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a German*



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BECAUSE I AM A GERMAN

*Authorised Translation  
from the German*

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Grellings, Richard. J'accuse!

# BECAUSE I AM A GERMAN

BY  
HERMANN FERNAU

*Edited with an Introduction*  
BY  
T. W. ROLLESTON



Gerade weil ich Deutscher bin!

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## INTRODUCTION

A WRITER who publicly takes part against his own country when it is engaged in a fierce struggle against hostile Powers does so at a terrible risk, a risk of more than life. The prosperity, nay, the very endurance, of any organised community depends on the loyalty of its members to the common ideals and the common good of the society as a whole. The more gravely these ideals and interests seem to be imperilled, the deeper and more dangerous becomes the responsibility of those who in any way seem to make common cause with the foe. It is not only natural and inevitable, it is also just and right, that they should be held sternly to account, and that the sincerity and purity of their motives should be probed to the uttermost.



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Nor will even the purest of intentions serve to protect them against the stigma of dishonour if they are shown to be moved by no earnest and reasoned conviction, but merely by that perversity, levity, or exaggerated individualism which may lead some minds that shine harmlessly in the everyday tournament of intellectual forces to throw themselves into fatal opposition to some profound national impulse which mere intellect could never have created, and cannot even comprehend.

Yet no one can deny that crises may come, and have come again and again in history from the time of Micaiah the son of Imla to that of Edmund Burke, when to prophesy smooth things to a warring people is the worst of betrayals, and to rebuke its madness and passion the truest loyalty. Then a man to whom a vision of the truth has been given must take his life in his hand and speak his mind, confident that he will be justified by time and reason, and, above all, by his own conscience. Germany has produced such men. In this



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little book one of them is made known to the English-speaking world. They have not written against Germany. It is precisely because they are loyal to Germany and love the better part of their country's complex being that they have dared to affront the enormous and unscrupulous power represented by the despotic authority and the regimented intellect of that country in the present day. They have written for Germans, and do not seek the praises of those who are in arms against Germany. In the whole of this book there is not one unworthy line of adulation such as might serve to win favour for it in the camps of the Allies. This has not saved the author's character or his right of free speech in Germany. His book had only been published three weeks when it was confiscated and all further sales prohibited. Even in Switzerland it has been thought necessary to safeguard the neutrality of that country by forbidding it to be placed publicly on sale. Yet though no one in Germany may read this book, anyone may

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denounce it and slander its author. One section of the German Press declares him to be identical with the "German scoundrel" who wrote "J'Accuse."<sup>1</sup> Another makes him out to be a Polish Jew, now living in Paris in the pay of the French Government. He is neither Pole nor Jew, but a Prussian subject of German stock, born in Breslau, where he lived up to the age of twenty-one. He was afterwards—like many others of his countrymen—domiciled in Paris, where he wrote his first books, but his German nationality was sufficiently clear to oblige him to quit that city on the outbreak of the war, and he is now living in Switzerland. From this refuge he writes, not in the service of any of the Governments which are now contending around him, but for the sake of an idea—an idea which, as he is well aware, is not served with whole-hearted devotion in any modern State. That

<sup>1</sup> The publishers of "J'Accuse," Messrs. Payot et Cie, Lausanne, have done this absurd imputation the honour of formally denying it.

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idea of liberty, justice, the humane and rational development of political, moral, social, and intellectual life in many free centres, call them nations, or federated communities, or what one will, is more openly and dangerously threatened by Germany at the present moment than it has ever before been in the history of the world. The friends of this idea are necessarily the enemies of Germany so long as her organised force is wielded under the influence of a poisonous delusion. We are fighting to protect ourselves, and to win peace and breathing-space for the gradual realisation in practice of the ideas which we cherish. They are ideas on which Herr Fernau has already laid stress in the work on the democracy of France which he published before the outbreak of the war. We do not pretend to have achieved our ideals already. Nor do we make any Tartuffian pretences of doing battle for the true welfare of the German people. Yet, in sober truth, to eradicate the disease called Prussianism may, unless we are compelled



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to make the surgery more terrible and destructive than it need be, set free a deeply buried, blind, at present almost inarticulate Germany, which, when it opens its eyes and feels its strength, will recognise that its worst enemies were not those who now face it along a thousand miles of steel and flame.

The symptoms of the existence of this hidden and now helpless Germany are not easily made manifest to the English or to any of the Allied peoples in their present temper. That is as it should be. We are at war; we have been plunged into a struggle of the utmost desperation, and one of which the issue is still uncertain. The masses on both sides cannot see beyond the enemy's trenches, and it is better for the present that they should not. But the thinker and the observer have also their part to play; they have to judge the present situation on the basis of long experience gathered under more normal conditions of life. To those who have known Germany, and the manner in which the spirit of the

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nation has expressed itself in literature for many years back, the events of the War have brought a shock of astonishment and disgust which has found memorable expression in Romain Rolland's famous letter to Gerhart Hauptmann. For just as in the Middle Ages, when the Church, in its vain and disastrous conflict with science and free thought, tried to force the intellect of mankind to move in prescribed channels to an appointed end, so the Prussian system, which is simply Vaticanism in the secular sphere, has striven with all the force at its command to make the German intellect subservient to the ends of the State, as those ends were conceived by the Prussian soldier, the Prussian bureaucrat, the Prussian reigning dynasty. And, again, just as the great tumultuous tide of mediæval literature was always in revolt against the limits imposed on it, always seeking and finding new channels, always sapping the dams and barriers raised by either Church or State, so in modern Germany, ever since the Prussian domination began in 1815,

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literature—that is, creative literature, not the literature of the regimented Professors in their enslaved Universities—has been in revolt against it, and has represented, more or less, the free conscience and the free intellect of the country. Few English readers know much about this literature, or have any idea of the extent to which the modern German *Reich* and all its ways and works have been scorned and denounced in it. Sometimes the hostility has been direct and open, sometimes, as in the case of Hauptmann, it has taken subtler forms, and has painted with terrible realism the cancerous vices that underlie the mechanical organisation which presents so imposing an aspect to the outside view. As an example of the lengths to which this criticism has gone, let me quote a passage from a brilliant novelist and essayist, Kurt Martens, who, in casting a regretful glance back to the days when Germany was a collection of small States, writes :—

“ It is true that in politics and economics there was then little to swagger about,



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but swaggering was not then in any case a German trait. Capitalism and militarism were not then even in the hobbledehoy period; they were but feeding up for it as apple-cheeked urchins. The German citizen went soberly and considerately about his business, talked harmless politics with his neighbours, and sang in the evening his beautiful and dreamy old songs. The ringing trichord made up by the voices of the drill-sergeant, the petty official, and the commercial traveller had not then become, as it has since gradually done, the *fanfare* of the new German nation. We had then an aristocracy with aristocratic principles and forms of life, and a corps of officers mainly recruited from this aristocracy; we had also a patrician class in trade and commerce, and patricians of culture who understood the temperate enjoyment of life. In Germany culture was then indigenous; Germany had style. Now, Germany is an arsenal, a stock exchange, a madhouse, a monster hotel.”<sup>1</sup>

Could any critic of Germany from the Allies' side to-day have delivered a

<sup>1</sup> “Literatur in Deutschland,” by Kurt Martens, 1910

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shrewder thrust at modern German imperialism than this German writer did six years ago? Might one not have predicted that a Power which could be truly described in these terms would be bound either to lower the ethical standards of civilisation, or to perish in some great catastrophe?

And Martens did not stand alone. His attitude was fairly representative of his whole class, the poets, play-writers, and novelists of modern Germany. But where were they, and in what kind of tones did they speak, when the German Empire actually brought forth the very fruits which alone could grow from such an organism as they had painted? This is the saddest and most hopeless feature of the whole wretched story. They made, all the distinguished names among them, common cause with their own worst enemy, the enemy of that better and truer Germany whose interests there were none to understand and to protect except themselves. They betrayed the Germany of

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their ideal for the Germany of the Prussian war-lord. They showed that the poison of Prussianism had entered into the very soul of the nation—for *they* are its soul. Their ordeal was a hard one, let it be granted; but how is the spirit to be tried unless the ordeal be hard? The country was suddenly ringed round with foes—it was true that they were foes who had been driven to arms, as they were plainly intended to be (with the exception of England), by the Austro-German ultimatum to Serbia; yet the position of a patriotic German who did not wish to see his country led into a desperate adventure by a military autocracy was undeniably a difficult one. Still, they might at least have remained significantly silent. But they were not silent—they joined in the mad chorus of greed and battle-fury; and when Hauptmann actually condoned, in plain terms, the flagrant perfidy and brutality of the invasion of Belgium he branded not only himself but his whole class with an inexpiable stain. Germany had often in



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history been betrayed by her own sons, but the betrayers were soldiers, or kings, or statesmen, and what they yielded was German soil. Never before had she suffered in interests so sacred as those which Hauptmann and his fellows, who alone had the power to defend or to sacrifice them, flung into the mire before the feet of the German Emperor.

