

A PROGNOSIS OF THE FUTURE

"North America: Wheel of the Future," by Hawthorne Daniel. Charles Scribner's Sons, New York. 1942. 300 pp. \$2.75.

In order to develop and advance his thesis, which deals with North America as the "wheel of the future," Hawthorne Daniel takes the reader on an abbreviated voyage through the industrial revolution and recites the effects it had on Britain, United States and Germany.

Mr. Daniel recalls to us an interesting point in Germany's economic development, particularly the industrial phase. In 1871, after the defeat of France was accomplished, it was the King of Prussia who became the Emperor of the newly constructed German Empire. The Empire wasn't the only thing that began at Versailles (a typical German touch); the treaty between Germany and France gave the former both Alsace and Lorraine, provinces which were a large part of France's textile industry. It is Mr. Daniel's view that here, economically, may be said to be the moment at which modern industrial Germany actually began. And yet by 1914, only 43 years after the end of the Franco-Prussian War, she had, in many industrial lines, surpassed both Britain and America. Though this power to rise had exceeded what anyone might have imagined it did not lure Germany to conquer by this method alone—by peaceful trading—by further advances of her industrial power. The leaders of Germany preferred the sword to science. The result was the First World War and, hardly to be denied, the present cataclysmic conflict.

As the author progresses in his theme, he adduces the evidence that Britain faces a serious problem, even though the present war is won: her population decline is imminent, while that of Germany is growing. The potential threat is more to Britain than to the empire. There must be a "leading" division of the empire, and Britain is that leader now. But is it necessary that Britain always retain that position? The author declares that, "should some other portion of the empire inherit Britain's economic power, or should some colony or dominion come to exceed Great Britain in productivity and wealth, it is not to be doubted that the center of *actual* influence would follow." He follows this thought with a consideration of the possibilities possessed by each dominion for this top economic role. India, New Zealand and Ireland are eliminated. Next in review come Australia, South Africa and Canada.

Of all the dominions examined Canada alone has the primary necessities which a nation must have, before real preeminence in industry can be attained. The conclusion is drawn that Canada will continue her industrial expansion, and that it is even likely she will surpass Great Britain in productivity before her population equals that of the mother country.

North America, already containing the first (United States) and fifth (Canada) trading nations of the world, is growing ever more potent in world influence. As dynamic, as energetic, as original as Britain ever was, and much more powerful, North America will be the very center of the world—the modern Rome to which all roads will lead. All this, of course, after Germany and Japan have been crushed.

A very pretty picture, indeed. But one which this reviewer feels has had the comforting aid of roseate hued spectacles. Leaving for

a moment the question of how sound the author's prognosis is for the establishment of North America as the wheel of the future, we ask in the author's own words—"But what of Germany?" Part of his answer is that she could be occupied, controlled, and educated for a period of years in the hope that time—and education—might convince her people that the victories of war brought nothing but disaster, while the victories of peace brought wealth and influence to her and to her people. The tinted glasses are still in evidence, for if the United Nations are to curb "these antisocial tendencies of the Germans" by occupation, control and education, then a tremendous measure of hope must become one of the important ingredients of this prescription. If Europe is to be kept from future wars and future desolation, it cannot be achieved by a hundred years of education and occupation of the kind proposed by Mr. Daniel, sympathetic as it may be. The people, the "little people" of Europe must be given a common, an equal share in the fate of their countries. They must have returned to them the heritage of mankind, the birthright that makes no distinction of race, creed or color—the common ownership of land.

Nowhere in the entire volume does the author state how North America will be enabled to start its "wheel of the future" turning. Statistics galore are paraded across the pages to prove that America is industrially unequalled. America is first in the production of this, first in the production of that. All that America must do, after the war is won, is to produce even more than she did in the past. Fine, How will we do it? By working forty-four hours a week instead of forty, by practicing patience, by accepting our world responsibilities—according to the author. But the author completely overlooks the one thing that could start the entire world's wheel of the future turning: an economic climate that presents all men with equal opportunity; that provides free access to land, nature's eternal workshop and cornucopia.

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