

dent's clerks, and the President himself cannot make them anything else save by a temporary act of grace. But Congress can. By permitting Cabinet officers to appear in the House and the Senate for the purpose of answering questions, explaining administrative problems, and advocating legislation, Congress would be making the Cabinet more useful to the President and more independent of him. By so doing Congress would not be increasing the power of the executive, it would be increasing its own power over the executive and at least tending to put the executive into commission. The President would need to be surrounded with abler men, capable of exercising influence on Congress and on public opinion, and among whom his exhausting responsibilities might be somewhat divided. Our Cabinet would cease to be merely part of an administration, and, while remaining subordinate to the President, would tend to acquire the vitality and the dignity of a government.

A Condition of Agreement Among Nations

ONE great opportunity has been missed by the American government and by intelligent public opinion to make our influence effective on behalf of a better understanding among the European nations. The rancors and grievances of the belligerents could not be soothed, their conflicting national interests could not be composed, the controversies among them could not be reduced to any group of even semi-acceptable formulas. But what could have been done was to seek the establishment in relation to the controversies growing out of the war of an unimpeachable basis of fact. Such an attempt to collect relevant and authentic facts will doubtless look like an humble task to those who wish the United States to stand upon a lofty platform and mediate among the European nations, or to those who wish to persuade the fighters to beat their swords into ploughshares. But it is less humble and more effective than it seems. After the war the greatest obstacle to any fertile and candid international discussion of its lessons will be the inability of Englishmen and Germans to accept a common basis of fact. The Germans are surrounded by a world of real or supposed truth in relation to the war which is as different from that of an Englishman as the real world of a Phoenician differed from that of a Greek. The intellectual differences are derived chiefly from conflicting ideals and philosophies, but their area could be enormously reduced by a reduction in the number of controverted facts. As soon as honest men agree upon a common statement of facts, they are much less like-

ly to make too seriously divergent interpretations.

The government of the United States had the best of excuses for the appointment of a commission to investigate accusations and establish their truth. The several belligerent nations have presented more or less formal charges in Washington that their enemies were violating international law and common human decency. No impartial judge can be expected to accept such charges on the simple statement of the aggrieved government. An answer could always have been returned to the complainant, stating that the American government, as one of the signatories of the Hague convention, would willingly accept the responsibility of investigating the alleged violation of its rules. The nation which resisted such an investigation would then become suspect. A report made by the Commission of Inquiry would possess an authority which would be binding upon fair-minded people of all countries. No German can be expected to accept a report on Belgian atrocities issued even by such an eminent English commission as that of Lord Bryce. During the progress of the war Germans might be equally unwilling to accept an adverse report by an impartial commission. But when the war was over the facts established by such inquiries would begin to be authoritative for Germans even when they counted against Germany. In so far as they were accepted, international intercourse, other than that of shrieking defiance and shaking fists in one another's faces, would again be possible.

If another Hague congress ever takes place the friends of peace should make immediate effort to constitute international commissions of inquiry which would begin their work as soon as war breaks out. They would be difficult to organize but not impossible, and the appointment to them of jurists from several neutral countries would make their investigation even more authoritative than that of a commission composed of the citizens of any one neutral state. In the absence of an official machinery of investigation a group of Swiss jurists is at the present time soliciting support in this country for the establishment of unofficial commissions of inquiry by impartial and competent international lawyers from all the neutral countries. They should receive the support for which they ask. Science may come to the rescue of internationalism. Even though so many scientists have, since the war broke out, been reasoning about their enemies after the manner of Choctaw Indians, the authority of science has not been destroyed. English and Germans are divided in their feelings, their interests, their philosophy and their religion, but both nations still accept the law of gravitation. Knowledge is based on general consent, and in so far as it exists it promotes intercourse and compels agreement.

The New Pioneer

CIVILIZATION often seems like an old drunkard who is forever taking one more drink to work off the effects of a previous drink, or like a chronic debtor who is always borrowing upon the future to refund the past. It never seems to catch up with itself, to start as freshly as it would like to. Because their fathers fought, children are taught to hate; and when they grow up they also fight, leaving to their children a new heritage of hate. Because their fathers gave over a continent to aimless exploitation, the new generation finds itself entangled in a network of law and tradition and vested right from which it cannot free itself except by injuring those who have done no wrong. Because our ancestors lived in huddled cities we go on building upon narrow and tortuous streets, sinking our capital in mistakes which age makes it more and more difficult to retrieve. The original cowpaths of Boston have become picturesque slums which support innocent ladies and stifle the health and the happiness of other people's children. Attack these slums and you attack helplessness itself; try to widen and ventilate, and you will find that you have struck at the security of the innocent. This is the real strength of the past and the overwhelming grip it has upon our lives. It lives on, not because intelligence can defend it, but because it has become so intimate a part of us that to cut it out seems a little too cruel.

A sense of this has made it a requirement of all Utopias that ancestral debts shall be cancelled. Thus men invent islands in the Pacific or inaccessible plateaus where history has left no monuments. In the same spirit the emigrant leaves behind him the accumulated weariness of older countries, and the pioneer the stale maturity of his home. He goes west where there is a chance to hope again. It is as if freedom were to be had in uncut forests, as if virgin soil made a virgin mind, as if only on earth that has no history could a cleaner future be planned. Men have moved from tired lands to fresher ones, from close civilizations to more open spaces. They have meant to leave behind them a past which was mulled over and oppressive. In Utopia they could begin again.

But in reality they left little behind them. Their habits and their prejudices they brought with them; they imagined that freedom was the absence of tyrants, and forgot that it is something to be built as well as something to be torn down. On new soil the old wrongs grew up again, grew up because they are the fruits of aimlessness, because men in seeking new territory had not sought also new modes of thought. The fresh land has grown a little weary, and it also nourishes riches and poverty, disease and congestion, class distinction,

race prejudice, fear and hate. The happenings of the past the immigrants left behind them, its essentials they imported in their hearts and minds. They were not schooled to freedom; how then could they be free?

Now a new territory is to be opened—the territory of Alaska. It is the first soil that has ever been planted by a people which has at least the tradition of democracy. It is also the last great fertile and temperate land on which Western civilization can start freshly. Lying on the rim of the Pacific, its settlement will complete the circle of the globe. It is in a sense the last chance and the best one, for in Alaska a democracy which has grown critical of its own mistakes can show what it has learned. Alaska can be made a happy civilization, the distilled experience of America; there at least we need not repeat our every blunder.

Half consciously we have felt this, and the long struggle to save Alaskan resources from monopoly was inspired by it. That struggle has been won, and the next step is to be taken. This step is far more difficult, for we have to lay plans now instead of fighting the exploiter. We have to propose an economic development which will keep opportunity open while it attracts enterprise. We have to lay down railroads, town sites, schools, homes; we have to regulate property and establish government; we have to foresee industrial and agricultural growth, and make sure that it is harmonious and sane. We have to train men for the task, and draw to the Alaskan problem a high quality of creative statesmanship. There is a new kind of pioneering to be done in Alaska, the pioneering of an educated democracy. It is a task beside which the building of the Panama Canal is a small enterprise, for Alaska is not merely a highway, it is the opportunity of a great state. It is a very sacred trust, for we are building a whole civilization.

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