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THE NEW GERMAN EMPIRE

A STUDY OF GERMAN WAR AIMS
FROM GERMAN SOURCES

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THE NEW GERMAN EMPIRE

I. THE SPIRIT OF GERMAN POLICY

WHAT sort of a peace does Germany still hope to secure? The question can be answered in a sentence: a peace which will enable her to fulfil in the next war the aims she has failed to fulfil in this. This can best be illustrated by a brief survey of the policies and war aims pursued by Germany's rulers since 1914. Those aims and policies are perfectly definite and can be set forth and analysed with precision. They have been too little studied in this country, where there has been a disposition to regard Germany as though she were simply a "mad dog" and her rulers as though they were suffering from a megalomania which obscured their powers of reasoning and reflection. It is true that Germany's rulers have been blind, but only to forces and considerations which they regard as irrelevant or are unconstitutionally incapable of understanding—to the claims of moral feeling, of international right, of human decency and chivalry. But within the narrow and non-moral limits which they have prescribed for their study their thinking has not been confused or neglectful, but as clear-cut, as well-informed and as conscientious as that of their masters, Bismarck and Macchiavelli. The Germans of to-day pride themselves on not being romanticists like their ancestors, on having abandoned "the kingdom of the clouds" which Voltaire assigned to them, and having acquired in its stead sobriety of thought and judgment, backed up by a

The New German Empire

wealth of technical and scientific knowledge. It is in this spirit that they approach the study of political questions.

The Chancellor's speech to the Main Committee of the Reichstag outlining the course of the submarine controversy and proclaiming the decision to embark upon unrestricted warfare was a perfect example of the German scientific method in politics. So is the discussion of German foreign policy in Prince Bülow's book. Both treat politics as though it were a vast game of chess. Force is marshalled against force: estimates are made of the various chances and probabilities involved; and the issue is decided purely on considerations of power. This is what is called *Realpolitik* or *Machtpolitik*. It is a phenomenon that is strange and confusing to the British public, unaccustomed as it is to this cold, clear, intellectual analysis of facts and forces with every element of feeling and moral value left out. But once it is understood that this *is* the method which is being followed, it is not difficult to detect the different steps by which it proceeds: for the very fact that it is so strictly logical and methodical betrays it. Once grasp the essentials of the problem as the German statesman sees them, and it is comparatively simple to follow out the argument to its conclusion, especially as German writers and speakers in their naïve boastfulness and over-confidence are constantly giving us the opportunity of verifying our hypotheses as to the drift of their ideas. The German method, in fact, by leaving out all the great essential human interests which lend nobility to the study and art of government, has reduced problems of State policy to a naked and transparent simplicity. Just as Macchiavelli's *Prince* is an easier text-book to follow and to understand to the depths than Plato's *Republic* or the New Testament, so the policies of Bismarck and Bethmann-Hollweg are more easily defined and analysed than those of Lincoln and Mazzini or of President Wilson and Viscount Grey.

Let us try, then, to see the history of the war through

The Spirit of German Policy

German eyes. It will be necessary to make large use of German sources and to accustom the reader to the language of militarism: for without extensive quotation, not from extremists but from moderate and representative spokesmen, it is impossible to give British readers an adequate sense of the abyss which still separates the thought and feeling of the general public in the two countries. Only one thing can bridge that abyss—the re-discovery of moral values by the great mass of the German people, so that they may once more enter into intelligible intercourse with the civilised world. How is that to be brought about? There are not many present-day Germans endowed at once with sufficient insight to see their own countrymen as others see them and with courage enough to proclaim what they see. One such man, Eduard Bernstein, the well-known member of the Socialist minority in the Reichstag, has lately answered that very question in the pages of an American review, and his answer is the same as that of our own Prime Minister.

The war (he says) is in a high degree the trial of German militarism. Shall it be maintained with its present features or not? For the parties of the middle-class the question is almost settled already. Unless the war ends for Germany in a downright defeat they will maintain it by hook or by crook.*

This estimate is borne out by Professor Hans Delbrück, Treitschke's successor in the Chair of History in Berlin University, who, writing early in 1914, says, in words that cannot be too often quoted: "Anyone who has any familiarity at all with our officers and generals knows that it would take another Sedan, inflicted on us instead of by us, before they would acquiesce in the control of the Army by the German Parliament." †

Thus for the sake of the Germans themselves, whom it has terrorised, no less than for that of the world, Prussian

* Article in the *New Republic*, September 23, 1916.

† *Regierung und Volkswille*, 1914, p. 136.

The New German Empire

militarism, with its strutting arrogance, its cold brutality its immense and not undeserved prestige for evil, must be "wholly and finally destroyed" as a political and social force in the life of the German people. Then and then only can we hope to see "in Germany as well as in Europe one great emancipated land from the Urals to the Atlantic shores." If there are any other means under heaven to the same end, save victory in the field over the military rulers of Prussia, those means have still to be revealed to us.

II. GERMANY'S WAR AIMS

WHAT has been the general aim of the Kaiser's policy since he expelled Bismarck from the seat of power in 1889 and seized the reins himself? It can be summed up in a few words. Bismarck was unprincipled, but he was prudent. He left Germany the most important single Power on the Continent of Europe. She had won three wars: she had attached to herself in a network of alliances, open and secret, Austria-Hungary, Italy, Russia and Roumania. Her one inveterate enemy, France, she had driven into isolation. With Britain, who did not cross her path and had many points of friction with France, she was on terms of friendship, almost of alliance.* She was in his own words a "satiated Power."† Under the Kaiser she became a hungry Power. His object was to make her a "world-Power"—to transform her from the dominant State in Europe into the dominant State

* On January 26, 1889, shortly before his retirement, Bismarck said in the Reichstag: "I regard England as our old traditional ally, with whom we have no conflicts of interest. When I say 'ally' I do not use the word in its diplomatic sense; we have no treaty with England; but I wish to preserve the close relationship with England which we have had now for over 150 years, even in colonial questions. And if I was satisfied that we were in danger of losing it, I should be careful to try and prevent that happening."

† Speech on February 6, 1888

Germany's War Aims

throughout the globe. This sounds like a dream or a vague aspiration. But its practical implications were worked out by his advisers with German care and thoroughness, in full appreciation of the almost inevitable contingency of war. It is true that there was before the war a school of "moderate" opinion in Germany, dominant among the Social Democrats (whose political power by no means corresponded with their numerical strength) and represented even in high governing circles, which did not desire a war with Britain, and, indeed, hoped to avoid the arbitrament of war altogether. But no one who reads Prince Bülow's book or the present Imperial Chancellor's review of his policy in his speeches can doubt that both these "moderate" men looked forward to a time when Germany, with or without war, would have elbowed her way to the front. Since the outbreak of war the party of relative moderation has ceased to exist, the majority of the Socialists have accepted the official programme, and the imperialists reign supreme. Leaving out of account the Socialist minority, which, so far as numbers go, is insignificant in its public representation, controversy has raged, not between "moderates" and extremists, but between different schools of Imperialism. This was inevitable as soon as the military machine assumed uncontrolled command, and will continue until it has been discredited by defeat.

