

The National State

From the days of the Roman Empire to the day of the British Commonwealth and the American Republic it has been demonstrated that race and citizenship, may be poles apart

By W. W. SWANSON,

The appointment of Philip Scheidemann to the vice-chairmanship of the Reichstag, and the audiences which Dr. Solf and Professor Hans Delbrueck are beginning to attract, as well as the weight now attached to the words of Herr Ballin and other leaders of the commercial and industrial world among the Central Powers, go to show that the Teutonic military element recognizes that its plans for world domination have failed. It is even proposed that under German hegemony a United States of Europe be constituted to offset the results of the Anglo-Saxon rapprochement. On the whole, German opinion, even proletarian opinion, is hostile to the idea of a League of Nations. Germany feels keenly that in such a League her will could not prevail. She knows, furthermore, that Premier Clemenceau interprets the mind of France when he says that Germany, under present conditions, must be watched, and guarded against, rather than welcomed into the family of nations. It is with the plain object of dominating the western world that German statesmen are formulating plans to enlarge the Middle-European alliance to include the bordering neutral States.

The Bureau of International Peace has, a week or two since, informed the Russian Soviet at Odessa, that it would be impossible to send delegates to Berne to negotiate conditions of peace. The International Bureau was of the opinion that pacifists worthy of the name were not so much interested in arranging peace as in making sure that peace for the future would be guaranteed by the might of a democratic world. It is worth while drawing the attention of our readers to the men in control of the International Bureau of Peace, men who are not too proud to fight for eternal right, and who do not confuse international sentimentalism for clear thinking and the propagation of justice. This is refreshing after the din of Ramsey MacDonald, Pongsonby, Brailsford, Sidney Webb, and even of Mr. Arthur Henderson. Bolshevism has spread its tentacles throughout the entire world, and has contaminated certain radicals of the United States, France and England. They preach the doctrine and expound the dogma of the I.W.W. leader, William Haywood, who, at his trial for sedition in Chicago, stated that he placed the welfare of his class above every other interest even national honour and the glory of the American flag. In somewhat less extreme form this idea is permeating and penetrating certain labour elements everywhere in the belligerent nations today.

We believe that the strong national State is essential for sound and liberal international political progress. Colonel Roosevelt, fundamentally right in instinct, although sometimes wrong in its expression, was sound in his recent statements that national power and national prestige, as well as loyalty to one's country, are basic in world progress. An amorphous agglomeration of denationalized States would avail nothing as long as a predatory and voracious Power hovered, as Germany hovers, over stricken Europe, eager for prey. Such a coalition would bring about merely a vaster China, without self-direction and without vigour or leadership in the world. Love of country and loyalty to national ideals are the pre-requisites to loyalty to international obligations and honour among the nations.

The conception must be repudiated, however, as advanced by Germany, that a State must be either aggressive or sink into decadence and decay. It has always been the belief, more particularly during the that aggression and force alone can preserve those last fifty years, among the German military caste, qualities that give a nation life and virility. The contrary, however, more justly reveals the forces that have made the United Kingdom and the United States great—the pursuit of peace, the development of national resources and the advancement of commerce, and the raising of the material standards of living of their people. True, both these States have waged wars during the nineteenth century; but, notwithstanding, peace has been the fundamental principle in their programme. It is equitable and just to say that the United Kingdom has made such marvellous progress during the past century because the nation has given itself over completely to economic construction everywhere throughout the world, and to the support of democratic polity. With the pos-

sible exception of the Boer war, Great Britain has fought, during that period, only to protect her vital interests.

While it is maintained that the national State is the best guarantee of peaceful progress, it does not follow that such a political entity is to be constituted out of one racial stock alone. Much less may it be said that each racial group, even a considerable racial group, will advance most rapidly under autonomous government. It should be clearly kept in mind that the objects of the war first set forth by the Allies have come under scrutiny since the United States entered into the European arena. Aside from that, the defection of Russia in itself has necessitated a new formation of peace terms. Broadly speaking, President Wilson's peace programme best expresses the mind of the Allies, having been publicly endorsed on many occasions by the leading statesmen of the United Kingdom, France and Italy. It will be recalled that President Wilson makes the right of each racial group to choose its own type of government fundamental in his peace terms.

Few statesmen during the course of the struggle have shown the ability, to the same degree as President Wilson, to cleave to the very centre of the questions at issue. Nevertheless, we believe that it may not be entirely to the good of the world to make race and nationality dependent upon one another. A glance at British history alone would show the sheer impossibility of bringing this to pass; and more than that, its undesirability. Scotchmen and Welshmen have learned to live in harmony with Englishmen; and notwithstanding the superficial eddies created in the political life of Ireland by Sinn Fein, most Irishmen have a profound conviction that they will best work out the destiny of their country alongside of England, or at least within the British Empire.

