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GIVE AND TAKE.

Shaw (7.)

By BROUGHAM VILLIERS, PS

PREFATORY NOTE.

The making of peace is, and must be, a matter of "give" as well as of "take." The author of these notes on a possible settlement has approached the various problems from the point of view of one desiring to do no injustice which shall breed future wars, but recognising that the best hope of peace lies in satisfying, so far as possible, the legitimate demands of peoples for expansion and opportunity. The Women's International League, therefore, publishes them, not as a commitment on the part of the League to any particular solution (for there might be many solutions), but as a stimulus to thought and discussion, and to encourage a habit of mind which shall recognise that, with States as with persons, life involves change, but need not involve conflict.

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Sometime or other the representatives of the nations now at war will meet to settle the terms of peace. The time when they do so will be one of the most important moments in the history of the world. Upon their decisions may depend whether the future life of the world is to be one of happy progress or of terrible misery. Whether this is to be really a "war that ends war," as so many people in this country hoped, or only the first of a series of wars, each dragging Europe further back into barbarism, will depend to a great extent upon the spirit in which the national delegates meet, and upon the agreement to which they ultimately come. If they meet as enemies, each seeking to take everything and give nothing, well! they will part just as less important people do when they meet in that spirit. They will each of them be dissatisfied with what has been obtained, each of them revengeful and bitter, each hoping by some new alliance, or by the invention of new methods of destruction, to wage a more successful war, and to force upon the enemies of his country a more humiliating defeat.

OBJECT OF THE SETTLEMENT.

We may hope that the representatives of the nations will meet in a better spirit. If each government realises that the highest interest of its

own people is the same as that of all the others, a *secure and permanent peace*, their deliberations may do much to assure for all time this greatest of blessings for mankind. The most terrible responsibility it is possible to conceive will rest upon them.

But it must not be thought that this responsibility rests wholly upon them. We are *all* responsible, in various degrees, for the right settlement of the war; for it depends to a very great extent upon whether we now make up our minds what it would be right to do, and aid in forming a righteous public opinion in the country about it, whether the influence of Great Britain will be cast in favour of wisdom and peace, or will, as so often before, be devoted to gaining this or that petty advantage at the expense of rival powers. The conference that will settle the affairs of Europe is not a thing of the future: *it has begun now*. It is not a meeting of diplomats sitting round a green table: it is going on wherever men and women are thinking and talking, wisely or revengefully, of the things they wish to see done. All these things go to make up the sum total of public opinion; and on public opinion, if it is strong and determined enough, the future instrument of peace will be founded. "It is not our business to collect trophies, but to bring the world back to peaceable habits," was the reply of the Tory statesman, Castlereagh, to those who wished to annex French territory at the close of the revolutionary war. In this, Castlereagh was right; and if he had had more sympathy with national liberty, the forty years' peace that followed Waterloo might have lasted even longer. We can see things from a more enlightened standpoint than was perhaps possible to Castlereagh a hundred years ago, but we must not forget the lesson he taught us. If the victors in this war get nothing but security for peace, they will gain far more than if they obtain everything else and leave the way open to future wars.

Nations fight for freedom, for conquests or for trade; and in so far as we extend the liberties of peoples, deprive aggressive States of the hope of making conquests, and increase the world's freedom of trade, we remove the causes of war. If, on the other hand, we allow any province or country to be handed over to a government it does not like simply because it has been "conquered," we prepare the way for a rebellion and another war; while at the same time we make foolish people in the conquering State think war a fine thing, by means of which they can make their own nation more important and prosperous. If we allow markets and trade routes to be closed by tariffs, and the commerce of nations to be shut out from the seas, the people so treated will never be content until they have got a juster arrangement.

When we come to consider peace we should meet in the spirit of peace, and should try to get rid as far as possible of the spirit of war. To do this it is desirable to get the whole question as quickly as possible out of the hands of the nations that have been fighting, into those of a conference *including all the civilised powers of the world*. If the many questions to be considered are argued and haggled about by people who have just been fighting, we are not likely to get them dealt with, as they ought to be, purely from the point of view of the good of the whole world. It will be enough if the belligerent nations agree about three things:

1. Each nation to forego any claim based on the **RIGHT OF CONQUEST**:

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2. All treaties and engagements of alliance on each side to be declared void, so that in considering any question no nation shall be considered bound to give diplomatic support to an "ally," or to oppose the just claims of an "enemy."

3. The immediate summoning of an **INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE**, including the neutral Powers, to arrange such transfers of territory as may be desirable in the interests of the peace of the world, and to consider any other question, by whomsoever it may be brought forward, that may lessen friction between nations, and make the peace more secure.

There is no good reason why peace should not be made *now* on the above terms.

