

supreme test of patriotism and the Boers never faltered during the bitter ordeal. General Botha stands to-day as the noblest patriot of the British Empire.

Canada, of course, showed a fine spirit from the first; party politics disappeared, parliaments and provincial legislatures vied with each other in offering gifts, and private individuals gave their contributions with a generous hand. The rush of recruits became a stampede, and the quality both intellectually and physically was not to be surpassed among the picked armies of Europe. Australia and New Zealand, impelled by the same deep feelings as Canada, poured out their offerings in money and men with true patriotism. The same feeling that actuated the larger colonies stirred the smaller ones scattered over all the continents and in every ocean. None was too remote, too isolated to feel the spell of the British kingship. As we read the simple letters accompanying contributions, coming from the red Indians of the far North West, from the deserts of Central Africa, and from isolated islands of the Pacific, nobody knows where—we realize to the full that our Empire is a thing of flesh and blood and not of mere dead materialism.

We said that the British Empire was not understood by the Germans; its irregularities, its lack of due proportions, disgust their fine sense of logical completeness and efficiency. All have observed the pyramidal evergreen tree on the well-kept lawn. Its axis is vertical, the branches spring out from the stem with the regularity of the spokes of a wheel, every branch is trimmed to the line, the bounding surface is geometrically perfect. Again, all know the gnarled old oak rearing his ancient head above the lesser things around, his trunk is rough and crooked but stout, his every branch has answered to its environment and taken its natural course where the air and light commanded, for the members have sprung from the stem wherever conditions to form them in perfect vigour appeared. The vulgar monstrosity of the lawn is the German ideal. Its very symmetry is its weakness, and the unnatural and cramped warping necessary to its symmetry contain the germs of its early decrepitude. The grand old oak of a thousand years well represents the British Empire, where every member is free to develop to perfection in his local environment. Each branch spreads out where God's sunshine and air are most invigorating; but all are firmly fixed in the parent stem, and the same vital sap courses its way to the extremest tip of the most distant twig. The truly æsthetic eye perceives a deep beauty, a perfect symmetry, a noble sublimity in the oak that is completely absent from the deformed evergreen.

Now the great tempest has come and the winds sweep by. The oak holds high his head with the vigour of a thousand years; the branches sway in the strength of their youth and the storm passes by leaving him as strong as ever.