German imperialists have had two separate and distinct aims in view—one in the West, the other in the East. No doubt their distinctness is more apparent now, both to us and the Germans, than it was before the war, for it has been brought out into sharp relief by the unexpected course of the campaign. But, looked at closely, the two aims always were distinct both in the policy which they involved and in the appeal they made to different sections of the German population. They are distinct, but they are not mutually incompatible. Rather they are complementary. Yet the attainment of either without the

The New German Empire

other would involve a great advance on the Bismarckian position and the achievement of a very substantial measure of "world-dominion."

Let us examine each of them in turn.

Germany's Western aims, as German imperialists conceived them before the war, can be summed up as follows: To decoy or to intimidate Great Britain or (if needs must) to defeat her; to crush France once and for all; to overawe Holland, Belgium and Portugal; to extend her power, in one form or another, over Rotterdam, Antwerp, Calais, and the mineral deposits of French Lorraine; to break up the extra-European dominions of her victims, including, in the end, the British Commonwealth, and to build up on their ruins a greater Germany beyond the seas.

There is no space here to go into these various points in detail. So far as the proposed European annexations are concerned, it is only necessary to refer to the speech by the second personage in the Empire, the King of Bavaria, on Germany's need to control the mouth of the Rhine; to the Imperial Chancellor's remarks bearing on the same subject during the negotiations; to the economic aspects of the General Staff's carefully designed plan of campaign in France and Belgium; and to the manifesto of the Six Economic Associations*, representing every class in the Empire, peasants included, with the exception of the town workmen. It is in its extra-European aspects that the programme chiefly concerns us.

There it found itself faced at the outset with one insuperable obstacle—the British Navy. "With regard to extra-European politics," says Prince Bülow, in his frank and revealing book, "England is the only country with which Germany has an account to settle." The challenge could hardly be more plainly stated. The same theme runs through speech after speech by the Kaiser and his representatives in their campaign for the growth of the German Navy, from the Kruger telegram onwards. Germany,

* Reprinted in *The Issue*, by J. W. Headlam, Appendix i.

Germany's War Aims

already predominant in Europe as the first military Power, was to become an extra-European or a "World-Power," with a "place in the sun" beyond the ocean, enjoying "the freedom of the seas" which has been defined on different occasions as "the Empire of the Atlantic," the command of the Suez Canal, or a balance of naval power with Great Britain, but which, closely examined, really means, or meant, a substitution of German for British supremacy. It was in this spirit that Seeley's *Expansion of England* was studied and (thanks to its misleading Prussian title) misinterpreted in German schools. It was in this spirit that Germany looked forward to the inevitable Day.

What sort of a Colonial Empire did Germany hope to attain after winning the freedom of the seas? The ordinary middle-class and working-class voter who supported the Government on the Colonial issue in the Herrero election of 1907 (when the Socialist representation was cut down from 81 to 43) had probably only a very hazy answer to this question. He would most likely have said that he wanted something big and rich and full of good fighting material: generally speaking, in fact, an Empire after what was considered the English style. But the statesmen and the professors had their projects worked out in detail. It is worth while quoting one statement of Germany's Colonial demands, not only because it conforms so closely to the childish popular canons, but because it is from the pen of a man who has more than once endangered his academic position by the moderation of his views.

The first and most important of all the national demands [says Professor Delbrück*] which we shall have to make when the time comes for the signing of peace must be a demand for a very large Colonial Empire, a German India. The Empire must be so big that it is capable of conducting its own defence in case of war. A very large territory cannot be completely occupied by any enemy. A very large territory will maintain its own army and provide numerous reservists and second line troops. If its main centres

* *Bismarck's Erbe*, 1915, p. 202.

The New German Empire

are connected by rail its different districts will be in a position to support one another in case of need. A very large territory can have its own munition and arms factories. A very large territory will also have harbours and coaling stations.

And he adds in a footnote, "in order to prevent misunderstandings," and to explain what he means by "very large," that

the Belgian and French Congo by themselves cannot suffice for the German India which we must try to secure and have a right to demand after our victories. This equatorial territory may provide us with unsuspected treasures in the future, but so far as the next generation is concerned its extraordinarily thin population will prevent it from being profitable to us : indeed, it would cost money. Only when the rich districts lying around it, which are now in English hands, are added on shall we have in sufficient measure the practical pre-requisites for a German India.

These are not the day-dreams of peace. These words were written in April, 1915, after the big check in the West and before the Eastern drive. The views expressed in them are even now not abandoned. Writing in the February issue of a Berlin monthly review,* an ex-governor of East Africa crosses the "t's" and dots the "i's" of Delbrück's statement. "If Belgium," he says,

as we hope and as the Belgians hope, is to be divided after the war between Germany and France, vast portions of the Belgian and French Congo will have to be included in Germany's colonial Empire, which we would then complete by the acquisition of British East Africa and Uganda, in exchange for Kiau Chau, New Guinea, and Australasian islands. Such an Empire could easily be defended from the sea, and it would have to be considered whether we could not exchange Togoland, which is isolated, for Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland. Germany would then have a colonial Empire worthy of her enterprising spirit, and it would yield us all the raw material we need.

Similarly, the *Frankfurter Zeitung*, a conspicuously moderate paper, was still two months ago demanding "a compact

* Baron Albrecht von Rechenberg, in *Nord und Sud*, summarised in the *Westminster Gazette*, January 27, 1917.

Germany's War Aims

Colonial Empire in place of our present haphazard acquisitions.”*

Nor is this attitude confined to the official and bourgeois classes. The Socialist majority, though shy about annexations in Western Europe, have from the beginning associated themselves with “imperialist” projects overseas. In an article dated January 17, 1917, one of their leading members, writing on terms of peace, demands for Germany “an extensive Colonial territory which will enable her to import from within her own sphere of government the tropical products which cannot be grown on her own soil.” †

It remains to be seen whether these expectations will be realised. They can now only be fulfilled on one hypothesis—the checkmating of British sea power. This is the logic of the introduction of what the Germans call their “sharpest weapon,” unrestricted submarine warfare. For it is certain that the great German Colonial Empire is not attainable *by military victories in the present war*. German public opinion in general is, it appears, still far from recognising this. But the German Government knows better. It knows that whether or not it recovers its lost colonies, it has, if things remain as they are, no hope of establishing the great self-sufficient German Empire of its dreams, for such an Empire, even if it could be won through exchanges of territory in a negotiated peace, would be useless for its purpose as a fighting organism without “the freedom of the seas”; and the British Navy still stands undefeated in the way. Moreover, if the territorial arrangements at the peace are settled, as we may hope, on the principle of government by consent of the governed, it is not likely that Germany will recover

* *Frankfurter Zeitung*, in an article criticising the immoderate demands of the German Colonial League. Quoted in the *Manchester Guardian*, January 10, 1917.