In the first place the CONFERENCE should confirm and extend the agreement the belligerent Powers had already come to to repudiate all claims based on the **RIGHT OF CONQUEST** and agree that in future wars the method of settlement should be the same as they were now adopting. It would be a great thing if this war ended for ever the immoral doctrine of the **RIGHT OF CONQUEST**.

THE RIGHT OF CONQUEST.

There is no "right" of conquest, and one of the worst sins of Prussian militarism consists in the fact that it has done its best to keep alive the idea that to annex a country or province by pure force is a justifiable thing.

This does not mean that States or provinces should never be transferred from one government to another, but that this should not be done merely to gratify the will of a powerful conqueror, but in accordance with some definite plan, assented to by the commonwealth of nations and, where this can be ascertained, the will of the inhabitants.

A necessary condition for the establishment of a firm and lasting peace, then, is the definite surrender of all claims made by any nation to retain countries, provinces, or colonies conquered in war, except where some other more satisfactory title can be established for their possession. If we want a lasting peace the **RIGHT OF CONQUEST** must go.

The abolition of the Right of Conquest secures for us everything for which we originally entered into the war. The great majority of British people supported this war to stop German aggression; not one in a hundred of us would ever have thought of making war for the purpose of taking anything from Germany. But the repudiation of conquests implies that Belgium, Northern France, and all countries or provinces overrun by the Germans are free to go back to their original rulers; while it also provides that any Colonies taken from Germany shall be restored to her. It is in itself a perfectly fair example of **GIVE AND TAKE**, and is the true preliminary step for any just settlement. But the abolition of the Right of Conquest does much more than this. It implies that *after any future war* the united powers of the world, neutral and belligerent, shall insist that a similar beginning shall be made in negotiating peace, and that whoever is the victor shall not be allowed to obtain any accession of territory merely because of a triumph in the field. *In this way only can we remove one of the greatest causes of war—the hope of conquest.*

TRANSFER OF TERRITORY.

But the abolition of the Right of Conquest does *not* mean, as some Germans desire, that the nations of Europe and the world should necessarily be left all under the same rulers as before the war. It is obvious that if the map of Europe, as it was before the war, had been one likely to preserve the peace, there never would have been any war at all; to go back to the state of things then prevailing would be to reconstitute a system that has broken down under our eyes. There ought, therefore, to be some, perhaps many, transfers of territory from one government to another; but these should be carried out on some definite principle with a view to prevent any revival of the old quarrels out of which the war arose, and should not merely be dictated by the victors in the present struggle.

There are two ways in which transfers of territory may rightly be made:

1. By voluntary arrangement and as a result of a free bargain between the nations concerned, and
2. By direction of the general Conference of the Powers, neutral and belligerent.

In order that rearrangements of either kind may be made, it is necessary that the Conference should decide the principles on which all such transferences should take place, whether they are carried out by what we may call a private arrangement between the two States chiefly concerned, or by instructions from the Conference itself. It may be necessary to lay down quite a number of rules before particular cases come to be dealt with, but there are three at least that should be agreed to and accepted as from henceforth part of International law. They are:

1. When an inland territory under one government depends for trading access to the sea on the harbours of a coast-line under another government, the inland country or "hinterland," as it is called, shall be allowed free access to the ports. The coast-line must be a free trade area.

2. No territory shall be transferred from one country to another, unless the State acquiring such territory makes itself responsible for an agreed proportion of the national debt of the State which surrenders it, paying compensation for any railways, harbour works, or other improvements, which have been made at the expense of the State within that territory.*

3. In any country transferred the people must be guaranteed freedom of religion and the free use of their own language.

It may be well to give the reasons for these principles. They are all aimed at preventing future friction and possible war, and are not laid down in the interest either of the Allies or of their enemies.

ACCESS TO THE SEA.

A fruitful cause of quarrel exists when an inland population, requiring access to the sea, finds itself hampered by the restrictions imposed upon

* When Colonies are transferred the State taking them over shall keep all International obligations to which the State surrendering them was at the time bound, and shall further engage to observe the policy of the "open door" so long as the Colony remains under the responsible control of the home government.

it by the Power controlling the nearest or most convenient seaboard. In some cases the prosperity of a large population may depend altogether upon unrestricted access to some port which is under the control of another government, it may be of a jealous and unfriendly government. When this is so, there can be no stable peace, unless the government controlling the coast is reasonable enough to allow the people of the inland country free access to their ports of shipment, or, failing this, such access is guaranteed by International law. Thus, free access to the coasts of the Adriatic is absolutely essential to most parts of the Austrian Empire and to Serbia, and as long as either of these Powers controls the Adriatic ports, it will be able to tyrannise over the other, and one of the most potent causes of the present war will remain. Russia, again, has no ice-free port, and Roumania no port at all whose commerce the Turks cannot ruin by closing the Dardanelles. It is absolutely essential to the prosperity of Roumania and Southern Russia that the access of their commerce to the Mediterranean shall be guaranteed. No arrangement that does not provide for this can ever be accepted by either country for a moment longer than it can be compelled to observe it by force. The Conference of the Powers should, first of all, provide that in no case shall a "hinterland," or country depending for its trade on free access to a particular coast, be put at a commercial disadvantage by any arrangement that may subsequently be made, but that sovereignty over all such coasts shall for the future be limited by a provision securing freedom of trade.

