of a number of heretics during the fêtes that followed the marriage of Charles II, and before the King, his bride and the Court and Clergy of Madrid. The great square was arranged like a theatre, and thronged with ladies in Court dress. The King sat on an elevated platform surrounded by the chief members of the aristocracy.

Limborch, in his *History of the Inquisition*, related that among the victims of one *auto-da-fé* was a girl of sixteen, whose singular beauty struck all who saw her with admiration. As she passed to the stake she cried to the Queen: "Great Queen, is not your presence able to bring me some comfort under my misery?"

on a public holiday as for a festival to see a beautiful child burned to death for a faith that, as it plaintively said, it had sucked in with its mother's milk?

How long separates us from that scene? Why, not the lives of three ordinarily elderly people. And how long after that scene—which was not an isolated incident of uncommon kind, but a very everyday matter, typical of the ideas and feelings of the time at which it was enacted—was it before the renewal of such became a practical impossibility? It was not a hundred years. It was enacted in 1680, and within the space of a short lifetime the world knew that never again would a child be burned alive as the result of a legal condemnation by a duly constituted Court, and as a public festival, witnessed by the King and the nobles and the populace, in one of the great cities of Europe.

Is it likely that a general progress which has transformed religion is going to leave patriotism unaffected; that the rationalization and humanization which have taken place in the more complex domain of religious doctrine and belief will not also take place in the domain of politics? The problem of religious toleration was beset with difficulties incalculably greater than any which confront us in this problem. Then, as now, the old order was defended with real disinterestedness; then it was called religious fervour; now it is called patriotism. The best of the old inquisitors were as disinterested, as sincere, as single-minded, as are doubtless the best of the Prussian Junkers, the French Nationalists, the British militarists. Then, as now, the progress towards peace and security seemed to them a dangerous degeneration, the break-up of faiths, the undermining of most that holds society together.

And that hundred years which I have mentioned as witnessing so amazing a development of European ideas, a period which marked an evolution so great that the very mind and nature of men seemed to change, was a hundred years without newspapers; a time in which books were such a rarity that it took years for one to travel from

Madrid to London; in which the steam printing-press did not exist, nor the railroad, nor the telegraph, nor any of those thousand contrivances which now make it possible for the words of an English statesman spoken to-night to be read by forty million Germans to-morrow morning—to do, in short, more in the way of the dissemination of ideas in a few weeks than was possible then in a century.

When things moved so slowly, a generation or two sufficed to transform the mind of Europe on the religious side. Why should it be impossible to change that mind on the political side in a generation, or half a generation, when things move so much more quickly? Are men less disposed to change their political than their religious opinions? We all know that *not* to be the case. In every country in Europe we find political parties advocating, or at least acquiescing in, policies which they strenuously opposed ten years ago. Does the evidence available go to show that the particular side of politics with which we are dealing is notably more impervious to change and development than the rest—less within the reach and influence of new ideas?

It is very difficult to say where the belief of those who talk of unchanging human nature in the matter of war really lies. Do they really believe that the tendency to war is ineradicable, or fear that it is not? For though they tell us so dogmatically that you can never expel man's tendency to war by "talk," they always clamour in war time—as they did in America in the Spanish War, and in Britain during the Boer War—for the forcible suppression of pacifist propaganda, because it undermines morale—takes away, in other words, the desire to go on with the war. And even in peace time, the Pacifists are accused, as Colonel Roosevelt has just been accusing them, of taking away our "fighting edge"; and he thinks we need the stimulant of war, the "strenuous life," to redeem us from our tendency to slothful ease. He obviously fears that we

shall not get as much war as we need. It is an old text upon which Ruskin used to preach.

Not that I am concerned to deny that we owe a great deal morally to the soldier. I do not know even why we should deny that we owe a great deal to the Viking and other pirates. Both have bequeathed a heritage of courage, sturdiness, hardihood, and a spirit of ordered adventure; the capacity to take hard knocks and to give them; comradeship and rough discipline—all this and much more. It is not true to say of any emotion that it is wholly good, or wholly bad. The same psychological force which made the Vikings destructive and cruel pillagers made their descendants sturdy and resolute pioneers and colonists.

