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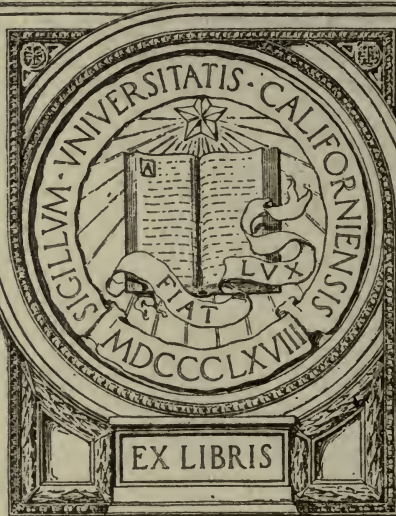
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**THE AMERICAN  
VERSUS  
THE GERMAN VIEW  
OF THE WAR**

BY

**MORTON PRINCE, M.D.**

AUTHOR OF "THE DISSOCIATION OF A PERSONALITY"



**T. FISHER UNWIN, LTD.**

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Boston, *February*, 1915.

The two articles here reprinted by request, were written for the Boston Post (February 7th and 14th). They are an examination of and reply to the appeals of the German propagandists to American sympathy, and give what the writer believes is the American view of certain incidents that have shocked the world, and of the German policies pursued in justifying and carrying on the present war. It is also believed they present the fundamental reason why Americans refuse their sympathy to Germany.

MORTON PRINCE.





# THE AMERICAN

## VERSUS THE

# GERMAN VIEW OF THE WAR

### I

#### FRENCH AND GERMAN LESSONS AT THE FRONT

SINCE the war began numerous articles by organised German propagandists have appeared scattered through the press and magazines of this country, and in pamphlets.

These articles have given us the German viewpoint of government, of the causes of and responsibility for the war, of the manner in which war should be carried on, of German ideals and other matters.

With the exception possibly of Dr. Dernburg, Dr. von Mach stands out as the most prolific writer among these propagandists. Furthermore, a few days ago he presided in Washington at the propagandist meeting of "German Americans," which passed resolutions demanding unneutral action by our government.

What, then, is the German viewpoint ?

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I turn to Dr. von Mach for the above reasons and because he has instructed us in a long series of articles specifically entitled the "German Viewpoint." These cover about every aspect of German thought and activity. With only one of these viewpoints am I interested here, that of the German army's method of carrying on war. I will cite only so much as will enable one who has not read the original article to understand this viewpoint.

Dr. von Mach begins by quoting the following words of the great von Moltke, written in 1880:

"Nobody, I think, can deny that the general softening of men's manners has been followed by a more humane way of waging war. The introduction in our generation of universal service in the army has marked a long step in the direction of the desired aim, for it has brought also the educated classes into the army."

"The truth of this statement," Dr. von Mach contends, "is fully borne out by the reports which have reached Germany from the front."

He then goes on to illustrate for our edification this "viewpoint" by a series of pictures of German army life constructed to show "the humane way of waging war" under the influence of the educated classes in the army.

These pictures are drawn from an account written by Professor von Hartmann, now serving as a lieutenant in the army. The first picture is of an incident

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which, we were told, "may well form the basis on which to construct a picture of the German army in the field to-day." It is called a "French Lesson at the Front. Place—A Stubble Field in Belgium. Time—Autumn, 1914."

### SONGS THE GERMANS SING

The soldiers, halted after a forced march, "are lounging in the field, talking and laughing" in animated groups. Breakfast finished, they "are in excellent humour." Some splendid fellows from the country have lighted their pipes and we hear them "singing the beautiful home and soldier songs" which we are told (though not in italics) "*often soften for the time being even the hardest hearts of warriors.*"

One sample of these beautiful, softening songs, expressive, we may suppose, of German sympathy for the enemy, is this :

"France, poor France, how will you fare  
When our German militaire  
Visits you? Colours: Black and white and red.  
Poor little France, it is too bad!"

Sympathetic songs like these are heard all over the field.

Then follows the French lesson. Here we see the German soldier passing his leisure, not in the rough, uncouth pastimes proverbial of soldiers of other

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lands, but in the higher intellectual pastime of acquiring culture.

On an order from the commanding officer "attention" is called, and the whole company is gathered about the professor-lieutenant, who proceeds to give a lesson in French to men eager for "kultur" that will be of use when in a few weeks they will be in Paris. Then the army takes up its march again.

Then we have another picture—that of the marching soldiers, with softened hearts, singing a touching song of comradeship. This song I shall refer to later. Once more the picture changes.

"The song died away, the thunder of the cannon grew louder"; the soldiers are going into battle. Now we have a picture constructed to show us the religious culture, the deep, reverent spirituality of the soldiers; their "grand conception of God and man;" they sing Koerner's "Prayer During Battle," beginning "Father, I call to Thee." The very air seemed purified.

"Whatever selfish train of thought the individual soldier or officer had been following fell into insignificance before the grand conception of God and man."

### AN AMERICAN VIEW

Thus we see in a succession of emotional pictures how von Moltke's dream—if I may call it a dream—has come true.



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These are delightful idylls, charming pictures of a Christian army, of an "army of the Lord," of the softening of men's manners, and of the humane German way of waging war. It is the German viewpoint. But there is an American viewpoint; let us contrast them.

Dr. von Mach has given his pictures as drawn by an eye-witness, Professor Hartmann, a German. Let me, too, draw some pictures, and let me, too, take my pictures from an eye-witness in Belgium; but he shall be a neutral witness, an American, Mr. E. Alexander Powell, who had unusual opportunities to observe what he describes in his book, recently published, "Fighting in Flanders." He was one of the few correspondents on the firing line.

If anyone has not read that book let him do so at once if he wants to realise the manner of the German invasion and of the heroic defence of their country by the Belgians. He lets you understand, too, how war is actually fought.

