

W H I T H E R ?

"We are bound to recognise that the United States is one of the greatest forces in international politics, and its relative influence must increase. World conditions are pictured in which the Dominions in the Southern Seas would have to turn to U.S.A. for protection or co-operation in defence."

A Broadcast Lecture

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ONE of the objects of these brief Thursday evening addresses is to stimulate goodwill toward other people, an active goodwill issuing from a policy aiming to minimise national misunderstandings and disputes, and to substitute for war a peaceful means of settling conflicts whenever they occur.

If we look back upon the experience of mankind we see that it is possible to do this, witness the passing away of family and inter-tribal feuds, of duelling and private wars from the practice of civilised nations, and the growth of international law and international agreements. If we do not thus stave off war, it threatens to destroy our civilisation, so far has man's evil genius for the invention of chemicals and machines apt to destroy whole communities, outrun his will and ability to curb his combative instincts and national prejudices and to put his mastery of nature's secrets to uses serving the good of mankind.

What does one of the greatest master minds of the age say? Einstein, whose name will live as long as that of any man to-day, wrote from Berlin on September 4 last: "What the inventive genius of mankind has bestowed upon us in the last hundred years could have made human life care-free and happy if the development of the organising power of man had been able to keep step with his technical advances. As it is, the hardly bought achievements of the machine age in the hands of our generation are as dangerous as a razor in the hands of a three-year-old child."

We who live in this small, thinly-peopled group of islands, the most remote of all countries from the heart of the cultural world, have great need of constant reminders to develop and maintain an imagination and a sympathy that shall enable us to respect the ideals of other nations and the knowledge and will neces-

sary to co-operate with them for the good of the world as a whole. We are heirs also to the proverbial aloofness and insularity of our British ancestors, though thanks to the freer social environment of a new country, Americans and Canadians find social intercourse easier with New Zealanders than with English people.

But the New Zealander who has not spent some time in the U.S.A. has often violent prejudices against everything American. This is a cause of pain to those who know something of the U.S.A., its people, and institutions, their difficulties, achievements, and history, especially when such hostility is accompanied by the regrettable self-complacency that has drawn the criticism of many visitors from abroad who come to note and study our developing national characteristics.

If we do belong to a superior people, it is not through our own merits but by the grace of God, and we should remember that impartiality, tolerance, and the will to see and understand the facts and meaning of life as it actually is, however these may shock our prejudices, are essential elements in any valid claim to superiority.

It is imperative that we should study the U.S.A. with eyes unclouded by preconceived ideas. It is a country with a huge population, English-speaking, comparatively near, and with immense economic resources. Whatever national economists may say to the contrary, circumstances decree that we must have intimate and important relations in trade and finance in the future. Strange as it may seem to us to-day, sixty years ago many in New Zealand desired that New Zealand should be annexed to the U.S.A. But to the historian and the social scientist who must take long views and regard our present position as merely a point in a long changing line of development, there is no improbability in supposing that in the



Exploration, the thrilling story of pioneer life the pushing back of the frontier of civilisation, have always had a strong fascination for the minds of young New Zealanders.