

society. . . . The balance of power, understood in the sense just indicated, ought to be maintained not in Europe only, but in all quarters of the globe.¹

This, it may be said, is putting the case from the point of view of an English writer, but appeal for support can successfully be made to French and other continental writers.²

Geffcken's note to his edition of Heffter's *Europäische Völkerrecht*, a German work of deservedly high repute, emphasizes the fact that there is no possible security for the international life when one State has over the others so great a preponderance as to allow it to threaten their liberty of action, their interests, and their integrity. The desire even to obtain such a predominating position is, he holds, itself to be condemned; the fear alone of a common resistance by the other nations ought to be sufficiently strong to hold in check such aspirations. Dealing in this connexion with the position of the smaller States of the world, Geffcken points out that it is essentially one of the tasks of the balance of power rightly understood to watch over the preservation of the small States, provided they are able to fulfil the conditions bound up with independence; for the more the small States are absorbed by the great, the more frequent will collisions between the latter occur. As for the idea put forward by Lasson that the small States are a perpetual danger to peace, the apple of discord between the Powers, and the natural causes and certain theatres of war, he pertinently asks when have Holland, Belgium, or Switzerland ever fomented discord among neighbouring States. All

¹ *International Law*, p. 133.

² See Despagnet's *Droit International*, § 180.