I cite this account because I wish to disregard all *ex parte* testimony. All the Belgian accounts are those of interested witnesses. We shall see the war as waged in Belgium not from the Belgian or the German viewpoint, but from the American viewpoint.

Dr. von Mach's first picture is entitled, "A French Lesson at the Front."

Let me call mine, "A German Lesson at the Front."

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It is a triptych in three scenes :

### SCENE I

*Place*—AERSCHOT

*Time*—AUGUST, 1914

*(To understand the picture we must remember that orders had been deliberately given to burn and pillage Aerschot by the German commander after the German troops had entered the town. This, the commander himself told Mr. Powell, was in retaliation for the shooting of the chief of staff by a boy, 15 years of age, the son of the burgomaster. "What followed," Mr. Powell was given to understand—the execution of the burgomaster, his son and several score of the leading townsmen, the giving over of the women to a lust-mad soldiery, the sacking of the houses, and the final burning of the town—"was the punishment which would always be meted out to towns whose inhabitants attacked German soldiers.")*

My picture is of what Mr. Powell saw :

“In many parts of the world I have seen many terrible and revolting things, but nothing so ghastly, so horrifying as Aerschot. Quite two-thirds of the houses had been burned and showed unmistakable signs of having been sacked by a maddened soldiery before they were burned.

“Everywhere were the ghastly evidences. Doors had been smashed in with rifle-butts and boot heels ; windows had been broken ; pictures had been torn from the walls ; mattresses had been ripped open with bayonets in search of valuables ; drawers had been emptied upon the floors ; the outer walls of the houses were spattered with blood and pock-marked with bullets ; the sidewalks were slippery with broken



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bottles; the streets were strewn with women's clothing.

"It needed no one to tell us the details of that orgy of blood and lust. The story was so plainly written that anyone could read it.

"For a mile we drove the car slowly between the blackened walls of fire-gutted buildings. This was no accidental conflagration, mind you, for scattered here and there were houses which stood undamaged and in every such case there was scrawled with chalk upon their doors, 'Good People. Do not burn. Do not plunder.'

"The Germans went about the work of house-burning as systematically as they did everything else. They had various devices for starting conflagrations, —all of them effective.

"Despite the scowls of the soldiers, I attempted to talk with some of the women huddled in front of a bakery waiting for a distribution of bread, but the poor creatures were too terror-stricken to do more than stare at us with wide, beseeching eyes. Those eyes will always haunt me.

"I wonder if they do not sometimes haunt the Germans. But a little episode that occurred as we were leaving the city did more than anything else to bring home the horror of it all. We passed a little girl of nine or ten and I stopped the car to ask the way. Instantly she held both her hands above her head and began to scream for mercy. When we had

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given her some chocolate and money and had assured her that we were not Germans, but Americans and friends, she ran like a frightened deer. That little child, with her fright-wide eyes and her hands raised in supplication, was in herself a terrible indictment of the Germans."

### SCORES WERE SHOT DOWN

Do you like the picture, Dr. von Mach? Quite a picture, isn't it? Let us complete it in order that we may study all the details in justice to German art.

"Piecing together the stories told by those who did survive that night of horror, we know that scores of townspeople were shot down in cold blood, and that, when the firing squads could not do the work of slaughter fast enough, the victims were lined up and a machine gun was turned upon them.

"We know that young girls were dragged from their homes and stripped naked and violated by soldiers—many soldiers—in the public square in the presence of officers.

"We know that both men and women were unspeakably mutilated, that children were bayoneted, that dwellings were ransacked and looted, and that finally, as though to destroy the evidences of their horrid work, soldiers went from house to house with torches, methodically setting fire to them."

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Is this the "humane way of waging war" which the great Moltke thought had followed "the general softening of men's manners," and the bringing of "the educated classes into the army" through universal service? Wouldn't he be proud of German "kultur" if he were alive to-day?

Perhaps you think I ought to give the reason why the fifteen-year-old son of the burgomaster shot the German officer. Well, I will.

### SHOT TO DEFEND SISTER

The Germans claimed it was, or looked like, a prearranged plan on the part of the townspeople, who, it is asserted, opened fire upon the troops. The Belgians give another reason for the boy's action. It was in defence of his sister's honour. You can read the detailed story, if you wish to know it, in Mr. Powell's book.

I do not know if that story is true; Mr. Powell does not know. But there must have been some reason, or perhaps the boy was a fanatic, or half-witted. Surely no sane man, and surely no man holding the responsible position of burgomaster, would give a dinner-party to German officers and arrange to have his own son shoot one of them, knowing that there was no escape from the consequences of such an act committed in his own home.

But accept either story you like, what do you



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think of a commanding officer, of the mode of conducting war that executes several score of the leading townsmen, that shoots down women and children, that gives over the women to the soldiery, that orders the sacking of the houses, and, finally, the burning down of the town, house by house, because a boy shot an officer ?

Is this the German idea of a "humane way of waging war ?"

If you think this mode quite justified, let me tell you how it impressed an American, one, remember, accustomed to the sights of war in many lands :

"It was with a feeling of repulsion amounting almost to nausea that we left what had once been Aerschot behind us." But the Belgians nevertheless learned their German lesson at the front.

Here is the second panel of the triptych. Please look at it. It represents a second "German lesson at the front."

### SCENE II

*Place*—LOUVAIN

*Time*—SAME

The Germans had entered the city. The inhabitants had evacuated it before their arrival. Yet in spite of that fact the Germans destroyed it.

"They used a motor-car, equipped with a large tank for petrol, a pump, a hose and a spraying nozzle.

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The car was run slowly through the streets, one soldier working the pump and another spraying the fronts of the houses. Then they set fire to them. Oh, yes, they were very methodical about it, those Germans."

