

INTERNATIONALISM

That the path of international cooperation, the trail blazed by Woodrow Wilson, is the true path for American foreign policy to follow is capable of proof by arguments based entirely upon political realism and national self-interest, since the United States, in spite of the most desperate efforts to escape, found itself irresistibly drawn into the vortex of world war in both the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. But the internationalist remembering the idealism of his dead leader, prefers to rest his case on moral principle, on the belief that as it is with a man so it is with a nation, that a nation is responsible not only for the evil done by itself, but for the evil done by others that it could have prevented, that inaction in the face of a ringing moral challenge is itself immorality. In 1914 Germany flung such a challenge in the face of the world by her invasion of Belgium, and all the neutral nations of the world shamefully ignored that challenge except England, the one neutral to which Belgium's independence was of vital national interest. Even Woodrow Wilson, then merely President of the United States, with no prophetic foresight that he was to bear the far greater title, Founder of the League of Nations, called upon his people to be impartial, even in thought, between the warring nations. Yet if the United States had entered the World War in 1914 to punish the rape of Belgium, millions of lives would have been saved.

The idealist, of course, must beware of the taunt of quixotism which the isolationist is ever ready to fling at him. It would, perhaps, be too extravagant, seven centuries after the last of the crusades, to call for a crusade to deliver the persecuted Christians of Russia, or the persecuted Jews of Germany. Yet how can an idealist accept the isolationist thesis that "the persecution of the Jews is, after all, Germany's domestic concern, and as such it should not interfere with her relations to other countries." If we cannot cure we can at least prevent. Let us serve notice upon Hitler and upon Stalin, upon the Brown tyrant and upon the Red, that any aggression upon the free and peace-loving democracies of Europe will be met by mobilizing all the vast resources of wealth and man-power possessed by the United States. Otherwise, we shall be again subject as in 1914 to such bitter jibes at our morally blind neutrality as the verse which I quote from the Boston Post, only bringing the nomenclature up to 1935:

" Hitler, in Teutonic rage,
Sacked the city of Liege
Quoth Uncle Samé, " Now ain't he cute
In his nice brown soldier suit?"

Germany is mad and has committed herself into the hands of the maddest of all her sons. It is of no use for pacifists to blether about Peace Pacts and the moral sense of world public opinion. Japan's aggression in Manchuria has been unanimously condemned at the bar of the World Court of Public Opinion and Japan is not a penny the worse for that.

" Thrice armed is he that hath his quarrel just;
But four times he that gets his blow in fust."