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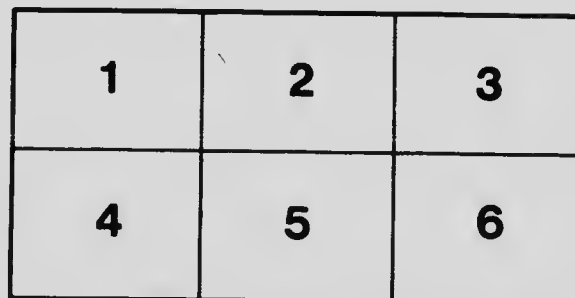
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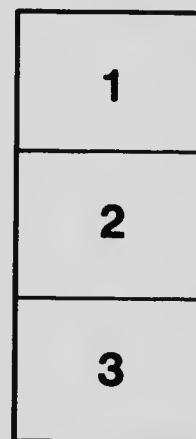
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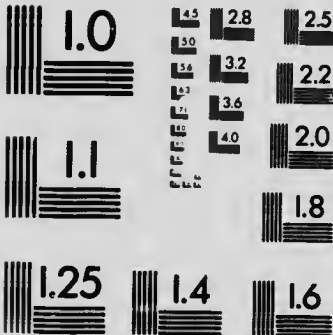
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THE PRESENT OUTLOOK

WILLIAM RENWICK RIDDELL

(REPRINTED FROM THE WASHINGTON PROCEEDINGS OF THE AMERICAN SOCIETY
FOR THE JUDICIAL SETTLEMENT OF INTERNATIONAL DISPUTES.
DECEMBER, 1916)

THE PRESENT OUTLOOK

It is the convention to begin an address on occasions
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With the Compliments of

WILLIAM RENWICK RIDDELL.

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method of settling disputes of an international character.

But this our Society was founded and had begun its
beneficent work, years before the commencement of the
present war; it has no thought of interfering with the course
of the war (were it otherwise I should not be here).

For as

We draw the sword to keep our troth
Free from dishonour's stain;

We Pray

Make strong our hands to shield the weak,
And their just cause maintain.

THE PRESENT OUTLOOK

It is the convention to begin an address on occasions of this character by expressing delight at being present; but it is not for that reason that I say that I am more than glad to be permitted for the third time to take part in the proceedings of this Society.

I have had some difficulty in persuading some of my friends at home of the propriety, the seemliness, of a Canadian, whose country is at war, who is proud that his country is at war, attending the sessions of a society whose function it is to prevent war and to substitute for war with its horrors another, a more humane and civilized method of settling disputes of an international character.

But this our Society was founded and had begun its beneficent work, years before the commencement of the present war; it has no thought of interfering with the course of the war (were it otherwise I should not be here).

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Our Society has not varied from its original objects—nay its avowed purpose is the same as the avowed object of the Foreign Secretary of Great Britain in July, 1914, before the war broke out. Of his sincerity and good faith, we Canadians have no doubt; but the record is open, let everyone, neutral or belligerent, judge for himself.

It is therefore wholly fitting for the citizen of a country which asserts that its responsible statesman wholeheartedly desired and in good faith urged that the dispute which had arisen, so far as it was not composed by the two parties, should be referred to a Judicial body at The Hague—that the citizen of such a country, I say, should be a member of a society for settling all international disputes in that way, a way which commends itself to the intelligent, the civilized, the humane, the Christian.

I was a little criticized by some of my friends in Canada because I represented my Country at the celebration of the Centenary of the Battle of Plattsburgh and of that of New Orleans. But there, too, my skirts are clear, my reason perfect. I gloried not in the battles in which my peoples suffered defeat (no dishonorable defeat, be it said) but in the fact that these battles were a hundred years in the past, that the one made peace possible and the other made peace palatable and therefore permanent; that thereafter the two peoples had decided their disputes not by arms, by blood and agony and death, but by the peaceful ways of diplomacy and contract—by making bargains and sticking by them; by interpreting these bargains when they disagreed, not by rifle and cannon, shot and shell, but by the legal acumen and skill of the ermined Judge or the practical sense of the conciliatory arbitrator.

In the consideration of the only proper and logical causes of disputes concerning international rights, there are two fundamental elements which must always be borne in mind. There is national feeling, national sentiment, national pride, national predilection, call it what you will—*kultur* if you like—which every nation possesses in a greater or less degree, and which impels us to look upon all things from a national standpoint—to magnify national rights of one nation, and to minimize the rights of all others. This is the fount of the spirit which says: "What my nation wishes is right, what it wants it must have, there is no law but my people's will, let all other nations great and (especially) small make way for them."

Then there is the other concept of which no nation is absolutely devoid; of which every nation claims a great share, and would like the world at large to think it has more than is always manifest; there is the sense of the right, the essentially right, the moral law implanted essentially and ineradicably in every human heart. Kant, speaking of this sense of law, which most of us conceive as coming direct from God himself, compares it with the starry heavens and finds them both sublime:

Two things do fill my soul with speechless awe,
The starry heavens and mankind's sense of law.

