

and France, of Britain and Spain and Portugal and Italy and Switzerland and Belgium? On the other hand, if we were united by a firm alliance, an alliance which must of necessity include an unspoken, unwritten pact with the United States of America—nay, I would make bold to say with the whole of America, since what is not Anglo-Saxon there is Latin—we could dictate peace to the whole world. A league like ours could view without jealousy a friendly Germany building up and cementing an Empire of the Nearer East Germany which has always hung about the flanks of Latin civilisation and which unconsciously did so much to virilise and urge the work of Rome or of Byzantium: we could see that great nation of sixty millions of people (who, as their Emperor said the other day without much exaggeration, are the salt of the earth—who are co-equal at any rate with us Britons, with the French, and with the Americans)—bring law and order into the Balkan Peninsula, civilise and (where it be empty) populate Asia Minor and restore the glories of Mesopotamia. We could see without envy or uncharitableness a regenerated Russian Empire devoting itself to the exploitation of the incredible riches that man's labour will produce from the fertile soil of Russia and the mines and forests of Siberia, the rocks and oil-springs, the orchards and vineyards and fisheries of Persia. We could watch without alarm the growth of the Japanese Empire and its revivification of China. If we could only bring about this Latin Alliance the great wars of the world might come to an end and the human race would for a time—all human arrangements are fleeting—be grouped under five great leagues or alliances—the Latin League, headed by Britain and France, the American League, closely allied thereto, the German Empire of the Nearer East (with perhaps Scandinavia as a close friend), the Russian Empire, and the Japanese. Indeed, Britain might be the agency which would link three of these great alliances together, the bond of union between America and the Latin League, and between these two and the Japanese.