† Article by Robert Schmidt, a member of the Socialist party in the Reichstag, in the leading socialist monthly, *Sozialistische Monatshefte*, January 17, 1917.

The New German Empire

even the "haphazard acquisitions" she has lost, still less that peoples living in the tropical zone will be handed about "as if they were property" to meet the needs of a self-sufficient German Empire. That being so, short of a naval victory or a successful submarine blockade, Germany is thrown back upon thinking out an alternative overseas policy until she is ready to resume the struggle against British sea-power, armed by the experience of the present war and under more favourable conditions. We shall see what that policy is.

It is worth while dwelling for a moment on the reason for the failure of Germany's original Western design, for it throws an interesting light on her future plans. She failed because when "the Day" came, after all her talk it caught her napping. In July, 1914, Germany did not intend to raise the Western issue in its full scope. Her Western plans, carefully cherished as they were, and loudly proclaimed as they had to be in order to secure popular support for the Navy, were to be reserved for a future war, which was to be the sequel of 1914, as 1870 succeeded 1866. It was not anticipated that the violation of Belgian neutrality would bring Great Britain into the war. This was unmistakably confessed by the demeanour of the Kaiser and the Imperial Chancellor on August 4 and 5, 1914. Still less was it anticipated that the victorious resistance of France would give Britain time to bring her full naval and military power into play. This has become abundantly clear in the course of the controversy in Germany about the effects of the British blockade. We know now from the statements of responsible persons* that the German War Staff had not reckoned out the economic implications of a long-drawn war with Great Britain and that, if we had disregarded international law and neutral opinion, as the Germans, judging us, as

* *E.g.*, Dr. Walter Rathenau, the originator of the Raw Materials Department of the German War Office, in a lecture delivered in December, 1915, and since published.

Germany's War Aims

always, by themselves, naturally expected us to do* and instituted the blockade from the first in its present rigour, Germany would before now have been completely denuded of essential raw materials.

It is for this reason that one of the subjects most discussed in the German Press since the blockade became acute is the best method of economic mobilisation for the next war—that “Second Punic War” against Great Britain which if Prussian militarism retains its hold over the peoples of Central Europe, will follow inevitably from the present conflict. That this design is cherished—and not unnaturally cherished—in responsible quarters could easily be proved at length. It is best illustrated by the practical arrangements for the storage of raw material and the conscription of industrial workers in the next war suggested by Dr. Rathenau in the lecture already referred to as a result of his administrative experience at the German War Office and by the following extract from the official Government paper, the *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* for October 15, 1916 :

The Reichstag Committee for Trade and Industry discussed on Saturday, as already briefly reported, the questions connected with the Economic Transition from War to Peace. The proceedings were confidential. . . . A representative of the Centre (the Roman Catholic party) summarised the main problems to be dealt with as follows : (1) The transition from war to peace ; (2) The organisation of economic life on a peace-basis ; (3) *The setting up and carrying through of a plan for placing economic life on a war-basis.* The two latter subjects (adds the journal), are of course matters for the future.

The bearing of plans of this kind on Germany's present policy may be left aside for the moment. They provide, however, an interesting testimony both to Germany's

* A composite book under the title *German Food Supply and the English Starvation Plan*, was published in Germany early in 1915. Its preface bears the date December 12, 1914. The entry of food-stuffs into Germany was, of course, not stopped until early in 1915, after the German Government had assumed control of the whole food supply and proclaimed its intention of starving out Great Britain by submarine blockade.

The New German Empire

relative unpreparedness for the full tide of the Western war and to her anxiety to face the logic of the situation which will arise when, as Germany's rulers still hope, the dominant military Power of the world, having emerged from the war with its prestige enormously enhanced and its military strength substantially increased by its Eastern conquests, stands face to face in the East as in the West, in the Persian Gulf as in the North Sea, with the dominant sea Power.

III. THE EASTERN PLAN

FOR though Germany has failed or partially failed up to the present in the West she has succeeded in the East; and it must never be forgotten that it was with Eastern not with Western plans immediately in view that she sped the Serbian ultimatum on its way and backed it up by declaring war on Russia.

In this Eastern adventure Germany's aims can be simply stated. They are as usual twofold—partly military and partly economic. Her military object was, and is, to secure a military preponderance in the Old World by establishing the supremacy of her arms over Central and Eastern Europe and Nearer Asia. Her economic object is clearly stated in the following sentences from the opening essay in an authoritative work recently issued on "The Economic Rapprochement between Germany and her Allies." *

The establishment of a sphere of economic influence from the North Sea to the Persian Gulf has been for nearly two decades the silent unspoken aim of German foreign policy. Our diplomacy in recent years, which has seemed to the great mass of all † Germans

* *Die wirtschaftliche Annäherung zwischen dem Deutschen Reiche und seinen Verbündeten*, issued at the request of the Verein für Sozial-politik, edited by Professor Herkner, of Berlin, 2 vols., 1916. The quotation is taken from the opening essay, by Dr. Spiethoff, Professor of Political Economy at the German University at Prague, vol. i., p. 24.

† *I.e.*, including the Germans of Austria, of whom the writer is one.

The Eastern Plan

vacillating and little conscious of its aim, only becomes intelligible when regarded as part of a consistent Eastern design. It is to the credit of Rohrbach to have shown in his writings how the single incidents fit into the general scheme of our policy. It is indeed in this region, and in this region alone, that Germany can break out of her isolation in the centre of Europe into the fresh air beyond and win a compact sphere of economic activity which will remain open to her independently of the favour and the jealousy of the Great Powers. Apart from the defence of hearth and home, no other success could compensate Germany for the enormous sacrifices of the war if she did not secure a really free hand, politically speaking, to pursue this economic goal. It is true that critical observers who have gone carefully into the details of the plan profess themselves sceptical of great economic results and emphasise the fact that the improvement of our relations with these regions cannot compensate us for the loss of our vitally important connections with the Great Powers and other States. They may very well be right. Nevertheless it remains true that a secure future for Germany is to be reached along this road and no other, and that Germany would be missing the greatest opportunity ever offered or likely to be offered her in the history of her foreign relations if she were not now to go forward with vigour and decision to its realisation.

