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REHABILITATION OF EUROPEAN CULTURE

THE encouraging measure of agreement reached by Mr. Winston Churchill, President Roosevelt and Marshal Stalin at the Yalta meeting, as indicated in the communique issued on February 12, goes far to offset some of the doubts as to common policy which have arisen since the tentative proposals of the Dumbarton Oaks Conference were issued last October. Agreement has been reached on the difficult question of voting procedure in the Security Council of the new peace organization, and a Conference of the United Nations is to be called to meet at San Francisco on April 25, 1945, to prepare the charter of such an organization along the lines proposed at Dumbarton Oaks.

The declaration on liberated Europe is the most important of the three parts into which, apart from the military plans, the statement falls naturally. It is true that European policy cannot be sharply separated from the treatment of Germany, but without some common European policy and without the reconstruction of civil life and the full restoration of social, economic and cultural activity, in which science has a prominent place along with other intellectual activities, there can be no hope of any adequate solution of the German problem.

That problem will probably provide the most searching if not necessarily the first test of the adequacy of any new world organization, and it is the appearance of lack of harmony in the policy of Great Britain, of the United States and of the U.S.S.R. towards the liberated countries of Europe during the last six months that has given such a shock to public opinion. The three Governments—and the statement expresses the hope that the provisional Government of the French Republic may be associated with the three Powers in the procedure suggested—declare their mutual agreement to concert their policies, during the temporary period of instability in liberated Europe, in assisting the peoples of Europe to solve by democratic means their pressing political and economic problems. The establishment of order in Europe and the rebuilding of national economic life must be achieved by processes which will enable the liberated peoples to destroy the last vestiges of Nazism and Fascism and to create democratic institutions of their own choice. To foster the conditions in which the liberated peoples may exercise their sovereign rights and self-government, the three Governments pledge themselves to give joint assistance where required, in their judgment, to establish conditions of peace ; to carry out emergency measures for the relief of distressed peoples ; to form interim Government authorities broadly representative of all democratic elements in the population and pledged to the earliest possible establishment through free elections of Governments responsive to the will of the people ; and to facilitate, where necessary, the holding of such elections.

The declaration, which provides for consultation

with the other United Nations in Europe when matters of direct interest to themselves are under consideration, thus proposes to proceed from world order to peace, and though it may be objected that there are areas in Europe which are not yet ripe for democratic institutions, over a large part of liberated Europe this implementation of democracy should be effective and appropriate. Further, the second proposal—emergency measures for the relief of distressed peoples—is one that may well at once provide an effective means of education in democratic methods and the touchstone of the sincerity and determination of the three Great Powers subscribing to the Yalta Declaration.

There is in fact no question touched upon during the recent conference that is of more immediate concern to Great Britain than that of relief for the liberated countries of Europe. Grave anxiety regarding the relief of France has already found expression in the House of Commons and in the Press, and has not been dispelled by either Mr. C. R. Attlee's statement or the more recent one of Mr. Richard Law. The concern is shared by the troops serving on the Continent, and on all sides there is evidence that a more generous, imaginative and positive policy would be welcomed, and indeed is essential if the goodwill we found on the Continent is not to run to seed. The criticism of, and charges of grave weaknesses in, the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration which Dr. H. V. Evatt, leader of the Australian delegation, uttered at the opening session of the Conference of that body at Lapstone are in keeping with growing uneasiness which has been apparent since its council met at Montreal in September.

Much of the criticism that has been levelled against the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration may in fact be unjustified, for since the first session of its council met at Atlantic City in November 1943, a large organization has been built up and much information gathered about the needs to be met and the supplies available to meet them. So far, however, the actual relief work in the liberated areas of Western Europe has been done by the military authorities in conjunction with the French and Belgian Governments. Dr. Evatt argued from this that it was doubtful whether the Administration would perform all the duties intended under the terms of its charter, and urged that there must not be the same delays in the Far East that have occurred in Europe. Further, he said that administration was over-centralized and that wider national representation was needed at all levels of the administration and staff.