This, as I have said, is the most shocking feature of the whole transaction. It seems at first sight to leave no hope of the emergence of a nobler Germany from the present conflict. And yet matters are not altogether so bad as they might seem. The shame has been much greater and blacker than one who had studied the currents of thought in modern Germany could have expected, but one must not forget how the author of "J'Accuse," the author of the present masterly and vigorous little book, and writers like Hermann Hesse, Annette Kolb, and Wilhelm Herzog, have in various ways striven to act in the spirit of the noble words prefixed by Rolland to his

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recent volume of collected studies on the war.<sup>1</sup> How much they really stand for in Germany we cannot yet discern. At any rate, they have done what in them lies to redeem their country's honour, and if they are now proscribed and calumniated, they are suffering, as Fernau points out in a passage of penetrating truth, what was suffered in their time by the very spirits whom modern Germany most professes to revere. German soldiers now go to battle singing "Deutschland über Alles." The author of that song was dismissed from his professorship and for six years hunted from one German State to another because he had published a volume of songs which were not altogether to the taste of the Prussian authorities of his day. Time has brought its revenges, and has many more to

<sup>1</sup> "A great nation assailed by war has not only its frontiers to protect: it must also protect its good sense. It must protect itself from the hallucinations, injustices, and follies which the plague lets loose. To each his part: to the armies the protection of the soil of their native land; to the thinkers the defence of its thought."—"Above the Battle," by Romain Rolland, p. 15.

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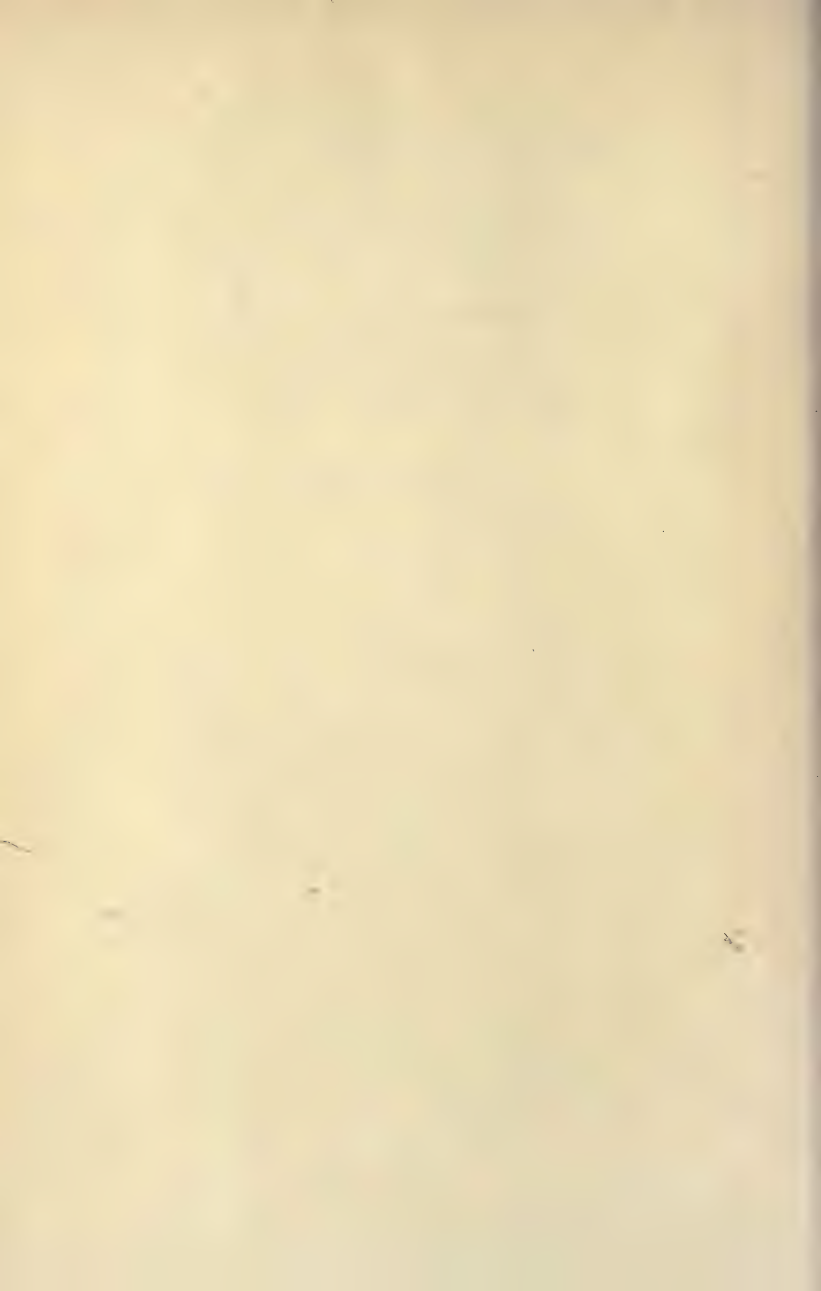
bring. Meantime, let us take note of the existence of such writings as that which is here presented to English readers. It is worth attention not only for the spirit in which it is written, but as a study of the circumstances under which the World-War broke out. For a brief and convincing statement of the Allies' case it would be hard to better the short series of "whys" in Chapter IV. The author writes throughout in the confident and masterful manner of one who has taken the measure of his opponents. He strikes hard and he strikes home. His book, as we have seen, is prohibited in Germany, and his friends there are of necessity dumb, but what he says aloud many must silently think, and even in Germany thought cannot be wholly under police supervision. When the War is ended a new war will begin, waged, perhaps, with other weapons, perhaps partly with the same: it will be a war for the making of a new Germany. The issue deserves to be closely watched by all civilised nations, for on that issue turns the



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question whether the immense forces embodied in the German nation are to be won for reason and humanity, or to remain as agents of destruction and demoralisation in the hands that are wielding them to-day against all that civilisation holds most sacred and most dear.

T. W. ROLLESTON.



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## I

THE publication of the work "J'Accuse" created an enormous sensation. The fact that in this book an authentic German should have unhesitatingly laid the blame for the outbreak of the World-War at the door of the Government of his Fatherland, the mysterious anonymity of the writer, the bold yet logical exposition of his unsparing indictment, combined to establish his book forthwith in the forefront of War literature. Wherever men were thinking and discussing, this book, in spite of the tremendous military events then in progress, became the topic of the hour. To this "wherever" we must, however, make an exception of Germany and Austria-Hungary, in which



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countries the work was prohibited immediately on its appearance.

That the Government of my country should have thought fit simply to prohibit "J'Accuse" is distressing to me, not because I regret that by this act the German public should have been deprived of the enjoyment of a valuable piece of literature, but, in the first place, because this prohibition seems to me to imply an offence against those sacred treasures of Culture for the protection of which Germany had drawn the sword, and, in the second place, because a Government, by forbidding a book, unfortunately creates to some extent the impression that it has been actuated by fear.

If a person possesses incontestable proofs of the justice and sacredness of his cause (and we may presume that this was the case with the German Government), can there be any books which he is under the necessity of prohibiting? Are the German people, when they are discussing the origins of and responsibilities for the World-War, to be allowed only to make use of a definite set of ideas manufactured for them

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in the Berlin workshop of Culture? Did not the German Chancellor, in one of his speeches, point out with pride that it was only the French who were subject to a petty, truth-fearing censorship, whereas the activity of the German Censor was limited to the purely military questions connected with the defence of the Fatherland? And is not this as it should be? Is the German military censorship, as the case of the book "J'Accuse" would appear to indicate, to step outside its *rôle*, and constitute itself a general inquisition over all the offspring of men's minds, thus exercising a tutelage over the whole German nation?

