

(5)

A FOOL'S NOTIONS.

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Tomorrow.

"History repeats itself," is a coward's plea to avoid responsibility for to-day's influence on tomorrow. As a fact, history never repeats itself because conditions are always changing. It is men who make the character of an epoch and no tomorrow can have the same components as any yesterday. In the old times, when the world moved slowly because father and son hardly differed from each other in quality or opportunity, today and tomorrow were much alike; but now when the distinction between the intelligence, scope and power of the man of yesterday is so great, it is folly to think of measuring to-day's obligations by yesterday's achievement. The aggregate tomorrow grows always out of to-day's conditions and the national tomorrow out of the impulses which characterize each people confronting <sup>specific</sup> national conditions.

To-day's conditions as we have seen are unique. The closing century has been one of extension and enhancement of the power of great nations and the absorption of small ones. Spain and Portugal have dropped out of the category of great powers. Holland, Belgium, Denmark Sweden-Norway retain their autonomy only by suffrance. The Balkan principalities are only outposts of Russian and German power. Austro-Hungary is apparently on the verge of dissolution. Greece is a cipher, a plaything for supernumerary royalties. Italy, not strong enough

(2)

to control its own destiny, condemned by the policy of the Vatican to neber-ending strife with a religious increment which cannot forget its past, has surely no effective role to play in the world-politics of the twentieth century. What is left? Russia engaged in the mighty task of developing her natural resources, assimilating her peoples and extending her power to the Pacific. She is self-supporting as to food and under American tuition is rapidly acquiring manufacturing capacity.

Germany, with the greatest standing army in the world, depending on the sale of her manufactured products to make up a constantly increasing deficit in her food-supply, suffers all the time from a plethora of manufactured articles, low wages and reduced profits. It needs no seer to declare what her future policy will be. Fate has traced it clearly for all the world to read. It is true to-day as ever, that "necessity knows no law." Germany must have <sup>new</sup> markets or suffer financial ~~decline~~ <sup>decline which is a condition</sup> ~~decline~~. Her policy has been and will continue to be, to seek territorial expansion, not in Europe except incidentally, for Europe can afford no relief to her over-crowded industries. Every other continental country except Russia is bearing the same burden. Germany seeks two things:

(1) Colonies, not as homes for her over-crowding millions, but as purchasers of her manufactured products--her guns, her cloth, her alcoholic beverages, her machinery, her toys. This her people unanimously demand. This demand may, to a certain extent, be met by the seizure of half-civilized territory in China and making it pay for such devel-

(3)

opment as the emperor may require. Here too, Germany expects to find profitable raw material and hopes to develop coal mines which would give her control of naval operations in the Orient, were it not for the American supply at Manila and the assured rivalry of Australian coals. However, Germany with a Chinese dependency furnishing coal for her naval forces and merchant marine might soon be the equal in naval power of Great Britain as she is already the first nation in the world in military strength. To-day, she could land more troops on any part of the earth's surface adjacent to the sea, in less time than any other country. Given a reliable coal-supply and an available base of operations in China, and in a brief time she would be the most formidable, as she is now the most aggressive power in the world. This view is based not only on the stress of her industrial conditions, but also on the established policy of her government and the firm belief of her people that the only remedy lies in the extension of her territory and the enhancement of her power. Prussian ambition and German industrial interest point in the same direction. The lust of power and economic need <sup>show</sup> ~~point~~ the same *path*.

(2) But there is something that Germany and her emperor desire even more than a foothold in the far East, and that is a dependency having a rich soil, a population advanced enough to desire luxuries ready for fuller development with a <sup>temperate</sup> climate to yield a surplus of meat and cereals. Such a country, wholly under German control, ruled from Berlin, garrisoned by German troops, safeguarded by the German navy, supplied by German industries, is the ultimate ideal of German policy and aspiration.

The empire is not a good colonizer. It desires to rule tributary peoples not to establish self-controlling ones. It has no sympathy with the aspirations of other types or races. It is a <sup>lord to command,</sup> ~~ruler~~, not a friend, <sup>to uplift.</sup> Its yoke is iron; its rule is steel. In Africa, in Polynesia, --everywhere, it is the same. <sup>The German</sup> ~~Its~~ idea of a colony is a people to pay tribute, to supply raw material and to consume German manufactures. Where is such a territory to be found? Put a map of the world before any bright child of twelve and his finger will point unerringly to the one on which German policy and German aspiration have rested hopefully and covetously for ~~a dozen~~ years.