What was the excuse for all this? I wonder.

That is not as pretty a picture as the one you draw of the happy, animated groups of German soldiers, "lounging on the field, laughing and talking"; with lighted pipes, "singing the beautiful home and soldier songs which often soften, for the time being, even the hardest hearts of warriors."

But would you like an idyll of that kind? Here is one; it is the third panel of our triptych, a third German lesson at the front.

### SCENE III

*Place*—TERMONDE

*Time*—SAME

Our American had made his way with difficulty from Aerschot to Louvain.

"From the windows of the plundered and fire-blackened houses which lined the road from Aerschot to Louvain, still hung white flags made from sheets and tablecloths and pillow-cases—pathetic appeals for the mercy which was not granted."

At Louvain "we came upon another scene of destruction and desolation. Nearly half the city

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was in ashes. Most of the principal streets were impassable from fallen masonry. The splendid avenue and boulevards were lined on either side by the charred skeletons of what had once been handsome buildings. The front of many of the houses were smeared with crimson stains.

“In comparison to its size, the Germans had wrought more widespread destruction in Louvain than did the earthquake and fire combined in San Francisco.

“The looting had evidently been unrestrained. The roads for miles in either direction were littered with furniture and bedding and clothing. Such articles as the soldiers could not carry away they wantonly destroyed. Hangings had been torn down, pictures on the walls had been smashed, the contents of drawers and trunks had been emptied into the streets, literally everything breakable had been broken. This is not from hearsay, remember ; *I saw it with my own eyes*. And the amazing feature of it all was that among the Germans there seemed to be no feeling of regret, no sense of shame. Officers in immaculate uniforms strolled about among the ruins, *chatting and laughing and smoking.*”

### ATTITUDE OF GERMAN OFFICERS

Mr. Hugh S. Gibson, secretary of the American legation in Brussels, was in Louvain on the second day, and this is what he *saw* :



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“ . . . The Germans had dragged chairs and a dining-table from a near-by house into the middle of the square in front of the station. . . . Some officers, already considerably the worse for drink, insisted that the three diplomatists join them in a bottle of wine. And this while the city was burning and rifles were cracking, and the dead bodies of men and women lay sprawled in the streets.”

Indeed, their “ beautiful home and soldier songs ” as you say, had softened their hearts, but the scene is a different one, isn't it ?

But we have the same happy soldiers “ lounging, talking and laughing,” just as your professor describes them, and smoking and drinking (though it is beer and wine instead of coffee) and “ everybody is elated,” just as you say.

But the Belgian townspeople, what of them ? Do the happy soldiers see them ? I don't know.

Louvain was not destroyed by bombardment or in the heat of battle. The Germans had entered it unopposed and had been in undisputed possession for several days. Why did they burn the city house by house and shoot down the townspeople, men, women and children ?

As with Aerschot, there are two versions, contradictory and irreconcilable.

The Germans say that in accordance with a conspiracy they were attacked by the townspeople ; what we call “ sniping ” in Vera Cruz. The towns-

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people say that in the inky blackness of night the German garrison, mistaking for Belgians a body of their own troops retreating and falling back upon Louvain, opened fire upon them, and so what approximates a massacre of civilians followed, and the city was deliberately burned.

It doesn't matter. Even if the Germans were attacked (though it be denied) were they justified in shooting down, indiscriminately, civilians ?

### WHY WAS LOUVAIN BURNED ?

But "why did you burn Louvain at all ?" That was the question which Mr. Powell asked the commanding general, von Boehn.

" ' Because,' replied the general, ' the townspeople fired on our troops. We actually found machine guns in some of the houses. And,' smashing his fist down upon the table, ' whenever civilians fire upon our troops we will teach them a lasting lesson. If women and children insist on getting in the way of bullets, so much the worse for the women and children.' "

Yes, as General von Nieher officially notified the citizens of Wavre, " without distinction of persons the innocent will suffer with the guilty," and, as was announced by proclamation to the citizens of Hasselt in the case of sniping, " a third of the male population will be shot."

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And so, as Mr. Powell in another place says, "the citizens had attacked them and they would teach the citizens, both of Louvain and of other cities which they might enter, a lasting lesson. They did. No Belgian will ever forget—or forgive—that lesson. *The orgy of blood and destruction lasted for two days.*"

It was a German lesson at the front, a lesson in German viewpoints. Not so charming as the French lesson you picture, Dr. von Mach, but it was better taught and learned—taught to the world, was it not ?

### GENERAL VON BOEHN'S VIEW

The interview between Mr. Powell and General von Boehn is destined to become classic. It had been sought by the general, who had expressed a wish to have an opportunity to talk with Mr. Powell, to give him the German version of the treatment of the Belgian civil population for the enlightenment of the American public. Mr. Powell was accordingly invited to dine with the general. Here is more of the conversation as given by the former as "nearly verbatim" as he could remember it.

" 'But why wreak your vengeance on women and children ? ' I asked.

" 'None have been killed,' the general asserted positively.

" 'I am sorry to contradict you, general,' I asserted, with equal positiveness, 'but I have myself seen their



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bodies. So has Mr. Gibson, the secretary of the American Legation in Brussels, who was present during the destruction of Louvain.'

" 'Of course,' replied General von Boehn, 'there is always danger of women and children being killed during street fighting if they insist on coming into the streets. It is unfortunate, but it is war!'

" 'But how about a woman's body I saw with the hands and feet cut off? How about the white-haired man and his son, whom I helped to bury outside of Sempst, who had been killed merely because a retreating Belgian soldier had shot a German soldier outside their house?'

" 'There were twenty-two bayonet wounds in the old man's face. I counted them. How about the little girl, two years old, who was shot while in her mother's arms by an Uhlan and whose funeral I attended at Heyst-op-den-Berg? How about the old man near Vilvorde who was hung by his hands from the rafters of his house and roasted to death from a bonfire being built under him?'