It is expected that U.N.R.R.A. may shortly be allowed to send supplementary supplies to certain countries, such as France, Belgium and Holland. This will involve a complete departure from the general principle of that body, that it will not operate in a country until invited to do so by the Government in power, and, in Western European countries who wish to pay for their supplies, until the relevant financial negotiations have been completed. While the new proposal releases the organization from the strictures that have in the past prevented it from dealing promptly with emergencies, it in no way affects the general schemes for providing relief in bulk in accordance with the original terms of the charter.

Though it is clearly unfair to blame U.N.R.R.A. itself for the present position, even given the limitations on its activities imposed by its charter, public opinion is not disposed to hold the Government entirely free from blame in this matter. Mr. Richard Law's statement in the House of Commons on February 13 with reference to relief appeals for allied and liberated countries will not allay misgivings on this point, for it showed lack of insight and imagination. His statement on February 14 on the economic and supply position in the liberated countries of Western Europe, while satisfactory so far as it went, did not remove the impression that the military authorities, to whom the matter had been left, have not shown sufficient foresight. The main failure, Mr. Law said, has been in distribution, but the national governments cannot be held entirely responsible because not only were the means of transport lacking but also the administrative machine had become seriously impaired and had to be rebuilt. No one will deny that the first objective of the military authorities must be to wage war and to wage war effectively, or that the requirements of our liberated allies are in direct competition with urgent military demands. Equally it cannot be denied that the position is one where high policy is also involved, and where the Government cannot evade the responsibility for rapid and decisive action.

What appear to be lacking are the imagination and warmth of sympathy already evident in public opinion. There is in the Government's statements no appreciation of what might be the effect of announcing that we were to release, for example, some of our own ample stocks of fats for France and Belgium, where the deficiency is so great. It is not yet forgotten in Europe that Mr. Churchill, when Secretary of State for War in 1919, not only opposed the continuance of the blockade of Central Europe as endangering a collapse of the entire structure of German social and national life, but also had earlier sought on Armistice Day to send six food ships to Hamburg. It is all a matter of the right priorities. We have large reserves of many other foodstuffs which were regarded as essential when the climax of the War still seemed distant but which could be safely reduced now. Even a reduction of food rations in Britain might be considered for the critical few weeks, provided that the urgency were explained fully to the people.

What is most essential is a clear understanding of how dangerous the alienation of France may become, and of how urgent it is not merely to meet the need but also to seize the chance to restore France. When that is realized there can be no hesitation over the decisions to be taken to divert transport from the more obvious military needs to the more urgent but no less vital needs of the political and economic

warfare against the same enemy. Here, as throughout the War, has been the weakest spot in our strategy; the rapid reconstruction of Europe is in fact not merely the background against which all relief work, whether through the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration or not, should be viewed, but also an essential condition of victory, without which military success may be sterile.

Nor should it be imagined that relief and reconstruction have physical or material aspects alone. The reconstruction of France and of Europe is a cultural and spiritual task also. Even now, six months or more after the liberation of France and Belgium, cultural contacts have scarcely been established except in the most desultory manner. Import of French books has not yet been resumed, and the Government's own policy with regard to paper for books removes all hope at present of providing France with the British scientific and other books which she awaits. Without such interchange and collaboration there cannot come the full understanding between the two great Western democracies which must be a prelude to their closer co-operation in the reconstruction of Europe, in whatever form that may ultimately take.

The abatement of national prejudice and passion, and the mutual sacrifices which are involved in building any form of world order, will not be made in moments of sentimental impulse. They will arise out of a clear understanding of what is involved and the deliberate surrender of the lesser to the greater ideal. That is the substance of Prof. D. Mitrany's argument in "The Road to Security"*. He sees the only basis of security in positive and constructive action in the social and economic fields. An international organization cannot limit itself to the negative purpose of restraining aggression: in a world of change, it must also help to bring about constructive change.

