

SIDE-ISSUES OF THE WAR

BY SYDNEY BROOKS

I

THE war widens, and it will widen still more before it is over. To the nine powers who were in the arena last August three more have already been added,—Turkey on the Germanic side, Portugal and Italy on the side of the Allies. Some three fifths of the total population of the earth and over three fifths of its land surface may at this moment be classed as belligerent. In Europe, of course, the proportion is much higher. Some seventy-five per cent of the peoples of Europe, inhabiting roughly 3,200,000 square miles out of a total area of slightly more than 3,800,000, are now at war. From the north of Scotland to the south of Spain and thence to Constantinople and the Ural Mountains, and so round the entire circuit of the Old World, only about one person in eight, only about one acre in six, lie outside the struggle. Of the fifty-six million Europeans who are at present neutral, perhaps only the twenty who dwell in the Spanish Peninsula are certain to continue so; one half of the remainder are possible, the other half likely, combatants. As matters stand to-day Turkey and the Germanic powers together dispose of some 460,000 square miles of European soil and 119,000,000 inhabitants, and the Allies in Europe of six times as much territory and about two and a half times as many subjects.

This European ratio of belligerent men and areas to neutral, huge as it is, is considerably exceeded in Africa. If

we disregard the fiction which reckons Morocco as an independent state, the only really non-combatant regions in that vast continent are the Spanish colonies, the Kingdom of Abyssinia, and the Republic of Liberia. These states cover rather more than one twentieth of the land of Africa, and embrace rather less than one tenth of its peoples. All the rest, that is to say about 95 per cent of the soil and 90 per cent of the inhabitants, belongs to the warring powers. In Asia, as nearly as I can make out, half the area and slightly over half the population come within the category of belligerents. In North America a twelfth of the people, occupying somewhat more than half the territory, own allegiance to Great Britain; and the remainder are apprehensive, and not without reason, that they too may be drawn into the conflict. The only continent, indeed, that may be said to be immune from the war-madness is Spanish America, where not more than one sixtieth of the area and one one hundred and sixtieth of the inhabitants come even technically within the zone of hostilities.

Looking round the entire world, one can with some confidence predicate neutrality for China, for Mexico, for by far the greater part of South America, and for Spain; but for no other country. The United States, the Republic of Switzerland, the small kingdoms in the north of Europe, and the tempestuous powers of the Balkans are all alike obliged to take into account the possibility of intervention. It is a

possibility that varies, according to circumstances, from the near to the remote; but in no case is it absent. Twelve powers are already in the war. That number will almost certainly be increased by three additions, possibly by four, perhaps by nine. Meanwhile it is enough to go on with. Of the belligerents now in the field one finds that the Allies, owning altogether more than 28,000,000 square miles and ruling nearly 870,000,000 people, are fighting the 150,000,000 subjects and the 2,200,000 square miles of territory that stand to the credit of Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Turkey. 'The greatest of all wars,' so far as numbers and area are concerned, more than justifies its title.

It justifies it, too, in many other ways. Former wars were wars of armies and governments; this is a war of nations. Former wars were wars of soldiers; this is a war in which the chemist and the manufacturer and the workman at home are as vital to victory as the fighters at the front. Former wars were on a great scale; but none of them saw, as this has seen, some 20,000,000 men under arms. Former wars were expensive, but never until now has civilization paid \$50,000,000 a day for the pleasure of blowing itself to pieces. Former wars brought in their train, within certain limits, a derangement of commerce; but no war, except this one, has precipitated an economic and financial upheaval of such unimaginable dimensions that there is probably not a single human being on this planet who has not in one way or another, for good or evil, directly or indirectly, been affected by it. Former wars took place — or such of them at any rate as can alone be compared with the present one — before the credit system had become internationalized, before the telegraph and the cable and the railway and the steamship were invented, while the mechanism of mod-

ern trade was as yet in its infancy, and when each nation, to a degree we can now hardly conceive, was able in the main to support itself. This war has burst upon a world so bound together by ten thousand links of commerce, finance, and communications, that a shot fired in the Dardanelles sends down the price of wheat in Chicago, and the intervention of Great Britain disorganizes for the time being the trade of China and Brazil, and armies are raised in the ends of the earth, transported across the seven seas to a single spot, and are there fed and clothed and munitioned from the resources of another hemisphere thousands of miles away.

