

thought which hovers over our life," he says, "and we must begin to work at it . . . , it is a matter of our life." That is the Utopia in which Björnson finds escape when he began to realize the ruin he had done so much to bring about.

*Federations Real and Utopian.*

For his schemes seem rather Utopian . The paper alliances of small states will never bear the strain of a crisis, as we see to-day. And paper alliances between a large and a small State are likely to work out to the cost of the small State, as we also see to-day. There is an artificial element in such that breeds doubt and hesitation at the decisive moment. It is only the family or political federation under one roof that gives equal security to all, because it is the same security for all and is based on something which is not subject to question even in times of crisis and danger. The clear lesson to be learned from the Scandinavian failure is the difficulty of creating new conditions for a union where the existing ones have been too rudely handled or have been allowed to go into disuse. We cannot set too high a value therefore on federative links and connections which already exist in free and natural operation, as they do in the British empire and also in a large part at any rate of the Russian empire. It is only by such federations that the areas of peace can be really enlarged, the areas within which war is unthinkable. The alternative to that is the Roman military empire. For the Utopian ideals of Scandinavian pacifists like Björnson, E. Bull, or Ellen Key are difficult if not impossible to realize in a stage of society which is plainly founded on keen, almost unscrupulous, competition between States and individuals alike. The man is a child in political matters who does not see that trade and commercial expansion are breeding and must breed as much conflict and controversy to-day as religion did in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The one cause has almost ceased to operate while the other seems to be gaining in strength and malice with the increase of its importance. But indeed it has always been a strong predisposing cause of war. You could make a fair history of Europe, and a very picturesque one, out of its trade wars alone from the days when Hanseatic and Norse fleets fought for control of the Baltic down to our own day.

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