COMPENSATION FOR TRANSFERRED TERRITORY.

At the conclusion of this war, all the States that have been engaged in it will be deeply in debt—indeed, it is quite possible some of the poorer ones may be unable to meet their financial engagements. If the population of any State be largely reduced by the transference of one section of its taxpayers to another, the burden of debt on the remainder will be all the more oppressive. It is only just when such a transfer takes place that the State acquiring the new province shall make itself responsible for a reasonable share of the national indebtedness—to be decided by arbitration—of the State surrendering it. Where there has been large outlay on State railways and other public improvements for the benefit of the province, the value of such improvements should be repaid to the State which has made them.

This is not only justice, it is good policy, as it will tend, in the present exhausted state of national funds, to deter nations from pressing unreasonable claims because of the expense, and will partly reconcile others to the loss of territories when they are at least secured against an unfair addition to their financial troubles. It should thus render the constructive work of the Conference easier.

RELIGIOUS AND LINGUISTIC FREEDOM.

In many of the territories which will have to be dealt with by the Conference the people have not yet outgrown the idea of religious persecution. In the Near East there is a strangely mixed population of Orthodox Greek, Uniate Catholic, Roman Catholic, Mahomedan, Armenian Christian, and Jewish peoples, few of whom can be depended upon to respect the others' opinions if they have the power to persecute.

Furthermore, most of the races in these parts are intolerant of any nationality but their own, and are anxious to compel their subjects to adopt their own language, German, Magyar, or Russian, as the case may be.

If we are to have a permanent peace, it must be stipulated in any transference of territory that the inhabitants shall have religious and linguistic freedom.

FUNCTIONS OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE.

The Conference, having first laid down the principles on which it intends to conduct its business, ought then to endeavour, by all the means in its power, to gain the free assent of the countries specially affected to each new arrangement proposed. In many cases, probably two countries, say Italy and Austria, may be able to arrange some matter in dispute without the assistance of the other Powers. If so, so much the better; only when they have made their bargain the general Conference should be informed of its conditions, so as to insure that the principles insisted upon by it have been observed, and the rights of other nations respected. If these conditions have been kept, the Conference should confirm the arrangement made. More frequently, however, the Conference will find it necessary to take part in the negotiations itself. It should, then, endeavour to arrive at a fair bargain, which will give both parties an advantage, while leaving behind it a situation at least less likely to produce discord than that which preceded it. No Power should be asked to surrender anything held before the war without at least an adequate money compensation; while, as far as possible, the Conference should endeavour to arrange exchanges of territory for territory, or, of territory for economic advantages. Generally, the Conference should try to secure greater freedom of trade, and should never on any account promote or consent to any scheme which introduced or extended restrictions on freedom of trade.

An instance of the way in which the Conference might aid in removing the causes of quarrel between two nations, while doing justice to both, may be found in the case of the bitter antagonism between France and Germany.

FRANCE AND GERMANY.

France has a grievance against Germany, and Germany has one against France. True, the latter is a grievance shared by all the world, and only the restless self-consciousness of modern Germany has magnified it into a cause of unfriendliness; but, nevertheless, the grievance exists, and, if possible, should be got rid of. France's grievance against Germany is that the provinces of Alsace and Lorraine were torn from her in 1870 by a particularly insolent and ruthless exercise of the "right" of conquest, and that these provinces have been governed since in a most illiberal and offensive manner, so that a large part, perhaps the majority, of the inhabitants are in no way reconciled to German rule, but still wish to be restored to France. Germany's grievance against France is that, since 1870, the Republic has annexed a large part of the backward countries of the earth, and endeavours by preferential tariffs in her own favour to shut out the trade of other nations, Germany included, from her growing Empire. The Conference might well deal with these two grievances together, and endeavour to obtain mutual concessions which would remove both.

ALSACE-LORRAINE.