" The general seemed taken aback by the exactness of my information.

" 'Such things are horrible if true,' he said. 'Of course, our soldiers, like soldiers in all armies, sometimes get out of hand and do things which we would never tolerate if we knew it. At Louvain, for example, I sentenced two soldiers to twelve years' penal servitude each for assaulting a woman.'

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“ ‘Apropos of Louvain,’ I remarked, ‘why did you destroy the library?’

“ ‘We regretted that as much as anyone else,’ was the answer. ‘It caught fire from burning houses and we could not save it.’ ”

General von Boehn is as good as a guide book in explaining German war pictures, is he not ?

### RICHARD HARDING DAVIS' VIEWS

I have refrained from quoting the Belgian account of what happened because it is *ex parte* testimony. But another American eye-witness, Richard Harding Davis, writes :

“ For many miles we saw procession after procession of peasants fleeing from one burning village, which had been their home, to other villages, to find only blackened walls and smouldering ashes.”

“ ‘Fifty Germans were killed and wounded,’ said General von Ludwitz, the military governor of Louvain, ‘and for that Louvain must be wiped out—so!’ In pantomime with his fist he swept the papers across the table. . . . Were he telling us his soldiers had destroyed a kitchen garden his tone could not have expressed less regret.” Davis watched the scene from the windows of the train in which he was held at the station. The Germans that night “crowded the windows of the train, boastful, gloating, eager to interpret.”

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“ Outside the station in the public square the people of Louvain passed in an unending procession, women bareheaded, weeping, men carrying the children asleep on their shoulders, all hemmed in by the shadowy army of grey wolves. Once they were halted, and among them was marched a line of men. These were on their way to be shot. And, the better to point the moral, an officer halted both processions and, climbing to a cart, explained why the men were to die. He warned others not to bring down upon themselves a like vengeance.

“ As those being led to spend the night in the fields looked across to those marked for death they saw old friends, neighbours of long standing, men of their own household. The officer bellowing at them from the cart was illuminated by the headlights of an automobile. He looked like an actor held in a spotlight on a darkened stage.

“ At Louvain that night the Germans were like men after an orgy.”

### AWFUL PRICE BELGIANS PAID

If the Belgian civilians sniped the German soldiery, the latter were undoubtedly justified in shooting offenders, but, Dr. von Mach, do you think they were justified in shooting the citizens indiscriminately, the innocent with the guilty ?

And if you do, do you think they were justified



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in systematically burning and pillaging the homes and workshops and other buildings of the guiltless ?

You have imagination ; think what that means ; the poor and the rich, the sick and the well, the old and the young, the helpless and the strong, the bread-winners and their dependents, all made destitute without a place wherein to live or to work, without means of support, the innocent and the guilty, thrown helpless upon the world to be fed by American charity, and later—what ? And all this because, if you believe the allegation, some rash hotheads sniped a chivalrous, humane soldier.

In every large city there are hotheads and mental defectives and fanatics. It was a policy of terrorism and intimidation. Do you think this the only policy that would suffice to overcome resistance to the conquerors ? Could they not, for instance, have been satisfied with temporarily rounding up the inhabitants in concentration camps to stop sniping ?

We Americans did not sack and burn Vera Cruz, though they sniped us. No, as Mr. Powell says, "The bombardment of cities, the destruction of historic monuments, the burning of villages and, in many cases, the massacre of civilians, was the price which the Belgians were forced to pay for resisting the invader."

You ask us to imagine (with your kindly professor) the "iron line" after the French lesson he describes, again on the march and singing "Ich

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hatt einen Kameraden." After each verse rang the refrain :

" The birds in the woods are singing,  
Are singing to warm your heart.  
At home, ah, at home, your dear ones,  
We'll meet and never will part.  
Gloria ! Gloria ! Victoria !  
With heart and hand for the Fatherland ! "

Listen once more. Do you hear the song of those same humane German soldiers ?

Do you see them again marching, but now drunk with the orgies of sackings and burnings and killings of Aerschot, of Vise, of Tirlemont, of Liége, of Termonde, of Malines, of Louvain, and God knows how many towns and villages and hamlets ? In the glare of the flames you see them ; and again with light hearts they sing :

" The birds in the woods are singing,  
Are singing to warm your heart.  
At home, ah, at home, your dear ones,  
We'll meet and never will part."

It is the same refrain. And as they sing you see, too, by the same light of the burning towns and villages, the long lines of panic-stricken Belgians fleeing from their " homes," and you see, near by, the condemned—husbands, sons, brothers, " dear ones"—being led away to the place of their killing.

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### OTHER PICTURES DRAWN

There are other pictures of other scenes which I might draw ; the picture of the people—innocent—non-combatants, women and men—killed in their beds in Antwerp by bombs thrown by a Zeppelin in the attempt to assassinate the royal family.

This picture, one that Mr. Powell saw, would include among the killed and wounded a child mangled by a shell ; a woman leaning out of her window, her head blown off ; another woman blown to fragments, splotching the floor, the walls, the ceiling with . . . and then fill in the picture with tottering walls and skeletons of houses wantonly blown to pieces.

I pass over the destruction of works of art that never can be replaced ; but to complete Dr. von Mach's pictures of the " German viewpoint," let me mention only one of the many he has omitted, that of Malines Cathedral.

Picture a deserted and undefended city, " as silent and deserted as a cemetery ; not a human being to be seen." That city, Malines, bombarded by the Germans, although not a Belgian soldier in it.