That would be regrettable from every point of view. Every true German patriot loves his country, not only because it is the most valiant in war of all the countries in the world, but also because it is the native land of critical methods, of scientific logic, and of spiritual freedom. If, in the land of Kant and Fichte, a Government now declares that it must draw the sword in defence of these treasures of Culture, and yet at the same time enforces

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silence upon any critics who are not of one mind with itself, this proceeding ought to cause us Germans the utmost shame and anxiety : shame, because it is a flagrant contradiction between word and deed, which little becomes the Fatherland of spiritual freedom ; anxiety, because the Government of our country, which now for seventeen months has waged successful war against the armies and fleets of all Europe, thereby creates the impression that it is nervous of a book. Yet what would any victory of arms avail us, if we were forced in the end to lay down those arms before the spirit that speaks through books ?

\* \* \* \* \*

The few copies of the book which have found their way into Germany, in spite of the prohibition, have called forth loud cries of "Shame !" and flaming protests. True, "J'Accuse" has won approval in many families and private conclaves in Germany, even in the most exalted spheres ; but this approval must not be voiced in public. The only feelings and opinions which may be voiced in public in



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Germany at present are those which echo the feelings and opinions of the Government. Of all that is being thought in Germany to-day the greater part will never be known, because it will never be permissible to print it. The so-called peace-within-the-precincts (*Burgfriede*) is an institution under which only staunch patriots can utter their thoughts with the tranquil assurance that they will meet with no contradiction. Individual opinions no longer exist, but only opinions that have found official sanction. Journalists and newspapers standing to attention! Field-grey sentiments and field-grey science! Iron words and iron money! The whole nation one mass of bronze, in which no golden streak of individual character is allowed to glimmer! A scoundrel he who should now speak as a citizen of the world! An abandoned wretch he who now should hint a doubt of the supreme virtue and veracity of the Government once so bitterly maligned! An offspring of Hell he who should not look to Potsdam as the source of Truth! In virtue of this same peace-within-

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the-precincts, that which was once our greatest pride—for instance, the freedom of speech and criticism constitutionally guaranteed to every German—may now become a fearful crime, while, on the other hand, that which in normal times was looked upon as a sign of an inferior mind—for instance, contempt for foreign nations, what Bismarck denounced as the grovelling of the “reptiles,” and the like—is now esteemed an evidence of the highest virtue.

These facts enable us to understand why “J’Accuse” is for the time being a still-born infant as far as Germany is concerned, and why sentence of banishment and outlawry was forthwith declared upon the author, who, a German subject, had displayed the unheard-of audacity to present the situation in a different light from that in which it was presented by the Government of his country. So it happened that, one day, when in spite of every effort the book could no longer be hushed up, the German reader was deluged with a flood of articles and pamphlets, all with one

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voice pouring violent abuse upon a work which it was impossible for him to procure at any bookshop. The distinguished authors of these attacks (who, of course, knew what they were talking about) assured him that "J'Accuse" was a shameful production, a scurrilous pamphlet, a murderous attack on their nation, and so on, and so on. To be sure, the honest fellow never doubted for a moment that it was only in France that the Censor was afraid of the truth, and that he himself, now as ever, was living in a land of freedom, and that it was the necessity of defending this freedom which had brought about the War; yet, this being so, he was forced to take note that we Germans (unless we happen to be living abroad) do not enjoy the freedom to reflect upon and discuss other explanations of the War than those dictated from Berlin.

Because I do not believe that love of one's country and subjection of one's reasoning faculties are the same thing; because I am not prepared that our Government should restrict our right to a free investigation of the truth

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and perhaps even finally command us to raise our hands in horror at the depravity of a German whose only crime is that he is of a different opinion from his (certainly not infallible) Government; because, moreover, I believe that it cannot be the purpose of this War to present us with a field-grey Germany, where frenzied abuse and calumny of anyone who expresses a dissentient opinion shall be a political weapon, where a grovelling servility shall be deemed the highest civic virtue, and intellectual bondage a substitute for democratic sentiment—for all these reasons, I deem it necessary to speak a word of reassurance and explanation.

While I give you my solemn assurance, Herr Censor, that I am a sincere patriot, that I was born and educated in Prussia, and that I have been generally reputed a good Christian and a law-abiding German citizen by the authorities of my country, I would beg your kind permission to examine the book "J'Accuse" with an open mind, to discuss the answers to it which have been published, and to venture to



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express my own views concerning it. And all this, not for the sake of making myself a party to the dispute (Heaven preserve you and me from the Teutomaniac wrath of German scientists and scholars, as from all other afflictions!), but only for the sake of clearing up, in the name of the supreme treasures of Culture (for which Germany is fighting), the questions actually set forth in "J'Accuse," and of appealing for a genuine discussion of them, all the more earnestly because it is of the greatest concern to me, as a German, that the views expounded in a book which has been circulated throughout the world should be logically and judicially refuted.

## II

WHAT is the substance and what is the intention of the book, "J'Accuse"?

It is an indictment against the German Government, and it sets out to prove that "Germany, in conjunction with Austria-Hungary, is guilty of having provoked the European War."

In the first chapter, "Germany, Awake!" the author tells us that the German nation has been the dupe of a gigantic lie, and he undertakes to prove that this is so.

In the second chapter he gives us a "History of the Events Leading Up to the Crime." He quotes and analyses passages from the works of General Bernhardi, which go to show that the typical German representative of the Imperialistic view of war ardently desired

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the War, because he hoped that it would achieve great results towards the establishment of Germany as a World-Power. "J'Accuse" believes that the Pan-Slav movement, which has often been named as the cause of the War, was scarcely as eager for War as the Pan-German movement. These "Pan" movements are to be found in every country; they are harmless so long as they do not proceed to actions; but our Pan-Germanists *did* proceed to the decisive action. The influential leader and battering-ram of the Pan-Germanist movement is, in the opinion of the author, the German Crown Prince; he does not name him directly in this connection, but he describes him in such a way as to leave no room for doubt. The present War is, in his opinion, a "war of conquest sprung from Imperialistic ideas and serving Imperialistic ends." Germany wants the famous "place in the sun." "The place in the sun is the world-power which belongs to us as the chosen people of God." What is the meaning of "place in the sun"? The author of

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"J'Accuse" maintains that Germany already possessed it before the War. In proof of this he quotes statistics (many of them again derived from the works of General Bernhardi) which demonstrate convincingly the magnificent development of Germany in every direction. Does Germany require more land, more colonies? The writer tells us that Germany's true colonies are in Paris, London, Manchester, New York, Canada, South America, and Australia—in those regions "where we do not own a foot of land." That the annual increase of population, amounting to about 800,000, does not call for any expansion of territory he deduces from the fact that the number of German emigrants has declined from 134,200 per annum in the years 1881-1899 to 18,500 in the year 1912, so that, at the present day, the annual immigration into Germany is in excess of the emigration from Germany, whilst trade, manufactures, shipping, and national wealth continue to increase. Also, Germany and the Triple Alliance had frequently won very considerable advantages by diplomatic



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methods. If, notwithstanding, the catchword "place in the sun" or the theory of the isolation of Germany, and so forth, were able to make such an impression on the German people that finally they were echoed by one and all, without any very clear idea of what was implied, it was because the Pan-Germanists had systematically set to work to secure popularity in advance for the impending War. "J'Accuse" devotes twenty-two pages to a survey of the efforts and proposals made by England during the last few years with a view to arriving at a political understanding and a naval agreement with Germany. All in vain! Germany persistently refused. She did not want equal rights, but supremacy. "If Germany really wanted nothing more than was repeatedly declared in all the speeches of the Kaiser, the Crown Prince, and the Chancellor, namely, security from attack, free play for her energies, unhampered development of her Culture, how could she have better secured for herself these blessings than by accepting the proposals made by England?" Germany,

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then, is not fighting for her freedom, as her leaders maintain, since the freedom for which she professes to be fighting was already hers long before the struggle began. "J'Accuse" now discusses the following questions: Did France want to attack us? Did Russia want to attack us? And, with the best intention, he can find no proofs of any design for attacking Germany on the part of these countries. He describes the Triple Entente as a defensive alliance<sup>1</sup>; he discusses the underground workings

