

(November 30, 1914.)

The Deeper Causes of the War

BY DR. STEPHEN S. WISE.*

AT a regular luncheon of the Club, held on the 30th November, Dr. Wise said:

Mr. Chairman and Fellow Neutrals (laughter),—I have been very eager to escape from my country for some time, though I had not possibly the same urgent motives for escaping that are commonly attributed to residents of the States who transfer their residence from our land to your own (laughter), but, gentlemen, I am glad to get away from my own country for the first time in my life, and to remain away long enough to say I am not a neutral. (Laughter, and applause.) Only one thing makes me hesitate about giving full expression to my spirit of neutrality while I am out of my own country. I remember, some years ago, Mark Twain said, when speaking in England, "Here in England, as in America, when I stand under the British flag, I am not a stranger, I am not an alien, I am at home!" And if I hesitate to give expression to my un-neutral feelings to-day, it is only because I feel that I am at home. (Applause.)

I read to-day—I know not whether it was in one of our papers or one of your own—and I wish every paper, every newspaper in America, were as good as the one edited by my friend, who belongs to us as to you, Dr. J. A. Macdonald—that while Germany is fighting for the future, England is fighting for coin. Now I am sorry only for the man who said that, because that man has not passed beyond the elementary stage of barbarism. Any man who will think of looking upon a great people like the British people, and say you are fighting to-day for coin, money, or trade, does not understand the British people, and is incapable of rising to the dignity and the reason of a great and noble, unselfish act. (Applause.) We feel in the States,—that is, some of us do—that England's fighting is not chiefly for England at all. I am not a neutral! My deepest sympathies and my deepest hopes are with the Allies (applause), because I feel that you

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and France together are fighting, not for England and France and Belgium, but that you are fighting for civilization, and because I feel you are fighting the cause of ordered democracy against autocratic militarism. (Applause.)

Now, gentlemen, in my lifetime, I have been in contact from time to time with Canadian Clubs, in a fluid state. (Laughter.) Canadian Clubs that have been less stable and less firm than this company which names itself the Canadian Club. In fact, I think in America there is nothing Canadian half as popular as "Canadian Club." (Laughter.) And I suppose Canada is particularly popular in my own country because this part of Canada has been so largely settled by, and is to-day occupied by Scots, the Scots of whom we in America often hear, "Scots wha hae wi' Wallace bled," and have been bleeding the rest of the world ever since! (Laughter.) You take me a little more kindly than did an English audience to which I once stupidly tried to say that I wondered whether England was called the "tight little island" because of the number of tight little Islanders in it. (Laughter.)

Talking about Scots, I am particularly interested in them because of that English story which recurs to me, so English that you will feel justified in lynching me for telling it you, the story of that poor Englishman, perhaps an immigrant from Canada, who was looking disconsolate in London, and when asked about business, he said, "Don't ask about business at all." "What's the matter?" said the other, "Is business so bad?" "Is it bad?" he replied; "I buy from the Scotch, and I sell to the Jews!" (Laughter.)

You know my people, my brothers in faith, have never lived in large numbers in Scotland. There are three places on earth where Jews can't even make a living: one is in New England, which is a sort of Yankeeified Caledonia; the second is China,—as I told my friend, Mr. Wu, some years ago; and the third is Scotland.

I wonder whether I may detain you long enough—though the Chairman has warned me of the limitations of time within which I am required to circumscribe myself—to tell you of the word I exchanged with a member of the English Cabinet some years ago, when invited to go with him along the classic Thames Embankment. Mrs. Wise and I were looking on the Thames, and our host said, "Not long ago, a young lady from America was here, and some one spoke of the river. 'This a river, is it?' she exclaimed. 'This is just a pool or a brook. Why, the Mississippi is twenty times as large as the Thames!' 'Yes,' I replied, 'of course; but the Mississippi is just a river,

while the Thames is liquid history!" (Applause.) The story reminds me of the contrast between the Thames and the Mississippi, you remember it—someone asked whether the Thames was as large as the Mississippi; "As large!" exclaimed the person spoken to, "why, there is not enough water in the Thames to serve as a gargle for one of the mouths of the Mississippi!" (Laughter.)

