

crity than the Sacred Scriptures. We read in the Third Book of Kings that during the reign of Roboam the son of Solomon, ten of the tribes of Israel separated from the Twelve and declared their allegiance to Jeroboam, who previously had been a fugitive in Egypt, and thus the son of Solomon was left to rule only over the two tribes of Juda and Benjamin. Then we are told that Roboam came to Jerusalem and gathered together all the house of Juda and the tribe of Benjamin—"a hundred and four score thousand chosen men for war—to fight against the house of Israel, and to bring the kingdom again under Roboam, the son of Solomon." The sacred narrative proceeds:—

"But the Word of the Lord came to Semeias the man of God, saying: Speak to Roboam, the son of Solomon, the King of Juda, and to all the house of Juda and Benjamin, and the rest of the people, saying: Thus saith the Lord; You shall not go up nor fight against your brethern the children of Israel. Let every man return to his house, for this thing is from me. They hearkened to the Word of the Lord, and returned from their journey as the Lord had commanded them."

Then we are told that thereafter Jeroboam ruled over the Ten Tribes, but that, fearing that common worship in the Temple would weaken their allegiance to him, he set up two golden calves and ordained for his subjects the practice of idolatry. We may conclude that Semeias, the Man of God, knew well when he forbade the son of Solomon to preserve the integrity of his Kingdom by resorting to civil war, that the Ten Tribes would turn to idolatry, and assuredly it is strong evidence in favor of the principle for which I am contending that the Almighty Himself, rather than deny a people their right to choose their own government, preferred to allow them to sink into idolatry.

Adam Smith's View.

In the light of the ancient precedent I have quoted from the Third Book of Kings, we may judge two of the bloodiest and most calamitous wars of modern times. Probably no war caused more profound feeling on both sides of the Atlantic than that which culminated in the independence of America and the birth of the United States. The illustrious Adam Smith, after ten years of retirement, had just completed his monumental work, usually entitled *The Wealth of Nations*, when the struggle was exercising men's minds. Adam Smith taught the interdependence of nations, but he insisted that, while economically and socially interdependent, it were better that each nation should govern itself. He pointed out that historically colonies were not necessarily dependencies, and that the first colonies we know of in history—those founded by the Greeks—were, without exception, completely independent from the outset. He argued further that the greatest service Britain and her overseas colonies could do for each other was to trade with each other, but that trade did not depend upon the political connection. Accordingly he counseled the Mother Country to enter into a treaty of peace and friendship with the American colonies and to "part good friends" before it was too late. Thus Adam Smith would have brought the United States of America into existence without the shedding of a drop of blood. The Imperialists of his day turned a deaf ear to his counsels, but with dire results, for although the United States won their independence, the Mother Country was left with a legacy of debt and taxation, and, more disastrous still, there continued a more odious legacy of hatred which later gave rise to the war of 1812, and which has not completely died out even at the present day. To give one other illustration: Few events have produced more disastrous consequences or aroused more anti-social tendencies than the American Civil War. I shall be told, of course, that as the result of that war the slaves were emancipated. My reply, however, is that had the Southern States been allowed to separate peaceably from the North, had North and South, to quote Adam Smith, agreed "to part good friends," had they agreed, while separating as political communities, to preserve complete freedom of trade, a far greater service had been rendered to mankind than could possibly have resulted from the war. True, the emancipation of the slaves might have been postponed, but it was none the less inevitable, and when it came as the result of powerful but peaceful social forces,

it were far more beneficent. Slave labor, as compared with free labor, is notoriously inefficient, and had there been no war, slavery as an institution in the Southern States must ultimately have withered away. Thus we may certainly conclude that the American Civil War—like its predecessor, the War of Independence—was a national blunder, if not a crime. The American who would insist upon preserving the Union, even at the price of blood, makes a fetish of the Union, even as our own Imperialists make a fetish of Empire. Neither Union nor Empire are part of the Sermon on the Mount. Both at best are mere human institutions, and it were folly of the rankest kind to place either before the convenience and happiness of mankind. After reading Lord Bryce's admirable work, *The American Commonwealth*, I am convinced that to-day the United States comprises too great a political entity to be efficiently governed. Over so vast an area, comprising such an immense number of people, government is necessarily autocratic and therefore inefficient and corrupt. Make a mental experiment, and imagine the disappearance of the American Union, but imagine further its forty-eight component States continuing to govern themselves under their respective State constitutions, but preserving *inter se* that complete freedom of trade which is the great characteristic of the present political union, and I take leave to say that you will have a set of circumstances under which such a calamity as the Civil War would be impossible. Such a consummation must come to pass if men are to be well and wisely governed, if political corruption is to pass away, and if international peace is to be secured.

Example—Good and Bad.

Dr. Goldwin Smith has rightly said that nations influence each other by their example, but it has to be admitted that their example is not always helpful. For instance, when addressing a meeting of his constituents during the reign of terror inaugurated by the Coalition Government in Ireland, Mr. Lloyd George quoted the precedent of the American Civil War as showing that England had the right to compel the allegiance of Ireland. He invoked the great name of Lincoln in support of his argument, and it must be confessed not without effect, particularly if you concede that Lincoln's position is unassailable. The principles of morality and justice, however, do not change through the ages. They cannot be impressed to accommodate the passions and vanity of men. Down through the ages comes a greater voice than that of Lincoln to answer the sophistries of Mr. Lloyd George, and still we may hear the prophet, Semeias, the Man of God, proclaiming in trumpet tones:—

"Thus saith the Lord: You shall not go up nor fight against your brethern. . . . Let every man return to his house, for this thing is from me."

Thus we may conclude with absolute certainty that the universal opinion of mankind is in favor of the right of Ireland to govern herself freely, fully, and without external interference. Only by recognising and giving full effect to the principle of nationality can the world be assured of international peace. Imagine the world bereft of Empires and divided into independent nations, and you will have no difficulty in concluding that in such a world war would be unknown, and that only in such a world is real civilisation possible. We never associate the idea of war with Holland, with Switzerland, with Denmark, with Sweden or Norway. The existence of Empires—those mischievous and abnormal excrescences—alone make us think of war. Empire is a military term. To find precedent for modern schemes of Imperialism we go back not to the free republics of Greece, but to Imperial Rome, and indeed, bearing in mind the flagrant disregard of human rights which characterises Imperialism in practice, we may conclude with certainty that it is essentially a pagan principle. The author of *The Great Illusion* has most appositely pointed out that there is a higher standard of comfort, a more equitable distribution of wealth, and less burdensome taxation in small nations than in great Empires, and assuredly we could scarcely have a better test as to which system is the more consistent with human happiness.

Independent and Interdependent.

To say that nations should be politically independent, is not to argue that they are to disregard each other's