<sup>1</sup> Throughout this study of the events leading up to the war, the author of "J'Accuse"—apart from the Crown Prince and General von Bernhardt, who must be accepted as speaking with authority—bases his conclusions exclusively upon documents which are beyond criticism. Moreover, the voluminous protocols of the Hague Conferences and the mass of literature connected with them confirm the justice of his assertion that it was Germany and Austria who, by their opposition, frustrated all the efforts of the Triple Entente to bring about a European court of arbitration and a limitation of armaments. One of the most prominent leaders of German pacifism, Dr. A. H. Fried, assures us (*Blätter für Zwischenstaatliche Organisation*, November-December, 1915) that there was, in fact, a close connection between the conduct of Germany at the Hague Conferences and the formation and

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of the German military party, with their picked troops—the Junkers; he refers to the revolu-

strengthening of the Triple Entente. Dr. Fried writes :—

“There was no thought of an attack on Germany, but only of the necessity for defence against Germany. . . . Germany’s complaints against Delcassé and Lansdowne are unjustified. She has herself brought about the situation from which she is suffering. At the Hague in 1899 she placed in the hands of her enemies the moral weapon of mistrust. By so doing she neglected to seize a great opportunity and to win for herself the reputation of a Power desirous of securing peace by modern methods. Germany showed an untimely persistence in her old paths. How greatly the attitude of Germany in the year 1899 was at fault may be gathered from the recently published reminiscences of Andrew D. White. It is clear from White’s ‘Reminiscences’ that Count Münster (who obtained the title of Prince for his services at the Hague Conference) aroused, by his attitude as German delegate at the Hague, a feeling of exasperation and mistrust towards Germany in all the other States. Germany is still suffering from this mistrust, and Delcassé would not have been possible without Münster.”

[Andrew Dickson White, a distinguished American author, born 1832, was U.S. Ambassador to Germany, 1895–1902, and a member of the Hague Commission, 1899. Graf, afterwards Fürst, Münster was of Hanoverian

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tion which (according to the statements of the French Yellow Book) has taken place in the views of the Emperor William II. during the last few years; and he comes to the conclusion that the truth is to be sought elsewhere than in the official German statements of the causes and aims of the War. The true purpose of the War is, in the opinion of the author, the conquest of freedom—"that which is mine by right"—namely, abroad, the politico-commercial supremacy in Europe aimed at by the German World-Power politicians, and, at home, the political enslavement of the German people; that is to say, such a crushing of its democratic ambitions as the Prussian Junkers achieved by the Prussian victories of 1815, 1848, and 1870-1.

In the third chapter the author of "J'Accuse" discusses the "crime" itself; that is to say, the diplomatic mechanism which

family. He was born in London, 1820. He has held the offices of German Ambassador in London (1873) and Paris (1885), as well as that of German delegate at the Hague.—ED.]



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unchained the war. Any person who sets out to examine the question of the responsibility for this War should read this chapter twice over. For it is, in the first place, the most important part of the book—the actual accusation and argument—and, in the second place, it is a very well-reasoned and original survey of the events of those critical eleven days, taking into consideration all the circumstances and all the possibilities, so far as the available official documents of the countries involved make this possible. The limits of this book do not permit of an analysis of his survey; but in any case these 178 pages must be uncomfortable reading for any German citizen who makes no distinction between love of his country and trust in the German Government. Not so much because the statements of "J'Accuse" are in flat contradiction to the official German statements of the origin of the War, but, most of all, because it is difficult to ignore the judicial acumen with which "J'Accuse" goes to work and the wealth of material which he brings forward. I found it

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easy to compose a refutation of the first 113 pages of the book, for, after all, it is easy to present "antecedent events" in a light favourable to any country and any party. With the exercise of a little skill, it is a matter of no great difficulty to assemble everything which serves one's purpose and to draw a veil over the rest. But here, where we are confronted with the momentous question: Who was it who proceeded from idle threats to actual deeds? here, where we have to deal with nothing else than official documents, which are accessible, verifiable, and convincing for all and sundry; here, where the writer, setting aside all patriotic prejudices and sentiments, comes forward only as a logician and a jurist, we must either produce a judicial refutation in the shape of valid documentary counter-evidence, or we must admit that he is right. The methods employed by the author in this chapter, so far as I can judge, are such as to afford no possibility of deliberate deception and misrepresentation. If the first two chapters convey the impression that the writer

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is more a partisan than a jurist, in reading the third chapter we feel that he is not accusing the German Government because he wants to accuse it, but because he is confronted with documents which compel him to this course. Later on we shall have occasion to repeat a few of the questions which are propounded, examined, and answered in "J'Accuse." It appears to me that anyone who undertakes to reply to the book ought first of all to reply to these questions. Yes, I would go so far as to say that anyone who is of opinion that the question of the responsibility for this War ought to be made the subject of a thorough and systematic examination (since only by this means can we prevent the occurrence of similar catastrophes in the future) ought to take the same course as that taken by the author of "J'Accuse"; because, unless these questions are answered with reference to the diplomatic documents belonging to the critical eleven days, any examination of this question of guilt will soon degenerate into frenzied panegyrics of the respective

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Fatherlands of those engaged in the investigation.

The fourth and fifth chapters of the book ("The Consequences of the Act," "The Future") need not detain us here. In these the writer reveals himself as a resolute pacifist, inveighs against the system of armed peace, appeals for a peaceful alliance of free nations, and intimates that a free Germany must of necessity be a republican Germany. Just as the first and second chapters are only introductions to the third chapter of the book, in the same way the last eighty pages are only conclusions to it.

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Like all books which are concerned with topical issues, "J'Accuse" has its faults. Indeed, these faults are so numerous (and in the state of "peace-within-the-precincts" lend themselves to such convenient exploitation) that by enumerating them we might easily mislead the reader in regard to the real contents and value of the book. From the very first lines we feel that the writer belongs to



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those republicans of the old school who in their secret souls join with Kant in placing the blame for wars on absolute kingship. Consequently, he is not always speaking in the character of a stern logician, but frequently in the character of an apostle of that republican ideal so sternly prohibited in Germany. A strong personal antagonism to Junkerdom and militarism is apparent on every page, as well as that love for the Fatherland which throughout German history has always been held deserving of punishment—imprisonment in the case of Jahn, the father of German athletics<sup>1</sup>; disgrace and calumny in the case of Ernst Moritz Arndt, the most national of our German

<sup>1</sup> Ludwig Jahn (1778–1852) was one of the most notable of German patriots during the Napoleonic period. He founded in 1811 the *Turnvereine*, or athletic societies, which have been a feature in German life ever since. During the period of political reaction after 1815 every popular and voluntary organisation came under the ban of the Government, and Jahn was arrested in 1819 and not released for six years.—ED.

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poets.<sup>1</sup> This love for the Fatherland, with its assumption that the arch-enemy of the German people is not outside, but inside its frontiers, occasionally obscures the clear vision of the writer, and gives rise to a somewhat one-sided presentation of the facts, such as is particularly and disagreeably noticeable in the second chapter of the book. After all, we are not concerned to present England, France, and Russia as innocent lambs, and Germany and Austria as greedy beasts of prey. In examining the origins of the war, the author ought to have borne in mind that there existed also in France,

<sup>1</sup> Ernst Moritz Arndt (1769–1860) was author of some of the most inspiring of the songs of freedom which were written during the struggle with Napoleon. His lines:—

Der Gott der Eisen wachsen liess,  
Der wollte keine Knechte,

are printed to-day at the head of German war-postcards. He was arrested in 1820, deprived of his Professorship of History at Bonn, and forbidden to write or lecture. The scandal in his case was very conspicuous, for his country had no more loyal subject.—ED.

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Russia, and England numerous individuals, associations, newspapers, and books whose aim was to egg on their country to war. Moltke, Treitschke, Frobenius, and Bernhardt were, in fact, not the only individuals in Europe who extolled war as a heaven-sent blessing and a baptism of healing for the nations.