It is by the action, reaction and interaction of these two principles that the nation's view of international relations must be determined.

In my mathematical days I took delight in Conic Sections—what this degenerate age is wont to call Ana-

lytical Geometry. There were set forth, enunciated, elaborated, established, the properties of the ellipse. With two coördinate foci, the shape of the ellipse is determined by their relative distance apart. Remove the foci from each other, the ellipse becomes more and more flattened, less and less like a circle, until it is almost a straight line; approach the foci and the closer they come the nearer the figure comes to the circle, until when they coincide all ellipticity disappears and the perfect circle emerges, uniform in all directions, curving alike everywhere.

Let us conceive of the two principles of which I have spoken as the foci of the ellipse of the national concept of international duty. We find that as they are removed from each other, the view of international duty will become more and more narrow, that it more and more looks only in the one direction and has less and less dimension in any other. But let the national spirit come close to the eternal right, the everlasting justice, the moral and fundamental law implanted in the very soul of man, and the view will become broader until at length it stands forth facing all the winds of heaven alike with the same countenance, and, like the judgments of the Lord, true and righteous altogether.

A nation in which the national spirit is far removed from the justice of God may indeed glory in war. It can look but in the one direction and may justify war as necessary to attain its desires; it may indeed consider war not only necessary to crush opposition to its aims and objects but also as noble in itself because showing the power of the State and the devotion of the citizen.

But a people which has its national spirit thoroughly imbued with the impelling thought of justice can take no delight in war. War, the *ultima ratio regum*, may indeed interpret a law of man—it is sometimes said that the American Civil War interpreted the Constitution of the United States—but no war, no force, can interpret a law of God; can make that right which was wrong before. If what is just be all that is desired, war will be looked upon with disfavor—nay, abhorrence; for what distorts the sense of justice like armed conflict?

I am wholly persuaded that the century of peace, the glory of your people and mine, has been rendered possible, nay inevitable, by the two people measuring their international rights with God's yard-stick, His eternal and immutable law; that they have prayed with Job; "Let me be weighed in an even balance that God may know mine integrity."

Not that such a nation will wholly escape war; it will and must strive against it, but there may come a time when war cannot be avoided. I hate violence as much as any man; but I would not if I could help it allow a thief to rob me, even if I had to use violence; if a housebreaker persists in breaking into my house I will shoot him without a qualm if no other means is possible to keep him out. Because I believe in Courts, I do not drive the policeman away from my street corner and I do not complain if he carries a night-stick.

In this place I express no opinion as the cause of the present war—the record is open and everyone must judge for himself—and I have been too long at the Bar and on the Bench not to know that every case has two sides.

If, as they claim, the Germans desiring peace had no other way to prevent an unjust and unprovoked invasion of their country than to declare war and press offensive warfare against an aggressor, they had a perfect right to do so, and no reproach can be made of that action; their conduct was in accord with the highest law.

So, too, if Britain entered the war to keep her pledged faith, to defend the helpless and to prevent the destruction of a peaceful and peace-loving people—and that we proudly claim and we firmly believe—if she used every honorable means to avoid the terrible conflict—and that we proudly claim and firmly believe—then had she acted otherwise, she would have been an object of scorn and contempt, a by-word and a perpetual hissing among the nations of the earth, forgetful of her past, marred as it is by some faults, but on the whole of dignity, justice and righteousness. And that is why Canada, free to choose for herself, without compulsion, physical, legal or moral, at once pledged every last man and every last dollar in the cause we are supporting.

A peaceful non-military people, loving peace as the apple of the eye, we are therefore not ashamed to be at war. We ask no sympathy, except such as comes from a calm and dispassionate consideration of the facts themselves. If our conduct be such as to commend itself to the judgment instructed in the facts, we welcome sympathy; if not, we do not desire it. Above all we spurn sympathy which is but another name for pity. We have no desire that this Republic shall be aught but neutral—it is better so—but we do not desire that that neighbour at peace shall pity us because we are at war. We are

proud that we are at war and that Canada has found her soul.

Blow, bugles, blow! They brought us, for our dearth,
Holiness, lacked so long, and Love and Pain.
Honour has come back, as a king, to earth,
And paid his subjects with a royal wage;
And Nobleness walks in our ways again,
And Canada has come into her heritage."

Few of us there are who have not those near and dear to us at the front; many have suffered the loss of son or other kin; but we refuse to repent.

When the ends of this war are attained, but not sooner, peace will come again. Peace will come in time, and Canada will welcome it with a full heart; but never again will she allow her soul to be corroded with the rust of material success, or infected by the poisonous, sordid love of money.

Many there are who despair of civilization, whose hearts wrung by the horrors of the present war, are down-cast, as there appears to them no reasonable prospect that wars will ever cease.

I cannot think their despair warranted.