In Canada we have learned this lesson in part, although much remains to be done to consolidate all interests in the nation and to achieve national solidarity. Although Mr. Armand Lavergne and Mr. Bourassa have at times spoken lightly of a republic on the banks of the St. Lawrence, it is safe to say that Quebec realizes too well the advantages of Canadian nationality to attempt to disrupt the Union. Confederation not only linked up French and Anglo-Saxon, but it prepared the way for the constituting of a national state in Canada whose population must consist of diverse elements—of citizens drawn not only from the Republic to the south, but from every country in Europe. No Canadian could tolerate the idea of making race synonymous with nationality. The Dutch and English in South Africa, the Irish, English and Scotch in Australia, not to mention the scores of races prospering under the British flag in India, all demonstrate that many races may be welded together to build up a vigorous and virile State.

Indeed it may be asserted that race as an aspect of nationality did not come to the front until the nineteenth century. The wars of Italian liberation, and the war of 1870 between Germany and France, were waged, in some degree at least, to hammer out a national state based upon race. It is probable, although this goes beyond our immediate purposes, that the German States could have been brought within the Empire without the instrument of war. Nevertheless, it is dangerous, as has often been done, to argue from the case of Germany and Italy that racial life can only find full expression under self-government. On the surface this appears true; but surface conditions do not count for much. From the

days of the Roman Empire to the day of the British Commonwealth and the American Republic, it has been demonstrated that race and citizenship, or rather self-government, may be poles apart. Milwaukee and other American cities are largely German in population; but it would be absurd to suppose that a sort of Hanseatic League could be set up in the United States composed of free German cities, as was the case with Hamburg, Bremen, Frankfurt, Luebeck, and other cities in Europe in days gone by. It is admitted that this is the "reductio ad absurdum" of arguments; but nevertheless it makes the question clear.

It may be hazarded that the Great War would never have occurred had Turkey and Austria recognized that racial characteristics could not be obliterated by tyrannical suppression. The unspeakable Turk doomed his Empire from the first by persecuting and prosecuting the non-Moslems, and by seeking to stamp out pride of race. His butcheries and his cruelties merely fanned into life the spiritual ardor of the Bulgars, the Roumanians and the Serbs. It has been the stupidity of the Hapsburgs that has kept the ramshackle Empire on the Danube in a state of political chaos. The Poles have been set upon the Ruthenians, the Magyar against the Slav. Divide et impera is a wise maxim, no doubt, but it does not always work. The Teutons and Magyars not satisfied with political power have for decades attempted to annihilate racial pride and culture. It cannot be done. The result, inevitable as the sparks fly upwards, has been the recrudescence, for fifty years past, of racial life demanding complete political autonomy, not only in the Dual Monarchy, but in the Ottoman Empire. Turkey has been obliged to let one racial group after another set up its own government; and the time is at hand when the outworn Hapsburg domains must be split up into their component parts, and autonomous States constituted out of homogeneous racial groups. Every one knows the worn-out saying that, if Austria-Hungary did not exist as a political fact, the necessities of its polyglot population would demand its creation. Like many another aphorism, the stupidity of the Kaisers and the Grand Dukes require that it also be thrown into the dustbin of time.

Race and self-government do not always co-exist, then, and need not necessarily co-exist. The English have been marvellously successful in the sphere of practical politics everywhere except in Ireland. Under the British flag hundreds of nationalities flourish in an almost common citizenship. Unfortunately in Ireland—for the blame of which all concerned are guilty—race, religion, economic progress and national pride have been permitted to come into conflict. No one needs to demonstrate that Irish pride of race cannot be killed by kindness as it could not be obliterated by cruelty. Contrary to general opinion, in certain quarters, notwithstanding the blundering of the aristocratic element in Ireland and England, race does not lie at the bottom of the Irish trouble. Whatever England's faults may be,—and every nation has them,—it cannot be justly said that Englishmen have not recognized to the full the virtues of the Irish race. That being an accepted fact, it is safe to say that, the English having met with conspicuous success in establishing an acceptable government throughout the length and breadth of the Empire, they will not have to admit failure in Ireland.

In conclusion, it may be said that the national State must be vigorous and strong if the international fabric upon which the future well-being and peace of the world are to be built, is to be safe and secure. And the national State need not necessarily be based upon race alone. Indeed history has proved that where racial aspirations are given room for development the strongest State may include not one, but many, racial stocks. The British Commonwealth having accomplished most in that direction may make claim to be the prototype of the new world-State that is slowly but inevitably coming into existence among mankind.

GENERAL F. D'ESPEREY, who commanded the Allied forces in the Balkans, where the Bulgarians were crushed, is one of France's best known and ablest generals. D'Esperey has been a pretty active character ever since the present war started. Away back in August, 1914, he was the only French general to hold the Germans at Charleroi. As it was, he defeated Van Hauson so decisively the latter was dismissed by the German Emperor. Later he opposed Von Kluck and Von Bulow at the first battle of the Marne, and from that time on won pro-

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motion and continued to win battles. D'Esperey got his first training in Africa. He is an able organizer and inspires his men with the most absolute confidence. His work in the Balkans was brilliant.