Former wars spread, and sometimes spread far, beyond their source of origin. We all remember what Macaulay wrote of Frederick the Great and the Seven Years' War: 'The evils produced by his wickedness were felt in lands where the name of Prussia was unknown; and in order that he might rob a neighbor whom he had promised to defend, black men fought on the coast of Coromandel, and red men scalped each other by the Great Lakes of North America.' But this war as a breeder of world-wide strife seems almost to lower its predecessors to the level of domestic broils. The guns it has set a-blazing have been heard among the bean-fields of Shantung, amid the islands of the Pacific, in the Malacca Straits and the Bay of Bengal, off the coast of Chile, within earshot of the Falkland Islands, at the head of the Persian Gulf, along the course of the Tigris and Euphrates, on the banks of the Nile, in the Caucasus and Persia, among the oil palms of Togoland and the Cameroons, in the waterless wastes of Southwest Africa and among the mangrove forests of East Africa, in the Italian Alps and the Adriatic, in the Mediterranean and on the Gallipoli Peninsula, in the Baltic,

the English Channel, the Irish Sea, the Black Sea, the North Sea, and the Ægean, from the Danube to the Baltic, from Paris to Warsaw, and from Switzerland to the Straits of Dover.

Former wars saw nearly all the present antagonists fighting with or against one another. But this one alone has witnessed such a gathering of peoples and races as to make it almost a microcosm of humanity. Canadians and Australians, New Zealanders and West Indians, Sikhs and Pathans, Ghurkas and Garhwalis, Rajputs and Marathas, Tunisians and Senegalese, Algerians and Malagasy, — these are but a few of the outlying peoples who for the first time in history have been summoned from overseas to fight the battle of European freedom on European soil; and the last and greatest of the Crusades, now on foot in Gallipoli, is composed of forces more varied and romantic than Boniface of Montferrat or Henry of Flanders ever knew. Former wars, for all their cruelties, were in general conducted in accordance with enlightened contemporary opinion. This one, beneath the eyes of the whole world, has seen the revival of old practices and the invention of new ones that outrage all the instincts and standards of our sensitive and compassionate age. Former wars saw armies numbered by the hundreds of thousands where to-day we reckon them by millions; fronts of a score of miles that now stretch out fifty times as far; battles of days that now take weeks; less ammunition spent in a whole campaign than to-day suffices for a single engagement; quick decisions, open fighting, and the easy predominance of the human factor, where now we behold victories that end in a gain of less than a mile, a prolonged warfare of subterranean clinches, and machinery rivaling and all but displacing men as the first essential of success.

No comparison, indeed, is possible between this conflict and its forerunners. It beggars them all. The advance in military technique registered by the aeroplane and the submarine is hardly greater than the margin by which this war transcends all other wars as a political and economic convulsion, in the magnitude of its destructiveness and the world-wide sweep of its consequences. For us in Europe it has changed, not merely the conditions, but the very atmosphere of life. I despair, indeed, of bringing home to the American consciousness how completely the normal elements of existence have vanished; with what mingling of oppressiveness and exaltation the war weighs on the thoughts and speech of all of us, transforming every business, every interest, every avocation, and the whole spirit and purpose of private and public pursuits; how unforgettably near and dark hangs its thundercloud of waste and misery and grief, and yet how bright is its lining of sacrifice and self-forgetfulness and heroic devotion. Nothing else in the world matters except the war and its fortunes and problems and the immensity of the effort needed for its proper conduct.