Here it is clearly shown that the Eastern aims in themselves will not at present meet Germany's economic needs. If she is no longer to be "dependent on the favour and the jealousy of the World-Powers" she requires a Colonial Empire in the tropics as well. Nevertheless, the Eastern prize was well worth following up, and with good fortune it might even yield "Western" results. After Great Britain and Turkey had entered the lists and the Moslem Holy War had been proclaimed, sanguine spirits dreamed dreams of an African Empire to be won and kept without command of the sea, and influential scholars and writers spoke openly of the conquest of Egypt and the Soudan, and a Berlin-Cairo-Central African railway. Here, again, expectation has so far outrun performance. Nevertheless, Germany's main object has been achieved with amazing success. She has overrun Poland, Courland, Lithuania, Serbia, and Montenegro, most of Roumania and part of Volhynia, and she has won more signal conquests still over

The New German Empire

her own allies and the adjoining neutrals. Austria, Hungary, Bulgaria, and Turkey are no longer free agents. They could not if they would cut themselves loose from the German control, which first pushed them into the war and then saved them from disaster ; and the longer the war continues the tighter must that control become. Turkey, in particular, has become in fact, if not in name, a German annexe. Meanwhile, the smaller European neutrals have been impressed and intimidated by the display of German efficiency and "frightfulness." Thus Germany, cut off from the sea and from the New World, robbed of the overseas Empire of her dreams, has established a new Empire in its stead in the very heart of the Old World. Stretching from Strassburg to Riga, from Schleswig to the Persian Gulf and to Arabia, it has been driven like a wedge through the continent, pushing Russia away from the warm sea into the northern ice and gloom, and leaving the Western Powers isolated in the peninsula of Europe, cut off from land communication with Russia, India, and the rest of Asia.

IV. THE NEW GERMAN EMPIRE

WHAT is the character of this new Empire ? What does it portend ? And, in particular, what is its bearing on the future of the British Commonwealth, and of the causes of which it is trustee ?

It may be well to take the last question first, for it can be simply answered. This new German Empire, if it survives, would be regarded as a disaster by all its neighbours, by Denmark, Holland, Belgium, France, Switzerland, Italy, Greece, and Russia ; but it would be most disastrous of all to Great Britain, at whom it would be chiefly aimed. If Germany succeeds, at the Peace, in retaining possession of her Eastern conquests, then Britain will have lost the war. The point need not be argued at

The New German Empire

length, for it is regarded by German writers as a self-evident proposition. It will be sufficient to give two representative German statements of the position of Britain in the event of the permanent establishment of the New Empire. In the course of the book already quoted written in April, 1915, Professor Delbrück remarks :

Whether this war drives the English out of Egypt or not, what becomes of the English supremacy in Egypt if Turkey now maintains her existence, rejuvenates and reorganises herself militarily and economically, and establishes a railway system which will permit her to put great armies and all that pertains to them right on to the Egyptian frontier? Hitherto England has been able, in time of peace, to maintain her hold on Egypt with a garrison of 6,000 Europeans. Whatever the conditions of peace at the end of the war, this idyll of British supremacy has passed away beyond recall.*

The same argument is still more clearly put by Paul Rohrbach, the semi-official writer who has done so much to further Germany's Eastern designs. Writing in his own paper, *Deutsche Politik*, on November 24, 1916, he remarks :

There was a period of the war between the great miscarriage at the Dardanelles and the successful Russian summer offensive, when here and there, in the English Press, the phrase cropped up that there were "two victors" in the war—England and Germany. Behind this lay the idea that English policy might rest content, in case of need, with a "drawn" war. From the English point of view, however, this was a piece of lazy and confused thinking. They know better to-day : and they are perfectly right when they say that if the game between them and us ends in an apparent "draw" it is we who will be the victors and they the vanquished. . . . In point of fact, if the Central Powers, with Bulgaria and the Turkish East, form a solid political block across the Balkans, then, for obvious political and geographical reasons, it is no longer possible for England in the future to conduct her world-policy on its traditional lines. English foreign policy, in contrast to that of all other European Powers, has hitherto rested on the fact that not only England, but

* Delbrück, *Bismarck's Erbe*, Berlin, 1915, pp. 211-2, written in April, 1915. The point here made in print about the defences of Egypt is no new one for the Professor. It was made in his university lectures at least as early as 1902. The Kaiser's visit to Palestine was in 1898.

The New German Empire

also every vital part of her Empire, was unassailable. This was a very pronounced advantage possessed by England as against all other Powers, although the English have for over a century been accustomed to treat it as a self-evident necessity and as a matter of course. . . . But if the English wish Egypt and India to remain unassailable in the future, and if they wish to secure themselves against the German submarine danger, they must defeat us to such an extent so as to sever our connection with the East, to render us powerless to prevent the break-up of Turkey in favour of England and her Allies, and to force us to submit to permanent restrictions as regards the construction and use of submarines. When England has achieved all this, and not one moment sooner, she has won the war. If she has not attained these aims when peace is concluded, then she has, according to her own confession, lost the war. Here, and nowhere else, lies the root of the English fighting spirit. It took an astonishingly long time before the whole of or, at least, the greater part of the English people realised this situation. But now it is realised, and, hence, we may be sure that England will not stop the war, however great her own sacrifices may be, until she admits defeat.

It is characteristic of the German writer that he should attribute the obstinacy of the British fighting spirit to intellectual calculation rather than to intensity of moral purpose. But his reasoning is perfectly sound. The establishment of the Berlin-Bagdad Empire as a spearhead against Egypt and India would strike a fatal blow at British security and would involve a complete transformation in our military and defensive system, with the consequent reactions upon domestic and social policy. So far as purely British interests are concerned the case is unanswerable, as the neutral world is well aware. And if Britain were Germany, and British ideals were Prussian ideals, there would be no more to be said. It is natural that a Great Power, especially a great Naval Power, should have a traditional bent towards the policy of *Divide et Impera* and should prefer to have small or weak States as its neighbours rather than a first-class highly organised military Power. That is the light in which the German writer, accustomed to weighing strength and weakness rather than right and wrong in the balances, regards the issue. All that he sees are two great non-moral World-Powers ranged

The New German Empire

against one another for mastery, and all the "right" that he expects to emerge from the contest is the "right" of the stronger. But there is, of course, a higher point of view than that of purely British interests—the point of view set forth in the Allied Notes and in President Wilson's Message. We have no right to condemn the new German Empire till we have examined the principle on which it is based, the policy which its rulers mean to pursue, and the bearing which its definitive establishment and consolidation in the treaty of peace would have on the future history of the Old Continent and of the world.