Some years ago, I was traveling to my own country, and on the way across a storm arose, and an American woman said to her little son, "James, I want you to go to the state-room and get into your pajamas and go to bed. There is going to be a severe storm, and I want you to be asleep through it." James went down, but after an hour his mother followed, and found him, not in his pajamas but wrapped in an American flag. When James was asked why this absurd performance, he said, "You know, mother, you said there was going to be a bad storm, and I thought the boat might go down. Now this is an English boat, but I want God to know I'm an American." (Laughter.) Now, I told that story in England at a dinner—and by the way I heard the best after dinner speeches there that I ever heard—I told that story, and just after telling it I observed an old Englishman that looked very sad, very much depressed and very dismal. I tried to counteract some part of the damage I had done, by saying, "Of course, you know the average American feels that if he were not an American he would like to be an Englishman!" But this was more than he could stand. He got up and said, "The Rabbi says if he were not an American he would like to be an Englishman; if I were not an Englishman, I should not want to be alive!" (Laughter.)

I wonder whether I should tell you, by way of closing the preliminaries of my address (laughter), the story of the Rabbi. One night an Irishman in New York was taken very sick, being stricken with the smallpox. He turned to his wife and said, "Bridget, I feel I am going to die, and I want the last rites; send for the Jewish Rabbi." Bridget thought poor Patrick was out of his head with the disease, but thought she had better humor him, so she said, "Ah, now, Patrick, ye're not going to die, but if ye want the last rites all right, but Patrick, dear, ye don't want the Rabbi, but our own good priest." But Patrick insisted that he wanted the Rabbi. "Do ye think," he said, "I want our priest to get the smallpox?" (Laughter.) So when I, gentlemen, an American, face a company of Canadians, and a Jew, face a company of Christians, as I hope you are. (Laughter.) I should have to ask my

good friend about that—I wonder what it is that I am going to catch! (Laughter.)

Gentlemen, I want to deal, in just the few minutes before you have got to leave me, whether I leave you or not, about fourteen minutes, (Cries of "Go on!")—I haven't begun yet! (Laughter.) I want to deal, if I may, with the deeper causes of the war; not the obvious, not the immediate causes of the war, not the things of which we all know and have thought, but, shall I say, the implicit, indirect causes of the war, which have brought on the war that is, and all wars, and as a result of which causes war will continue to be.

For one thing, gentlemen, we shall not have an end of war as long as you and I feel that man is a fighting animal, and therefore must forever fight. I am not maintaining to-day, nor could I bring myself to maintain, that this war is an unnecessary one from my point of view, or that this war could have been averted, for I think Sir Edward Grey did everything that a man and a gentleman could do to make this war impossible. (Applause.) And I do say, and I take it every Canadian feels the same way, whether this war was inevitable or not, you don't believe in the permanent continuance of war and of all warfare. I say, as long as we are guilty of the moral and spiritual heresy that man is a fighting animal we are going to have no end of war. Man *was* a fighting animal; a *thing* became man through fighting; but if you are going to declare that man is a fighting animal, and therefore must forever be such, your theory has reference only to man's origin, which is down in the deeps, and ignores man's destiny, which is in the highest heights. (Applause.) In other words, gentlemen, man became what he is, a thing became man, through warring and fighting, but if man is going to rise one step higher, it will be because of the cessation of warfare. In a better world, in a truer world, a world in which law and religion obtain, whether yours or mine, there will be no room for war. Whether war is necessary to-day or not, this one thing has got to go! (Hear, hear.)

Now, I know some of you may not agree with me herein, but I pay you the compliment, as Dante said, of flattering you by truth speaking, by saying not that which you think I should think, but what I really believe. I think if there is one thing Englishmen want to hear, it is what the other man really believes. (Hear, hear.) Having said what I did, and abating not one jot or tittle of my admiration for Sir Edward Grey, we are not going to have an end of war until we have an end of secret, stealthy, underground diplomacy. (Hear,

hear.) That is a serious thing to say to a company of men like this.

If Russia and Germany, Austria and France, and above all the German and Austrian people, who did not want war, understood all the hidden felicities of speech and action by the Chancelleries of the respective countries between the 24th of July and the 3rd of August, this awful world carnage would not have been. They never would have suffered themselves to be flung into this hell of war by the secret diplomacy which obtained and obtains.

Now, you English gentlemen and others have been laughing for a century at our "shirt sleeve diplomacy." Now, perhaps, you will agree with me when I say that we have blundered along almost as well as have the Britishers. We have got along with our "shirt sleeve diplomacy"—we have another definition of it: you remember what Bismarck said—Bismarck, the man, I believe, who is truly responsible for this war and for all that Bernhardt and the German ministry of to-day are saying and doing, and this war is the inevitable result of Bismarckianism and of nothing else,—I find in a recently published book by John Morley—Lord Morley, if you please—the remark of Bismarck quoted, that "diplomacy is the art of passing bad money." Perhaps you gentlemen know what that is in Canada. (Laughter.) Now, Bismarck knew what diplomacy was; as to bad money, he never passed any other, diplomatically and internationally!