Prof. Mitrany, in this little pamphlet, brings out very clearly the relation between national planning and world order. International peace cannot be considered as consisting only in the prevention of violence. We must take account of social unity and economic development, and it was the failure to do this that broke the system of common order represented by the League of Nations. If once more we conceive of security as merely a matter of policing the world against the use of violence, we may well find divisions in the economic world—competition in shipping and aviation, for raw materials and trade—even more acute than during the twenty years of truce. Even the aspirations for full employment and social security, with the national planning and State action involved, may threaten security unless national planning is geared from the outset to international planning.

In fact, the organization envisaged at Dumbarton Oaks will be futile, Prof. Mitrany believes, unless we develop joint economic arrangements sufficiently comprehensive and far-reaching to prevent a split between the participating Powers. Such arrangements would go far towards protecting States, especially the economically weak States, from economic aggression, and remove the temptation to try aggression for economic and social ends. Moreover, certain agencies are already available for that purpose, as Prof. Mitrany points out, and as is further indicated in the P E P broadsheets which have been brought together and re-issued under the title "Building Peace out of War". Economic technical agencies would be preventive, by their very nature, in a way in which military agencies never can be. Just as it would be their function to give service wherever it is needed, so it would be their duty to deny service where it is not obviously needed and might be abused.

Stress is laid by Prof. Mitrany on this withdrawal of services as an effective form of sanctions, but the most important point is undoubtedly that they are a step towards dealing jointly and resolutely with the very springs of war. The real problem of security and the task of statesmanship are not to keep the nations peacefully apart, but to bring them actively together, and in such a task science has an essential part to play. As is pointed out in the P E P broadsheets, in building European unity, parallel with the establishment of a framework of order and security must go the reconstruction and development of European life in the direction of a social, economic and cultural community which all its citizens have a common interest in maintaining and furthering, and to which all will eventually come to feel a loyalty commensurate with their loyalty to their own countries. Moreover, the key to the restoration of social stability will be the rebuilding and development in new forms of those cultural and other institutions and associations which are the life-blood of a free community, but have been persecuted or suppressed by totalitarian Germany—universities, churches, trade unions, professional organizations, the free Press and radio.

Linked with the rebuilding of institutions is the gradual development of individual leaders in every sphere, and here the emphasis must be on individuals, not governments, for in a Europe functioning as a community the individual leaders of industries, trade unions, universities and other vital institutions are as important as those of regional governments. In such a process the universities of Europe, which inherit the tradition of European unity, must take a central role, whether or not there is linked to them, as is suggested by P E P, as centres of post-graduate training and research, one or more special European staff colleges for the training of Europe's key administrative personnel.

There can be no doubt that, as is stated in the final study of this volume, the people of war-ravaged Europe will look to Britain for help and guidance in picking up again the scattered threads of the European tradition, and in rebuilding the institutions in which it is largely embedded. But since that broadsheet was written in 1943, the problem and the task have

* The Road to Security. By Prof. David Mitrany. Pp. 20. (Nat. Peace Council, 144 Southampton Row, London, W.C.1, 1944.) 4*d*.

become urgent and imperative. The situation is desperate, and it is no longer merely a matter of urging that the advance of science demands the resumption of normal free communication and contact the moment military exigencies permit: it is rather that unless the physical task of relief and reconstruction is undertaken forthwith, military success may be sterile. Even now the physical task demands all the help and inspiration it can draw from the cultural life and the institutions which enshrine the tradition of European unity and the highest ideals of its intellectual and spiritual life.

It is in fact a moral obligation that rests on scientific workers to press for the re-establishment of contacts with their colleagues in liberated Europe, and to co-operate with them in building up once more the tradition and institutions of learning and research which Germany has sought to extirpate. The task of reconstructing the universities of Europe is immense, and in the physical sphere little may yet be practicable. But already the planning of such reconstruction is an urgent task, and a generous response to the desperate needs of Europe on the part of scientific workers, no less than of other men of learning and culture, might have an immense effect in establishing an atmosphere of understanding and goodwill and in giving new hope. What are required above all are vision and imagination to sense the possibilities, as well as the dangers, and to grasp the significance of the European cultural contacts and institutions which the Committee on Intellectual Co-operation once represented, not merely in providing the leaders required to-morrow, or in establishing the freedom of thought, of utterance and of investigation, but in creating that sense of European community of interest, of confidence, which brings fresh hope, in place of frustration or despair, and without which the sore-pressed peoples of Europe might have no heart to address themselves to that task of reconstruction.