There is no necessity for the peace advocate to ignore facts in this matter. The race of man loves a soldier just as boys we used to love the pirate, and many of us, perhaps to our very great advantage, remain in part boys our lives through. But just as growing out of boyhood we regretfully discover the sad fact that we cannot be a pirate, that we cannot even hunt Indians, nor be a scout, nor even a trapper, so surely the time has come to realize that we have grown out of soldiering. The romantic appeal of war was just as true of the ventures of the old Vikings, and even later of piracy.[1] Yet we superseded the Viking and we hanged the pirate, though I doubt not we loved him while we hanged him; and I am not aware that those who urged the suppression of piracy were vilified, except by the pirates, as maudlin sentimentalists, who ignored human nature, or, as General Lee's phrase has it, as "half-educated, sick-brained visionaries, denying the inexorability of the primordial law of struggle." Piracy interfered seriously with civilization. We are prepared to sing

[1] Professor William James says: "Greek history is a panorama of war for war's sake . . . of the utter ruin of a civilization which in intellectual respects was perhaps the highest the earth has ever seen. The wars were purely piratical. Pride, gold, women, slaves, excitement were their only motives."—*McClure's Magazine*, August, 1910.

about the Viking, but not to tolerate him on the high seas; and those of us who are quite prepared to give the soldier his due place in poetry and legend and romance, quite prepared to admit, with Mr. Roosevelt and Von Moltke and the rest, the qualities which perhaps we owe to him, and without which we should be poor folk indeed, are nevertheless inquiring whether the time has not come to place him (or a good portion of him) gently on the poetic shelf with the Viking; or at least to find other fields for those activities which, however much we may be attracted by them, have in their present form little place in a world in which, though, as Bacon has said, men like danger better than travail, travail is bound, alas !—despite ourselves, and whether we fight Germany or not, and whether we win or lose—to be our lot.

CHAPTER XII

CONCLUSIONS

The conclusion to be drawn from the argument of this book is not that since war is profitless the danger of attack is past. Men are not guided by the facts, but what they believe to be the facts. Only when the futility is realized will the futility deter. One-sided disarmament is therefore of no avail and is not here advocated. But while maintaining our arms we must maintain our efforts to create a new order based on the recognition of those mutual obligations between nations which are necessary for fruitful co-operation. Such efforts are now unpopular so that statesmen dare not make them and take the risks involved. The necessary will can never exist so long as we believe that co-operation between nations is contrary to the laws of nature and of life, and beyond man's power. This book is designed to undermine that satanic fatalism; to prove that though truly war will not stop itself, apart from human endeavour, man can, since he makes war, also make wars to cease.

WHAT is the conclusion?

We have seen that no material advantage is to be achieved by a successful attack upon us, any more than by ours upon someone else; that an enemy, successful in war, could take neither our wealth, our gold, our trade, nor our colonies (since we don't own them); his war would certainly prove economically futile. Is the conclusion, therefore, that we need no defence; that we can abolish our armaments and invite the foreigner to do his worst?

Always have I insisted that this is not the conclusion; that the futility of war will never of itself stop war; that only when men realize the futility will it deter them. They do not at present so realize that futility, or this book would never have been written. Policy is determined, not by the facts, but what men believe to be the facts, and that belief may be woefully mistaken.

In a pamphlet which was the first edition of this book, and repeated in every subsequent edition, is this passage:

"Are we immediately to cease preparation for war, since our defeat cannot advantage our enemy nor do us in the long run much harm? No such conclusions results from a study of the considerations elaborated here. It is evident that so long as the misconception we are dealing with is all but universal in Europe, so long as the nations believe that in some way the military and political subjugation of others will bring with it a tangible material advantage to the conqueror, we all do, in fact, stand in danger from such aggression. Not his interest, but what he deems to be his interest, will furnish the real motive of our prospective enemy's action. Not the facts, but men's opinions about facts is what matters. And as the illusion with which we are dealing does, indeed, dominate those whose influence shapes European politics, we must, while this remains the case, regard an aggression, even such as that which Mr. Harrison foresees, as within the bounds of practical politics. (What is not within the bounds of possibility is the extent of devastation which he foresees as the result of such attack, which, I think, the foregoing pages sufficiently demonstrate.)