In this connection, however, it ought to be emphasised that the advocates of war in the countries of the Triple Entente, especially in France, formed a dwindling minority without influence either on the Government or the people. This fact I have myself, as the result of long study, expressly emphasised in my book, "The French Democracy" ("Die Französische Demokratie"). In a long passage on "The Peace-Guarantees of the Third Republic" ("Die Friedensgarantien der dritten Republik") I have drawn attention to those peculiar features of the French democracy (influential State finance with pre-eminently international interests, a stationary population, an increasing worldliness, a pacifist conception of society on the part of the leading

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French intellectuals, the effect of democratic ideas, and so forth) which have formed a combination of elements distinctly opposed to war, and, in the course of decades, have brought about a perceptible weakening of the idea of *revanche*. In Germany, on the other hand, the chauvinistic pro-war agitation has been promoted and encouraged among the most influential circles by the Junkers, militarists, and Pan-Germanists. In the Pan-German Union (Alldeutscher Verband), in the Navy League (Flottenverein), the Defence League (Wehrverein), and similar associations Germany already possessed gigantic organisations, extending over the whole Empire, which were preparing her, in accordance with a definite programme, for the "inevitable" war for world-supremacy.

To return to "J'Accuse." The observations of the writer with regard to the military situation existing at the time that he was writing seem to me beside the question. Although his conclusion that the present War can under no circumstances end in Germany's victory is



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confirmed more and more every day by the course of military events, his prophecies have furnished a welcome pretext to the all-too-numerous intellectual busybodies who alone have the right of free speech, for calling into question the writer's love for his country, and for persuading the uninitiated reader that he has written in the interests of the enemies of Germany.

This last suspicion, however, is proof of a lack of psychological acumen. An author who was in the pay of the enemies of Germany would have written with much less heat, that is to say, with less imprudence, and would have produced a book which, like all books written to order, would have been much more calm, more precise, and more tedious. It is, in fact, the passionate enthusiasm for his political ideal displayed by the author which proves that the book was written in response to an inward compulsion, and that it was, in fact, a spontaneous expression of the author's love for his country. "J'Accuse" is written with so much heat; it is so devoid of literary artifice

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and studied effect; the character and soul of the writer are presented to the reader with so much reality and emotion and guilelessness—in fact, the book is so defective and one-sided from the standpoint of German scientific cautiousness that, in spite of the judicial questions with which it is concerned, from the first to the last line, it conveys the impression of an outpouring of the heart. A writer who is not writing spontaneously in the cause of an ideal will never make this impression, will never be able to carry away the reader with him. And, quite apart from this, nobody will pay a price for an *anonymous* writer. The first condition ordinarily imposed on a writer whose pen it is desired to buy is that he shall contribute his name (and it must be a well-known name) to the support of the ideas which are to be dictated to him.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> If, on the one hand, the anonymity of the writer seems to me a proof that he wrote his book with complete independence and with a sorrowful heart, on the other hand I cannot on principle approve that he should not have put his name to it. Yet, in view of the present stifling of every free expression of

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In any case, "J'Accuse," like all valuable and enduring books, is not an "objective" book in the German sense of the word. And therefore anyone who studiously ignores the kernel of the book (the third chapter) and only reflects with a shake of the head on the zeal which the writer has brought to the work of assembling all the circumstances most damaging to the German Government, may easily get the impression that "J'Accuse" is not a serious work, but a libellous production, that it is not inspired by any earnest motive, but that it is an accusation framed in a spirit of partisanship against the Governments of the Central Powers.

The more steeped a man is in the ideas which are the rule in Germany at the present time, the more strongly, of course, will he get this impression. For we repeat once again: the patriotism revealed by the writer of this book is regarded in Germany to-day, as it was

opinion, I can excuse the anonymity, for it offers the only possible way of supporting ideas and ambitions which are prohibited and punishable by law.

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regarded a hundred years ago, as nothing less than high treason.

For those of us, however, who, in the interests of truth, feel ourselves unable to defer to the views of Berlin on the subject of high treason, there is no reason for judging "J'Accuse" in a different fashion from other books. In the foregoing pages I have attempted to indicate the structure, the main ideas, the defects, and the prejudices of the book. And because, as an impartial German, I am of opinion that the book contains, in spite of its defects, the most important elements towards the discussion of the question of responsibility for the War; because, moreover, I believe that we Germans, in the interests of our country and of the coming peace, ought neither to shun this discussion nor to dilute the question of responsibility—for these and for other reasons it seems to me absurd to whisk the book under the table with facile and insulting words of abuse, as it has been sought to do in Germany up till now. To try to abuse out of existence



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a book which has justly created a sensation all over the world and has already been translated into most of the languages of civilisation is a childish and a wholly un-German proceeding. Unless we are to corroborate indirectly the statements of the writer, we must refute them in a fair and business-like manner.

Let us now proceed to examine the most important answers to "J'Accuse" which have been published up to the present.

### III

APART from numberless newspaper articles, there are, in particular, three replies to "J'Accuse" which have been published and assiduously propagated in Germany :—

"A Slanderer,"<sup>1</sup> by Professor Th. Schiemann; "'J'Accuse' from the Notes of a Field-grey Academician"<sup>2</sup>; and "Reflections of a Swiss Neutral on the Book, 'J'Accuse.'"<sup>3</sup>

Like all those who during the last few decades have openly and defiantly supported the right and destiny of Germany to a world-

<sup>1</sup> "Ein Verleumder," Georg Reimer, Berlin.

<sup>2</sup> "'J'Accuse' aus dem Aufzeichnungen eines Feld-grauen Akademikers," Stilke, Berlin.

<sup>3</sup> "Gedanken eines Schweizerischen Neutralen über das Buch, 'J'Accuse,'" A. Lüthy, Solothurn.

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supremacy and thereby excited amazement and anxiety in foreign countries, Professor Schiemann,<sup>1</sup> the author of the first pamphlet, is a notability of present-day intellectual Germany. Together with Rohrbach, Reventlow, Chamberlain, Harden, Keim, Ostwald, Sombart, and so forth, Privy Councillor Schiemann commands a division of that Imperialistic army whose Commander-in-Chief is named Bernhardi. He is thus the political antithesis of the author of "J'Accuse."

On the very first page of his brochure he assures us that the author of "J'Accuse" is not a German patriot, but a deliberate slanderer. Schiemann, the Professor of History, contents himself with giving a summary of the contents of the book in *nine* lines, and then

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Theodor Schiemann (b. 1847), one of the most violent of the disciples of Treitschke, has long been noted for his anti-English and anti-Russian views. He is Professor of History at Berlin. His most notable book on the war is "Die Letzten Etappen zum Weltkrieg : Deutschland und die grosse Politik, anno 1914."—ED.

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asks excitedly : "Has there ever been heard a more shameless distortion of the truth from the mouth of a German, to the detriment of his country?" Perhaps it might first be asked whether a German Professor of History ever before passed a more superficial judgment upon a book which was being discussed all over the world.

Professor Schiemann informs us that German Imperialism involves no idea of world-supremacy, and that it is only "malicious misrepresentation" that has made it appear to do so. "The courageous writings of Bernhardt, with a clear prevision of what was preparing, have demonstrated the necessity of drawing the sword."

Courageous writings! Herr Schiemann's whole conception of the universe is contained in these two words. This honest, good-natured German Imperialism, which a closer inspection reveals as the most peaceable philosophy in the world! If one were infected with the servile zeal of the German Professors of History, one might almost weep over that



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“malicious misrepresentation” which has been propagated over a wicked world.

But still further conclusions are arrived at, if we attack the subject with German professorial earnestness : for instance, the remarkable fact that “preventive” means, not “*preventive*” at all, but properly “*defensive*.” “It is also a historically untenable assumption that a *preventive* war cannot be in the nature of a *defensive* war,” very ingenuously remarks Herr Schiemann. What would he say if anyone were to steal his purse and at the same time maintain that he was obliged to steal it, because otherwise the Herr Privy Councillor would have stolen his, and that consequently his theft is, to be sure, a theft, but only a *preventive* theft, and even, in fact, a necessary measure of self-defence against Privy Councillors? Herr Schiemann would doubtless pronounce the fellow to be out of his senses, since he himself is an honest man and has never had any intention of stealing purses. And Herr Schiemann might perhaps add that, by admitting such “lame excuses” as these, we

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should be smoothing the way for crime. This is what Herr Schiemann might conceivably say in reference to his *individual* case. But if England, France, and Russia say the same to Germany—namely, that they never had any intention of stealing—then he stoutly maintains that these are only cunning lies, devised in order to put Germany off her guard and then to steal her purse.

