THE ALLIES OF THE FUTURE

A Meditation on the Second Anniversary of the Beginning of the Great War in Europe

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VER in Germany a rule of the soldiers' pension system has become a routine phrase: "Years of war count double." In our system of thoughts and feelings it is not sufficient to count the years of this world war as if they simply had twofold or even tenfold length. Two years have passed today, and we feel as if a whole age had gone by since peace and goodwill gave charm and melody to our wondrous life. The "piping times of peace"—we can hardly think back to them in our frighted memories, and whatever we do remember gazes at us with cold and disillusioned eyes. So much has proved wrong, and when really the horrors of the war have ended, we shall have to recast everything in our mind. We shall have to relearn the axioms, Dogmas which we had accepted as certain in the world of commerce and industry, of technique and intercourse, of international law and politics, of morals and history, have turned out to be fallacies. Not only at the belligerent coasts were the gleaming signal fires extinguished when the war began; it became dark on neutral shores, too, and dark on the shores of our friendships.

Perhaps the greatest inner hope is that in those distant days of peace had given their thought and their life and to the idea of a lasting friendship between America, Great Britain and Germany. This had been an inspiring hope for many of us, and the fulfillment had seemed near. Surely it was not dictated by any lack of sympathy for other nations; in those sunny days of yore who did not feel that his life was richer for the contact with the fascinating brilliancy of France and the mellow beauty of Italy, with the genial spirit of Austria and the inexhaustible soul of Russia, with the admirable dash of Japan and the tremendous power for civil good in the small States of Europe? Nevertheless we the great historic chord was America, Great Britain, and Germany; three nations so different in traits and traditions, and yet so alike in their health and strength and moral energy. We felt they were the three really progressive peoples which ought to work in growing harmony for the glorious advance of the world. Every day, we fancied, brought them nearer together, the three Teutonic master nations in which the aristocratic will toward highest civilization blended with the democratic spirit of individual responsibility. The day of disaster long, long ago destroyed this hope and this belief; against Germany and every German feeling surges its anger against England. America boils with indignation against the kaisertum, and the fatherland is disgusted with America. Yet, even England's contempt for America has broken out again, and America is at the end of its patience with a nation which destroys its mail and its trade with the neutrals and humbles it by its blustering. A bitter warfare of minds has come over the three peoples, and all the dreams of the better past are cruelly shattered.

And now as the second year of war and terror dies, stained with blood, and the third year of war begins, which we all feel must bring an end to the carnage, we cannot help asking with trembling lips: what will come after? No memory of our past wishes can aid us in finding an answer. A new time must begin with new ideas and with new emotions. All was wrong; we must free ourselves from the old futilities and approach everything afresh. How will it be possible to build again a civilized universe in which it is worth while to labor? No other problem can be of equal importance; it is the one question of the future. Today at last we know that the year is pregnant with decision. A moral preparedness for the new tremendous issues is our most solemn duty. Without petty prejudices and without selfish wishes we must turn our face to the future: what can, what must it bring? But behold! The future does not appear bewildering. If we look at it correctly, the chaos seems to yield to order, and if we ask boldly the final question, we get one and only one simple clear-cut reply; the ultimate outcome of the world war will be just what we hoped before the war, a firm alliance of America, Great Britain, and Germany.

To be sure, if we began a long run-out discussion with the genius of history, we should hear in the preamble many other points which are true and important. Why ought we to rush to such plans of alliance which appear so unnatural in the turmoil of these days? Ought we not rather labor for a world which will rise in the name of the human principle, of the union of all nations, the all nations, the liberal world? Why ought we to build on the ruins of the war, a new world which will not be an eternal spring of cultural creation? Old World and New World, large countries and small, will all be stirred after the war by a new self-renewal, a new faith in national powers, a new willingness to fulfill national duties. No doubt this new patriotic passion will separate nation from nation. However great it may remain distant from shallow chauvinism, and however much it may transcend mere military preparations, it surely will stir in each country the wish for independence with all its economic, political, and cultural consequences. Self-centred effort will triumph in energetic rivalry. Yet loyalty is not strife, patriotic rivalry is not a desire to crush the rivals; the hope of each people to contribute its best gifts is not the hot craving for imperialistic world dominion; nationalism is in no way the foe of internationalism and peace.

This will indeed be the second great factor in the days to come. The memory of the world disaster cannot fade away in the next generation; the longing for peace will curb every unhealthy overgrowth of nationalism which threatens to disturb the development of neighbors. The will of the world must be bent toward keeping harmony in the household of civilization. Whatever the outcome may be when the grave-faced men sit around the polished table, the nations will go out into the world with the instinctive feeling that such a horror must not come again, unless Western culture is to break down.
before that date; and, the result, according to the law, would be that all the nations of the league would be obliged to enter into the struggle. Every loyal power would have a tendency to grow into a world war; truly such a "League to Enforce Peace" would be a league to endanger peace.

Some imagined that such a general diversion would be averted because no nation would desire to face a world war. Yet the German statesmen had been at it for years without success. The mere thought of war was too frightening for them. The "League to Enforce Peace" would have forced them to face the issue.

The League to Enforce Peace is like a league for the use of Experience. This, too, was intended in order to harmonize the nations of the globe. Their thought was that the world of history an artificial abstract construction which can be grown organically. The linguistic forms of Europe's association and the traditional forms of its friendly or hostilities behavior cannot be created in a philo-

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Moreover, the preparation for war would not only include guns and shells, flour and canned goods, but alliances. An alliance would be a year for the expansion of the crisis. More and more nations would be involved, and the province and the continental struggles would grow during the year into a continental war. But worst of all: A strong people, unwilling to face their fate, might be tempted by sheer force and, being weak, would give up the given alliances all the distance for a year's plodding preparation.

The league of nations would be at fault. But, through the effort of national self-interest, the nation would face the whole world. Yet the German statesmen had been at it for years without success. The mere thought of war was too frightening for them. The "League to Enforce Peace" would have forced them to face the issue.
tion. France and Austria, Italy and Sweden, Holland and Spain, Brazil and Argentina, would naturally cluster about this massive unison of the big three. It would be America and Central Europe, however, which would attract to themselves the European states all over the world, with the exception perhaps of Italy and Spain, which, in the desire to maintain their neutrality, would keep their borders open to the humanity and generosity of this great and noble idea. But if England and Russia are to be separated from the rest of the world, and if the rest of the world is to be divided into two great camps, then a great and terrible struggle will be inevitable. The conflict will be not only a conflict of nations, but a conflict of ideas, of ideals, of systems. The struggle will be not only a struggle for power, but a struggle for the soul of mankind. The fate of the world will be decided in this conflict, and the outcome will be the determination of the course of history for centuries to come. The world will either be united in the cause of peace and justice, or it will be divided in the cause of war and destruction. The choice is ours, and the decision is in our hands.