"On this ground alone I deem that we or any other nation are justified in taking means of self-defence to prevent such aggression. This is not, therefore, a plea for disarmament irrespective of the action of other nations. So long as current political philosophy in Europe remains what it is, I would not urge the reduction of our war budget by a single sovereign."

In the enlargement of that pamphlet I wrote this:

"But if preparation of the machinery of war is to be our only form of energy in this matter—if national effort is to neglect all other factors whatsoever—more and more will sincere and patriotic men have doubts as

to whether they are justified in co-operating in further piling up the armaments of our country."

We take risks in accepting inferiority of power; but we take still greater risks if we drift into war because, concentrating all our energy on piling up arms, we have none left for composing the quarrel or difference.

In this matter it seems fatally easy to secure either one of two kinds of action: that of the "practical man" who limits his energies to securing a policy which will perfect the machinery of war, and disregard anything else; or that of the pacifist, who, persuaded of the brutality or immortality of war, just leaves it at that, implying that national defence is no concern of his. What is needed is the type of activity which will include both halves of the problem; provision for education, for a political reformation in this matter, *as well as* such means of defence as will meantime counter-balance the existing impulse to aggression. To concentrate on either half to the exclusion of the other half is to render the whole problem insoluble.

What must inevitably happen if the nations take the line of the "practical man," and limit their energies simply and purely to piling up armaments?

A critic once put to me what he evidently deemed a poser: "Do you urge that we shall be stronger than our enemy, or weaker?"

To which I replied: "The last time that question was asked me was in Berlin, by Germans. What would you have had me reply to those Germans?"

The British Navy League catechism says: "Defence consists in being so strong that it will be dangerous for your enemy to attack you." And the German Navy Law providing for new construction, in its preamble, simply turns this phrase into German.

The essence of truth is degree. This book does not argue that there is not, and could never be, such a thing

as a conflict of national interests. It is not necessary to prove such absolutes in order to establish the case which I am trying to establish. But if it be true, broadly, that a nation cannot capture wealth by military means—that wealth in the modern world is of such a nature that the very fact of military seizure causes the thing we want to disappear; if, far from it being true that we *must* fight or starve, it is very much nearer to the truth to say that we shall starve unless we stop fighting; and that only by co-operation can we solve our economic problems, then to prove this is to clear the road to co-operation, to do the thing which must be done if the *will* to co-operate is to be set in motion.

For while it may not be true that, where there is a will there is a way, it is certainly true that, where there is no will, there is no way; and there can be no will to co-operation so long as each party believes that partnership means dividing limited spoils of which he could secure the whole if only he can "conquer" that other party.

Now, though it may be true that, where you are dependent upon your partner (where, say, two fishermen are working together a fishing smack which would certainly be wrecked if one tried to work it alone), you cannot profitably destroy him, cannot seize his share of the catch without sacrificing your own—even so, it does not mean that you are ready to forgo all means of protecting your rights under the terms of the partnership; does not mean surrendering all measures to ensure that you do not have more than your share of the work and less than your share of the profits.

Thus, though we may decide that fighting each other in order to seize things which cannot be seized is a silly business, and that as civilized men we must learn to co-operate, co-operation needs organizing, perhaps policing.

Collective power, expressed through police, may be necessary to give men—or nations—equality, equality of right. Circumstances give a person or a nation a position of power. There arises a difference—it may well be an

honest difference—of view as to which has the rights of the matter. The stronger—fortified by his sense of right—says to the other: "That's my view. I believe I'm right: I intend to carry my view into effect, and, as you are weaker, you will just have to accept it." There is no equality of right here. The material or economic question, as we have seen, soon becomes a question of right. And, by some curious quirk of thought this situation is supposed to justify competition of arms, the armed anarchy of the nations. But that does not ensure right or justice; it imposes injustice; compels the weaker to accept the view of the stronger, however outrageous that view may be.

But if anarchy, the competition of arms does not ensure justice, neither does non-resistance: the unresisted domination of the stronger. Power must act impartially for all, and it can only do that if it is placed behind a law or code that is applied equally to all.

