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Peace and War

RECENT events have suggested that the modern organised State, closely linked as it is with the highly emotional concepts of the new nationalism, might prove a danger in the way of the free pursuit of scientific inquiry, and that it has already affected the international standing of science. It may be argued with equal justice that such a State is also a menace to the present nicely adjusted equilibrium of forces between the Powers which we call by the name of peace. The responsibility for the feeling of instability in the present international situation, of which every nation is conscious, is to be attributed, not so much to the activities of Herr Hitler and President Roosevelt in the political and economic fields—though these may seem to run counter to any progress towards a solution of world-wide problems on a world-wide basis—as to the spirit of aggressive self-expression and integration characteristic of present-day nationalism. This spirit emphasises and glorifies national distinctions, oblivious of the consciousness of a common humanity, to which much is forgiven and in which differences are composed rather than made the cause of offence. By the stress laid on nationality the urge towards the larger unity is repressed.

Many have asked why mankind for ages should have lived under the constant menace of war. War has been sung by the poets and glorified by the historians; and for certain individuals, and perhaps even to whole hordes which have been dignified by the title of races, the career of arms has represented the fullest expression of man's essential nature. Yet it may be questioned whether the adventurous spirit and the joy of battle are commonly the obstacles in the way of peace they are sometimes said to be, especially when the conditions of modern warfare are kept in mind.

If there is one thing that may be affirmed with certainty to-day, it is that a majority of the nations of the world do not desire war. Yet all are watching anxiously for the spark which may light a conflagration destined in all probability utterly to destroy the civilisation of the western world; and beyond disarmament no suggestion is put forward as a remedy. It is, therefore, all the more an urgent necessity, as Lord Raglan points out in his recently published book, "The Science of Peace",* that the underlying forces operative in bringing about wars should be

* The Science of Peace. By Lord Raglan. Pp. x+166. (London: Methuen and Co., Ltd., 1933.) 3s. 6d. net.

understood. For neither pacifists nor the League of Nations will ensure peace until the factors by which it is endangered have been eliminated, even though the facile argument of despair may reiterate its belief that the situation is brought about inevitably by man's instinctive tendency to pugnacity.

Modern Germany—unfortunately specific reference in this context is inevitable—has glorified and idealised war. Although the Chancellor has expressed his devotion to the cause of peace, and the recently concluded agreement with Poland, which apparently would eliminate the Polish Corridor as a *casus belli* for a period of at least ten years, is an earnest of good intention, nevertheless the youth of Germany is disciplined in the belief that war, rather than peace, is the arena for the fullest exercise of civic virtue, as well as the noblest training ground of the citizen. A war-like and aggressive spirit which fights blindly for its tribe is displayed for emulation as the Aryan's virtue. If by 'Aryan' we are to understand 'Nordic', as presumably we must, it is a strange turn of the wheel that has made a nation, which only a short while ago claimed to have led the world in philosophy, science and certain branches of the arts, now seek to mould itself on the pattern of peoples who were the destroyers and not the founders of civilisations. But neither physical nor cultural anthropology endorses the exclusive ideal of 'Aryanism' as having a basis in historic fact; and a patriotism which pursues its end without regard to considerations of logic or common sense may in the long run be as destructive of the Fatherland as treason. For good or for evil, Germany affirms her belief in the struggle for existence as a conflict among nations, and in survival as determined by the arbitrament of war.

The fighting qualities of the Nordics cannot be quoted in support of any theory of the innate pugnacity of primitive man, for they were barbarians rather than primitive. Dr. W. J. Perry has collected a considerable body of evidence to show that the peoples of the lower culture are essentially peaceable, and Lord Raglan accepts this view, while pointing out that organised aggressive warfare begins at a later stage of social development, in which ritual ceremonial requires a periodical, and often considerable, supply of captives to provide for human sacrifice. There are others, however, who view the primitive state and the evolution of man at a different angle. The life of primitive man, like that of modern

man, is many-sided, and each observer is apt to regard it from the point of view of his own special interest.

Sir Arthur Keith, for example, essentially a Darwinian, like Hobbes of 'Leviathan' fame, sees Nature as a state of war. For him the advance from primitive to civilised has been achieved in a struggle for existence by which peoples have been welded into nations—races in process of becoming. Warfare, in fact, he holds, is one of the forms of machinery whereby Nature works in the satisfaction of a biological urge towards the establishment of the more highly specialised type, a position which it must be admitted is not unlike that of Hitler himself. Here indeed the difference between Sir Arthur Keith and Lord Raglan becomes most apparent, for while the latter, viewing the situation as a social anthropologist, arrives at the conclusion that the obstacle in the way of peace and of peaceful mindedness in the peoples of the world to-day is the concept of nationality, Sir Arthur sees in the nation a stage, achieved by struggle, on the way to peace—to be more fully attained by the apotheosis of the nation in a federation such as the British Commonwealth of Nations.