The annexation of Alsace-Lorraine by Germany is an instance of the evils of the "right" of conquest. Ever since this injustice was perpetrated there has been ill-feeling between the two countries, such as never endured for a similar length of time between France and this country, however long-continued or bitter a war may have been waged between them. If the people of the provinces had been willing to be transferred to Germany, or even if they had been so liberally treated by the Empire as to have become generally reconciled to it, this animosity would probably have died out long ago. For the Alsace-Lorraine question is not chiefly one for the German or French people, but for those of Alsace-Lorraine itself, and there can be no final settlement of it till they are satisfied. The Peace Conference should, therefore, reopen the question, and endeavour to ascertain whether the majority of the people in the Provinces desire to be reunited to the French Republic. If this proves to be the case, the wrong of 1871 should be righted and Alsace-Lorraine restored to France.

GERMANY AND FREE TRADE.

If, however, France recovers Alsace-Lorraine, it is only fair that the German grievance against France should be removed also. Since 1870, France has built up a great Colonial Empire, in the administration of which she has followed a very illiberal policy, endeavouring by differential tariffs to monopolise the trade of her Colonies for herself. This is a quite unjustifiable thing to do. If the people of Alsace-Lorraine elect to go back to France, the best way in which that country could recoup Germany would be by agreeing to follow the lead of this country, the United States, and Germany by granting equal freedom of trade with herself to all nations in the Colonies under her control.

If, however, the people of the provinces prefer to remain as they are, this should not close the question. It is, even now, a matter of some importance that so large an area as the French Colonial Empire should be shut off to a great extent from the commerce of the world, and it is a matter that is likely to become a much more serious ground of friction as time goes on. The German people feel more anxious than anyone else lest the Colonial market of France should continue and that of the British Empire should become closed to them. They have no important Colonies of their own in which they can secure a market to themselves. But if Germany makes no territorial cession to France, and has no important Colonial markets to keep open in return for concessions in the French Colonies, she has nevertheless a most effective means to prevent any danger of her commerce ever being excluded from either the British or the French Colonial markets. If Germany will consent either immediately or gradually to place her own market on a free trade basis, one of the main supports of the protective system and the difficulties it places in her way will disappear.

In this connection, it is well to note that Germany, France, Austria, and Italy have been obliged to suspend their protective tariffs on food and on some manufactures during the war, and, whatever they may do in the future, they will come to the Peace Conference as virtually free

trade nations, at least as far as food is concerned. In a large measure, then, it is a question of not re-establishing protection, not of abolishing it.

POLAND.

Or take the case of Poland. Here we have a very difficult question, to the solution of which two of the hostile Powers have themselves given suggestions. The war has broken down the Polish policy of Germany and Russia alike. Both have promised Poland some form of Home Rule. Thus the two Empires are agreed, except that each wants to be the suzerain Power. The obviously fair compromise is to make Poland independent of both, and form the country into a most useful buffer State between the two Empires. This is an arrangement that would, no doubt, disappoint both Russia and Germany, but it would not involve any loss of dignity to either, and would leave far less bitterness behind than any other arrangement.

But the complete and unconditional independence of Poland might leave the way open for many further irritating questions to arise, and it would be advisable to take the opportunity to impose some conditions on the Poles in the general interests.

If Poland became an *hereditary kingdom*, there would be danger of discord between Russia and Germany as to what family should rule in Poland, and the country might come under the rule either of a German or Russian royal family. It would be still worse if the old *elective* monarchy of Poland were revived, as every time a King was to be chosen we should have intrigues all over Europe to influence the election in favour of a Prince from one country or the other. Poland should, therefore, be a Republic, and its President a Polish subject, free from connection with any foreign royal or imperial house.

If Polish independence be restored, there should be a guarantee for autonomy within it of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, or, at least, a provision that the Lithuanians should be allowed free use of their own language. The Poles are Slavs, the Lithuanians are not, but have a language and character of their own. Any attempt to compel—and the Poles, unless due provision were made to the contrary, would be very likely to make one—the Lithuanians to adopt the Polish language and customs would breed further trouble.

The three sections of Poland under Russia, Germany, and Austria respectively have been divided from one another, and united economically with the Empires which rule them by the tariffs of these Empires. In any event, the restoration of Polish independence must cause a great amount of dislocation in business. This can be minimised and future friction avoided by providing either that Poland shall become a free trade nation, or that her tariff shall be a fair one, that is, shall consist of an equal rate of duty on all goods coming into Poland. Either plan would leave no loophole for German or Russian intrigues to obtain tariff arrangements favourable to themselves, and injurious to their rivals.

If possible, the neutrality of Poland should be guaranteed.

If Poland were made independent, of course, both Russia and Germany would lose territory by the war, and if that were all that was done, both would feel aggrieved. If possible, however, we should endeavour to

obtain for each some compensation, especially if by doing so we are enabled to remove some dangerous grievance which might tend to bring about another war. Germany and Russia have each a perfectly legitimate ambition, though it must be confessed that in the ways in which they have vainly endeavoured to realise these ambitions they have paid little heed to the rights of others or the interests of peace.