The Decalogue and the Sermon on the Mount, "Thou shalt not covet," "Thou shalt not steal," "Thou shalt not kill," are just as binding upon the nation as upon the individual. (Applause.) And we have got to learn that; all of us have got to learn that; and I think, gentlemen, you will be eager and proud to agree with me, that our own country has given one of the finest imaginable illustrations of accepting the mandate of the Decalogue as binding upon international relations; I refer to the President of the United States, a wise and noble statesman. (Hearty applause.) You remember how about a year ago he insisted that the American people be mindful of that verse in the Hebrew Bible, "He that sweareth to his own hurt and changeth not." We had sworn to our own hurt, it may be, but Woodrow Wilson cared nothing about that! The American people must be true to their pledge! They must go on and deal with absolutely undeviating justice, first with England and then with all nations of the earth! And we did! (Applause.) You know, gentlemen, what this "Shirt sleeve diplomacy" should be named, and will be named; the name was given by a great American statesman, who is not as well

known to you as some other leading political figures, the one time Ambassador at the Court of St. James, from our country, John Hay,—the "Golden Rule diplomacy," (applause) a diplomacy upon which the nations of the earth have got to agree, and if they fail to agree thereon we shall have no end of the kind of war that now is raging.

Now, gentlemen, a third cause of the war I want to mention,—I see I have three minutes. (Cries of "Go on!") I will keep you posted about the time—the third cause—I wish there were an exit facility offered to me so that I might disappear without unnecessary peril, for I have one widow and two orphans dependent upon me, that is, if you should put an end to me here! I will not commit myself here in my own thought, but say what would be my own thought, if I were not a clergyman, and free to have a thought! (Laughter.) Gentlemen, we shall have no end of war as long as women are shut out from government! (Laughter and applause)—I knew that. (Laughter)—And Sylvia didn't ask me to say it, either! (Laughter.)

Now, gentlemen, I am going to talk to you about that for a moment. War began, a war that embraces more than half the nations of the earth—somehow I think I can appeal to you, because you are fair, and Englishmen are said to like fair play,—do you think it is fair,—I put it that way,—that it should have begun without asking a single woman on earth whether the war should be? Women don't bear arms. No, they don't! they merely bear armies! Gentlemen, be fair! Who bears the first, heaviest, and last cost of war? (Hear, hear.) Men may die: they have the choice and the glory of dying upon the battlefields. But woman has got to live on for a decade or a generation or two after the battle is over! The bitterest cost of the war is borne by women! (Hear, hear.) I tell you, gentlemen, even if apparently you are not prepared to accept universal suffrage in Canada, judging by the looks on your faces at this moment, I tell you, we shall not have an end of war until the mothers have a share in government. (Applause.) For women know what war means. You own fellow-Englishwoman, Olive Schreiner, says, "Woman counts war in the cost of flesh, life, love."

I tell you, what I resent as a churchman, a religionist! I resent the actions of your country and of France and Germany and Russia, in asking, inviting, sanctioning, urging, what are war marriages. What are they? Marriages women contract with men, to which in many cases children will be born, and then the father of may be three or six children will never come back alive to see them. The British Government

and other Governments wish to neutralize the heavy death rate, and I think what it means—I am going to use simple, plain terms—is asking women to make of themselves breeding machines, so your birth rate can be equal to and neutralize your death rate! (Hear, hear.) When the nations of the world see the nations of civilization and of Christendom act in such a way that women would be asked to contract trial marriages,—for that is in effect what they are—to make of themselves breeding machines,—do you think that would be the case if women were to have a share in government? Would it not soon pass away, this pain, this agony, this tragedy which has been laid upon the soul of woman?