And picture a splendid cathedral looming high above that silent city ; and then imagine shells deliberately aimed at that wonderful cathedral until it was little more than a heap of debris ; and then, the cathedral destroyed, imagine, in that city of the



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dead, shells bursting with a shattering crash in deserted buildings, the whole front of those buildings crashing down about you in a cascade of brick and plaster! That was what Mr. Powell saw. Is this wanton bombardment of a deserted city and of a great work of art, a cathedral of religion, "the German viewpoint?" And is this that effect of bringing "the educated classes into the army"—of German kultur—for which the great von Moltke hoped?

Dr. von Mach, in his "German viewpoint," goes on to tell of the German soldiers when going into battle singing, during "*the thunder of the cannon*," Koerner's battle hymn, company after company joining in the magnificent song:

"Father, I call to Thee.

The roaring artillery's clouds thicken round me,

The hiss and the glare of the loud bolts confound me.

Ruler of battles, I call on Thee;

O Father, lead Thou me!"

Shall we picture the soldiers again amidst these "roaring artillery's clouds," "the thunder of the cannon"; and again singing, while they bombarded the cathedral dedicated to their God, "Father, I call to Thee?" and did "the very air seem purified" "before the grand conception of God and man?" Perhaps, after all, it is only a matter of viewpoint.

No, Dr. von Mach, you and your fellow propagandists, Dr. Dernburg and Dr. Münsterberg, Dr. Albert, and others, appeal in vain to the American

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people. You do not know the true full-blooded American of the twentieth century. Americans are governed by feelings of humanity, of pity, of mercy, of fair play.

Those are the ideals of our national conscience. Americans believe in a government for the people and by the people, not in a government by an autocratic military caste, without pity, without mercy, without regard for the rights of mankind.

If I read the signs of public opinion aright, if I correctly understand American ideals of human rights, Germany stands condemned by American opinion. America cares nothing for the "necessities of war," whether argued as an excuse for crimes against humanity by a German General Staff in 1914, or a "Spanish Butcher" in Cuba in 1898; she cares nothing for fine-spun specious arguments as to why Germany was not to blame for the invasion of Belgium. She sees only a peaceful, unoffending nation defending her inalienable rights to her own soil. And she sees the inhabitants for this offence shot down, and their houses, one by one, put to the torch; she sees tens of thousands of homes desolate, and hundreds of thousands of inhabitants driven into exile, or starving and dependent upon American charity—all this, mind you, not as a sporadic instance in one city, but repeatedly, day by day, in many cities and towns; and not as unavoidable accidents from the shelling of the enemy in battle, but

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deliberately and systematically and unnecessarily, after the capture and occupation of the city, for the sole purpose of revenge, to overcome resistance by terrorism, as officially proclaimed and officially justified. It is for these reasons, if for no others, that Germany appeals in vain to American sympathy.

### THE GERMAN IDEAL OF GOVERNMENT

Before closing let me say a word upon the German ideal of Government. *This ideal is, the responsibilities of government should be undertaken for the people by the state.*

The "state" stands for an abstract conception of authority, an entity. In practice it is an autocratic caste, at the head of which is the Kaiser, who, as he has time and again proclaimed, rules by "divine right."

"We, the Hohenzollerns, regard ourselves as appointed by God to govern and lead the people whom it is given us to rule, for their well-being and advancement of their national and intellectual interests," announced the Kaiser.

And again: "Those who are willing to help me I heartily welcome, whoever they may be; those who oppose me in this task I will crush." In such a state we have the embodiment of "efficiency" or kultur.

As Professor Francke has told us, the German



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people, in every class (with the exception of the party with democratic ideals) consider it an "obligation," a duty, to subordinate self, all individual interests, all individual desires and welfare to this state.

It is the conception of "state" and "citizenship" of Plato and Socrates. The German state governs for the people. And as the basis of efficiency is power to impose, the army and militarism become the foundation of the state, and the autocratic caste that governs in the name of the state becomes a military caste. "We belong to each other. I and the army. Thus we are born for one another, and thus we will stand together in an indissoluble bond in peace or storm, as God will it," proclaimed the Kaiser.

The authority of the state rests on the Kaiser and the army, not on the will of the people, as in the American republic, England and France.

From the American viewpoint we are forced, however unwillingly, to the conclusion (in consideration of German warfare and German ideals of government) that Germany must be regarded *in war as the enemy of civilisation, and in peace as the enemy of democracy.*

Between the autocratic German viewpoint and the democratic American viewpoint there is an irreconcilable conflict—a conflict of ideals that cannot be settled by argument, by citation of facts, by appeals to logic or to moral judgment.

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It can only be settled by the arbitrament of arms. If the Allies win, we may expect that the ideals of the democratic viewpoint will receive a world-wide acceptance. It was thus that the conflict between the ideals of freedom and slavery was settled in this country only by the acceptance of the arbitrament of war.

If, on the other hand, Germany wins, the United States of America still remains to be settled with, and that conflict of viewpoints, between American democratic ideals and German autocratic ideals, will still exist, to be settled some day in the future by the arbitrament of the sword.

## II

### THE GERMAN POLICY OF TERRORISM

IN my first article I contrasted the methods of the German army in carrying on war in Belgium, as seen from the American viewpoint, and as seen from the German viewpoint.

And I pointed out why, in consequence of this difference in viewpoints, Germany had lost the sympathy of real Americans.

There are numerous other policies, both military and political, in regard to which the two viewpoints are radically antagonistic. These differences have produced that irreconcilable conflict of opinion upon which I dwelt.

Some of these I discuss to-day ; but before doing so let me point out and insist, as emphatically as I can, that it was not the German soldier that was responsible for the inhuman atrocities in Belgium, and the laying waste of the cities and towns.

The soldier must obey. The responsibility lies wholly upon the men "higher up," upon the government which ordered the policy and gave the commands. The German soldier is not to be blamed.