II

In some ways, perhaps, the nature and scope of that effort can be better observed in Great Britain than in any of the other belligerent countries. For Great Britain, when the war broke out, was a peaceable, industrial nation, absorbed in domestic issues; not unprepared for war, — the navy was ready and the Expeditionary Force of 150,000 men was ready, — but decidedly unprepared for a European war on this unexampled scale. Her task in the past year has been to shoulder a three-fold burden never before laid upon any land. To control the seas so as to insure for

herself and her allies an uninterrupted freedom of maritime communications with all the strategic mobility and economic vitality implied therein; to perform for her allies the indispensable functions of banker and manufacturer; and at the same time to build up a military force adequate to the needs of the situation and not less than twenty times greater than any she had previously contemplated, — these have been the labors of Hercules at which she has toiled for the past twelve months.

That there are shadows on her record I should be the last to deny. It could not be otherwise with a people somewhat slow of imagination, little used to the direction or control of the state, fiercely individualistic and unorganized, and kept by its rulers in a stupid and exasperating ignorance of the facts and character of the war. Hence among ministers a backwardness in envisaging the problem before them as a whole, and among the people, here and there, an unrealizing lethargy and too great an indulgence in the habits and pleasures of peace. In the British manner these shortcomings have been trumpeted to the skies. That deceptive trick of the English people of taking what they do well as a matter of course, while loading their failures or defects with extravagant lamentations, is one of the most embarrassing obstacles to a true understanding of their character; and I dare say that no small part of the world of onlookers, taking its cue from the London press, is persuaded that the British masses are shirking their work, spending their high wages on drink and horse-racing and football matches, and pursuing 'business as usual' with an almost horrible insensibility to the national interests.

If such an impression exists among any readers of this magazine, I beg them to get rid of it. So far as it is not

sheer exaggeration, it is justified only in the case of a troublesome but extremely exiguous minority. The great body of the workmen have done magnificently; and for the backslidings of the weaker vessels among them the indecision and myopia of the government, a very formidable rise in the cost of living, and the revelation of huge profits made by contractors and a few employers, are more immediately responsible than any native lack of energy or self-control or patriotism.

The government have failed to do all that they might and should have done to bring the war home to the people. They failed to foresee that an indiscriminate system of voluntary recruiting would draft into the army thousands and scores of thousands of men who would be better serving their country by going on with their work at home. They failed to establish any rational balance between military and industrial needs, between the numbers required at the front and the numbers required at the forge and the factories to supply the equipment and munitions of war and to carry on the commerce of the country, on which its ability to meet its financial liabilities must largely depend. They failed to realize in advance that high explosive shells and machine guns would prove in this war the prerequisites of victory, and they were unpardonably tardy in waking up to the truth and in acting upon it. What they are doing now to organize labor and industries and to restrict inordinate profits could have been done, and should have been done, six months ago.

But in all wars Britain begins slowly and finishes strongly; and if there is a debit side to the national account, there is also an imposing list of credit items. The British navy has been invaluable; the British army has been something more than useful; and the

financial skill and courage of the government have gone far to insure an all but indefinite capacity to furnish the country and its allies with the sinews of war. Not far short of 3,000,000 men have voluntarily offered themselves for service at the front. In the face of such a spectacle, without parallel in history, it is little less than ludicrous to question the spirit of the British people. What is needed, however, to make that spirit reach its maximum of productivity and effectiveness, is guidance and organization; and these are at last forthcoming. There has been much to deplore and a little to be ashamed of in the British record during the past year, but there has been vastly more to admire; and I, for one, am confident that we are turning at this moment one of the most glorious pages in British annals. I am not thinking solely or even mainly of naval or military successes in the seven widely separated theatres of war in which Great Britain is engaged. I am thinking of a nation strung up to the heroic pitch, wholly united in a cause that holds out no prizes but those of duty done, honor fulfilled, and security won by valor and sacrifice, absorbing discipline and steadied by it without losing their characteristic flexibility and self-reliance, and pitting against a monstrous mechanism of tyranny the full, spontaneous, and orderly strength of millions of free men.

