

the old ideas and practices of national domination or Imperial domination, which were the real root causes of the Great War. No ; not in alliances, in any exclusive alliances, but in a new spirit of amity and co-operation do we seek the solution of the problems of the future. Although America is not a member of the League of Nations, there is no doubt that co-operation between her and the British Empire would be the easy and natural thing, and there is no doubt it would be the wise thing.

FAR EAST AND PACIFIC THE NEW FOCUS OF WORLD'S POLITICS.

In shaping our course for the future we must bear in mind that the whole world position has radically altered as a result of the war. Europe is no longer what she was, and the power and the position which she once occupied in the world has been largely lost. The great Empires have disappeared. Austria will never rise again. Russia and Germany will no doubt revive, but not in this generation nor in the next ; and when they do, they may be very different countries in a world which may be a very different world. The position, therefore, has completely altered. The old viewpoint from which we considered Europe has completely altered. She suffers from an exhaustion which is the most appalling fact of history ; and the victorious countries of Europe are not much better off than the vanquished. No ; the scene has shifted on the great stage. To my mind that is the most important fact in the world situation to-day, and the fact to which our foreign policy should have special regard. Our temptation is still to look upon the European stage as of the first importance. It is no longer so ; and I suggest we should not be too deeply occupied with it. Let us be friendly and helpful all round to the best of our ability, but let us not be too deeply involved in it. The fires are still burning there, the pot is occasionally boiling over, but these are not really first-rate events any more. This state of affairs in Central Europe will probably continue for many years to come, and no act on our part could very largely alter the situation. Therefore, not from feelings of selfishness, but in a spirit of wisdom, one would counsel prudence and reserve in our Continental commitments, and that we do not let ourselves in for European entanglements more than is necessary, and that we be impartial, friendly, and helpful to all alike, and avoid any partisan attitude in the concerns of the Continent of Europe. Undoubtedly the scene has shifted away from Europe to the Far East and to the Pacific. The problems of the Pacific are, to my mind, the world problems of the next fifty years or more. In these problems we are, as an Empire, very vitally interested. Three of the Dominions border on the Pacific ; India is next door ; there, too, are the United States and Japan. There, also, is China—the fate of the greatest human population on earth will have to be decided. There Europe, Asia, and America are meeting, and there, I believe, the next great chapter in human history will be enacted. I ask myself, what will be the character of that history ? Will it be along the old lines ? Will it be the old spirit of national and Imperial domination which has been the undoing of Europe ? Or shall we have learned our lesson ? Shall we have purged our souls in the fires through which we have passed ? Will it be a future of peaceful co-operation, of friendly co-ordination of all the vast interests at stake ?

NEED OF FRIENDLY CONFERENCES FOR THE FUTURE.

Shall we act in continuous friendly consultation in the true spirit of a Society of Nations, or will there once more be a repetition of rival groups, of exclusive alliances, and finally, of a terrible catastrophe more fatal than the one we have passed through ? That, to my mind, is the alternative. That is the parting of the ways at which we have arrived now. That is the great matter, I take it, we are met to consider in this Conference. If we are wisely guided at this juncture this Conference may well become one of the great landmarks in history. It comes most opportune. The American Senate has already made the first move in a unanimous resolution calling for a Conference of the United States, the British Empire, and Japan. Japan has been a consistent supporter of the League of Nations. She is one of the Great Powers with a permanent seat on the Council, and she has, so far as I can gather, consistently been a power for good in the Councils of the