That it was the government policy to overcome resistance of the civilian population by a policy of

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terrorism—by exacting money tribute from captured cities, by taking hostages to be killed in case of resistance by civilians, by shooting a large number of unoffending citizens in retaliation for offences committed by others, and to deter further resistance by burning wholesale the houses and turning out the inhabitants destitute, and by many other ruthless acts that were a revival of the middle ages—needs no argument.

The policy was publicly announced to the world through proclamations issued by such commanding generals as von Buelow, von Emmich, von Boehn, von der Goltz, von Nieher, von Luetwitz, and Major Dieckmann.

It is only by reading these proclamations that we can fully realise this policy, a relic of the middle ages, and comprehend the viewpoint from which the Germans ordered the atrocities committed. For example, the following were issued :

First, two general proclamations of August 4th and August 9th, by Generals von Emmich and von Buelow respectively, to the Belgian nation, announcing the German policy and demanding a “ free passage.”

That in the absence of resistance the population would be treated kindly, but that “ we will act severely on any attempt by the population to show resistance to the German troops or to do injury to the military interests.”



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That "the destruction of bridges, tunnels and railway lines will be regarded as hostile acts."

That Belgians "will have to choose" and

That "it depends on your wisdom and understanding patriotism to avoid for your country the horrors of war."

### PROCLAMATIONS THREATEN

Accordingly, on August 17th, a proclamation from the German viewpoint to the citizens of Hasselt announced: "In the case of civilians shooting on the German army, *a third of the male population will be shot.*"

On August 22nd, a proclamation by von Buelow announced to citizens of Liège that:

"It was with my consent that the general had the whole place (Andenne) burnt down and about 100 people shot," and that Liège would be treated in the same way if the inhabitants attacked the German troops.

On August 25th, a proclamation by von Buelow announced to the citizens of Namur:

1. That citizens who did not betray the presence of Belgian and French soldiers would be "condemned to hard labour for life," and that every such soldier found would "be immediately shot."

2. That any citizen who did not inform the authorities of the existence of any arms, powder or dynamite which he knew of would be shot.

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3. That 10 hostages would be taken from "each street," and if there was any uprising in the street the corresponding "ten hostages will be shot."

On August 27th, a proclamation by von Nieher notified the citizens of Wavre that if the balance of the war levy of \$600,000 was not paid on September 1st, "the town of Wavre will be set on fire and destroyed," and "without distinction of persons, the innocent will suffer with the guilty."

Some fifty houses were set on fire and hostages taken in reprisal for alleged but denied sniping.

On September 8th, a proclamation by Major Dieckmann notified the citizens of Grivegne, of Beyne-Heusay, Bois le Breux, and Fleron of a large number of acts and failure to act for which the penalty was death.

Among these misdemeanours, some trivial, a failure to obey the order "hands up," and failure to inform the military commandant of the location of "quantities greater than 100 litres of petroleum, benzine, benzol, or any similar liquid," of which he had knowledge. (It followed that if an employee did not inform on his employer, or a friend upon a friend, he incurred death, and if he did, his employer or friend incurred death.)

Persons held as hostages, when their relieving substitutes did not present themselves within twenty-four hours of the appointed time incurred death,

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and also if the population of the communes did not remain "quiet in any circumstances."

On September 4th, a proclamation by von Boehn notified the inhabitants of Termonde to "hoist the white flag immediately and to cease fighting. If you do not agree to this summons the town will be razed in a quarter of an hour by a very heavy bombardment."

On October 5th, a proclamation by von der Goltz announced :

"In future, the localities nearest to the place where similar acts (destruction of a railway line and telegraph wires) take place *will be punished without pity ; it matters little whether they are accomplices or not.* For this purpose hostages have been taken near the railway lines thus menaced," etc.

In view of these proclamations, the claim of the Belgians that when German troops have been resisted at the entrances of a village with shots fired by regular Belgian troops, the population has been held responsible, and punished by executions, fire and pillage, is not incredible. One instance, at least, is vouched for by Powell, the instance he threw up at General von Boehn without contradiction.

That such proclamations were not mere bluff, but were literally carried out, the facts cited by them give evidence. The world knows it, too, from the ruins of cities and towns just as it knows by the debris that an earthquake destroyed Italian cities.



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### THE EVIDENCE OF GERMAN SOLDIERS' DIARIES

And the world knows it from the accounts written in the diaries of captured German soldiers, even if all other evidence be disbelieved.

I have cited the evidence of Americans; let me cite the evidence of these German diaries in order that the German propagandists in this country may understand the reasons for the failure of their appeal to the American viewpoint. It will be seen that the German method of warfare is not confined to Belgium, but is carried into France.

\* \* \* \* \*

“At the entrance of the village (near Dinant) were about 50 villagers shot for having treacherously fired upon our troops during the night. Many others were shot, so that we counted over 200. Women and children, with lamps in their hands, had to witness the terrible sight. We ate our rice among the corpses.”—(*From the diary of Private Philip of Kamenz, Saxony, First Battalion, 178th Infantry.*)

\* \* \* \* \*

Langevillier, August 22nd.

“Village destroyed by the Eleventh Pioneer Battalion; three women hanged on trees.”—(*From a soldier's diary.*)

\* \* \* \* \*

“Of the inhabitants, 300 were shot. Those who survived the volley were requisitioned as grave-



## GERMAN VIEW OF THE WAR

diggers. The women were a sight, but it cannot be helped.”—(*Private Schlauter of the Third Battery, Fourth Field Artillery, of the Guard.*)

\* \* \* \* \*

Cirey, August 24th.

“ In the night, incredible things have taken place ; shops plundered, money stolen, violences. . . . Simply to make your hair stand on end.”—(*From an officer's diary.*)

\* \* \* \* \*

Dinant, August 25th.

