

The New German Empire

Austria becoming the dumping ground of German goods* that the idea of a Customs Union has already been abandoned for the milder formula of an "economic rapprochement." The disputes which always break out in a partnership where self-interest is the only tie are already in full swing.

But we need not conclude too hastily that these conflicts of interest will undermine the foundations of the new project of Empire. That can be done, and must be done, by the Allies alone. For there are two great outstanding differences between the old Colonial system of Britain and the new Colonial system of Germany, which ensure to the latter, if secure from without, at least a temporary stability. In the first place, Germany has and will retain the undisputed military control over her allies, so that of the two alternatives, tyranny or disruption, the former is the more likely. Secondly, each of her allies is itself a tyrant, practising ascendancy over lesser peoples, so that a sense of common interest and common guilt is always at hand, in case of need, to hold the system together. Berlin-Bagdad represents the ascendancy of Germans, Magyars, Bulgarians and Turks over Alsatians, Poles, Danes, Czechs, Jugoslavs, Roumanians, Italians, Slovaks, Greeks, Arabs, Armenians, and other races. In the last analysis, as they know already to their cost, the lesser partners have little voice in the higher direction of the system, just as the German people themselves have little voice in the decisions of their own Government. But they realise that the alternative before them is not the transference of their allegiance to another camp, but in the case of Austria-Hungary and Turkey, at any rate, a drastic alteration both in the boundaries and in the character of their govern-

* Not all Austrian manufacturers share this view. At a conference of the Lower Austrian Union of Trades, on May 14, 1915, a glove manufacturer remarked in all innocence: "In trades like ours taste is the most important factor involved, and we shall all readily admit that we have nothing to fear from German competition in this respect." Herkner, Vol. II., 161.