Even when civilized individuals, living within the nation, accept completely the principle of social co-operation and do not base their conduct on the assumption that in order to live someone else has to go under—even so, we know that life can only go on by means of established rules and codes, sometimes of great complexity, covering things from motor traffic to marriage laws, banking practice and inheritance of property. Each individual must know that such rights as he possesses will be assured to him other than by his own strength, otherwise he will be his own defender of his own rights and try to be stronger than his neighbour; and that neighbour will claim the same right to be stronger, and you will then get the process of everybody trying to be stronger than everybody else, anarchy and chaos.

That is why I do not believe that the problem of defence can be simply ignored; nor that we can persuade men to accept sheer non-resistance as its solution. The first stage in getting rid of our instruments of coercion, or reducing them to vanishing point, is, as indicated in preceding pages, to transfer them from rival litigants to the law,

to the community, to make of our armies and navies the common police[1] of civilization, standing behind a commonly agreed rule. But, before that can be done, there must be created a sense of community, a sense of our interests being common interests, not inherently, "biologically," in conflict. It is futile to lament the fact that there is no police to restrain our rival if we ourselves refuse to co-operate in the creation of a police. Before the police can exist, there must be a community; and before the community can exist, there must be a sense of common interest, and before that can exist, we must shed the false ideas which are incompatible with that sense. To that end finally—the transformation of men's ideas which determine their acts—do we inevitably come.

However we may start, with whatever plan, however elaborated or varied, the end is always the same—the progress of man in this matter depends upon the degree to which his ideas are socially workable.

It is customary to talk in this connection of the necessarily slow changes of outlook, with the implication that great wisdom and great knowledge on the part of millions must be a part of the process of change. But, as we saw in the last chapter, the great changes, like those which marked the change in the attitude of the state to religious belief are due, not to a knowledge of many facts, intricate learning, but to a clearer perception of the meaning of simple, everyday facts. It is with such, after all, that this book has mainly dealt.

If little apparently has been done in the modification of ideas in this matter, it is because little relatively has been attempted. Millions of us are prepared to throw ourselves with energy into that part of national defence which, after all, is a makeshift, into agitation for the building of dread-

[1] I do not mean an international force with an international commander, but the exisisting armies and navies pledged by treaty to maintain a common international policy. What differentiates a police force from an army is not its organization but its purpose, its function.

noughts and the raising of armies, the things in fact which can be seen. But barely dozens will throw themselves with equal ardour into that other department of national defence, the only department which will really guarantee security, though by means which are invisible—the clarification of ideas.

No attempt is made in these pages to draw up schemes of world government. There have been many such in the past, as there will be many in the future. One of them was known as "the Grand Design of Henry IV," and of it a fellow monarch said in effect this: "It is perfect. There is not a flaw in it, save perhaps this: not a single earthly prince would dream for a moment of agreeing to it." And that is the defect of all these paper schemes, drawn up in disregard of the existing way of thought, of feeling. So long as that is disregarded it is true to say of these schemes that "the best is the worst," in the sense that the better they are as a piece of logical governmental mechanism, the more remote they are likely to be from the familiar, the everyday, paying least regard to the prejudices, blind spots, follies of the ordinary man, which have produced the defects they are designed to cure. And the statesmen, politicians, are justified therefore when they refuse to take much interest in plans which they are perfectly aware their publics will never accept. But is that the end of the matter? Does it mean that the world can never be governed by sense and reason—or rather that the degree of sense and reason which enters into government can never be increased; that nowhere is more wisdom possible? Of course, we don't believe that, for if we cannot in this matter get more wisdom we shall get less. Note where lies the dominant error in this matter. The politician or statesman says: The only effect of my standing for your Grand Design would be to cause my party to be turned out of or banned from office by an angry electorate whose ideas of patriotism, national welfare, morality and religion it outrages. How much forrader would we be? Even if I believed in your

scheme, what purpose would be served by smashing my party and having the electorate smash your Design? You would not be any nearer to the achievement of your ends. Your scheme simply is not "practical politics."

And the general conclusion is that that finishes the matter, and that practical folk need pay no further attention to it.