“ The Belgians, at Dinant on the Meuse, fired on our regiment from inside the houses. We shot everyone we could see, or we threw them out of the windows, women as well as men. The bodies lay three feet deep in the streets.”—(*From a soldier's diary.*)

\* \* \* \* \*

August 26th.

“ The charming village of the Gue d'Hossus, has, apparently, though innocent, been destroyed by fire. It seems that a cyclist fell down, which made his gun go off itself. He was immediately shot at. The male inhabitants were simply thrown into the flames. Let us hope that such horrors will not take place again. At Leppes, about 200 men were shot. There, an example was necessary ; it was unavoidable that some innocents should suffer ; but a proof of all suspicions of guilt ought to be required, so that such

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an indiscriminate shooting of all men might be controlled.”—(*Diary of an officer of the 178th Regiment of Infantry, 12th Saxony Army Corps.*)

\* \* \* \* \*

Laval-Morancy, *August 28th.*

“Apparently a day of rest. Confiscation of all provisions, bread, jam, wine, cigars; killed geese, chickens, etc. Played piano, plundered fast!”—(*Diary of a soldier.*)

\* \* \* \* \*

“We have thus destroyed eight houses with their inhabitants. In one house only, two men with their wives and a girl of eighteen, were stabbed with bayonets. I might have pitied the girl, for she had such an innocent way of looking at us, but it was impossible to do anything against the infuriated mob; then, indeed, they are no longer men, but brutes. We are now on our way to Sedan.”—(*Last page of an unknown soldier's notebook.*)

\* \* \* \* \*

Rethel, *September 8th.*

“Unfortunately, discipline is getting looser and looser. Spirits, wine and plunder are the order of the day.”—(*From an officer's notebook.*)

\* \* \* \* \*

*September 8th, 1914.*

“Tuesday, 8-9-14.—Reveille 5 a.m. Very violent fight in the woods. Artillery brought into action. Order to shoot down all Frenchmen, the

## GERMAN VIEW OF THE WAR

wounded excepted, even if they offer to lay down their arms, because the French allowed us to come within a short distance, then took us by surprise with intense firing.”—(*Last page from a killed soldier's notebook.*)

### THE AMERICAN WAY BY CONTRAST

It has been claimed by the apologists for Germany that this policy of terrorism was justifiable under the circumstances.

That is a matter of viewpoint.

The policy is justifiable if we deny all humanitarian notions of warfare and admit the German contention that under circumstances, the circumstances of this war, everything is permissible.

That it is not the American viewpoint, was shown by our attitude towards Spanish rule in Cuba.

We Americans went to war with Spain and drove the Spaniards from Cuba, and gave back the island, after conquering it, free to the inhabitants.

Why ?

Because of the atrocities committed against the non-combatant inhabitants in pursuance of a military policy by Spain, without pity, without mercy, and without regard to human rights, under General Weyler.

The American conscience would not stand for that.



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But have not the Germans outdone the Spaniards ? The Spaniards did not aim at a policy of terrorism so much as to cut off the source of rebellion ; they did not burn the cities and towns. Yet when the Spanish viewpoint of war was shown to the American people ; when the press was able to bring home to the full consciousness of the American people the cruelties inflicted by the " bloody Weyler," as he was called, on the inhabitants of Cuba, the American conscience was aroused and no " necessities of war " were accepted as an excuse. There arose an irrepressible conflict between the American viewpoint and the Spanish viewpoint.

If we were willing to take up arms to enforce the American humanitarian viewpoint upon Spain, regardless of the Spanish necessities of war, do not Germany and her organised propagandists appeal in vain to the American people to morally tolerate the still more atrocious German methods of carrying on this war ?

### WAR AS TAUGHT BY THE GERMAN WAR BOOK

That it is the German contention that under circumstances nearly everything is permissible in war is shown both by their writings and acts.

In a book issued by the general staff of the German army, entitled " Usages of War on Land," extracts from which I have in a review before me, there are a



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number of passages teaching this doctrine to the soldiers. In one he is taught that :

“ A war conducted with energy cannot be directed merely against the combatants of the enemy state and the positions they occupy, but it will and must in like manner seek to destroy the total intellectual and material resources of the latter. Humanitarian claims, such as the protection of men and their goods, can only be taken into consideration in so far as the nature and object of the war permit.”

Was it from this viewpoint that the splendid cathedrals of Rheims and Malines and other great public monuments were bombarded and shattered ?

In another passage the soldier is taught to guard himself against the danger of “ sentimentality and flabby emotion ” of modern thought :

“ The danger can only be met by a thorough study of war itself. By steeping himself in military history an officer will be able to guard himself against excessive humanitarian notions ; it will teach him that certain severities are indispensable to war, nay more, that the only true humanity very often lies in a ruthless application of them.”

Was this the viewpoint from which, as described in the German soldiers' diaries, they threw women

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as well as men out of the windows of the houses until the bodies lay piled three feet in the street, cast the "male inhabitants into the flames," stabbed the women in the homes with bayonets or hung them to the trees, shot down Frenchmen who offered to "lay down their arms"—acts that made even the hair of the German soldier "stand on end?"

And was it with this passage from the text-book in mind that the Kaiser in 1900 instructed his troops embarking for China in the following words :

"When you come into touch with the enemy, give no quarter, make no prisoners. A thousand years ago the Huns, under their King, Attila, made themselves a name which still lives in tradition. Do you likewise strike home, so that for a thousand years to come no Chinaman may ever again dare to look askance at a German."

On the other hand, certain acts, such as looting of private property, are forbidden, but little attention seems to have been paid to such prohibitions in this war.

It must be from the German viewpoint, as taught in this official text-book, that Admiral Schliepe, in the *Local Anzeiger* (as cited by the *New York Times*), complained bitterly that Germans in their conduct of war, and especially in this war, have been far too considerate !

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The purely human side of war receives too much attention!