Great Britain will not be aggressive in the near future, unless forced by the action of other powers to defend herself. The task of consolidating, harmonizing and developing the components ~~elements~~ of her empire is not an easy nor a brief one. The pacification of South Africa, the development of Egypt and the extension of trade-relations with her colonies and with peoples in ~~her~~ spheres of influence already defined, and providing for their defence, will engage her chief attention.

France, with a constantly diminishing population and a decreasing export trade, is devoting her energies to the development of trade with her colonies. Her colonial system, both from an administrative and economic point of view is unique. Whether it will add strength or wealth to the Republic is yet a matter of doubt. It does not encourage, to any great extent, the permanent migration of her citizens to her colonies, but endeavors to assimilate the inhabitants by political

recognition of the same as constituent parts of the Republic and by the extension of military service among them at almost any stage of development. To a degree unprecedented by any other colonial system, France recognizes the personal rights of the native inhabitants of her dependencies. Because of these conditions and the fact that it has the largest national debt in the world, amounting to thirty-six milliards of francs or nearly two hundred dollars per capita, it seems beyond all question that the French Republic will not be an aggressive factor in the economic struggles of the early part of the twentieth century.

The United States more than any other nation except Germany, is committed to the role of commercial expansion, the defense of commercial rights and territorial inviolability. This latter does not embrace merely the territory of the United States but of that essential to its security and the maintenance of the commercial advantages its people are entitled to enjoy.

Probably no nation of ancient or modern times ever experienced so sudden, so universal and so intense an impulse toward the extension of its foreign commerce as the United States since 1897. Every manufacturer, great or small, of any product capable of exportation, all at once was seized with an ambition to invade and conquer foreign markets. He did not wait for governmental aid. Without any mercantile marine; without ships enough to show our flag once a year in the ports where ~~it had two hundred arrivals and departures a year~~, a century ago; paying \$200,000,000 a year to other nations to carry our goods

*our ships entered and cleared every day*



*— in face of these <sup>(6)</sup> conditions;*

across the ocean, every producer and every manufacturer determined to start a trade on his own account in one or more foreign countries. There are instances of men engaged in the manufacture of American specialties employing <sup>only</sup> three or four men apiece, who fairly loaded down the mails of Europe with circulars in search of foreign orders. Many of them got the orders, too, and our export trade of manufactured articles leaped at once to a figure no one had deemed possible, putting us in the second if not the first rank of exporting nations. No party, no policy can turn back this impulse. It is in the heart of every American producer, just as hot and intense as is the idea of territorial expansion in the heart of the German emperor. To each, ~~and~~ the idea of commercial expansion, of entering markets which have heretofore been accessible only through a foreign intermediary, seems to have come with a thrill of delight as a matter of personal conquest.

At once, the nation awoke to some facts it had <sup>almost</sup> forgotten. It is to-day clear to all that we must control the Gulf of Mexico, or rather the Caribbean sea, because the way to the country's heart lies through it and no nation can be allowed easier access to our shores than our own fleets. It is not safe to give an enemy the interior line of approach and a nearer base of operations than our own ships possess. For a hundred years, every man who studied our strategic situation has uttered the same warning. But the war with Spain was needed to show our own people how weak, how utterly indefensible is our southern coast-line, without control of West Indian bases of operation. Give Germany the Danish West Indies and the <sup>national</sup> strength of the United

States would be reduced fifty percent in a single year. We have an immense coast-line and practically no army: she has no coast liable to attack and the largest and best-equipped army ever known in the world. It would be only 500 miles from Germany to the United States; but would be more than 3000 miles from the United States to any vulnerable German territory. Every man knows that in face of fierce competition and harsh necessity of existing industrial conditions <sup>the prevailing in Europe,</sup> the only guaranty of peace is such preparedness for war as ~~taking advantage of~~ our strategic position may give.

Every intelligent person knows, too, that the time has come when the American people demand and are going to have, an Isthmian canal. Even Mr Bryan does not deny the necessity and universal demand for this costly piece of expansion. It is the determination of the people also, that this inter-oceanic water-way shall be on American soil, made by American capital, and protected by American power. They will not listen to any idea of partnership in its control or operation. They are willing all the world should use it commercially on the same terms as ourselves, but defensively it must be ours--ours without restriction or community of control. Why? Because every one instinctively recognizes the fact that our double coast-line and the immensity of the interests we have to safeguard, render it an absolute necessity for national defense.