THE BOSPHOROUS AND DARDANELLES.

The retention of the great waterway through the Bosphorous and the Dardanelles which is essential to the commercial development of Southern Russia in the hands of such a Power as Turkey, at once hostile to Russia and at least strong enough to be able to shut up the Straits at will, is a thing altogether intolerable, and if we are to have a peaceful world it is essential that this great waterway should be open always to the commerce of Russia, Roumania, and Bulgaria. The Russian ambition to rule in Constantinople is another matter. The mixed population of the city includes few Russians, and there is no reason to suppose that the people wish to be under the rule of the Tsar. Russia, however, is a "hinterland" of Constantinople, and on the principle laid down by the Conference should be secured in her access to the sea. It should be put out of the power of the Turk to close the Straits, a thing that would far more than compensate the people of Russia for the loss of a discontented province like Poland. But it is doubtful if the Straits can be effectively neutralised as long as they are held by a Power, however corrupt, which has such a large army of brave soldiers as Turkey. It is essential that the military power of Turkey in Europe should be brought to an end, though this need not imply the loss of independence for the Turks who live on the European side of the Straits. The Sultan of Turkey has two dignities: politically he is head of the Turkish nation, and spiritually he is Caliph, or the successor of Mohammed, the head of the religion of Islam. It seems to some that this is an unfortunate combination of offices, as it inevitably leads to mixing up two very different things, the religious interests of Islam and the political interests of one of the least civilised of Mohammedan States. The great things that Mohammedans have done for the world come not from the Turks, but from the Moors of Spain, from the Arabs, and from the Moguls of India. It may be suggested as one way out of the difficulty of the Straits that the present Sultan of Turkey should be allowed to choose whether he will retain his spiritual position as successor to Mohammed and rule over a small neutral State, consisting of Constantinople and the lands bordering the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles, handing over the Sultanate and Turkish Empire in Asia to another Mohammedan ruler, or remain Sultan of Turkey in Asia and surrender the Caliphate to somebody else. The small neutral State would then be to the Mohammedan world what the Vatican is to the Roman Catholic—the neutral and independent home of the head of their religion, while all the other nations of the faith would be equal in status and dignity.

If this were done, and the terribly ill-treated Armenians were granted autonomy under the protection of Russia, the really vital interest of the latter in this region would, we think, be adequately safeguarded. It would then be virtually impossible to close the Straits against Russian

and Roumanian commerce, and Russia would obtain a more than equivalent compensation for her losses in Poland.

Germany might be compensated in another way.

THE BAGDAD RAILWAY.

The Bagdad Railway is an invaluable enterprise necessary for the full development of lands, which were once the most civilised in the world, but which have fallen, under Turkish misrule, into almost hopeless decay. It owes its construction to the enterprise of Germany, but, unfortunately, it has been conceived and carried out in a spirit of political aggression and of scarcely concealed hostility to Great Britain and Russia. Acting in this spirit, without any attempt to come to an understanding with other Powers having important interests in the surrounding regions, the German Government was compelled to carry out its work by conniving at all the abuses of Turkish rule, and to endeavour to establish communications by bullying the Balkan States and making them subservient to its plans. With the effective neutralisation of Constantinople, Germany would have no power to use the railway as a threat either to Great Britain or Russia. It is highly desirable that some European nation should undertake the protection of this railway, and help in the development of Asiatic Turkey. Working no longer in the dark, but with an agreement with the Powers as her title, the protectorate of the railway might well be left to Germany. In that way the backward countries of the southern and eastern Mediterranean would all be divided up into "spheres of influence," France and Spain in the West, Italy in Tripoli, England in Egypt, Germany in Asia. This arrangement might have the happy effect of creating a "European mind" in Germany. She would be responsible for carrying out an important international trust; if she attended to it honestly, she would have no particular difficulty, but if she endeavoured to use the railway for any purpose of aggression she would find out that without the consent of Russia, the Balkan nations, or Great Britain, she could have no communication with her protectorate either by land or sea.

This way the Turks would lose no territory except Armenia, to which they owe a heavy debt for centuries of monstrous misrule. For this reason it does not seem desirable that any compensation should be paid to Turkey for the loss of Armenia, and justice would probably be satisfied if Russia gave guarantees to do all that is possible to indemnify the Armenians for the destruction caused by the Turks during the war.

THE ADRIATIC COAST.