England is choking Germany, and under the circumstances everything is permissible! England may throw up her hands and exclaim, "Oh, those German barbarians!" The British may accuse Germans of being invaders also, but these names must be borne. And other German authorities high up, even Admiral von Tirpitz, the naval secretary of state, have given voice to the same sentiments.

And so, from this viewpoint, Germany, according to the press despatches, goes into a wild ecstasy of enthusiasm because her fleet bombards the English towns of Scarborough, Whitby and Hartlepool, two of these unfortified pleasure resorts like Atlantic City and Bar Harbour and Beverly, and knocks hotels and dwelling houses to pieces and kills non-combatants, men and women—servant girls and babies in arms, and then proudly sails safely home. Under the circumstances, as they say, everything is permissible.

And from this viewpoint it must be that German aeroplanes dropped bombs upon English towns, ripping to pieces the houses of non-combatants and killing men, women and children; and by the same policy bombs have been dropped in Paris and Antwerp and Warsaw and numerous undefended places with intent to kill, or perfect indifference as to whether non-combatants were killed or not.



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It was according to this viewpoint that Germany sowed the North Sea with mines and blew up harmless fishing and other vessels.

### THE POLICY OF DESTROYING MERCHANTMEN

And now comes the announcement by the German Government that it will blow up and sink, if it can, by submarines, British merchantmen with their crews and passengers, though the latter be Americans and other neutrals; and this notwithstanding the laws of war require that crews and passengers shall first be removed in safety before the ship is destroyed.

And if by chance, owing to the use of a neutral flag by English merchantmen to escape (a practice common in all wars, by all nations) an American ship is mistaken for an English one and blown up with its crews and passengers—so much the worse for the American ship.

The established rule that the ship shall be first searched to determine its nationality is to have no binding force on a German submarine. The avowed policy is to attack the non-combatant British merchant marine by submarines, and as submarines cannot take off crews and passengers, the human freight will have to go down with the ship. And this notwithstanding the fact that transatlantic liners carry for the most part American passengers.



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Are we to have another *Titanic* disaster? That would have happened if the *Lusitania* had been sunk by a submarine.

Then as to the flag. German warships are to have a right to use a neutral flag to deceive and capture merchantmen, as did the *Emden* and other cruisers, but the use of a neutral flag by merchantmen to escape capture or being blown up must be protested!

And as our ships cannot always be distinguished by the flag or at sight without being boarded and searched, they run the risk. This is the meaning of the new German proclamation.

I pass over the immediate responsibility of Germany's political and diplomatic activities for the war—her secret agreement with Austria, kept from the Powers during all the preliminary negotiations; her secretly backing Austria while claiming to be working for peace; her refusal to join a conference of four Powers to act as mediators; her refusal to give the same promise that France did to respect the neutrality of Belgium; her plans for the invasion of France through Belgium, long in advance, by the construction on the Belgian frontier of a system of strategic military railroads of little commercial use; her refusal to accept any of the several modes of mediation acceded to by Russia; her suppression of the offer of Russia (now just come to light) to leave the dispute to The Hague; her declaration of war, although she knew Russia and Austria had actually

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agreed upon a basis of mediation by which peace might well have been preserved.

All this is too large a subject for discussion here, but may be read in the official publications of the despatches of the great Powers.

### THE PROSTITUTION OF INTELLECTUAL HONESTY

And now, in closing, one word regarding the so-called "Intellectuals": Are we not compelled to believe it is owing to the unconscious influence of the German viewpoint that a large number of German university professors and others distinguished in literature, science and learning, men of great personal probity and culture and hitherto commanding the respect of the intellectual world, have, in their aim to tell us "The Truth about Germany" in that and other publications, sacrificed their intellectual honesty to the cause of the fatherland?

Are we not compelled to believe that it is from the German viewpoint that these intellectuals and, still more flagrantly, the organized political propagandists in this country, represented in the press by Dr. Dernburg, Dr. von Mach, Dr. Albert, Dr. Münsterburg and Mr. Ritter, all of whom we are glad to respect for their culture in other fields, have misrepresented facts of common knowledge relating to the causes of and responsibility for this war—have perverted the meaning of official despatches and

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actions and motives of the governments of England and France and Belgium and Italy and Russia, and have sought, by the shallowest sophistries, to throw dust in the eyes of the public and gain the sympathy of the American people ?

If one wishes to recall to mind examples, one need only think of the audacious assertion of the propagandists that Germany offered to make a new treaty with England to guarantee the neutrality of Belgium and that England refused—a reckless assertion without a single scrap of authoritative evidence ; the sophistical assertion that England and France had already violated the neutrality of Belgium before Germany did ; that England and France intended to invade Belgium, thus forcing Germany to do so ; the disingenuous argument and misrepresentation that Belgium had forfeited its own neutrality before the war ; that England claimed to declare war solely because of her treaty with Belgium without regard to her obligations to France ; that England wished for war and did not try to prevent it ; the disingenuous claim that Germany strove to hold back Austria and maintain peace, and many other statements similar in kind.

By their publications the propagandists have been successful to a certain psychological and political extent ; to a psychological extent in that they have undoubtedly presented to those who were already national sympathizers with the fatherland, to those

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who have the will to believe, a point of view by which they can justify to themselves, in spite of the facts, their belief in the justice of Germany's cause; to a political extent in that they have produced a solidarity among those who have the will to believe.

But to neutral Americans, the publicists, the diplomats, the historians, the jurists, the men of American universities, and the "man-in-the-street," who without previous affiliations and without previous national prejudices have studied for themselves the facts as revealed in the official publications of the belligerent nations, all this prostitution of intellectual honesty must be destined to be useless.





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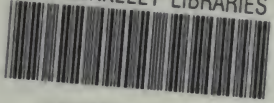
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