

This brings us to a consideration of the question of power generally, as a problem in the elaboration of proper terms of peace. The problem, which is one of fundamental importance, is this:

A peace that would seriously impair Germany's military power could only be obtained under conditions which would be unjust to her people and would leave her future development unsecured. It could be obtained, if at all, only after a crushing defeat inflicted upon her by the Allies; and instead of a lasting peace we would have an armistice which would become the starting-point for a series of future wars, probably even more terrible than the present one. No matter what form such an impairment of German military power takes—whether it takes the monstrously unjust form of a forcible dissolution of the German Empire into its constituent states, or the mild form of an enforced reduction of armaments—it is bound to have direful consequences. A great people marching in the very forefront of civilization cannot be made to smart under the humiliation of such a defeat as would be required in order to make Germany accept such terms without the world paying a frightful penalty therefore. The immediate result of such a peace would be the imperative necessity for the whole world to arm as never before in order to be in a position to enforce its terms, which the German people could be made to observe only by a force similar to that which compelled them to accept them in the first instance. And after the German people shall have had a breathing spell, and shall have recuperated from the economic and financial wounds of the present war, we shall be treated to a "war of liberation" similar in spirit to that which followed Jena, and transcending in severity and barbarism the one which we are now witnessing. In short, we shall have for a while the "armed peace" of the status quo ante on a much enhanced scale, to be followed by the horrors of the present war raised to the nth degree.

But a peace that would leave Germany's military power undiminished, or increased, as it is bound to be if the creation of

Middle Europe is permitted, would be unjust to the world, and would, besides, be merely a prelude to "the next war."

If Germany should come out of this war with her military power unimpaired or increased, as a result of her military victories, it would prove that "preparedness" and militarism "pay." The necessary result would be an era of "preparedness" and militaristic extravagance, spiritual and material, such as the world has never seen before. Conscription would then surely have come to stay in England as well as in this country.

The same or even worse results would follow if Germany's increased or undiminished military power after the war were due not to crushing military defeats inflicted by her upon her enemies, but to the "liberal" attitude of the peoples of the world in staying the hands of their governments in the act of punishing her. Such an attitude would put the stamp of approval on the "scrap of paper" doctrine of international relations, thereby destroying all possibility of ordered international relations in the future. It would put a premium upon aggression; be, in fact, an invitation to aggression to autocratic and militaristic countries like Germany and Japan, by insuring them against the risks which war otherwise entails and which necessarily exert a restraining influence upon their militaristic impetuosity. If this attitude should be adopted as the policy of the liberal warlike elements of the world's population and enforced wherever these elements are in control, war would become a much safer enterprise for those likely to engage in it than it now is, or at least has been hitherto. For the rulers of countries like Germany and Japan war would then hold the allurements of gain and glory without any risk of loss; should the Lord of Hosts bless their enterprise there are "kingdoms," perhaps a world, to gain; for there are no "liberals," the same Lord be praised, in "their" countries to interfere with their terms of peace. But should the "fortunes of war" go against them, there are the liberals of the enemy-countries and of the neutral world to see to it that no harm befall them.

In any event, and whatever the cause, a peace that would leave Germany's military power undiminished or increased would be