Great Britain, it may be said, has not yet scaled these heights of splendor. But she is nearing them; she is climbing already beyond the lower slopes; she will gain the summit. She will not, however, do so without carrying still further that process of shedding old habits of thought and old ways of doing things which set in from the first moment of the war. We have seen in the past twelve months two developments of unique significance in British

life — the exaltation of the state and the crushing down of party politics. It has been made a reproach to the Socialists of all lands that they did not prevent the war. If they cared for the reply, they might well make answer that at any rate it has had to be waged by applying their doctrines. Whether that shows the common sense of Socialism or merely its abnormality, I shall not attempt to determine. But the fact is patent that in Great Britain, as in all the other belligerent countries, the state has taken on an unprecedented increase of powers and responsibilities. For the time being, the old economics are dead.

The British are among the least submissive and the most independent of peoples. Yet their chief complaint against their government at this moment is that it has not sufficiently restricted their liberties, that it does not enforce discipline on every human being in the kingdom, that it does not prescribe for each one of them his or her special sphere of usefulness. Every step that the state has taken beyond the province assigned to it in times of peace has been received with a round of popular applause. The state regulates the prices of food; the state makes vast purchases of necessary commodities for resale to the people; the state takes over the railways; the state gags the press; the state, by one enactment after another, places the entire kingdom under what is virtually martial law; the state fixes wages, annexes profits, takes control of the saloons, starts new industries, enters the insurance business, commandeers all the engineering works in the country, abolishes trade-union restrictions, regulates and disciplines labor, — essays, in short, a hundred enterprises that would be utterly closed to it in ordinary times.

The approval with which the British people have watched and encouraged

these inroads upon their traditional philosophy is something more than a tribute to necessity. It implies a conscious recognition that the organization of Great Britain as a community has hitherto been singularly defective and that only state action can improve it. This recognition, in my judgment, will outlive the war. A sane and humorous people like the British are never likely to deify the state as the Germans have deified it; but they will more and more incline to enlarge its functions and to invoke its assistance. The awful transitional period that lies ahead of Europe, when the stimulus of war is removed and its ruin and waste come to be counted, and a desperate scramble of readjustment and rebuilding begins, will force all nations to turn to the state for leadership in the work of salvage. I cannot conceive that in Great Britain all problems of government ownership or control of such utilities as the railways, such services as the banks and stock exchange, and such industries as mining, will not after the war be considered from a new standpoint. I cannot conceive that the British people, when peace returns, will tolerate for long the failure of the state to recolonize the British countryside or to provide a genuinely national system of education. Still less can I conceive of the Empire continuing to be the same loose, unfederated, disjointed congeries of states that it was when the war began; or of domestic politics being resumed on anything like their old footing; or of women continuing to be excluded from that share in public and professional life to which their incomparable services during the war have with compelling effect underscored their claim; or of emigration from an exhausted and overburdened Great Britain to the ampler skies and prospects of Greater Britain beyond the seas being allowed to pursue its old haphazard course.

System, organization, discipline; a new sense of the state; a more realistic conception of unity throughout the nation and of brotherhood among all classes, — these are the attributes that one hopes may survive the war and animate the British people without detriment to their native impulses of initiative and self-confidence. I find myself relying, blindly perhaps but profoundly, upon those three or four millions of young men who will have volunteered for the war, to introduce into Great Britain, on the return of peace, a wider democracy, not so much of political forms as of spirit and opportunity, a national and not a party outlook in public affairs, a better type of legislator than 'the tired lawyer,' and a higher standard of efficiency in the business of government. With the soldiers of the war, if they will but hold together and assert themselves, rests the future of the nations engaged in it; and in France and Great Britain and Italy, the three belligerent lands in which political life is most highly developed, their influence will naturally be thrown, not on the side of a resumption of party politics, but on the side of prolonging and upholding the temper and methods of the really national governments that the plain urgencies of the war have already set up in London and in Paris.

