

CHAPTER XXIII

THE UNITED STATES OF THE WORLD

ONCE more we have worked our way through the ocean of thought to the vision of a time when there shall be no more of isolation among the groups of people who make up the passenger list of the good ship *Earth*. We asked the question once, "Why not manage the earth as a unit?" and we decided that even though the Martians may be able to lay out their whole planet, and ditch it as a farmer ditches a field, our field, the deck room of the good ship *Earth*, is still in too many separate and hostile hands.

But we have now glimpsed the vision of a world religion. Can we not see the picture of a world government—a United States of the World, in which there shall be no more of exclusiveness in travel or trade between Germany or Japan and these states of ours, than

ON BOARD THE GOOD SHIP EARTH

there now is between Iowa and Missouri or New York and Illinois?

It is a divine vision! But it is not a new one. The poets are men who see more deeply, and speak more truly than the rest of us, and are therefore prophets. It is to Tennyson the Prophet that we must go for the best expression of this old vision.

“For I dipt into the future, far as human eye
could see,
Saw the Vision of the world, and all the wonder
that would be;

“Saw the heavens fill with commerce, argosies
of magic sails,
Pilots of the purple twilight, dropping down
with costly bales.”

And remember, Prophet Tennyson wrote this about the heavens filling with commerce, and the pilots dropping down with costly bales, before Langley built his first aeroplane, or Zeppelin his dirigible, or the Wright brothers rode their first glider at Dayton. And Tennyson, in his dip into the future, saw the horrors of aerial warfare.

THE UNITED WORLD

“Heard the heavens fill with shouting, and
there rain'd a ghastly dew
From the nations' airy navies grappling in
the central blue.”

But he did not stop here. He looked on to
the development of peace from war,

“Till the war-drum throb'd no longer, and
the battle-flags were furl'd
In the Parliament of man, the Federation of
the world!”

Is this anything more than the baseless
fabric of a vision? Will there ever be any
such a thing as a parliament of man, a federa-
tion of the world? I believe that there must
be in the fulness of time.

To be sure, there was never a time when
there seemed less prospect of the Universal
Government Merger than now. Great Britain
still holds sway over her uncounted millions
of souls and scores of nations—by force rather
than by accord, save in the case of her English-
speaking colonies. Every great power grasps
its sheaf of subject peoples who hate their con-
querors—and is reaching for more. Italy

ON BOARD THE GOOD SHIP EARTH

has just snapped a mouthful from the flank of staggering Turkey in Tripolitania. Bulgaria, Serbia, Montenegro and Greece are eating into the vitals of the same decadent power. Austria stands ready to leap upon Serbia in anger at the stealing of a bone in the form of an Adriatic port. Russia is placing armies in the field to daunt Austria. Germany clenches her mailed fist in support of Franz-Joseph. France sharpens her knife for that portion of Germany's back called Alsace-Lorraine. Great Britain keeps up steam in her mighty pack of dreadnaughts in case Russia and France need aid. Japan and Russia are gradually gnawing into the huge passive bulk of China, which stirs, and sends out a new army for the defense of Outer Mongolia. Mexico and the Spanish- and Portuguese-American republics, sheltered under the Monroe Doctrine, look upon their mighty protector, remember the attacks on Mexico and the Philippines, and wonder whether the Yankee pigs are not more like wolves protecting sheep until a time of hunger. It is nearing Christmas, 1913, as

THE UNITED WORLD

this is written—and when was there ever apparently less of peace on earth, and good will to men?

The federation of the world will not come save through the need of it. Is there any need to be satisfied by federation?

Yes, there is as much need of world-federation now, as there was of colony-federation in America in 1775. There are many world problems that can not be solved save through it. There are world slums, which the advanced nations may be obliged to clean up and purify. There are world pest-holes which the world may wish to make sanitary, or to isolate. There are areas of darkness on which the world may find it necessary to turn the light. It is only because of our home problems and their pressing nature that we have found it possible to delay so long a world movement for the perfecting of society in the steerage and the fore-castle of the good ship *Earth*.

Moreover, there are questions of the division of the lands, and the natural resources of the *Earth*. The population is very unevenly

ON BOARD THE GOOD SHIP EARTH

distributed over the decks—and much of the best lands is unused. Suppose that Brazil fails to reclaim and populate the great Amazon Basin—is not the rest of the world, especially the over-populated portions, interested in having Brazil's delinquency remedied? Shall half the good deck room of the good ship *Earth* go half used because of one or two nations' lack of energy or initiative?

Suppose the world's supply of potash is finally found to be localized in Germany, and the phosphorus in the United States, as seems to be the case. Suppose that the iron mines and the coal mines also fall into the hands of one, two, or three nations. And suppose these nations, or as many as control them, either allow them to be exploited by private owners or refuse their product to the world on just terms, or take too much for themselves, or allow the priceless heritage of all the peoples of the earth to be wasted. Have not the wronged peoples a right to be heard in protest? Will there not be need of a federation of the world to deal with these problems?

THE UNITED WORLD

Already there is growing up a thing never known until this era of ours—a world public-opinion. The world will never be federated in government, until it is federated in thought—save by tyranny.

Consider two only of the great federating tendencies. The Socialist party is the same party everywhere. It seeks to build up in every nation, another nation of working people, and to bring about a condition of industrial democracy in which all will be working people. Its growing power makes its world-wide success a thing to be regarded as far outside the bounds of impossibility. Its triumph would be in itself a federation of the world. The other great radical school of thought, not less powerful than Socialism in its influence on affairs, is the school of the Georgians or single-taxers. This school bases its propaganda on the principle that this huge Zeppelin the *Earth* is in justice common property, and that rent is the wedge that separates the privileged from the unprivileged. The triumph of this school of thought would at once estab-

ON BOARD THE GOOD SHIP EARTH

lish a federation of the world, and could not fail to lead to a listing of our world properties, a division of our natural resources on lines of recognized principles, and some central body with power to care for the common property of the race, and administer it for the common good.

Such a federation would draw the line between those activities which are national, continental or planetary functions and those which are better performed locally, and would usher in an era of local self-government in local affairs. It would be consistent with perfect liberty and seems essential to it.