

made, are twice as long "in the fly" as they are in the hoist;" that is, twice as long as they are broad.

The flag of Denmark bears a broad white upright cross on a red ground; but the Danish cross differs from the cross of St. George in shape. When the flag is oblong, which is its proper shape for the merchant service, three of the arms of its cross are of equal length; while the fourth, that farthest from the staff, is longer. In other words, the vertical bar of the cross in the Danish flag is not drawn through the flag at the middle of its length, as in our flags, but near enough to the staff to make three arms equal.

The merchant flag of Norway is like that of Denmark, except that the cross is dark blue with white margin; a resemblance which reminds us that not very long ago Denmark and Norway formed one kingdom. Sweden has a yellow cross of the same shape on a field of very dark blue. Formerly the flags of both Sweden and Norway carried in the square canton, or staff-head corner, between the two arms of the crosses, a union device made by a combination of the national colors. By a very recent change, however, owing to national jealousies, this union device has been removed from the flag of Norway. It was, and is still, used as a separate flag, forming the perfectly square Union Jack of the two kingdoms. To make it, one might cut off the fly, or outer end, of the national flags pure and simple, so as to make them square; and then, dividing each into four parts diagonally, so join together two parts of each that the upper and lower sections would show the Swedish colors, and the others those of Norway.

The flags of the Danish, Swedish and Norwegian navies differ from the merchant flags in having a V-shaped portion cut away from the fly, so as to leave them swallow-tailed in shape; and in the case of Sweden and Norway, the outer arm of the cross is prolonged into this opening, tapering to a point of the same length as the outer points of the fly.

The national device of the kingdom of Greece is a broad white cross upon a ground of very pale blue. It is square in the jack, and also in the canton of the blue and white striped ensign; but in the royal standard, which is oblong, the cross is of the same shape as that in the Danish flag.

The war ships of the German Empire carry a white ensign, through which runs, as the principal device, a black cross with white margin, this margin divided from the white field by a narrow line of black; or it may be described as a narrow and parallel-edged cross of black upon a white ground. The cross has three arms equal, as in the Danish flag. To complete the description of the ensign, it has in the canton the jack

described below, in which the symbol of the cross again appears; and, where the arms of the first cross meet, a white circle with the black eagle of Prussia. A black cross, known as the "iron cross" of Prussia, the arms of which widen outward, (in the shape generally known as the Maltese cross, but not divided at the end as in the true Maltese cross), is used in other flags of the German navy. A square white flag with such a black cross extending to its edges is the official flag of a German admiral. The jack, which is oblong when used as a separate flag, may be described as the German tricolor, (the merchant flag of the empire, of black, white and red, in equal horizontal divisions,) with the addition of the black "iron cross," white-margined and outlined in black, placed in the centre of the flag and occupying half its width.

The flag of Switzerland is red with a white cross. As in the jack of the German war ships, the cross does not extend to the edge of the field. Each arm is only as long as it is wide; and the cross, in shape as if made up of five squares placed together, is borne in the centre of the oblong flag. The Swiss Cross with its colors reversed is the flag of the International Red Cross Society.

Switzerland and the obscure republic of San Domingo, or Santo Domingo, in the West Indies, it may be observed, are the only republics in the world that display the symbol of Christianity in their national ensigns; and the flag of the Dominican Republic, which a broad white cross divides into quarters alternately blue and red, is the only cross-bearing flag in America, except our own and that of Denmark.

It is noticeable that none of the Roman Catholic countries of Europe display the cross as a part of their national colors. Italy may seem to be an exception; but the flag of Italy is essentially a tricolor of green, white and red, vertically divided; and the blue-bordered shield with its white cross, which stands in the centre of the flag, is placed there incidentally, as the escutcheon of the reigning family, the House of Savoy. The white cross of Savoy, however, on a square red flag with blue border, is used as the Italian pilot flag.

The flag of the Rajah of Sarawak, an English ruler of an independent native state in the north of Borneo, may, perhaps, be regarded as a national flag. It is yellow, and bears a cross which for half its length and half the width of its transverse bar is black, the other half red.

The flag of Crete, which may also be mentioned, though not as the flag of an independent nation, is the white cross of Greece on its ground of pale blue, with a Turkish device in the staff-head corner, a white crescent on red ground.

Many flags now obsolete bore the cross as a device, including one of the earlier flags of the late South African Republic; but nations that have set aside the symbol and substituted others, France only excepted, are not among the leading nations of mankind to-day. It is a remarkable coincidence that the three great empires which now seem destined to rule the civilized world fly as the ensigns of their mighty navies white flags marked with the figure of the cross. V.