

THE THREAD OF FLAME

in the Museum, with whom I could discuss the topics nearest to my heart. With Pelly, Bridget, the Finn, and even with Miss Smith, I had friendly arguments as to the League of Nations and similar matters of public concern; but they rarely went beyond the catchwords of the newspapers.

"My dear father," Miss Smith would say, gently, "who was an eminent oculist in his time, Doctor Smith, you may have heard of him, used to say that his policy was to keep this country out of entangling alliances. That was his expression, entangling alliances. I always think of it when I see foreigners."

"From awl I hear," Bridget informed me, "this here League o' Nations they make so much talk about is on'y to help the English to oppress Ireland."

"Will it bring down prices?" the Finn demanded, if ever I spoke of it with him, and when I confessed that I couldn't be sure that it would, he dismissed the theme with, "Then that's all I want to know."

"Punk, I call it," was Pelly's verdict, "unless Lloyd George is for it; and whatever he says goes with me."

This being the scope of my conversations on the subject it became a special pleasure to air my opinions with one who, while not always agreeing with me, took in such matters the same kind of interest as myself.

We were, therefore, in what is called the thick