What, then, is the character of this new Empire? On what principle of government is it based? Is it a benevolent autocracy based on the desire of the dominant German rulers to promote the welfare of their subjects? Or is it a Commonwealth based upon the exercise of political responsibility by all who are fitted to bear it? Is it based upon the rule of law, or upon the assent of the governed? Will it contribute to the comity of nations and form a corner stone in the new league of Peace? Judged by the touchstone of President Wilson's Message, how does it stand the test? Men of liberal tendencies in neutral countries, ignorant of the local circumstances and safe in the detachment of the New World, have been tempted to welcome it as a large-scale international experiment and to discern in it an element of stability and order—or at least to demand for it a fair trial. "The Allies," says a writer in an American weekly paper, well-known for its progressive tendencies,*

are resolved not to accept a Germanised Central Europe, even though it rests on the acquiescence of the minor Slav peoples; but inasmuch as they may be forced to consent, it is worth while to consider possible compensations. Germany would have acquired more or less political control over a large region whose economic resources are undeveloped and whose inhabitants possess an inefficient political

* *The New Republic*, December 16, 1916. See an article on the same subject in the issue for January 27, 1917.

The New German Empire

and social organisation. German control would not rest on military conquest. . . . The Germans could not treat such peoples as they have in the past treated the Prussian Poles or the Alsatians. The different groups of non-Germans in the Central European system would insist on a substantial measure of self-control. Some kind of federal system would have to be forged, and the making of it would be a slow, delicate and dangerous operation. . . . These non-German peoples will never be politically content unless they can be wrought into an international commonwealth, analogous to that which is needed for British Imperial federation.

In any event the Germans would cease for the time being to threaten British and French sea power.

And the article closes with the suggestion that the establishment of the new Empire and the consequent increase of Germany's prestige "might place fewer impediments in the way of the ultimate creation of a system of supernational law" than would a decisive victory for either side.

Can speculations of this kind be brought to the test of fact? Is there any likelihood or even possibility that the new German Empire can develop, through the free union of its constituent peoples, into a commonwealth analogous to that of Britain?

It would be easy to suggest an answer to this question from the past history of the four partners in the Alliance which has crystallised into the new Empire, or from the past record of the alliances and conflicts between them. Prussian ruthlessness in Alsace-Lorraine, in Schleswig and in Poland, the relentless persecution and matchless hypocrisy of the Magyars in the government of their "national" State,* the suppression of every symbol and vestige of Serbian nationality in their occupied territory by the Bulgars, the simple, cold-blooded Turkish expedient of wholesale massacre, are not promising foundations for a stable edifice of empire. Nor does the alliance between Austria-Hungary and Bulgaria, which was first manifested

* "The whole of public opinion in Hungary holds the principle of nationalities in honour," was Count Tisza's comment on President Wilson's message. Far more respectable was the German comment which advised President Wilson never to mention the subject of Prussian Poland again.

The New German Empire

to the world by the open breach of the Treaty of Berlin, supported by Germany in "shining armour" and then confirmed at the treacherous outbreak of the Second Balkan War, nor the alliance between Germany and Turkey, cemented by the blood of the Armenians, suggest that the new dominion will stand forth as a champion of international right. But these things, after all, are in the past, important and suggestive as they are. It will be fairer, in the space at our disposal, to test the new Empire rather by the future programme set before it by its promoters and sponsors. Let us judge it, not by what it is, but by what those who have brought it into being hope and believe it may become.

So much has been written in Germany on the subject of "Berlin-Bagdad," and there is such unanimity and, indeed, monotony about the views expressed, that it is not difficult to summarise them. This will best be done, not by isolated quotations, which could be multiplied indefinitely, but by reproducing a few connected statements from representative sources. These may make it clear how widely the new German Empire diverges from the ideals and practice of the British Commonwealth as regards both its external relations and its internal policy and organisation.

To take first the question of external relations. "In every discussion on the peace that must follow this war," says President Wilson, "it is taken for granted that peace must be followed by a definite concert of the Powers. The question upon which the whole future peace and policy of the world depend is this: Is the present a struggle for a just and secure peace, or only for a new Balance of Power?" How is this question answered by the prophets of the new German Empire? There is only room for one statement of their creed: but it must be given at some length:

The great lesson which the German people has had to learn is to

The New German Empire

think in terms of power (*machtpolitisch denken*); and the present war has taught us more in this regard than all the four centuries of European diplomacy and development that preceded it. For all who have eyes to see and a mind alive to the world around them the Great War has made clear our true situation. We must insist on being a World-Power, or we cease to be a Great Power at all. There is no other alternative. . . . Let no one here say that small States, too, can have a national life of their own. True, so long as the great States around them allow them to exist. But any day may see the end of their existence, in spite of all treaties to the contrary, and every day brings us fresh evidence how little assured is the existence of small States. For *neither alliances nor treaties provide the least security* for the existence of the Great Powers, still less of small States. Anyone who still retains belief in such things is past all argument. A man who has not learnt wisdom from the events of the last two years is incapable of learning anything. Of course every Great Power will always do its best to form alliances with other Powers, great and small, in order to assure its existence against hostile coalitions. But no one of them can feel any security that these alliances will be observed, Germany least of all. . . . We cannot do without alliances, but we can only reckon upon them as promoting our own security so long as they are cemented by the greatest possible sense of common interest. Alliances by themselves are worthless. . . .

Let us sum up the argument. Germany needs, quite independently of her Allies, to be large, strong and powerfully organised; in order to secure herself against the possibility of *being deserted by the small Powers and being treacherously attacked by the Great*.

What does she need as a guarantee of this? The answer is: an extensive Empire, with highly developed agriculture and industry, the best possible strategic frontiers against sudden attacks and the best possible allies—alliances based not upon scraps of paper (*papierene Verträge*) but upon the elementary and vital needs of the allies as regards both defence and economic development. It is unnecessary, nay, harmful, to rely upon the affection and loyalty of *any* ally unless the material basis of the alliance has been soundly laid. If the war has done no more than awake the German people out of love's young dream—that is, out of its reliance on the goodwill and honest dealing of peoples and States—it will have done us a great service. *There are no ethical friendships between States in our day. There are only friendships of convenience.* And friendships of convenience last just so long as the convenience itself.

That is the sheet-anchor of all foreign policy. What we desire for our future therefore is a strong, self-dependent Germany, strong enough to secure that Austria, Bulgaria and Turkey shall find their

The New German Empire

greatest safety and prosperity through the German connection—and *only* through Germany.

