

**A SOCIETY OF STATES,  
SOVEREIGNTY, INDEPENDENCE  
AND EQUALITY IN A LEAGUE  
OF NATIONS**

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A Society of States, Sovereignty, Independence and Equality in a League of Nations by W. T. S. Stallybrass

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# A SOCIETY OF STATES

*Sovereignty, Independence and Equality  
in a League of Nations*

BY

W. T. S. STALLYBRASS, M.A.(Oxon)

FELLOW AND VICE-PRINCIPAL OF BRABENOSE COLLEGE, OXFORD,  
OF THE INNER TEMPLE, BARRISTER AT LAW



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## PREFACE

**T**HE idea of a League of Nations has now taken firm root. The spadework has been done. Leading statesmen of every country, in eloquent and glowing words, have proclaimed their adherence to the movement for its constitution after the war. It has extorted even the tribute paid to vice—hypocrisy. The seed has been sown. What manner of fruit it will bear will depend upon the knowledge and patience and care with which it is tended in its early growth.

The first task that lay upon those who believed that, through the co-operation of civilized States within a League, the world might win some respite from war and the

threat of war, was to evangelize—to hammer away at their theme and announce their belief, in season and out of season, until a great body of opinion took shape, touched with their enthusiasm and filled with their faith. Both the objects at which the League aims and the efficacy of the League to attain those aims now met with a wide (if not a general) acceptance. The first task is accomplished.

The French say that our whole career depends upon our first step. But in the case of a League of Nations mere acceptance of the principle will not in itself guarantee success. The foundations must be truly laid. That can only be if the statesmen of the world bring to bear all the knowledge and ability of which they are possessed on settling the constitution of the League. Hitherto, with the exception of President

Wilson, the statesmen have necessarily been so pre-occupied with the effective prosecution of the war that they have had little time or energy to consider the details of international reorganization. They have been as studiously vague as they have been eloquent in all their statements on the subject. Even the men to whose enthusiasm the movement owes its strength have been so concerned to gain acceptance of the general principle that they have devoted relatively little consideration to particular aspects of the problem. The amateur constitution-builder has been building on so large a scale that he has not had time to consider the plan in detail. Yet if the League is to achieve its aims, the details also will count. We must lie under no illusions in the magic of a mere document; it will not be enough that the constitution of the League is accepted