The northern and north-eastern coasts of the Adriatic form the essential outlet of the trade of a varied collection of nations—Serbs, Croats, Hungarians, and Austro-Germans. The coast population is mainly Italian on the north-west, mixed Italian and Croat on the north, and Serbian, with a few Italians, on the north-east. At present, this coast is almost entirely controlled by Austria, with the result that the Italians and Croats are compelled to submit to a government of inland people, hateful to them, and Austria is enabled to exert very tyrannical pressure on Serbia, by partially compelling her to confine her export trade

to one market—that of Austria herself, and then to impose what conditions she chooses on that export, or even to prohibit it altogether. Yet it would not make for the peace of the world to hand the Adriatic coast over to the Italians and Slavs, if they were to be allowed to imitate Austrian exclusiveness, and forbid the coast or make onerous restrictions on its access to the Hungarians and Germans who depend upon it for their trade with the outside world.

In dealing with this problem, therefore, the first thing the Conference of Powers should do is to proclaim the whole northern Adriatic coast a permanently free trade area, with an international code of regulations for dues and charges on goods and shipping. These arrangements should only be alterable with the consent of the Powers; whoever it is ultimately determined shall exercise the political sovereignty of any of the lands trading through the Adriatic.

The question is further complicated by the religious and national intolerance of many of the nations in this part of the world. Transference of territory from one Government to another in this region would very likely, unless imperative rules were first laid down by international law, lead to religious persecution of Roman Catholics and Mohammedans, as well as many attempts to suppress national languages. Before dealing with any territorial claim, then, the Conference should first insist that in the whole region everyone should be guaranteed the free exercise of his or her language and religion. Here, too, it is particularly important to remember that no province must be transferred from one Government to another without the transfer at the same time of a due proportion of the national debt of the State losing its subjects to that which acquires them. If any transfers of provinces take place on the Adriatic at the Peace, they will certainly be at the expense of Austria, and the financial position of the Austrian Government will have an important bearing on the matter. Austria will be almost certainly bankrupt at the close of the war—she was seriously embarrassed before it began—and if due provision is made for secure access to the sea and for the fair treatment of Roman Catholics the overwhelming financial difficulties of Austria may make it much easier to secure her consent to cede territories which are only a burden, in return for substantial assistance in restoring her industrial prosperity.

The limits of this pamphlet render it impossible to suggest any detailed scheme of settlement for the Adriatic lands, but if the true principles of such a settlement are firmly grasped, Great Britain, and perhaps the United States, the only countries which are likely to have any money to lend after the war, might be able to help the Serbians and others to realise some at least of their legitimate ambitions.

OTHER PROBLEMS.

There are many other national problems in Europe which may come before the Conference for consideration. If so, they should be dealt with, if at all, on the same principles. However, as none of them had much, if anything, to do with this particular war, they may not be brought up at all, and as it is not at all likely the Conference will succeed in settling at once all the questions forced upon its consideration, it is very likely to ignore them. It should then be remembered that the Danes of

Schleswig, the Finns, Ruthenians and Georgians, the Roumanians of Bessarabia and Hungary, who are oppressed by Germany and Russia, or Austria, will be in a far better position to secure autonomy, or independence, after the war, when the Governments by which they are oppressed are nearly ruined, than they were before, when they were merely financially embarrassed. The Japanese War nearly caused the destruction of Russian bureaucracy, and would probably have done so but for French and British loans. Neither France, Great Britain, nor any other belligerent, is likely to have money to lend for some time after this war. The capitalists of the United States will find many more secure and promising outlets for their surplus money than German or Russian loans. Denmark and Roumania, for instance, will be solvent, while Germany and Austria may be crying out for money. Even, then, if such questions of those of Schleswig and Transylvania are not touched by the Conference, it may be quite possible for these smaller States to acquire the country inhabited by their fellow nationals by a friendly bargain after the war. Again, it is a question of *laying down sound principles*, and taking every opportunity to apply them, not merely at the Conference, but afterwards.

THE GERMAN COLONIES.

During the course of the war our own soldiers and those of our Colonies have conquered a large part of the German Empire beyond the seas, and if the war lasts long enough it is quite possible Germany may have no Colonial Empire at all at its close. These conquests are, of course, much less important than those made by Germany herself in Europe; but whereas it is conceivable, however doubtful, that the Germans might be driven out of Poland, Belgium, and France by force, it seems clear that they can never communicate, either with their own Colonies or any other country, beyond the Continent of Europe, till Germany comes to an understanding with Great Britain. In obedience to the principle that the RIGHT OF CONQUEST must go—a much more valuable thing to us than any German colony—the Conference must recognise these Colonies as still parts of the German Empire.

The Imperial Government should have nothing to do with them. Our Colonial Office is already overloaded with work in developing the vast Empire we already rule, and further additions could only embarrass it. Togoland, and any other Colonies conquered by our own soldiers, should thus go unconditionally back to Germany, unless the French or some other nation cares to make an offer for them. Provided the conditions laid down by the Conference for Colonial transfers were observed, it would, of course, be no business of ours to prevent an amicable bargain between France and Germany for a transfer of Togoland, or for any other rearrangement they liked in Africa. *It is essential that Great Britain should keep no conquests.* To quote Castlereagh again, "It is not our business to collect trophies, but to try and bring back the world to peaceful habits."

