

WHAT IS PAN-AMERICANISM?

Professor Roland G. Usher, of Washington University, has written a book on *Pan-Americanism*, with all of the scholarly but exasperating impartiality which puzzled the readers of his previous study of *Pan-Germanism*. Many persons are still disputing whether his earlier book was a masterly attack upon German diplomatic ideals, or an enthusiastic appreciation of them. It is probable that half of those who read the present work will conclude that the author intended to prove the futility of the Monroe Doctrine and to urge its abandonment, while the other half will die in the belief that his plea is for an immediate increase in the army and navy to protect the new world from the colonial adventures which will follow the present war whichever side is victorious. As a matter of fact, Professor Usher is but the judge who sums up for both militarist and pacifist, while leaving the conclusion to the only suitable jury, the American people.

The author concludes that the United States "has the unique distinction among nations of owing its independence and its safety to its geographical situation, and to the arts of peace." The development of modern methods of transportation has somewhat diminished this safety, but it is still improbable that any nation would attempt the conquest of the United States. The objection to disarmament is that it would mean the abandonment of the defense of our outlying possessions, including the Panama Canal, the termination of the Monroe Doctrine, and the loss of power to enforce our policies or ideals in the councils of the world. But if the Monroe Doctrine implies any common link between the Americas it rests on a fallacious basis. The most important parts of Latin America are far removed from us geographically and, what the author regards as of far greater importance, have closer bonds of travel and trade with Europe than with us.

There is no bond of common sentiment to replace the lack of common material interests. On the contrary, the average American of the north despises the Latin American, and the latter repays him by a deep-seated resentment and distrust. At present, says the author, South and Central America have far more fear of the imperial ambitions of the United States than of any European power and would gladly see the whole policy of Monroe abandoned. Yet the danger, if it is a danger, of European expansion in South America exists, particularly if Germany should be victorious and yet not sufficiently so as to seize the British colonies in India and the east, because there is "nothing on the globe that would cost the Allies so little without threatening them at all" as giving Germany a chance to develop South America. So far as war with a major European power is concerned "we are already disarmed," since our army and navy, however costly, are inadequate to the purposes for which they are maintained. The question before the American people is whether our present policy shall be continued or our army and navy shall be reorganized, and there is no better summary of the case for each of these policies than Professor Usher's.

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