

THE REASONABLE DIRECTION OF FORCE

are open to individuals through change, movement, growth : a partner in trade, unfairly treated, can leave to found business elsewhere, a workman finds fresh employment, an oppressed child grows up and emancipates himself, but States cannot remove themselves, and when they grow, intricate problems grow with them. (c) An individual often may, and often does, feel it his duty to sacrifice his own existence, but this can rarely be the duty of the State. There are millions of individuals in this world ; there are perhaps forty States, scarcely twenty that are civilized. It cannot be the same to surrender one out of millions, and one out of twenty existences, especially if we add the poignant thought that an incalculable sacrifice is being imposed on the future as well ; millions yet to be born are being deprived of their natural rights. And the contribution to human life made by a great nation is irreplaceable, beyond comparison with the contribution made by any ordinary individual, however noble. Nevertheless, this distinction should not be exaggerated. There is too much cant about the constant danger to national existence, whereas, in the last hundred years of European history most of the sacrifices needed, and refused, could not for a moment have imperilled the national life of any State ; the life of a nation is not the delicate plant that some would take it to be. The European States themselves have, on occasion, been better than some of their theorists,¹ and in general it is clear that the union of large countries like England, France, Italy, and Germany would have

¹ e. g. the South German States when surrendering their independent foreign relations for the sake of German unity in 1870 : England, when she handed the Ionian Islands to Greece in 1863.