But this implies gross confusion as to the proper function of the politician. His function is not to change the common mind but to represent it. To possess the common mind to an uncommon degree, to become leader because he follows, is nine-tenths of the secret of political success. And it is in truth folly to suppose that a man could ever become leader by flouting the real convictions of those he leads. For a politician to expect that the millions will steadily vote against their honest convictions would be utter childishness. This does not mean that convictions can never be changed. The history of the world is there to show that they can be: in the deepest and most vital things that concern us, in morality, in our ideas of what is right and what wrong, in religion, in our ideas of God; our ideas of honour; our ideas of what is important and what unimportant, there occur revolutionary changes sometimes in a generation or two. A multitude of things which our forbears regarded as manifestly right or excusable—human sacrifices, slavery, polygamy, autocracy, judicial torture, the duel—we regard as shamefully wrong or silly. Much of what we regard as manifestly right or good, our forbears would have regarded as monstrously wicked. So convictions can change. But the democratic politician, dependent for his political life upon votes—votes rapidly obtained in the whirl of an election—cannot change them. All he can do is to reflect or register changes or modifications that have gone on in the public mind, usually as the result of forces outside politics.

In this matter it is the business of those outside politics to prepare the ground for the wiser politician; to make it

possible for him to advocate the right course, since it may be that while the course may not have received recognition on party platforms, it is sufficiently near the surface in popular feeling to be brought up if given a push by political leadership; or, to vary the metaphor, the ideas are in suspension only waiting for some precipitant to be applied. That latter stage of the job is the politician's, but the earlier stage is the job of those outside politics.

It should be our pride that England has in the past been a leader in promoting new political ideas, and working out their practical application. Her own Empire, a congeries of independent States, is itself a forecast of what the relationship of all European States might be. If five nations have surrendered, as they have surrendered, the use of force the one as against the other, and are able to adjust their relationship without resort to physical combat, why should not fifty nations of the same character of civilization do as much?

The extension of the dominating principle of the British Empire to European society as a whole is the solution of the international problem which this book urges. That extension cannot be made by military means. The British conquest of great military nations is a physical impossibility, and it would involve the collapse of the principle upon which the Empire is based if it were. The day for progress by force has passed; it will be progress by ideas or not at all.

And because these principles of free human co-operation between communities are, in a special sense, an English development, it is upon England that falls the responsibility of giving a lead. If it does not come from her, who has developed these principles as between those communities which have sprung from her loins, can we ask to have it given elsewhere? If England has not faith in her own principles, to whom shall we look?

English thought gave us the science of political economy; English thought and practice must give us another science, that of International Polity—the science of the political

relationship of human groups. We have the beginnings of it, but it sadly needs systemization—recognition by those intellectually equipped to develop and enlarge it.

The development of such a work would be in keeping with the contributions which the practical genius and the positive spirit of the English race have already made to human progress.

I believe that, if the matter were put efficiently before them with the force of that sane, practical, disinterested labour and organization which have been so serviceable in the past in other forms of propaganda—one thinks of the work of just two or three Englishmen in the anti-slavery movement—not only would they prove particularly responsive to the labour, but English tradition would once more be associated with the leadership in one of those great moral and intellectual movements which would be so fitting a sequel to her leadership in such things as human freedom and parliamentary government. Failing such effort and such response, what are we to look for? Are we, in blind obedience to primitive instinct and old prejudices, enslaved by the old catchwords and that curious indolence which makes the revision of old ideas unpleasant, to duplicate indefinitely on the political and economic side a condition from which we have liberated ourselves on the religious side? Are we to continue to struggle, as so many good men struggled in the first dozen centuries of Christendom—spilling oceans of blood, wasting mountains of treasure—to achieve what is at bottom a logical absurdity; to accomplish something which, when accomplished, can avail us nothing, and which, if it could avail us anything, would condemn the nations of the world to never-ending bloodshed and the constant defeat of all those aims which men, in their sober hours, know to be alone worthy of sustained endeavour?

PART III

THE FINAL MORAL

What is the policy to which the arguments of this book point? If that policy is impracticable then our armament will prove as barren of security as was our victory of 1918.