Now, gentlemen, I come to the last cause with which I want to deal to-day. The first is militarism, and second, that final cause of war, more responsible than all else. What is militarism? You have an army, and a *rather* good navy; we think it is almost comparable to our own—surely we could pay you no higher compliment than that! (Laughter.) And yet, I think, England is not a militarist nation. (Hear, hear.) She is essentially as far removed from militarism as the United States of America. Militarism means the subordinating of the civil to the military arm of the government. I'd like to see the English Government try for five minutes to subordinate the civil to the military arm! You want your army and navy to be triumphant, but in their own place, but you are master of the army and the navy, and Englishmen will never permit the army and the navy to govern them. (Applause.) And then a militaristic nation, gentlemen, is one which dreams of military conquest, of achieving military glory, which believes not in that old maxim of my fathers, "Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit," but, as some nations of the earth to-day, "Not by the Spirit, but by the exigencies of the case, but by might and by brute power alone, shall man prevail." I dare say no man on earth would accuse England of being a truly militaristic country, but we in our land see the peril of being flung over the abyss of militarism as a result of this war. I heard a great American statesman a few days ago, whom I may not mention, speaking reflectively on the moral causes of the war,—and he was just as neutral as the speaker,—(laughter)—say that he trusted England would be splendidly triumphant, because if England should be defeated—he felt, as I believe you all feel, that such defeat is unthinkable (hear, hear, and applause)—if England were defeated, if the cause of the Allies should fail, America would have to embark upon a great militaristic adventure, and we should have a mighty army and a mighty navy; and we don't

want either! (Applause.) We need no army in America, because the only land from which we are in any danger is only Canada. (Laughter.) You know, we used to say in America that there were only two things to do to Canada: either to swallow it or smash it. Now, we have come to say, that we could not smash it, and we would not swallow it! (Laughter.) We don't need an army in America. Along a frontier of three thousand miles, is it not? (A voice, "Four thousand.") I thank God to-day, for a hundred years you and we have maintained unbroken peace, not only because the influence of that hundred years unbroken is a prevision of another thousand years of peace between the great Dominion of Canada and our great democracy to the south, but because that hundred years means that never, never can there be division or strife between the two great English-speaking nations of earth! (Hearty applause.) When the test comes, when the challenge comes, we know who our friends and our kinsmen are, and we don't forget, and we never will forget, that not Germany, but England, is the Mother of Liberty. (Hear, hear.) And I say that, gentlemen, with the deepest feeling of my soul, because I am an American and a Jew. I know, if my people throughout America have been lifted to a higher state, it is because of the leadership of England throughout the world. (Applause.) And, gentlemen, I have felt that there was something almost providential, surely, when a Jew by birth, a statesman and a great Englishman, had the unparalleled joy of placing upon the head of the sovereign Queen of your land the crown of the Indian Empire, which means so much in loyalty for the divisions of the Empire. (Applause.)

We don't need a big army in America, and we don't want a big navy. Those of us Americans who are sober,—and some of us sometimes are, because we can't afford enough "Canadian Club" (laughter)—say we are not going to be Hobsonized—if you happen to know that ludicrous personality—or William-Randolph-Hearstified, into war with Japan. (Hear, hear.) There is no more reason for war with that nation than with any other. There is room under the sun—poor sun, how badly abused!—(laughter)—room for both Japan and our own democracy. (Hear, hear.)

Now, gentlemen, what does this really mean in our own diplomacy? We are going after a program for which we are going to be called mollicoddles by such persons as that model of strenuosity who has gone over this and all continents of the earth, a very great American, whom we all love, even when we think he is wrong, because he is a great American. But in despite of him and his followers we do hold that we have

no room in our country for a militaristic program; we want none of it! (Applause.) Some day, gentlemen, the test is going to come to us. You may not agree with me here again, but I ask you this question:

I should suffer myself to be slain, sooner than do that! Some day, gentlemen, some day my Government may ask me to slay a man who speaks a tongue other than my own, of a race different from mine, of a faith I do not hold; and I am going to say it to my Government, not in vain repetition of that recently resurrected barbarism, "My spear knows no brother!" but I am going to say, because I am a churchman, because I believe in the reign of God in the world, "My brother, white, yellow, red, brown or black, American, Asiatic, European or African, Jew, Christian or unbeliever, shall know no spear of mine!" And when we say that, then war will end! (Applause.)

And gentlemen, if you think I am very radical, I am not more radical than the church to the right or to the left. The trouble is, gentlemen, I am only a Jew; I make the mistake of taking Christianity seriously. (Hear, hear.) You see, I am unlike Christians in that. (Laughter and applause.) I really assume that Jesus meant what He said. (Hear, hear.) I really assume and believe there is no place in this world for war and religion at the same time. (Hear, hear, and applause.) One or the other has got to go! (Applause.) If you hold, with Treitschke and Bernhardt and Nietzsche, you will say Christianity must go; but if you agree with some of us who are willing to be dubbed mollycoddles, we say war has got to go, and will go! (Applause.) And religion, the religion of Israel and the religion of that Jew of Jews, Jesus of Nazareth, will not go! (Applause.)