It may seem that Sir Arthur Keith's patriotic enthusiasm for the British Empire has warped his sense of logic; but the fallacy is formal rather than material. If we could look on the hideous slaughter, the cruelty and brutalities of war, which have disfigured the history of mankind, with the same detachment as we view the survival of the fittest among the millions of the lower organisms, would it be possible to say that the results of war have not been beneficial and in the long run have conduced to the advancement of mankind—as, for example, in the conquests of Alexander and Julius Caesar? To deny it would be to affirm that the peoples then drawn into the main stream of history would have developed along lines equally or more conducive to progress without the intervention of conquest—a contention incapable of proof, however high may seem the degree of its probability. On the other hand, to admit the validity of the argument is not to deny the advantage, indeed, we may even say the necessity, of peace for the future. War has become an anachronism, in which the wastage of life and material are more than the belligerents, and often in these days of universal reactions, more than the world at large, is able to endure.

The predominant characteristic in modern

civilisation is its constant advance towards a more complete scientific understanding of conditions in all departments of human life. It would be an ironical commentary on man's ability to control the material conditions of existence if he were unable to understand and guide forces within himself which threaten him with destruction.

The one essential factor is not so much the elimination of the causes which have led, and may still lead, to war, though naturally this has its importance, as the creation of a peace which is a habit of mind among peoples and not as it now is, a state of unstable equilibrium, maintained by the sanction of force, in which the nations are on the alert for the outbreak of war.

How this habit of mind is to be attained is a problem which should not be beyond the possibility of solution. Obviously that solution does not lie in disarmament alone. Disarmament, however attractive in theory, may become a forcing house for jealousies, rivalry and suspicion. Nor does experience endorse the claim of the League of Nations. If we may rely upon the evidence of man's social development in the past, it would seem that we must look rather to a general and widely-distributed consciousness of group-solidarity; but it must not be the narrow group-consciousness of 'nationalism'. The *Pax Romana* is an obvious analogy. The *Pax Romana* endured in the consciousness of a common citizenship which embraced all but the outer fringes of the then known world. The studies of the social anthropologist tell us of the homogeneity which rules within the primitive social group. He shows us how its extension may be followed in the development of the social organism by aggregation as family group merges into tribe, tribe into people and people into nation. Within these groups and between their members, as a normal condition, there is peace. Broadly speaking, and in general terms, this has been the rule in the modern State. Only on rare occasions has social unrest produced disturbance sufficiently serious to amount to war.

It is obvious that the larger the proportion of the world's peoples to be brought within the political unit, the greater the possibilities of a permanent peace. By 1914 the nation, in the traditional form in which it had existed in the previous hundred years, had outgrown its utility in relation to the needs of international politics, commerce and finance. It was this which, by restricting Germany's power of expansion, was in part

responsible for the War of 1914-18; and now, after that War, the problem of peace is even more closely bound up with the necessity for developing some new and more elastic form of political aggregation. We are, as it would appear, moving towards new political forms; but whether in the present temper of the nations they will conduce to peace or lead to a war more catastrophic than the last, seems to be left to blind chance. Russia and Italy have each applied a new spirit within old political boundaries, while America, southward of the Canadian line, stands aloof behind the possibilities of a revitalised Monroe Doctrine. France in its colonial policy of citizenship for its subject races, and Great Britain in the Statute of Westminster and the inauguration of Dominion status have each made their contribution to the future development of the political organism. The crux of the situation is Germany. Will the historian of the future write down the 'tribalism', which would substitute tribal for State boundaries within the Reich and proposes to overleap political frontiers, as a mere reactionary archaism or as a stage towards the formation of a great pan-Teutonic union of the peoples of Central and Northern Europe on 'racial' lines, towards which the approach to Austria marks an attempt to take the first step?

Goodyer's Dioscorides

The Greek Herbal of Dioscorides. Illustrated by a Byzantine A.D. 512, Englished by John Goodyer A.D. 1655, Edited and first printed A.D. 1933 by Dr. Robert T. Gunther. Pp. x+701. (Oxford: Dr. Robert T. Gunther, 5 Folly Bridge, 1934.) n.p.

IN 1909 the late Canon Vaughan of Winchester, having seen the collection of books on botany bequeathed to Magdalen College, Oxford, by Mr. John Goodyer (1592-1664), described Goodyer as "a forgotten botanist of the seventeenth century". The Canon was Rector of Droxford: we know that many of the plants the descriptions of which by Goodyer were printed by Dr. Thomas Johnson in 1633 in his revised version of the rather unsatisfactory "Herbal" which Mr. John Gerard (1525-1612) published in 1597, were grown in Goodyer's garden at Droxford. But as one of these plants was the "edible Sunflower", the first tuber of which Goodyer had planted by March 25, 1617, and as Goodyer was able to report on October 17, 1621, that he had already "stocked Hampshire" with "this wonderful increasinge plant", we know that,