If Great Britain has much to learn from Germany, Germany has far more to learn from Great Britain. But the capacity of each to assimilate what gives strength to the other is by no means identical. Great Britain can find room for, and in almost all departments of life stands to benefit by, those qualities of patient foresight, scientific exactitude, thoroughness in preparation, thrift, realism, and devotion to the state of which Germany has set so far-shining an example. For these are virtues that already exist in the British character, but are largely lost to the

national service through faulty organization. They can be developed and they can be applied without any harm to, and, indeed, with a positive enrichment of, those traits that are the backbone of the British people. Great Britain, for instance, could adopt national military service without canonizing the uniform or enthroning a military caste. She could extend the functions of the state and yet still regard its agents and functionaries with the good-humored tolerance of to-day. She could reach Germany's standard of education and intelligence without forfeiting her ancient dower of a natural and resourceful rebelliousness. She could become as systematic, economical, and provident as her adversary and still retain her talent for meeting responsibilities gladly and for thriving on emergencies. What Britain, in short, can borrow — and, if she is to hold her own in the war and in the not less difficult times that will succeed the war, must borrow — from Germany is in the nature of expansion. What Germany can borrow from Great Britain is in the nature of explosion. Once plant in the Fatherland the careless British doctrine that a man is a human being and not a cog in a machine, and the whole apparatus of autocracy, caste-government, impotent parliaments, and manufactured opinion begins to crack and crumble.

I fancy that in any event it will hardly emerge intact when the defeat which is as distant as it is inevitable strips from the ruling classes in Germany the prestige of infallibility and success. The people have long been beating against the bars. More and more they have begun to ask for a share in the government commensurate with their numbers and intelligence, and to realize that the ballot, as an end in itself, is insufficient: that divorced from direct responsibility, it is little more than a national plaything, and that it affords no

adequate security against the subjection of government to the interests of a single class or against the capricious and hazardous policies of a semi-absolutism. For some years before the war the German people had been working round to the conclusion that no emperor, however patriotic, and no chancellor, however dexterous, could be quite so safe a guardian of the national interests as the nation itself. I do not say that they had actually reached that conclusion or that, even if they had, they possessed the political capacity to give effect to it. But unquestionably that was the direction in which the German mind was moving. It seems not unreasonable to assume that the defeat of Germany in this war, by discrediting the whole philosophy of the state for which the Hohenzollerns have stood, must powerfully aid the political enfranchisement of the masses.

But it is, perhaps, on Russia that the war is destined to work its greatest effects. Whatever else happens, the days of Prussianism in the Empire of the Czars are numbered; and with its disappearance there vanishes a baleful influence that since the days of Peter the Great has corrupted the Slavonic spirit and interposed an estranging barrier between the Czar and his peoples. Changing the name of the capital from St. Petersburg to Petrograd was a small thing but symbolic. It was a token that the Russian sovereign and his subjects, long separated by Prussian ascendancy in the court, the army, and the bureaucracy, were at last coming together in a mutually intelligible identity. The true genius of the Russian people is kindly, tolerant, and democratic. It is almost everything, indeed, that the Prussian spirit is not. That is why this war is for Russia essentially a war of moral liberation that will clear a path for the fruition and expansion of all that is most genuinely Russian. The

results may be long in showing themselves, but those who know Russia best and are possessed of something of her own unconquerable faith have the least doubt of their ultimate advent. Another and a decisive milestone is being passed on the long and tortuous road of Russia's progress toward liberalism and unity.

III

But it is on wider problems than these that the observer of the present struggle soon finds himself ruminating. There is not a question of all the many questions that have harassed European statesmanship for the past hundred years that has not been started by it into fresh vitality; and one at least, forgotten by all diplomats and remembered only by dreamers, has reëmerged from a still older tomb. Poland! That name, that ideal, that inveterate aspiration of a people martyred with the peculiar callousness of the eighteenth century, — what 'practical' man gave it, until the present war and Russia's resounding pledge of national resurrection, a single moment's thought? Yet the final and, as it were, the sacramental token of victory for the Allies has been solemnly and sincerely declared to be the ancient kingdom of Poland reconstituted and made whole. And the principle by virtue of which this miracle is to be wrought is the principle of nationality. There, if anywhere, is the point of sharpest opposition between the Teutonic powers and the Allies. The triumph of the former means the trampling of the smaller peoples of Europe beneath the jackboot of Prussian militarism; the triumph of the latter is the vindication of their right to security and self-realization.