Just a minute or two longer, then I will release you; if I don't, there will be another exodus, not of the children of Israel, but of one child of Israel! (Laughter.) Gentlemen, back of this war, and of all wars, is something else, just racial and national hatreds, passions, bitternesses and prejudices; and as long as we suffer these things to be, war will be. You can't get rid of war until you rout out of the heart of man the prejudices which obtain, all the mean racial prejudices and bitternesses. Some of us get the impossible notion into our heads that there must be one race and language, one religion and faith. But, gentlemen, we forget that in God's world there is room for every variety and type of race and people and faith. This world would be insufferably stale and unprofitable if there were only one faith or one language or one people. I love England and the Englishmen, but oh! what a

dreary world it would be if there were none but Englishmen on earth! (Laughter and applause.) What is it that constitutes the charm, the majesty, the glory of Britain? That it is a great *causerie* of heterogeneous peoples! And in spite of what John Milton called three hundred years ago "Brotherly dissimilarities," they have been forged and merged into one great British Empire. You don't need uniformity to have unity. Your Scotch and Welsh and English and Irish and all other tongues and faiths, find room in the Empire, and Britain's greatness is above all and over all due to the fact that the Englishman knows what tolerance is: his horizon is as wide as his Empire, and his Empire covers the world!

Suppose we could have one type of culture, (laughter) and that type of culture, gentlemen, so high that it should even surmount Termonde and Louvain,—we want no one type of culture in the world! There is just as much need in the world for little Serbia as for mighty Austria, (hear, hear) and just as much need in a reconstituted world for unhappy little Belgium (applause) as for the expanding of the German Empire. (Applause.) We are only a handful of people on earth—my people are some twelve or thirteen millions—and yet I say to you to-day, as a Jew and a Jewish teacher, the greatest disservice which my people could render to the people on earth would be to be guilty of cowardice, of moral and spiritual suicide; the world needs the example of the incomparable and inflexible loyalty of the Jew to his own ideal, his own type of life and culture. I know no people on earth understand that better than the Englishmen here or anywhere. (Applause.)

Now, we have to get rid of these bigotries, these hatreds, these passions and animosities; and we will! Out of this war, and after this war, is going to come a new patience, a new sympathy, a new tolerance; and we shall respect the rights of the weaker peoples, the lesser nationalities, the smaller faiths, and not seek to crush them and root them out, because they are not as strong and cultured as we are. (Applause.)

Lastly, gentlemen, there is one word I want to say to you, but it is not necessary that it should be said. I want to speak for the last moment for my own country. You may have been deluded or deceived by reports that have come to you. I imagine Englishmen have the notion that we are all a lot of magpies, as if we were a nation of vultures, hucksters, traders, fattening upon the resources of other nations. We don't want more trade because of the war! (Hear, hear.) We want an early and honorable peace; and if America is going to have any part in the adjusting that is to come—and I be-

lieve we are (hear, hear)—because I believe America has come to share, not to dispute, with you the moral and spiritual hegemony of the peoples of earth,—there is only one thing we will ask—will you not agree with me—when the hour of victory strikes, as I pray God it come soon! We will ask you brothers, we children of Britain will ask of the Mother and of you brothers, to make no terms, to lay down no stipulations, which involve such a truce as will again renew the war! (Hear, hear, and applause.) In other words, gentlemen, when peace comes, it must stay; and it will not stay,—but now you may not agree with me—it will not stay unless England, unless Great Britain, chief of the Allies, become not only equal to herself, but greater, finer, and more magnanimous, than she has ever been before. (Applause.) I love Great Britain! So I want Great Britain to be supremely great in the hour of victory, not through crushing any nation or destroying any empire, not through dismemberment of any kingdom, but I want England to lead in establishing a foundation for peace which will be firm because it is just, lasting because honorable! And if England will be great enough, splendid enough, magnanimous enough, to make such a peace, then will England retain her hegemony among the nations of earth! And, gentlemen, whatever you are, and whatever you do, you and I, or rather you and we, Englishmen and Americans, are ever to remember and never to forget, that we are one, one in aim and one in purpose, one in devotion to liberty, and one in our passion to serve and make free the peoples of the earth! (Long applause.)