There is nothing new in sentiments such as these. The temper, the argument, even the very turns of phrase, are as old as history. Macchiavelli, in his lore for princes, preached upon the self-same text; and two thousand years before him the greatest of Greek historians noted how war, “the most compelling of teachers,” upset all the established conventions of morality and taught men a new code of mutual dealing. “What an intending ally trusts to is not the goodwill of those who ask his aid, but a decided superiority of power for action.” “The strong do what they can, while the weak suffer what they must.”* So ran the writ of blood and iron, in the ancient world, as it runs to-day. What is new, and what must give us pause, even after all we have witnessed of German methods, is the source from which this monstrous doctrine is proclaimed. This new prophet of ascendancy, who lisps in the accents of Macchiavelli and pours scorn on the ideals which, as we are told on high authority, “every lover of mankind, every sane and thoughtful man must take for granted,” is no politician or diplomatist, no Prussian soldier, like Bernhardt, familiar from the traditions of his service with the philosophy of the jungle, no hired scribbler paid to dip his pen in poison, but a man known through two hemispheres as a moral educator of the young. Few German writers, indeed, are better known and more esteemed in this country than Dr. Kerschensteiner, of Munich, whose name is inseparably associated with the Day Continuation School system in that city and elsewhere in Germany, and it is with a sense of cruel irony that his English admirers will find his name associated with this solemn and deliberate denial of the very possibility of international right and of a comity of nations. There is no need for further witnesses as to the part the new

* Thucydides. Book iii., ch. 82, Book v., chs. 89 and 109.

The New German Empire

German Empire is likely to play in the "creation of a system of international law." *Ex hoc uno disce omnes*—and their name is legion.*

Let us now turn to the internal policy and organisation of the new Empire. No subject has been more discussed in Germany and among her Allies in recent months; but a brief summary of the general upshot of the debate must suffice. Germany's objects with regard to her new Eastern Empire are two-fold: military and economic. It was the Military General Staff who made the present war. Circumstances, and not least the British blockade, have set at their side, as no less important for the carrying out of Prussian designs, an Economic General Staff. Together they have worked out the possibilities of the new Empire in terms of men and things—of cannon-fodder and material products.

The military question is always regarded as a mere matter of arithmetic. Having waged one war with perhaps a majority of unwilling soldiers in their ranks—Poles, Alsations, Schleswickers, Tchechs, Italians, Roumanians and Jugoslavs among the regiments of the Central Powers, not to speak of the composite Turkish army—the

* *Die Zukunft Deutschlands*, by Oberstudienrat Dr. Georg Kerschensteiner, Member of the Reichstag, Munich, in the *Europäische Staat und Wirtschaftszeitung*, December 16, 1916. Italics as in the original. Dr. Kerschensteiner is the author of *Education for Citizenship*, English translation, Chicago 1912 and 1915, and *The Schools and the Nation*, English translation, 1914. As regards other literature, the German learned periodicals are filled with articles and reviews of books and pamphlets on current social and political questions, among which Mitteleuropa predominates. Diligent search of the available literature has revealed one single pamphlet which departs from the prevalent materialist philosophy and imports moral considerations into the argument. And of this the expert reviewer sternly remarks: "The author seems to be quite unaware that he is being guilty of an unpardonable confusion of thought. All ethical considerations are completely alien to the State and the State must therefore resolutely keep them at arm's length," adding that it is to be hoped that such "pointless ethical reasonings" will not find imitators. (*Archiv für Sozialwissenschaft und Sozialpolitik*, July, 1916, p. 317. Review by Professor Eulenberg, of Leipzig, of *The War in the Light of Social Theory*, by William Jerusalem. Stuttgart, 1915.)

The New German Empire

General Staff is justified in laying its plans on the hypothesis that the same thing can be done again on a larger scale. Moreover, the effect of a uniform system of military training upon the populations concerned must not be overlooked. The unity of modern Germany, as Germans are never tired of telling us, is largely the result of compulsory military service. As Germany was unified in the generation after 1871, so Mitteleuropa, they hope, in spite of its composite and refractory material, will be welded into a military, if not an intellectual, unity in the generation after 1914. The process has already been carried far in the present war. The German military system is dominant throughout the armies of the Allies and Germans are almost everywhere in command, in fact if not in name. The very protestations of military independence issued at intervals by the various allied Governments testify to the helplessness of their position. This unified military control is convenient in many ways to the German Government. It enables it to dispose of doubtful units by sending them to fronts where they will be out of harm's way, and to employ them to keep the civil population in order by the use of foreign troops. Turks, we learn, have already been employed to quell a civil disturbance at Munich.* This is indeed a new use for "co'lonial" troops, but under the militarist regime it is too convenient not to be resorted to.

There is another element in the German military system which must be remembered. Its foundations are laid, as everyone knows, in the national school. It is inevitable therefore, that Germany should seek to control the educational system of her allies—more especially of Turkey and Bulgaria, who are more amenable to such treatment. The influence of German universities and university professors in this direction of recent years has been very great, not only in Europe but in America, and it will, of course, be extended wherever possible after the war. Already a

* Statement from a well-informed—seemingly official—source in the daily papers on February 5.

The New German Empire

university has been established in Constantinople, and although it has made itself ridiculous by proposing the Kaiser for the Nobel Peace Prize it is likely to be more successful in its main object—the spread of German ideas in Turkey. This policy is already put forward under the specious plea of promoting Turkish independence. Everyone who knows Turkey is familiar with the work of the mission schools, a very large number of them American, which have carried on their civilising labours without attempting to use their influence for political purposes. These “alien schools,” we are now told,*

must be turned into true Turkish institutions. This will be a favourable moment . . . to see that German methods are appreciated. . . . The foundations of our power will be stronger and broader if—in harmony with Turkish wishes—we secure our influence, not by the establishment of new schools of our own, but by gradually introducing the German language as the most important second language in the Turkish schools, and thus by the active and increasing collaboration of German teachers implanting a deep respect for the achievements of German culture.

But the economic side of Germany's programme is no less important than the military, and it is round this that controversy most centres. It is best set forth in a series of quotations.

The following extract is taken from the chapter on Turkey in the large, composite and obviously semi-official book on *Germany and the World War* to which most of the best-known “political” professors have contributed.†

The great problem of German-Turkish relations is commonly summed up in the watchword “Berlin-Bagdad.” Enemy statesmen

* *The Economic Rapprochement between Germany and Her Allies*, Vol. II., p. 450, article on German-Turkish Economic relations. It is the standard book on the subject and in its general cautious treatment marks a reaction against Naumann's *Mitteleuropa*.

† *Deutschland und der Weltkrieg*, Berlin, 1916, p. 305, chapter by Professor Dr. Carl H. Becker of Bonn. The preface to the second edition states that “the book has been received at home and abroad as an unprejudiced scientific treatment of the events brought about by the war.” Italics, as in all subsequent quotations, are reproduced from the original.