A grain of logic, please, Herr Professor! Either you must admit that the absurd excuse of the thief who steals your purse is legally sound, in which case Germany certainly has a right to wage a preventive war (but in that case every thief has the right to steal a purse upon the plea that he has acted in self-defence); or else you do *not* admit this excuse, and, in that case, the German preventive war was—as the author of “J’Accuse” asserts—a crime. But if in the one case you say that the more loudly the thief endeavours to vindicate his action by lame excuses the more culpable he becomes, while in the other case you declare that Germany was justified in

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assuming that her enemies were planning to attack her and in forestalling them (and that, therefore, her preventive war was a measure of self-defence), this is logic for babes, and an insult to an adult human intelligence.

In any case, Herr Schiemann, in the sentence quoted above, admits that Germany is waging a preventive war, thereby unintentionally corroborating the accusations of the "slanderer."

The above will sufficiently indicate the character of the Herr Professor's pamphlet. But the anxiety which he displays to avoid the central issue of "J'Accuse," and the loud loquacity with which he discourses on subjects entirely alien to the discussion, are so grossly evident in his pamphlet that I cannot refrain from analysing it a little further.

The author of "J'Accuse" has committed the crime of giving to his study of the events leading up to the War (to speak in the spirit of the time) a republican bridge-head. Professor Schiemann, on the other hand, erects a Pan-Germanist bridge-head. He tells us

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about the origin of the Hague Conference, and about other things which we are not interested to know, and finally, on page 23, he comes to the point, and asserts somewhat pompously that "anyone who invalidates the verdicts of not guilty pronounced [in the book "J'Accuse"] upon England, Russia, and France, by producing overwhelming counter-evidence, thereby cancels at the same time the verdicts pronounced by the 'German' against the Fatherland, and against Austria-Hungary. It will suffice, therefore, to examine these verdicts of not guilty, which are refused acceptance by the whole unanimous German people, with the single exception of the so-called 'German.'" Now that the Herr Professor has, in this elegant and striking proposition, as it were, rolled up his shirt-sleeves, the reader awaits the pompously advertised "overwhelming evidence." But what does Herr Schiemann do? He ransacks every nook and corner of the history of the last twenty years for expressions of hostility to Germany—books, newspapers, &c., emanating



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from the countries of the Quadruple Entente; he discusses in detail a book—Flourens' "La France Conquise"—though he admits that it was entirely without influence; he speaks of the political influence of the French freemasons, of the exertions of Russia to form closer relations with England, of the Balkan entanglements of recent years, of the treacherous policy of Italy, of the policy of encirclement of Edward VII. (which, of course, could not fail of success), of everything from any source far or near which suits his thesis, except the one thing about which he set out to and ought to speak. Nowhere is there any examination of the questions raised in "J'Accuse." Not a syllable concerning the third chapter of the book, which none the less occupies 178 pages out of the total of 370. Nowhere do we find the promised "overwhelming evidence." Schiemann's production is, in fact, a 63-page history of the events leading up to the War presented from the German nationalist standpoint.

But while the author of "J'Accuse," in his

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history of the events leading up to the War, at any rate makes use of official documents and authorities, the Herr Professor rakes together, without discrimination, everything which falls to his hand which may serve in any way to lay bare the infamy of the enemies of Germany. What would he have said if "J'Accuse" had taken the same course, and had based his accusations upon the senseless ravings dished up in the newspapers, reviews, and publications of the Pan-German League (Alldeutscher Verband), the Defence League (Wehrverein), the Navy League (Flottenverein), the Peasant League (Bauernbund), &c., &c.? Doubtless he would have pointed out indignantly that the *Deutsche Tageszeitung*, the *Tägliche Rundschau*, the *Post*, the *Kreuzzeitung*, the *Rheinisch-Westfälische Zeitung*, the *Alldeutschen Blätter*,<sup>1</sup> and others, do not

<sup>1</sup> The *Deutsche Tageszeitung* (Berlin) is the organ of the Prussian Junkers. Graf Reventlow is a member of its staff. It is edited by Dr. Georg Oertel. The *Tägliche Rundschau* (Berlin), edited by Heinrich Rippler, represents

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express the views of the German Government, that in Germany any man can write what he pleases, and that it would be madness to quote the personal opinions of crazy devotees of world-supremacy as proofs of a desire for war upon the part of the German Government. In this we should support him unreservedly, and we are therefore all the more astonished that, though he does not scruple to reproach others with being unscientific and libellous, he himself quotes without sense or discrimination from chauvinistic leaflets, private expressions of opinion, and obscure scribblers belonging to

the Independent National section in politics. The *Post* (Berlin), edited by Dr. H. Pohl, is Independent Conservative. The *Kreuzzeitung* (properly entitled the *Neue Preussische Zeitung*), published in Berlin, and edited by Dr. H. Wendland and Hauptmann G. Foertsch, is strongly Conservative and Evangelical. The *Rheinisch-Westfälische Zeitung* is published at Essen. It represents Independent National ideas and the armament factories. The *All-deutschen Blätter*, a more recent production, is the organ of the Pan-Germanic movement.—  
ED.

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the countries of the Quadruple Entente, and treats these as "overwhelming evidence" of the desire of these countries for war.<sup>1</sup>

What must be the mental condition of this

<sup>1</sup> As an example of the seriousness with which Schiemann sets out to write history, he quotes at great length the pamphlet, "La Guerre qui vient," by Francis Délaïsi, and declares that it was at once bought up and cancelled by the French Government, but that, on the outbreak of the war, it was immediately reprinted. With regard to this pamphlet (which was published for, and addressed to, the very limited and special public who were readers of Gustave Hervé's *Guerre Sociale*, which was at that time still definitely anti-militarist): firstly, it was not accessible to the general reading public; secondly, it never went beyond the first edition; thirdly, it was never objected to by the French Government; and, fourthly, it was not reprinted after the outbreak of the war. In all probability, the unsold balance of the first edition is still reposing in the offices of the *Guerre Sociale*. But the anti-English tendency of the pamphlet was so seductive to Herr Schiemann that his imagination accords it the honour of State proceedings, and represents Monsieur Délaïsi, who before the war was scarcely known outside Paris, as the one enlightened intelligence in France. That this same Délaïsi, in his speeches and writings, pleaded energetically for an understanding with Germany is a fact which Herr Schiemann naturally ignores, since this second aspect of the man would not harmonise with his picture of a France frantic for *revanche*.



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German celebrity that he should dare to serve us up such a hotch-potch of nursery-tales as an answer to, and a refutation of, a clearly reasoned work, which may have its faults, but which, after all, is not to be disposed of by the back-stairs gossip of European diplomacy? Why did he entitle his pamphlet "A Slanderer," when he not only does not examine the most important section of the alleged slander, but even admits, in his incoherent history of the events leading up to the War, that Germany is waging a *preventive* war, thereby indirectly corroborating the statements of the author of "J'Accuse"? It is a stain upon the reputation of German scholarship that one of its representatives should be seen banging his fists on the table and pouring forth such ignorant twaddle, just as if we were simpletons who had only to believe whatever Herr Schiemann chose to describe as "overwhelming evidence."

But we are not simpletons, and we therefore maintain that, since the Herr Professor still owes us a proof of his assertions, since he

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has jumbled together in a worse than unscientific fashion an extremely futile and subjective history of the events leading up to the War (which, even if it were intrinsically valuable from beginning to end, would still prove nothing against "J'Accuse"), and, into the bargain, by means of his own peculiar professorial logic, argues that "*preventive*" really means "*defensive*" (thus indirectly corroborating the accusations of the "slanderer"), it would not be a misprint if the title of his book were also appended as its signature.

\* \* \* \* \*

The pamphlet by the field-grey academician demands even less serious examination from the point of view of the refutation for which we are seeking.

It is a regrettable fact, though no doubt a dispensation of Providence, that in our German academicians, for all their learning and their earnestness, there is always a touch of the ridiculous. This one, for instance, in the very first line, is seized with horror that anyone should exist capable of writing such a book

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("so ein Buch"). In fact, the book distresses him to such an extent that he feels drawn to it with "that mixture of horror and loathing which impels us to the spot upon some lonely road where an unexpiated murder has been committed."