The question of defense comprises much more than the mere guarding of our shore lines, mighty as that task would be in case of conflict with a great power having a base of operations in the Pacific

(8)

as well as in Europe. This would impose upon us the necessity of maintaining two fleets each equal in strength to the whole of a European antagonist's naval power, since such power would be able to choose its point of attack. With the canal <sup>in our control,</sup> we could concentrate on either the Atlantic or Pacific coast; without it, even the staunchness of a fleet of ~~Oregons~~ could not save us. It is 3000 miles from Europe to New York or from China to San Francisco; but it is 9000 miles from San Francisco to New York via Cape Horn. With the canal, we are on equal terms with a European assailant; without it, we are at the mercy of such a power as Germany because we face both ways, and both shores are vital points of attack. Hitherto, we have been exempt from conflict with European powers, ~~more~~ because we have avoided "entangling alliances", <sup>but</sup> ~~that~~ because the strenuous economic need which confronts the continental powers is as unprecedented as the universal impulse of the greatest of them to attain preponderance as a military and commercial power throughout the world. Germany to-day seeks empire wherever it may be obtained for glory and <sup>for</sup> profit. Born of Prussian aggressiveness thirty years ago, the dream of restoring the world-supremacy of the "ancient Roman Empire" has become familiar to her people as a worthy ambition of her emperor. Then, only England stood in his way and he has with infinite skill isolated her from European allies. Save Italy, Great Britain has not a friend in Europe, and Italy is not valuable as an ally. Commercially and as an ocean-carrier, Germany has made wonderful strides in <sup>the last</sup> thirty years. Today she is directing her utmost energies to the building of a navy to rival her great competitor. No wonder the sudden efflorescence of the United States



as a world-power filled sovereign and people with disappointment and hate. It is the hate of absolutism for republican government, linked with an ambition as boundless as Napoleon's and an economic condition as imperative as fate, which makes the sovereign's lust of power the people's hope for better times.

*two*  
There are ~~three~~ things which make the American republic an object of imperial animosity and an obstacle to the fulfillment of Germany's dream of predominant empire and commercial supremacy:

1--The number, enterprise and doggedness of the American people in regard to any matter on which they have decided.

2--The fact that *three quarters of a century* ~~ago~~ *ago* she made the remarkable declaration that no European ~~monarchy~~ *power* should ever acquire any farther territory on the American continent, and that her people have continued so content with such declaration that no party and no statesman has ever dared to propose the suspension or abrogation of the "Monroe Doctrine." This declaration was not made with any anticipation of present conditions but simply to prevent republican institutions being endangered by the extension of foreign monarchical power. *to secure the liberty*  
*It* ~~This~~ was less for our protection than ~~for the necessity~~ of the weaker republics of South America. The spirit of liberty was then just beginning to loosen the bonds of Spanish power and it was easy to forecast that she would soon lose control of her South and Central American colonies. So the first and the greatest of the new-world republics extended a voluntary protectorate over her young and even *her* unborn sisters. Its terms have been well and honorably kept. Not

once has she sought to dictate the form of government of one of them; not once has she interfered in the controversies between them. Not once has she failed to protest and to offer armed intervention when a foreign <sup>power</sup>~~monarchy~~ sought to acquire territory on this side of the Atlantic. As soon as our war of secession was over, we were ready to expel the allied forces from Mexico. When Germany seemed desirous of interfering in the affairs of Brazil, we sent a fleet to maintain the "Monroe Doctrine." We have no treaties offensive or defensive with any of them, but the United States stands pledged to use the full strength of her army and navy to prevent any foreign monarchy from acquiring by conquest or treaty a single foot of new territory from Terra del Fuego to the North Sea.

Had conditions remained as they were when the "Monroe Doctrine" was proclaimed our task as guardian of the liberty of the continent would have been light in comparison with what tomorrow promises. Those were the days of sailing ships, wooden ships, smooth-bore guns, muzzle-loading cannon and rifles whose utmost range was two hundred yards. Then the winds and the waves fought with us, and it was matter of little moment what any European power might think of our self-assumed protectorate. Steam, electricity, steel ships, cannon with a range of 12 or 15 miles, have changed all this. What we laughed at then as only a pleasant tour de force, to-day, has become a task that may at any moment demand our utmost energies. History never goes backward; never stands still; and never repeats itself. The nation which tries to shirk its destiny by hiding in its shell, chattering <sup>about old</sup> ~~all~~ saws and

(11)

exploiting worn-out theories of historical repetends, will be as help-  
less when the hour of trial comes as one which would seek to over-  
come an armed enemy with imaginary bombs.

R. R. G.

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