PART III

THE FINAL MORAL

A COMMON form of criticism of the thirty-year old book which you have just read, has been this:

> However true, however verified by events, its truth will not alter by one hair's breadth the course of the Totalitarian governments. For that reason, therefore, its truths are valueless in international politics.

The reply to that is implicit in much of the first part of this book, but may usefully be summarised as follows:

1. The central truth of the book has been ignored in the conduct of policy not merely by Totalitarian states, but by ourselves; ignored not merely at Versailles, but on many other occasions, with the consequent creation of problems which need never have arisen. Not until the significance of the arguments here developed are more generally recognised can international conferences succeed and a workable policy be hammered out.

2. Even if we were prepared to meet the demands of the Have-Not states by very considerable territorial cession, no solutions of their economic problems could be found by that means. We might give away our empire and its possession would no more solve the problem for them than its possession has solved the problem for us. There would be change, but not improvement. Moreover, we are not in fact prepared to make any large measure of territorial cession.

3. Mere refusal, however, backed by an attempt once more to establish British preponderance of power, to be

used without reference to predetermined law or principle, would be equally inadequate, and could only end in sheer head-on collision—a collision in which, owing to the course of British policy this last six or seven years, we are likely to be smashed.

4. An offer of equality of access to the dependent empires by a Britain and France manifestly unable to defend these empires, would be regarded as inadequate by a Have-Not combination deeply imbued with expansionist doctrines, and in a position of such military power as to impose their claims. They would rather possess or dominate than merely share. Peace, therefore, demands a dual policy; resistance to claims of exclusive possession, combined with an offer of real equality of access, of economic rights; partnership.

5. That offer will never come from a British government and people themselves believing in the advantages of exclusive possession of territory and disbelieving in any real need for law or its defence as the condition of their own security. At some stage a more than usually extravagant Have-Not claim will be resisted, and we should then get either a war, in which the chances are we should be beaten, or another supine submission which, however complete and humiliating, would give no solution.

Our immense re-armament is proof that we hope to resist at some point. Obviously we should do so with better chance of success if we make it clear to the world, to the totalitarians and particularly to ourselves that our power is not for the purpose of depriving Germans, or Japanese, or Italians of the rights of defence we claim for ourselves but that we are willing to co-operate with them in the building up of a system which would gradually enable them to secure by peaceful means the political and economic securities for which they profess to be fighting. We shall be in a better position to resist if we make it clear that we arm, not for the purpose of being sole (and interested) judge of Germany's rights, but in order to be sure that

she shall not be judge of ours; not in order to close empires against her, but to see that she does not by conquest close them against us.

If that were plainly our policy, it is not true that it would have no effect upon the line taken by the Dictators. Those Dictators know the risks to their own position involved in war, particularly in a war in which victory would not be cheap and certain; they are aware of how the last war swept away régimes older, more firmly embedded in tradition than their own; and they know that in the last resort even dictators are dependent upon a great measure of popular support; that if they cannot count upon it they may be threatened by rival claimants for popular favour who can.

Despite all censorship, facts revealed by public discussion on a world wide scale will seep through in some measures to the peoples of the dictatorship states.

This is not the place to give a detailed plan. The present author has outlined such policies elsewhere. The steps are obvious enough.

First, let us have the facts. Will Germany, Italy and Japan stand with us for the establishment of a Fact-Finding Commission to answer such questions as whether the Have-Not states are at a disadvantage in their access to raw materials, and if so, what is the nature of the disadvantage?

Second, will the Have-Not states undertake to publish freely among their own peoples the findings of such a Commission? (An important condition.)

Third, let us make it clear that in those cases where sincere difference of opinion exists—(where one side of the frontier regards a given condition as obviously just and the other as outrageously unjust)—we stand for the umpire principle in some form. Will the Have-Not states accept that principle, agree either to accept impartial judgement or refrain from war as a means of correcting what they regard as unjust? (Since alteration of the *status quo* by war means a new one at the will of the conqueror, it creates as many injustices as it corrects.)

Fourth, since the whole case of the principal Have-Not states is that the *status-quo* becomes with the passage of time inequitable, will they agree to the creation of institutions or organs of peaceful change, and co-operate in their functions?