BOTANY IN BRITAIN

British Botanists

By John Gilmour. (Britain in Pictures Series.) Pp. 48+8 plates. (London: Wm. Collins, Sons and Co., Ltd., 1944.) 4*s*. 6*d*. net.

THE history of science has for so long been written from the point of view of chemistry and physics, with generous recognition of astronomy and even geology, but with almost complete indifference to biology in any form, that it is encouraging to note the recent development of interest in the records of early botanists and zoologists. A brief and accurate history of British botany, written with the knowledge that the late Dr. Gunther on one side and Dr. Agnes Arber on the other have made available to us, is a very valuable help to such development. Mr. John Gilmour's book is excellent and timely.

To survey a history which covers four such changeful centuries; to tell the story of so large and so varied a succession of students; to keep a sense of proportion so that the outstanding developments of the science are not lost in a mass of detail; and to present the story with all its human interest and charm and excitement as a fascinating adventure; this fourfold task Mr. Gilmour has discharged with eminent success. There are inevitably gaps, particularly perhaps in the early stages of the story: the present reviewer would plead for recognition of Thomas Penny, the friend of De l'Obel and De l'Ecluse and chief author of the "Theatrum Insectorum", and of Thomas Willisel, the first professional field-naturalist, employed by Merret and then by the Royal Society, and the discoverer of many of our rarer plants, particularly in the Pennines and Teesdale. But to compress the record into forty-eight pages, many of them half-filled with pictures, is necessarily to cut it down to the barest skeleton. That Mr. Gilmour has nevertheless found room for such delightful descriptions as that of Stephen Hales' Sunday at Teddington and for clear hints as to the relationship between botanical studies and the general ideas and culture of the time is proof of real skill as a writer as well as real knowledge as a historian. We notice only one slip in matter of fact: Bilson, not Bilster, is the name of John Goodyer's employer on p. 13.

The book, like others of the series, is almost lavishly illustrated, and here too Mr. Gilmour has chosen his pictures with discrimination. They cover a very wide range of subjects, are representative of different aspects and moments of the story, and thus are a real contribution to the record.

It is much to be hoped that Mr. Gilmour will carry on with work in this field. There is no satisfactory history of botany, and few subjects supply more abundant and more interesting material. He has evidently got a thorough knowledge of very much of what is generally available, and possesses the threefold qualification—a thorough knowledge of botany, an understanding of historical method and research, and the power to write vividly and accurately. We hope that the success of this small essay will encourage him to a large-scale work.

C. E. RAVEN.

REJUVENATION OF PLANT GEOGRAPHY

Foundations of Plant Geography

By Prof. Stanley A. Cain. Pp. xiv+556. (New York and London: Harper and Brothers, 1944.) 5 dollars.

IN a recent review of "Historical Plant Geography" by the late Prof. E. V. Wulff[1], reasons were given for thinking that the subject had been revitalized by the recent application to it of methods and information developed and acquired in other scientific fields. It now appears that while these changes were leading Prof. Wulff to write his book in Leningrad, they had, in the United States, caused Dr. S. A. Cain similarly to set about accumulating material for this comprehensive volume on "Foundations of Plant Geography".

Though both works convey the indication of the opening of a wide territory for scientific investigation, they differ considerably in scope and emphasis. Prof. Cain's book is conspicuous for its reference to a very large body of work by the great American phytogeographers, such as Asa Gray, Fernald, Marie Victorin and Gleason, with their very numerous and able followers. One cannot indeed help the reflexion that the North American continent has offered, and still does offer, greater advantages to the plant