

to India,* thereby completely winning her friendship and co-operation for all time to come. The measure is overdue. India has an indefeasible right to be her own master, and she has, besides, won that right by service to England. She has contributed in no small measure to England's greatness. Most thoughtful men concede that India is bound some day to be free. If Great Britain now of her own free will grants home rule, she will cut the ground from under all plots, whether from the East or from the West. By this one step she can save Russia as well as the rest of Asia. Such a step will increase her prestige in the world, will give hope to Persia as well as China, and will make Great Britain a worthy ally of the United States. A few years hence it may be too late.

America in the World†

By JOHN DEWEY

THERE seems to be a little irony in the fact that upon Washington's Birthday the topic most apt for discussion is connected with the participation of America in a world war. Instead of a little strip of territory sparsely populated, able to maintain its own with the great nations of the world chiefly because of the advantage of remoteness, we are now a continental state, able to confer with the nations of the world on equal terms. While once there was enough to do in conquering a wilderness, we have now come to the end of the pioneer period, and have a margin of energy to draw upon.

The change has, of course, been brought about by that same development of industry and commerce which has annihilated distance, drawn all peoples into closer relations, and made the affairs and interests of one nation the concern of all, for weal or for woe. The fact that the interdependence which the new industry and the new methods of transportation and intercommunication have brought about should first reveal itself in strains and alignments for conflict does not alter the essential fact that the world for the first time now finds itself a round world, politically and economically as well as astronomically. That nations from every continent on the globe are engaged in the war is the outer sign of the new world struggling to be delivered.

It is a commonplace that whatever else the war means, it signifies for our own country the end of its period of isolation. Whether for better or for worse, America is no longer a people unto itself. America is now in the world. Unless this change of position is to mean that we are to be affected by the jealousies, the intrigues, and hostilities which have marked other nations longer in the world, we must see to it that those other nations accept and are influenced by the American idea rather than ourselves by the European idea. Of late we have been afflicted with national bashfulness, with a shy self-consciousness as to noting even that there is an American idea, lest we be guilty of spread-eagleism. We have assumed a self-depreciatory, almost apologetic, attitude towards the rest of the world. But unless our contribution to the present world struggle is to be confined to military and economic force, it must be that we have an idea

to contribute, an idea to be taken into account in the world reconstruction after the war. What are the important aspects of this idea?

Politically, federation; *e pluribus unum*, where the unity does not destroy the many, but maintains each constituent factor in full vigor. It is not accident that the conceptions of a world federation, a concert of nations, a supreme tribunal, a league of nations to enforce peace, are peculiarly American contributions. They are conceptions which spring directly out of our own experience, which we have already worked out and tested on a smaller scale in our own political life. Leaders of other nations may regard them as iridescent dreams; we know better, for we have actually tried them.

One of the greatest problems which is troubling the old world is that of the rights of nationalities which are included within larger political units—the Poles, the Irish, the Bohemians, the Jugo-Slavs, the Jews. Here, too, the American contribution is radical. We have solved the problem by a complete separation of nationality from citizenship. Not only have we separated the church from the state, but we have separated language, cultural traditions, all that is called race, from the state—that is, from problems of political organization and power. To us language, literature, creed, group ways, national culture, are social rather than political, human rather than national, interests. Let this idea fly abroad; it bears healing in its wings.

Federation, and release of cultural interests from political dictation and control, are the two great positive achievements of America. From them spring the other qualities which give distinction and inspiration to the American idea. We are truly interracial and international in our own internal constitution. The very peoples and races who are taught in the old world that they have an instinctive and ineradicable antipathy to one another live here side by side, in comity, often in hearty amity. We have become a peace-loving nation both because there are no strong Powers close to our borders and because the diversified elements of our people have meant hope, opportunity, release of virile powers from subjection to dread, for use in companionship and unconstrained rivalries. Our uncoerced life has been at liberty to direct itself into channels of toleration, a general spirit of live and let live. Since our minds have not been constantly impressed with the idea that the growth of another power means the decay of our own, we have been emancipated to enjoy sharing in the struggles which exist wherever there is life, and to take its incidental defeats in good humor.

In working out to realization the ideas of federation and of the liberation of human interests from political domination we have been, as it were, a laboratory set aside from the rest of the world in which to make, for its benefit, a great social experiment. The war, the removal of the curtain of isolation, means that this period of experimentation is over. We are now called to declare to all the world the nature and fruits of this experiment, to declare it not by words or books, but by exhibiting the two primary conditions under which the world may achieve the happiness of a peace which is not the mere absence of war, but which is fruit-bearing concord. That we should have lost something of our spirit of boasting about our material greatness is a fine thing. But we need to recover something of the militant faith of our forefathers that America is a great idea, and add to it an ardent faith in our capacity to lead the world to see what this idea means as a model for its own future well-being.

*The self-government immediately demanded by Hindus and Mohammedans alike is of the kind mentioned in the editorial article in the *Nation* of February 28, outlining the joint plan of the Indian National Congress and the Moslem League.

†From an address delivered at Smith College on Washington's Birthday.