The New German Empire

have discerned in this the idea of a German political domination. They have spoken of Turkey as a German province, or at least contemplated a German "Protectorate" over the Turks. And yet the problem is not one of politics at all but of economics. . . . Berlin and Bagdad are linked together as the termini of a mighty railroad that is now nearly completed—a line that will link up lands of widely different economic conditions and render possible an exchange between them which will make them independent of hostile competition, hostile attacks and, above all, the command of the sea. What we have to deal with, then, is a *great closed economic territory as the basis of political friendship*. All the States astride the line—the German industrial States in the North, the great Turkish agrarian State in the South-East, the Balkan States in the centre—will remain free to carry on their own national affairs, but they all have the same interest in exchanging their goods along this artery of communication. Granted that in peace time heavy goods will be mainly transported by sea to save expense, yet the existing crisis has shown us the immeasurable value of a secure line of communication by land, a line which is comparable with the great overland railways of the United States.

There speaks the voice of the bourgeoisie and the official classes. Let us add some representative testimonies from the working class. In the article already quoted Robert Schmidt, a well-known Socialist member of the Reichstag and writer, remarks :

The peace which seems possible to us to-day will leave Germany and her allies in the eyes of Europe as a group of Powers whose sphere of economic control extends from the marshes of the Elbe to the waters of the Persian Gulf. Thus Germany, in close union with her allies, will have won by her arms the kernel of a great sphere of economic control worthy to be set as a closed economic system (*geschlossenes Wirtschaftsgebiet*) by the side of those of the other world-Empires.

In 1915, before the entry of Bulgaria, a number of leading German trade unionists representing the chief industries of the country published a book entitled *Working Class Interests and the Issue of the War*. It was a naked appeal to sectional self-interest, in harmony with the dominant philosophy of the country. Trade by trade the German workman is told that defeat means ruin and

The New German Empire

victory more work and higher wages. But whenever the question of peace terms crops up the familiar exposition of Eastern policy reappears :

A German commercial policy which met the needs of the Balkan States and, above all, of Turkey would bring with it invaluable consequences. It would bind those peoples more closely to Germany, because it would offer them mutual advantages and the possibility of cultural progress. It would suit the interests of the German consumer, because it would assure him of the import of foodstuffs independently of the sea and of England. . . . It would also be of advantage to our industries. The procuring of *industrial raw materials* is extremely important for the trade unionist as for the manufacturer. Already to-day we are importing *wool* from those regions. With the improvement of methods of communication cotton-production would assume a greater importance for Turkey, to the great advantage of the Central Powers. There is no reason to rely for ever on the American supply or to be dependent on the development of Africa. Both these sources can be cut off from the sea. The straight road to Asia is, however, open if only these peoples can be *interested in the prosperity of Germany*.*

The same point of view is dominant in the most interesting Socialist document which has as yet come to hand on the subject, the published report of the proceedings at a meeting between the official representatives of the German and Austrian Socialist and Trade Union movements, held at Berlin early in 1916. From the purely intellectual point of view the discussion was on an extraordinarily high level, and the various conflicting factors and interests in the complicated economic situation were analysed with a wealth of practical and theoretical knowledge seldom found at political gatherings in this country. But the whole discussion is dominated by the materialist philosophy of Marx, which has proved so sinister a bond of union between Prussian militarism and German and Austrian socialism. The moral standpoint is simply

* *Arbeiterinteressen und Kriegsergebniss* : a Trade Union war book, edited by William Jansson (editor of the official organ of the German Trade Union movement), p. 159, from the closing essay of the editor.

The New German Empire

non-existent. "Central Europe" is judged, not from the point of view of justice or moral values, but by whether it is the predestined next step in the economic evolution of the world; and from this standpoint there has been no difficulty in bringing round the great majority of Socialists to the policy of co-operating with the Governments and the bourgeois parties in promoting the closer economic union of Germany, Austria-Hungary, and the Near East. The general attitude of those present on the question of the rights of small nations may be judged by the following extract from the report of the remarks of the one courageous minority speaker (Ernst Meyer), who ventured to touch on the subject of the wishes of the non-German nationalities concerned :*

From the Socialist point of view, we ought not only to ask what are the interests of the German working-class; we ought also to take into account the interests of the workers in the Balkan countries. . . . Very likely our comrades in the Balkans have other wishes in preference to the *rapprochement* with the Central Powers. . . . We cannot demand that without further ado the wishes of the German workers should ride roughshod over theirs. (Interruption: "Absurd!") Regard for the working-class interests of other countries has not hitherto been regarded by us as absurd (Interruption: "Parish Pump politics!").

Let us complete the picture by an extract from the most widely read, as it is also by far the best written, of all the books that have appeared in Germany on this subject—a very oasis in a desert of sand—Naumann's *Central Europe*. Attention has already been drawn in THE ROUND TABLE† to the significance of Naumann's book in connection with German domestic policy; his

* Verbatim report of proceedings on January 9, 1916, issued by the Executive of the German Social-Democratic Party, Berlin *Vorwärts* Publishing Office, 1916, p. 49. The words translated "Parish Pump politics" above are "Montenegriscche Kirchturmspolitik"—i.e., "Montenegrin church steeple politics."

† See the article on the Labour Movement and the Future of British Industry, June, 1916.

The New German Empire

exposition of the underlying meaning and philosophy of Germany's Eastern policy is equally striking :

We have reached the heart of the constitutional problem of Central Europe.* It consists in the marking off of National Government from Economic Government and Military Government. The distinction is fundamental. We started, it will be remembered, with the idea of large-scale economic areas (*Weltwirtschaftsgebiete*). The large-scale economic area of Central Europe must be larger than the existing States of Germany and Austria-Hungary. We have refrained, for obvious reasons, from mentioning the names of neighbouring States to be brought in, merely stating in general terms that further accessions are necessary. But into what sort of a union shall they be brought in ? The answer is : a military union and an economic union. Anything over and above this would be superfluous and positively harmful. In all other matters there must be no derogation of political independence. It is therefore vital to delimit the military and economic functions as so to work them into a new central government. Let us take first the latter side of this new union, or, if the expression be preferred, the new Economic State. . . . This Economic State will have its own customs frontiers just as the military State will have its trench defences. Within these frontiers it will promote a wide and active interchange of commodities. For this a central Economic Government will be required, which will be directly responsible for part of the economic arrangements concerned and will advise the national Governments as to the remainder. Customs, the control of syndicates or trusts, organisations for promoting exports, patents, trade marks, etc., will be under central control. Commercial law, traffic policy, social policy and similar matters will only be indirectly within its purview. But the super-national Economic State, once established, will steadily increase its powers and will gradually evolve an administrative and representative system of its own.†

Here, then, we have the programme. The new German Empire, we now see, is not, and is not intended to be, a political unit in the ordinary sense of the term. It is

* Central Europe is habitually now used by German writers to include the Turkish Empire, though Naumann is more directly concerned with Austria-Hungary.