This romantic and gruesome phantasy is pervaded not only by the servility which leads so many German academicians to confuse loyalty to one's King with love of one's country, but also by a prepossession which makes discussion absolutely impossible.

Let us, then, leave this gentleman the academic joy of having contributed his log to the wood-pile on which "J'Accuse" is burning. We respect the superstition of old people, even when it evokes a smile. Let us respect the field-grey temper of this academician, who, to be sure, is not yet old, but has already learnt to wriggle for the bait upon which at some future date will glitter, we trust, the highest honours of the Royal Prussian Academy of Learning.

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The "Reflections of a Swiss Neutral on the Book 'J'Accuse'" are unfortunately, for the most part, only reflections on the unpatriotic depravity of the writer. This neutral, too, was inspired by an inward horror at the vile-ness of a man who should dare to bring an accusation against the Government of his country. From the fourth line, in which Herr Weber (the author of these "Reflections") speaks of the "arrogant tone and unreliable statements of the book," we guess that here again we need not expect to find any genuine discussion. And, in fact, Herr Weber contends on the third page that this "J'Accuse" fellow cannot possibly be a German patriot; he even discovers that "every line of his work breathes hatred of the Germany which had grown so strong and powerful since 1870."

What has impelled this neutral to give so much prominence to the question of the sentiments of the author—a question which, in the first place, is alien to the discussion, and, in the second place, does not in the least



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concern a neutral—remains his own secret, regarding which we may form our own theories.

And then the logic with which Herr Weber assails the book! To the statement of the author of "J'Accuse" that Germany is waging a war of aggression, he replies, for example, with a toast of the King of Italy (at Naples, on March 16th, 1914), in which William II. is celebrated as "the strongest bulwark of the peace of Europe"; and then with a telegram of Victor Emmanuel to the Emperor of Austria, in which the latter is assured that Italy will maintain an "attitude of sincere friendship" towards Austria-Hungary. "Would the King have used such words of a frivolous disturber of the peace of Europe?" demands our neutral with a simplicity which is almost disarming. He regards the documents discovered by the German Government in Brussels as "historical documents of incontestable value for anyone who loves the truth," and he cites a report of the Belgian Minister at Berlin, dated May 30th, 1908, which, in his opinion,

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"affords decisive evidence in regard to the origin of the War."

What are we to make of it? Now the question of the responsibility for this War is decided by a royal toast dating four months before its outbreak, and now by the report of a diplomat dating six years before its outbreak. But, in this case, I will not withhold my own contributions to the argument. I therefore refer Herr Weber to the noteworthy fact that, in the 'eighties, a certain Déroulède openly preached a war of *revanche* against Germany, and that, even as early as at the time of the Thirty Years' War, France leagued herself with Sweden in the most malicious way, with a view to compassing the destruction of Germany. Space unfortunately does not permit me to bring forward still further proofs of the mendacity of the book "J'Accuse." Nevertheless, it is sufficiently clear from the facts adduced by Herr Weber and supplemented by myself that the hypothesis of the author of "J'Accuse," namely, that Germany and Austria-Hungary in the

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period between July 23rd and August 1st, 1914, intentionally provoked the War, cannot be anything else than an infamous lie. Anyone who fails to see that, as a result of these historical facts, no other course lay open to Germany on August 1st, 1914, than to declare war on Russia is simply a blockhead.

Just as Weber, a late Judge of the Confederation, seems to be entirely ignorant of the fact that a crime cannot be excused on the plea that the culprit knew that another man intended to commit the same crime and wished to forestall him, he seems to be equally ignorant that a crime cannot be justified by insisting on the very dubious past of the victim of it. The manner in which he deals with the documents discovered in Brussels not only amounts to a justification of Germany's violation of the neutrality of Belgium, but also shows that what he is presenting us with is merely an uncritical repetition of the statements of the German Press. What would he say of a Belgian who, in the event of the violation of the neutrality of Switzerland by one of

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the Great Powers, should bring forward the documents which that Great Power would certainly discover in Berne as "incontestable evidence," and should deduce from them that Switzerland was not really neutral, but that she had sold herself, and consequently only deserved her fate? As if there were not everywhere and at all times people who make it their business to cast aspersions on the victim of a crime with so much persistence and ingenuity as to convey the impression that a service has been done to humanity, and that the criminal is, in fact, a hero who has relieved the human race of an encumbrance. Such Jesuitical and juridical devices, with the help of which a counsel frequently succeeds in talking away the central issue of a debate in a court of justice, may deceive the vulgar multitude (especially if they are precluded from reading any other version of the story), but not the serious logician, and still less the honest neutral. We should have expected from a genuine neutral that he would have listened with some scepticism to the defence of the Imperialist advo-



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cate; our Swiss, on the contrary, demonstrates such loud and unquestioning approval that one might almost imagine that he belonged to the *claque* of the Berlin Court Theatre.

After Herr Weber has devoted eleven pages to narrating the history of the events leading up to the War after his own fashion (Imperial toasts and telegrams, Belgian documents, and a book by an English labour leader published in 1912), he makes a feeble attempt in the remaining nine pages to examine the questions actually propounded in "J'Accuse." But since any adequate examination would be impossible in the space of nine pages, all that he actually does is to make a tour of the subject and then leave it. To anyone who still had any doubts on the subject it must now have become clear that this Swiss is a secret votary of Imperialistic methods and of the divine right of kings. For instance, on page 14 he declares very modestly: "It might well be suggested that Serbia could have been punished by other effective means . . . but I do not presume . . . to reproach Austria with

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lying and trickery when she solemnly declared before all Europe that she would not seize so much as a square foot of Serbian territory. . .”; while on page 19 he asserts very positively : “And the *feeling* of Kaiser Wilhelm that it was incompatible with the honour and dignity of Austria that a question concerning her relations with Serbia should be submitted to the decision of a conference, was certainly justified.” In other words : I, a republican, have much too sacred a respect for the diplomacy of Austria to venture upon a criticism of her conduct ; and, on the other hand, by reason of this same respect, I look upon it as quite natural that the “feeling ” of a single individual should decide absolutely the question of peace and war in Europe. This servile obeisance before the views and judgments of those in high places may do for a Prussian district councillor, but we could willingly forgo it in the free citizen of a highly developed republic. If Tell and Winkelried and Bubenberg had treated the Austrian dynasty with the same respect on the several occasions in the Middle Ages when

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the latter set out to "punish" the "machinations" of the Confederacy (history is constantly repeating itself, as Nietzsche says), Switzerland at the present day would be, not a free democracy, but a kind of Austrian Helvetia. Anyone who, like Herr Weber, turns the writing of history into a prostration before the great ones of the earth is reduced to regarding us as cattle to be slaughtered and enslaved for "higher ends," and the Winkelrieds as the hooligans of the world's history.

The strangest thing, however, about Herr Weber's pamphlet is the grandiloquent and patriotic conclusion, which gives the impression that it might have been composed by the editor of the *Deutsche Tageszeitung*.<sup>1</sup> "Such statements as these [those of the author of "J'Accuse"] could only come from a degenerate son of his fatherland!" exclaims Herr Weber with pious indignation.

I could scarcely believe my eyes. Can it be, then, that this moralist knows nothing of the

<sup>1</sup> See note on p. 58.

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sad history of intellectual freedom in Germany? Has it never been brought to the knowledge of this Swiss that nearly all those whom we revere as the greatest spiritual heroes and the most ardent patriots of Germany have been slandered and persecuted during their lifetime as "degenerate sons of their fatherland"? Ernest Moritz Arndt,<sup>1</sup> for example, who to-day is regarded, even by our blood-and-iron fanatics, as a pattern of true German patriotism, was for years denounced to the German public as a rebel and a slanderer. Gutzkow,<sup>2</sup> an ornament of German literature, suffered imprisonment for his opinions. Jahn,<sup>3</sup> the father of German athletics, one of the most courageous patriots concerned

<sup>1</sup> Arndt. See note on p. 42.

<sup>2</sup> Karl Gutzkow (1811-1878) was the author of several brilliant romances and plays, including "Die Ritter vom Geist" and "Zopf und Schwert." His liberal ideas in religion led to the complete banning of his writings for a time, and brought him a term of imprisonment (1835).—ED.