A difficulty arises in the case of those German Colonies conquered by the soldiers of our self-governing Dominions. New Guinea, Samoa, and German South-West Africa have been conquered by Australia, New Zealand, and the South African Commonwealth respectively, and it is certain they will wish to retain these Colonies after the war. And it is

probably for the good of the world that they should be administered by vigorous, young communities, in close proximity to them, rather than by a nation many thousands of miles away.

We owe a great debt to our Dominions for the help they have given us in this war, and short of putting any difficulty in the way of establishing the principle of *no conquests* it would be well for us to help them in this matter. The Colonies are not of much value to Germany, who will need money more than Colonies. They have always been an expense, and not a source of income to the German Government, and it should not be impossible for Great Britain to buy these Colonies from Germany, and make presents of them, in recognition of their services rendered, to the Dominions. The Dominions could then form their own Colonial Offices to administer their new possessions. Germany could either use the money obtained to assist her in the appalling financial chaos that must follow the war, or make Belgium an offer for some part of the Congo, which she is supposed to desire.

MILITARISM AND NAVALISM.

Germany and Great Britain are, respectively, the strongest military and naval Powers of the world. This, which was common knowledge before the war, has been confirmed during its progress, so that we may almost say that the power of each nation on its own element is overwhelming. Supreme military power is, of course, capable of great abuse—and Germany has abused hers terribly. Though it is impossible to overrun and devastate a peaceful country with a fleet, supreme naval power in the hands of an aggressive Power might easily become intolerable to the world. Military power, so long as it is needed at all, should be under international control, and so should naval power.

Yet with the world organised as it has been in the past, neither country will give up its predominant position, if it can possibly help it. If any other country were stronger than ourselves at sea, it would be within its power to starve us in a few months, and to break up our Empire. Naturally, we are not prepared to run any risk of such a calamity. As long as Europe is divided into hostile camps, the Germans may at any time either have, with a stronger army, to fight an enemy on foreign soil, or, with a weaker, on their own. As long as they can possibly maintain an army strong enough to enable them to ensure the former alternative, even peaceable Germans will certainly do so. No doubt the rulers of Germany have been a particularly aggressive caste, who were by no means disposed to employ their army only in defensive work, but, *unless some better security against invasion had existed*, any other Government of Germany, even a Social Democratic one, would have refused to surrender the leading place as a military power, until compelled. And even if German militarism were crushed to-morrow, the effect would merely be to put some other Power in her place. If the British Navy were destroyed, that would merely mean that the sea power would pass to other hands. The new military leaders might not abuse their power as Germany has done, or the new sea power might begin a war of aggression—we may not have abused our power, while Germany has done so—but that should not blind us to the fact that either thing is only justifiable so long as the world is in a state of international anarchy.

GREAT BRITAIN AND GERMANY.

As in the case of France and Germany, Great Britain has a grievance against Germany and Germany one against Great Britain. Our grievance against Germany is that so long as she is stronger than anyone else on land she can turn all Europe into a battlefield on any pretext whatever, and virtually compel us to come into the fight, if not in self-defence, at least in the cause of human liberty. In this war Germany has actually done this. Germany's grievance against us is that if ever we quarrel with her, from *whatever cause*, we can at once sweep all her commerce off the high seas, and practically ruin her without her having a chance to hit back. There is no reason to suppose that we would force a quarrel on Germany, and we have not done so, until she, herself, forced Europe into strife, but we can hardly expect even peaceful Germans to feel satisfied so long as we retain the ability to do so whenever we like. Yet, in our own defence we must retain this power, if we can, until we have some other security for our food supply and our Empire equally reliable.

Germany is very likely to bring this matter of the freedom of the seas—that is, the immunity of her commerce in time of war—before the Conference. We may hope so, for by so doing she will raise in a favourable way the whole question of militarism. Sir Edward Grey has given the world a useful lead in this matter by admitting that the question may be a very proper one for consideration, though not by itself. *British naval power cannot be considered except along with German and other military power.*

Subject to two conditions, however, we should not stand in the way of giving security to Germany and other countries against blockade and capture by our naval power. They are :

1. A world-guarantee against blockade and invasion of our own country, and against interruption of our Imperial communications.
2. The surrender by Germany of her great military organisation.

INDEMNITIES.