† *Mitteleuropa*, by Friedrich Naumann. Berlin, 1915 : p. 249. The passage quoted will be found on p. 272 of the English translation (P. S. King & Co., 1916).

The New German Empire

ostensibly an alliance—an association of militarised partners, each pursuing objects of their own, but bent on preserving a closed system against the jealousy of the outer world, and submitting to the general direction of the most powerful member of the group. The guiding motive is self-interest, and the terms of alliance are a business contract.* The four Powers are in league for what they can get out of it: and Germany, who holds the others to her by a characteristic blending of cajolery and terrorism, maintains the alliance, with the definite material object of eventually rendering herself independent of British sea-power as regards the import of food-stuffs and essential raw materials, such as cotton and wool. She conceives the world as divided up among a few great World Powers with mutually exclusive economic spheres, and she is determined to carve out her own area of exploitation.

It is hardly worth while to point out to British readers how this conception conflicts at every point with the principles and practice of our own "free, tolerant and unaggressive" Commonwealth, which has kept clear the seas for the trade of the whole world and maintained throughout its dependencies the principle of the open door for all comers. That a system which is based merely on self-interest and repudiates the very suspicion of any deeper unity is built upon shifting sand is a proposition which need not be argued in the pages of *THE ROUND TABLE*. Yet it is interesting to recall that this strange, new ambitious German scheme is in its general conception not a

* This is brought out most clearly of all in the manifesto, unique in its combination of peasant cunning and *naïveté*, which was issued by the Bulgarian Government previous to its entry into the war. It is reprinted in Herkner, Vol. II. It is perhaps the first time in history that a call to arms has been backed up by statistics. The following extract is typical of the whole: "Germany and Austria-Hungary are cut off from American and Russian imports of corn. If, therefore, we can get our corn to their markets we can sell it free of duty and at the price of 60 to 80 francs per 100 kilogrammes. Bulgaria would be guilty of the greatest of crimes if she did not make arrangements (*i.e.*, by attacking Serbia) to enable our corn to be sold at these high prices" (p. 470).

The New German Empire

novelty but an anachronism. There was a time in British history when we, too, pursued the phantom of the "self-sufficient Empire" and regarded every neighbouring State as an intending highwayman. "Berlin-Bagdad," for all its parade of modern science, is little more than an adaptation to modern conditions of the ideas and policy of the "Old Colonial System," which led to such friction between the Colonies and the Mother Country and ultimately to the disruption of the Commonwealth.*

That friction is inevitable, and is already plentifully in evidence. Germany's allies do not relish the prospect of being treated as the colonial plantations of a modern industrial State. The Turkish Government, for instance, has recently announced a complete revision of the Turkish tariff and German authorities are already complaining of the "industrial fanaticism" by which it is inspired. The Hungarians, whose country is described by Naumann in glowing periods as the "granary" of Germany, protest that their manufactures only need an influx of German capital to develop on prosperous lines. Austrian industrial interests have been so much alarmed at the prospect of

* "Anxiety to make England independent of continental Europe in respect of shipping and of certain raw materials . . . was the motive which prompted English statesmen to favour projects of American colonisation. . . ."

"The policy of British statesmen towards the colonies was moulded by the conceptions of their commercial system. They left the colonists to concentrate their attention on the local affairs of their several communities, in the belief that Britain could bind them to herself by undertaking to defend them against foreign aggression, and by offering a preference to their raw products, in return for which she was to confine the market for those products to herself. . . ."

"The inherent defect of the system lay in the fact that it was one which could not exist without control, and that control lay in the hands of only one of the parties to the bargain. Each side was so situated as to think mainly or exclusively of its own interests, which was but a part of the whole. There was no common control in which all shared, such as might compel them to think of the interests of all—of the interests, that is to say, of the Commonwealth as a whole."

The Commonwealth of Nations, edited by L. Curtis, pp. 245, 307, 309.

The New German Empire

Austria becoming the dumping ground of German goods* that the idea of a Customs Union has already been abandoned for the milder formula of an "economic rapprochement." The disputes which always break out in a partnership where self-interest is the only tie are already in full swing.

But we need not conclude too hastily that these conflicts of interest will undermine the foundations of the new project of Empire. That can be done, and must be done, by the Allies alone. For there are two great outstanding differences between the old Colonial system of Britain and the new Colonial system of Germany, which ensure to the latter, if secure from without, at least a temporary stability. In the first place, Germany has and will retain the undisputed military control over her allies, so that of the two alternatives, tyranny or disruption, the former is the more likely. Secondly, each of her allies is itself a tyrant, practising ascendancy over lesser peoples, so that a sense of common interest and common guilt is always at hand, in case of need, to hold the system together. Berlin-Bagdad represents the ascendancy of Germans, Magyars, Bulgarians and Turks over Alsations, Poles, Danes, Czechs, Jugoslavs, Roumanians, Italians, Slovaks, Greeks, Arabs, Armenians, and other races. In the last analysis, as they know already to their cost, the lesser partners have little voice in the higher direction of the system, just as the German people themselves have little voice in the decisions of their own Government. But they realise that the alternative before them is not the transference of their allegiance to another camp, but in the case of Austria-Hungary and Turkey, at any rate, a drastic alteration both in the boundaries and in the character of their govern-

* Not all Austrian manufacturers share this view. At a conference of the Lower Austrian Union of Trades, on May 14, 1915, a glove manufacturer remarked in all innocence: "In trades like ours taste is the most important factor involved, and we shall all readily admit that we have nothing to fear from German competition in this respect." Herkner, Vol. II., p. 161.

The New German Empire

ments. So they acquiesce perforce in the control of Berlin, a control over the lives of some 150 million people—one-tenth of the population of the world—exercised, directly or indirectly, by the same methods—the combination of prestige and terrorism—by which the old Empires of the East retained their temporary dominion over some of the same unhappy lands ; at the best, organisation, discipline, efficiency, science, material well-being ; at the worst, forced labour, deportation, slavery, massacre.

Such an Empire is not a commonwealth or community of citizens. It is not even an autocracy of the familiar type. It is something different and more sinister : a military and economic unit, a barracks and a plantation, an area in which the normal concerns and functions of government and social life are subordinated to the demands and requirements of an economic and military General Staff. In peace its inhabitants are no more than a “labour-force” ; in war they are simply “man-power.” If it survives the present war and is allowed to be consolidated in the future peace, it will rivet tyranny for yet another generation upon the peoples of Central Europe and Nearer Asia, and make ready, slowly perhaps but inevitably, as its resources develop and a new crop of soldiers grows to manhood, for yet another trial of strength between militarism and the forces of liberty and justice.



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