The last time I attended a banquet in this room, Dr. David Jayne Hill told a story which burned itself into my mind. I have not forgotten it—I cannot forget it. He said: "Sitting under the shadow of the Cologne Cathedral on a night in August after having dined in the open air on the terrace, I saw a little boy coming along with a great roll of broadsides under his arm, swinging one out in his hand and saying, in German of course; 'Proclamation by the Czar of Russia.' Everybody was

excited; everybody wondered if it was a proclamation announcing some great calamity, perhaps a declaration of war. Everybody bought a copy of the broadside. I bought one, glanced over it and in a moment realized that it was a copy of the rescript of . . . the Czar of Russia inviting the nations to assemble in an international council in order to arrest the progress of the armament of nations. In five minutes after the sense of that document had been comprehended by those who read it . . . everybody was smiling,—and it was a smile of indifference. I did not see one countenance expressing any serious appreciation of the purpose of the rescript . . . It seemed to mean nothing."

Of a surety the Chancellor, Von Bethmann-Hollweg, did not exaggerate when he said the other day: "We never concealed our doubts that peace could be guaranteed permanently by international organizations, such as arbitration Courts."

That picture of what took place on the Cathedral terrace impressed me strongly, it haunted me; I felt that sense of having heard it all before which ever now and then we all feel and cannot account for. At length it flashed upon me that I *had* heard it before, that the same thing happened on Calvary nigh nineteen centuries ago, when they that passed by wagged their heads and jeered: "If thou be the Son of God, come down from the Cross."

Not only in Cologne, but also in Paris and in London, yes, in Ottawa, it is possible in Washington, too, there were those who ridiculed the thought that anything good could come of any movement looking to the prevention of war by international agreements or other peaceful means.

If a rescript of the Czar of Russia looking toward reduction of armaments or, however indirectly, toward preventing war, should now be presented to the populace in front of Cologne Cathedral, would they all smile a smile of indifference? Would it be looked upon as "another piece of sentimentalism, another exploit of imperial impulsiveness?" And would the diplomatic world treat it with "quiet, courteous disregard?"

What does it mean when the Chancellor, no doubt with the full approval of his Imperial Master, says: "If at and after the end of the war, the world will only become fully conscious of the horrifying destructions of life and property, then through the whole of humanity there will ring out a cry for peaceful arrangements and understandings which, as far as is within human power, will avoid the return of such a monstrous catastrophe. This cry will be so powerful and so justified that it must lead to some result."?

And what mean the words of Lord Grey?

"I think public utterances must have already made it clear that I sincerely desire to see a league of nations formed and made effective to secure future peace of the world after this war is over. I regard this as the best, if not the only, prospect of preserving treaties and of saving the world from aggressive wars in years to come. If there is any doubt about my sentiments in the matter, I hope this telegram in reply to your own will remove it."

Of Lord Bryce?

"London

Ex-President Taft, New Haven, Conn.:

Those working here on your lines send heartiest sympathy with and best wishes for your League's efforts.

BRYCE."

Of Premier Briand?

"In basing your effort on the fundamental principles of respect for the rights and wishes of the various peoples of the world, you are certain of being on common ground with the countries who, in the present conflict, are giving their blood and their resources, without counting the cost, to save the independence of the nations."

You may say that the utterances of one or of the other are wrung from him by the agony of a bleeding country and the bitter disappointment of defeat, actual or prospective. Be it so, if you will,—is it not a great thing, a splendid omen, that such words are said at all?

Let us not despair. I repeat what I said in another place before the war began: "No doubt the watchman on the tower will often hear the anxious question, 'Watchman, what of the night?' before, looking eastward he can say, 'The morning cometh,' without adding 'and also the night.' But that answer will be made. Weary hearts looking for world peace will again and again be saddened by wars and rumors of wars; but these must cease at length. Christ died upon the tree to save mankind, and nineteen centuries after his sacrifice but the fringe of heathendom has heard the good news; yet his kingdom is secure, his throne as the days of heaven."

. . . . Peace "must triumph or all moral governance of the Universe is impossible. Far, far back the

Hebrew prophet saw what must come to pass unless there is nothing but blind chance. "The government shall be upon his shoulder and His name shall be called Wonderful . . . the Prince of Peace. Of the increase of His government there shall be no end . . . The zeal of the Lord of Hosts will perform this.'" . . .

Even if there is not to be world peace, there may at least be peace so far as your great nation and mine are concerned. The United States does not need to show its power; its glory is gained and is imperishable, it can be diminished only by the United States itself; the altruism exhibited in the case of Cuba, the ardent love of peace exhibited in bringing about the Conference and Treaty of Portsmouth are all to its credit. You and we have lived side by side at peace. We are near, very near neighbors; we have four thousand miles of international boundary without a soldier or a fortification; we have hundreds of square miles of international waters for nearly a hundred years unpolluted by the keel of a ship of war. As very brethren we have lived thus far for a century without war; and we are determined that that century shall become another century, and another, and another, yea, till time shall be no more, for sooner shall the earth be shaken out of her place and the pillars thereof tremble than that a peace which is based upon righteousness shall be broken, and He who cannot lie has said: "the work of righteousness is peace and the effect of righteousness, quiet and assurance for ever."