But one who, with this clue in his hands, seeks to thread the maze of European politics, will find 'the principle

of nationality' an erratic and even convulsive guide. By its light he may, indeed, picture to himself, without too much effort, the lost provinces restored to France, Belgium once more independent, and the neighboring kingdoms as self-contained and relatively tranquil as they are to-day. But as his eyes travel eastward, he becomes aware that, if nationality is to determine everything, very little is left of the map of Europe. Poland rises again; Austria-Hungary disappears, the German elements gravitating toward the Hohenzollerns and the Slav toward the Romanoffs, leaving Hungary to form a Magyar Switzerland; a Greater Serbia, a Greater Roumania, emerge; Bulgaria expands to the limits of her original agreement with Serbia and Greece; Italy annexes whatever in Austria and along the Dalmatian coast is Italian in speech or sentiment or by tradition; and Greece overflows into Asia Minor. Such a rearrangement is not impossible, if and when the Allies win. But it raises almost as many problems as it solves, and the more he looks into it the more will a dispassionate onlooker wonder whether nationality may not prove as refractory and aggressive — and may not be the forcing-bed of as many wars — as religion itself.

Not even here, however, do we reach the limits of this 'greatest of all wars.' Is the five-hundred-years-old curse of Turkish rule at last and really to be removed from Europe? Is Russia actually within sight and touch of her insistent goals, — Constantinople and an outlet to the warm waters? And if the Turks are driven from Europe, can they hold their own or maintain any sort of authority in Asia Minor? Syria and Palestine, Mesopotamia and Arabia, what is to become of them? Can Great Britain with her eighty million Moslem subjects be indifferent to the fate of a country that contains the holy places

at Mecca and Medina, and that commands the trade route to India as well as the coasts of Egypt? Is another and a greater empire to rise where the Assyrian and Babylonian empires fell? Will cities more magnificent than they cover the sites of Nineveh and Babylon, and the Tigris spread fertility like the Nile, and Mesopotamia become once more the granary of the East, and the oil-wells of Kerkuk rival those of Baku? These are not idle speculations. They are as much and as pertinently the conceivable consequences of the war as the fate of Germany's possessions in Africa and the Pacific, and the rounding-off of the all-British route from Cairo to the Cape.

But all forecasts, all possibilities, are subject to the issue of the struggle and the nature of the peace. The world is

at war to-day very largely because the Congress of Vienna one hundred years ago redrew the map of Europe on the artificial and transient lines of dynastic claims and antiquated technicalities, and ignored the rights and sentiments and individuality of the peoples it was dealing with. Since then democracy and nationality have made themselves felt as the most potent of all forces in the politics of to-day. If the settlement is guided by them, a new and saner dispensation may be created such as Europe has not seen since the peace of the Antonines was broken. For by far the most crucial question propounded by the war is not its effect upon this country or upon that, but whether it is to end merely to be renewed later on, or whether 'the greatest of all wars' is to be also the last.

WAR AND THE WEALTH OF NATIONS

BY L. P. JACKS

WHAT is the cause of the terrible calamities which are now falling on the civilized world? Surely it lies in the fact that the economic development of mankind has outstripped the moral development. The nations of the world have grown richer without becoming wiser and juster in a corresponding degree. We all know that the possession of great riches is a dangerous thing — dangerous for the possessor and dangerous for his neighbors. We all know what the dangers are; we know further that they can be averted only if the moral development of the man's character keeps pace with the economic de-

velopment of his wealth. I suppose that few of us would object to a man's increasing his possessions tenfold, provided that his sense of justice and his wisdom were increased to correspond. But if his wisdom and sense of justice lagged behind, while his fortune went ahead, we should be justly alarmed for the consequences both to the man and to his neighbors. This holds good of nations as well as of individuals. And the fact is that during the past fifty years the wealth of the world has gone ahead by leaps and bounds, while the morality of the world has moved only at a snail's pace.