Fifth, we should make it clear that we and other states accepting those principles form a defensive alliance or confederation based on the principle that an attack on one is an attack on all. Such an alliance, we should point out, is not "encirclement," because membership is open to all, on equal terms; we offer to others the precise principle of defence we claim for ourselves. (The nucleus of such an Alliance would be Britain, France, Russia, China; drawing in later, Poland, Jugoslavia, Rumania.)

If the Have-Not states co-operate on those terms we have recreated the League. If they do not co-operate, it is still more necessary to maintain that confederation among as many allies as we can obtain. And our defensive effort will have greater chance of success if it is also the defence of a universal right instead of being merely the defence of our selfish interests.

The difference between ourselves and the totalitarian states is not that they "believe in" war or force and we do not. For if we did not "believe in" war or force, we should not now be arming for defence. The difference between us is in our respective conceptions of defence. They stand for a conception which is incompatible with defence of others; we, if we are wise, will stand for a defence which, whether on the economic or political side, will offer to those against whom our power is directed the same securities we claim, a code or rule we ourselves are prepared to abide by.

But that means that we must be as ready to fight for that code or rule of the road as heretofore we have been willing to fight for our territory, our "possessions," our interests as we conceived them.

It is possible to imagine law which has no force behind

it. Indeed, very powerful laws of a "forceless" character in fact exist and operate. But it is quite impossible to have an unarmed law co-existent with armed litigants, with the arming of those whom the law is designed to restrain. The grounds upon which non-resistance as the solution of this problem is rejected have been indicated in these pages and more fully developed elsewhere.[1]

To say, as is so often said, that it is hopeless to expect men ever to fight for anything but their own interests is merely to say that it is hopeless to expect men ever to improve in the understanding of what their interests are, and how such interests may best be protected. For it is as certain as anything can be, that men cannot protect their own interests effectively unless they are prepared to defend the interests of others, that is to say, the law which protects others. This theme the present writer has also elaborated elsewhere.[2]

In order to make in some form or another the offer outlined above, we should not wait, as so many socialist critics of this book would seem to desire to do, until "Capitalism has been wiped off the face of the earth." For we shall never know when we have done it. Trotsky, who, after all, is no mean judge of Socialism, is passionately convinced that Russia has not done it; that, on the contrary, Stalin is travelling rapidly back to the re-establishment of Capitalism throughout Russia. Furthermore, however foolish the belief may be, millions upon millions of adherents of "National" Socialism are convinced that theirs is a surer road to Socialism than is the road of Moscow. Full agreement throughout the world, therefore as to what *is* Socialism would be almost as difficult to obtain as agreement upon resistance to aggression. Indeed, it would be much more difficult.

Our world is bound, whatever the onward march of Socialism to retain for generations many features of the

[1] See *Peace with the Dictators*, Part II.
[2] *Preface to Peace.*

capitalist, the bourgeois system. To say to the Bourgeoisie now in possession: "It is no use making any effort to secure peace unless you are prepared to overturn completely that whole economic system in which you believe," is not going to make the task of peace easier. If that view has determining influence, it is going to make the task impossible.

It is a view which Moscow has had the sense to abandon. Increasingly there the notion of world-revolution is going out of fashion. Russia has decided that it can co-operate with capitalist states, with the capitalist system, for the promotion of political ends which are indispensable whether we are to remain capitalist or become totally socialist. Socialists outside Russia should show equal wisdom.

A final question or two remains.

Everywhere now goes up the cry for national unity. Yes, but unity for what? Alliance with Germany to permit the destruction of French democracy and the dismemberment of Russia? And with Japan to pick the carcase of China? Our youth will not die, nor will the nation arm, for that.

Nor will they arm and die merely to repeat another victory as fruitless of good and as pregnant of evil as that of 1918 has proved to be. If we have to fight again less than three decades after the last victory, how soon after the next shall we have to fight?

If you tell those who are to bear your arms that these new ways of peace and defence here urged are visionary and hopeless; that only the old way can defend our country, then these youngsters, looking for a moment at the "defence" which the older way has given, will decide to go without defence; to refuse to bear your arms. And they will be right.

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