The Triumph of Mordecai

By FREDERICK TUPPER

ON the walls of an American historical seminary, which has played its part in the moulding of two leaders of the Administration now at Washington, are printed Freeman's famous words: "History is past politics. Politics is present history." A true saying! But our own age has enlarged this to include: "Past history is present politics." Each morning paper is no longer a penny-glimmer, flickering for an instant, but the lurid reflection of fiery facts and forces which have set the world aflame during the centuries, and which are now blazing with redoubled fierceness. Each new hour seems an epitome of all that men have ever wrought and wrecked. All the influences that have gone to the making or the marring of our body politic—individualism, nationalism, internationalism—strut together upon the stage of the moment, so full of sound and fury that one is deafened by the clamor. All the mediæval manifestations of savagery—invasions of Huns, descents of "blonde beasts" upon defenceless towns and coasts, slaughters of Christians by Turks, massacres of Jews by Christians—confront us in our daily columns. Old unhappy things are no longer "far-off," but painfully near. Hence the bookman in this war time soon discovers, when ranging through his shelves, that any volume close to the life of its own day seems now so vitally linked with the life of ours that he brings to this reading a truer perspective, a deeper understanding than in all earlier encounters. Old and cherished pages offer thus a hundred fresh adventures, undreamed of four years ago. Under the stress of the present, we are coming to recognize that the utterance to which like war passions and peace yearnings have stirred long-dead bosoms is often both more timely and more permanent than the stammering expression of our too partial judgment; and we accord to the time-hallowed heart-cry a sympathetic response, emotional leagues above the indifference or hostility of its first hearers. How could ears have been deaf a hundred years ago, when Shelley, in lines that thrill us mightily at this moment, pointed an accusing finger at "the wretch on yonder throne, commanding the bloody fray to rise," backed by the bravoes who support his rule, glutted with groans and blood, sullenly numbering o'er the myriads of the slain and the wailing tribes of human kind, revealing by his every word and deed the monstrous evils of such kingship; against this despot, humanity, rising in a Promethean might that brooks no reconciliation with the Evil Principle, and winning the world back to that light of life which is love, after primal power has driven the royal murderer from his seat amid breaking sceptres and tiaras, swords and chains, and crumbling tomes of reasoned wrong? Why did men rail sixty years ago at Tennyson because in "Maud"—its Crimean War part a fitting utterance of America in her present heroic mood—he extolled a land that loses for a little her lust of gold and her love of a peace that was full of wrongs and shames, when a war arises in defence of the right, and because he chanted the glory of the manhood of those who can say in that great hour: "We have proved we have hearts in a cause, we are noble still"? Why did our thinking folk of a half-century since give little heed to the prophetic soul of Walt Whitman forecasting so many of the world-pangs and world-triumphs of the present in those rapt visions

which men just now are eagerly reading and quoting in the public prints? And wherefore such curt dismissal from the "chorus of irresponsible reviewers" forty years syne, when George Eliot championed in "Daniel Deronda" Jewish hopes of Zion, seemingly shadowy then, but close to gleaming realization in these tremendous days of ours, which see all dreams both good and bad come true?

Dux femina facti. As Lincoln said to Mrs. Stowe: "So, this is the little woman who made this great war." George Eliot's creation, Mordecai, who tottered upon the scene in "Daniel Deronda" a full score of years before the first gathering of Zionists at Basle (1897), had little honor in his brief hour. A consumptive Jewish workman in threadbare apparel, he seems, with his choking cough, his yellow face, his skeleton hands, to invite from all men pitying regard rather than reverent attention. Indeed, his hearers "take his thoughts without attaching more consequences to them than the Flemings to the ethereal chimes ringing above their market-places." Among the Jews of his circle, his prophecy of the revival of the national centre of Judaism, and of the restoration of the race to Palestine, awakens only dissent and contradiction. The chief smiles at his pregnant words are his own people. To all but his one convert, the high-bred Deronda, who dons his mantle and assumes his mission, Mordecai appears the leader of a forlorn hope, the mouthpiece of an expiring tradition.

So the Victorian critics certainly deemed him. To the *Edinburgh* reviewer, "the hectic figure of Mordecai, the visionary prophet Jew, is as much an absolute failure as anything produced by the hand of genius can be. His consumptive vehemence has but one or two gleams of interest. Deronda's romantic sentimental departure for the East to reorganize the Jewish nation is but a little subdued out of the heights of ridicule." In the opinion of the *Saturday*, "Daniel Deronda" is devoted to the whimsical object of glorifying real or imaginary Jewish aspirations. . . . The purpose of the story is chimerical and absurd." To Leslie Stephen, also, "the scheme of the restoration of the Jewish nationality seems chimerical." And Henry James makes his young spokesman in the *Atlantic* say: "I don't understand more than half of Mordecai's rhapsodies, and I don't perceive exactly what practical steps could be taken. I rather suspect that the Jews in general take themselves much less seriously than that." Though Dicey, in the *Nation* (October 12, 1876), praises "the skill with which George Eliot has labored to enlist the reader's sympathy," yet he feels that "the immense tour de force ends in failure. The pain of Gwendolen's parting from Deronda touches the feelings of a hundred readers for one who is moved by Mordecai's dreams of a new return of his race to Jerusalem." Everywhere—or almost everywhere, for Dowden, Jacobs, and Lanier read the Mordecai chapters with something of our present understanding—we find this defect of sympathy. Some denounce the prophet's ideas as "vague and mystical." Others brutally proclaim Mordecai a bore, and ask loudly: "What rational person can care for the return of the Jews to Palestine?" Even an admiring Jewish commentator like Rabbi Philipson, in his suggestive book of the late eighties, "The Jew in English Fiction," declares that "the mission