Had the war been a short one, it might have been necessary to consider the question of indemnities. As it is, it is hardly worth while discussing the advisability or justice of exacting large money contributions from defeated enemies, though, in general, it may be said that they are open to the same objections as conquests. It is most undesirable to allow any victorious nation to recoup itself at will for the cost of the war at the expense of a beaten enemy, even if, which is more than doubtful, it is possible to do so. If ever indemnities for wanton invasion are permitted, it should be by order of an international council, not at the dictation of a conqueror.

It may be taken for granted that there will be no indemnities after this war, however, for nobody will be in any position to pay them, or, if that would be possible, to enforce them. You cannot compel a beaten foe to pay an indemnity, unless

1. It has some money or credit;
2. You are in possession of its capital and Government, as the Germans were in France in 1871.

We shall certainly pay the Germans no indemnity—unless they

capture London; the French will pay them none—unless they can take Paris; and, whatever happens, Germany, Austria, and Russia would be in no position, even if the war ended now, even to pay the interest on their own debts for some time to come, much less to raise any more money.

The devastations and exactions caused by the Germans in Poland, Belgium, and Northern France, and by the Russians in East Prussia, are, however, on a different plane. If it were possible to exact it, there would be justice and good policy in making nations which have wantonly destroyed private property, or imposed fines on the inhabitants of occupied territory, refund the damage. As we have said, it is unlikely that these nations can pay for what they have destroyed, and the duty of restoring the devastated territories will fall on their ultimate rulers. The general scheme of settlement here outlined, however, permits of modifications which may do something to remedy this injustice. If Alsace-Lorraine be reannexed to France, the money that ought to be paid by Germany to the ruined districts of Northern France could be set off against the contribution France should otherwise pay towards the National Debt of Germany in consideration of the transference. If Poland recovers her independence, neither Germany nor Russia should receive any compensation in money for the loss of taxpayers, and Poland starting free of debt would be in a position to raise a loan to reimburse her ruined citizens.

BELGIUM.

There remains the case of Belgium—the most urgent of all. It is quite true that Germany *ought* to be made to pay for all the damage that she has done in innocent Belgium, but it is almost equally clear that Germany will be in no position to do anything of the kind. Germany will be flooded with paper currency at the end of the war, her stock will be at an enormous discount. Probably, until she has had time to remodel her Budget from top to bottom, she will have to suspend payment of interest on her debt, and even if she is not finally driven to repudiate it altogether suspicion that she may do so will be enough to prevent her borrowing any more money for a long time. However *just* it might be in appearance to let the restoration of Belgium depend on the ability of her enemy to pay, it would almost certainly mean a great *injustice* in reality. The Allies and the world owe much to Belgium, and they are not justified in letting her industries be ruined, whatever happens. The best and perhaps the only way to restore Belgian industry is to make it a charge upon all the nations of Europe in proportion to their means. A joint loan for this purpose could be raised, and the claims of Belgium honourably met, whatever position Germany may be in.

Incidentally, this is another reason in support of the policy of obtaining the evacuation of Belgium by negotiation, if possible. To drive the Germans out of Belgium by force would inflict yet more devastation on that innocent and unhappy country, besides costing the lives of many thousands of our own men. As, very likely, it will be impossible to obtain compensation for this ruin from anyone else, we may readily discover that either we must pay for the damage ourselves or Belgium must go uncompensated.

CONCLUSION.

In concluding these brief suggestions towards a permanent peace, I wish to remind the reader that among the many differences of opinion of friends, enemies, and neutrals there is one thing common to every thinking man or woman in the civilised world to-day, and that is the wish for a righteous and lasting peace. What we gain for ourselves, what we yield to our opponents, is of infinitely less importance than what we gain for both, for civilisation, for the world. This terrible war is an anachronism, it has come upon us as something almost as incredible as it is horrible, something utterly strange to the life of humanity as we have known it in our day. The peoples of Europe were engaged in creating things, in sowing and reaping, in building, weaving, and mining, in making homes for themselves and their children. But this thing makes nothing; it can only destroy. It is War, and not the German, that is the enemy of Britain; it is War, and not the Briton, that is the foe of Germany. It is as if some monstrous beast from an earlier world had appeared among the peaceful sheepfolds and pastures of England, killing and destroying. But strange as it may appear in itself, the war has nevertheless sprung out of the faults, the injustices, great and small, of the life of our own time. Every one of the warring nations has suffered from one or other of these injustices; every one of them has felt hemmed in; every one has felt itself deprived of its place in the sun. It is our business, as far as possible, to remove these injustices—it matters nothing whatever whether a particular injustice injures an enemy or a friend. As long as the injustice remains it will always be a source of unrest and possible war. If we want peace, we must be as willing to GIVE as to TAKE, to surrender a point that pressed hard upon a foe as to gain one for ourselves. For in removing a possible cause of war there is no such thing as loss for any nation, but only gain for the world at large.

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