<sup>3</sup> Jahn. See note on p. 41.



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in the rising of 1813, was for years imprisoned as a demagogue and placed under humiliating police supervision. Fritz Reuter,<sup>1</sup> one of the greatest German poets of the last century, was sentenced to death for his labours on behalf of the German Students' Association, then let off with thirty years' imprisonment, and finally restored to freedom after serving seven years of this sentence. And so with every other champion of the German ideal of freedom—Börne, Laube, Herwegh, Wienbarg, Freiligrath, Prutz, Pfau,<sup>2</sup> &c. Very long and unspeakably sad is the list of German poets, thinkers, and patriots (I do not even

<sup>1</sup> Fritz Reuter (1810-1874) was author of some of the most humorous and racy stories of country life in German literature. He wrote in the *Plattdeutsch* dialect. "Ut mine Stromtid" is his best-known work.—ED.

<sup>2</sup> Ludwig Börne, Heinrich Laube, Ferdinand Freiligrath, Georg Herwegh, and the others mentioned belonged to the "Young German" Liberal movement of 1815-1848, and had all to endure exile and the banning of their writings in Germany.—ED.

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include Heine among them) who have had to endure abuse and ignominy, imprisonment and exile, merely because they felt and expressed democratic-republican sentiments. Is Herr Weber aware of the scandalous fact that the composer of our national hymn, "Deutschland, Deutschland über Alles" (Hoffmann von Fallersleben)<sup>1</sup> endured for years the most cruel persecution from the German Government, who were not satisfied until this "degenerate son of his fatherland" had taken refuge in Mecklenburg? And that little change has taken place in Germany since the time of Metternich<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> August Heinrich Hoffmann, born at Fallersleben, 1798, wrote the famous national song, "Deutschland über Alles," in Heligoland, 1841. He was deprived of his Professorship of German at Breslau in 1841 for some of the sentiments expressed in a volume of *Unpolitische Lieder*, and had to endure much privation and annoyance for some years thereafter. He died in 1874.—ED.

<sup>2</sup> Klemens Lothar Menzel, Fürst von Metternich (1773-1859), presided at the Vienna Congress, 1815, and was Foreign Minister of

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and of the Socialist legislation is proved by the case of Hauptmann among many other incidents of the last century. Hauptmann, Germany's greatest living poet—who at the present moment is already decorated with the Order of the Red Eagle, that is to say, who is far from possessing the intellectual courage of his forerunners—was brutally reproached by the German Crown Prince a year before the beginning of the War (on the occasion of the prohibition of his Breslau festival play) as a degenerate son of his fatherland.<sup>1</sup> We may confidently

Austria from that date to 1848, when he was driven out by the revolution. He was the soul of the reactionary and despotic influences which prevailed on the Continent after the fall of Napoleon I. The Viennese police once distinguished themselves under his *régime* by confiscating a new edition of Copernicus because the title of the volume began with the words "De Revolutionibus"—the movements of the heavenly bodies being the "revolutions" referred to.—ED.

<sup>1</sup> Gerhart Hauptmann, the most distinguished figure in contemporary German litera-

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assert that the terror manifested by the Prusso-German Government at any kind of intellectual freedom has at all times been so puerile that a German cannot so much as dot the "i" of the word "republic" without at once being howled down as a "degenerate son of his fatherland."

A degenerate son of his fatherland! If this alleged free Swiss had a little less respect for Prussian State discipline and a little more sense of the ridiculous, he would not have written as he has. Yes, he might certainly very well have spared us his "reflections." In his exceedingly un-Swiss eagerness to bow down before German official ideas, he proceeds to launch a terrible anathema against

ture, a Silesian by birth (1862), was commissioned to write a commemorative drama of *Festspiel* to be performed at Breslau in 1913, the centenary of the Battle of Leipzig. The play on being produced was found to lay more stress on the popular uprising of 1813 than on the part played by Prussian princes or generals, and the Crown Prince insisted on its withdrawal.—ED.



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the author of the detestable work (the word "degenerate" in particular he emphasises in capital letters). He has only succeeded in provoking a smile. And inasmuch as the "degeneration" to which Herr Weber refers has always been in Germany a sign of greatness and originality, his anathema is almost in the nature of a high compliment to the author of "J'Accuse."

\* \* \* \* \*

Among the many articles which have been published in Germany in answer to "J'Accuse," I cannot forbear to mention the very curious article, "A German Ephialtes," which was published in the German periodical *März* (September 18th, 1915), and which was from the pen of the Socialistic Vice-President of the Austrian Chamber of Deputies, Herr Pernersdorfer. This article is typical of the present much-discussed "reevaluation of all values," not in the sense in which Nietzsche intended it, but in the sense in which Potsdam has effected it in the case of those who were yesterday her most outspoken enemies. Moreover, Herr

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Pernerstorfer does me the honour of making a comparison between my own book,<sup>1</sup> published in May, 1914, and "J'Accuse"; he cites me as in some degree an instance of how far a freedom-loving German may prosecute his criticism without incurring the danger of being put in the pillory as an unpatriotic ruffian.

It is a satisfaction to me that, in spite of my severe criticism of the German Empire, I should still be accounted by Herr Pernerstorfer not only a German, but even an "apostle of freedom." I was therefore all the more astonished at the patriotic emotion, bordering on hysteria, with which this Socialist regards "J'Accuse," an emotion rather befitting the president of some paltry provincial war society. To be sure, he admits that the conduct of the Central Powers in this War lends itself to criticism on various heads (and especially in the matter of the violation of Belgium's neutrality), and that, for the purpose

<sup>1</sup> "Die französische Demokratie, sozialpolitische Studien aus Frankreichs Kulturwerkstatt" (Duncker and Humblot, Munich).

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of making a critical analysis of "J'Accuse," it would be necessary to investigate the individual statements contained in it. Instead, however, of doing this, or of at least promising us an adequate investigation of the book at a later date, Herr Pernerstorfer is seized with an attack of Teutomaniac wrath. He searches out the most obscene words in which to give vent to his indignation, and finally exclaims, in the bitterness of his anger, that "the simplest and most natural thing to do would be to dispose of the author of the book 'J'Accuse' with a well-merited kick."

As if the book could be "disposed of" by this kind of horse-play! Herr Pernerstorfer ought to know that abuse is not argument, and that, in fact, such abuse has often been a proof that the victim of it was in the right. Also Herr Pernerstorfer should consider a little the curious impression made by such patriotic extravagance coming from a Socialist. For the Socialists, who during the last forty years have threatened all kinds of revolutionary intentions and have scoffed at and

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fought against the national idea as "*bourgeois* stupidity," are certainly playing a comic rôle if they are to-day to perform the function of chuckers-out on behalf of those whom they were accusing only yesterday of exploitation, chauvinism, and superficiality. I could show Herr Pernerstorfer articles in which (at a time when such things were still permitted) he made merry over those narrow-minded people whose highest ideal was their fatherland. But when it came to the point, when the Internationalists at length had an opportunity of carrying out their pre-arranged programme, and of showing those horns and claws of which they had bragged all over Europe until everyone was sick of them, lo and behold! these revolutionary rams suddenly transformed themselves into harmless sheep, prepared to allow their last vestige of wool to be shorn for the purpose of keeping warm that class-domination which had once been so shamefully abused.<sup>1</sup> To be sure,

<sup>1</sup> Read, for example, the stirring appeal, containing the most scathing indictment of the Austrian Government, which was issued by the Social-Democratic



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we bear no ill-will to Herr Pernerstorfer because he is one of the shorn, but it certainly strikes us as rather ridiculous that he should now have become more German—that is to say, more rowdily patriotic—than the Pan-Germans. And although Herr Pernerstorfer's abusiveness recalls that of a police functionary, in whose case curses and kicks are rather a part of his calling than an expression of the heart, all the same, we do not believe that Börne was right when he declared savagely that the people of every nation were slaves, but that the German people were lackeys.

We would rather believe that Börne's bitter scorn is not applicable to Herr Pernerstorfer, and we confidently hope that he will rend asunder the terrible book in the character of a

section of the Austrian Imperial Council on the publication of the ultimatum to Serbia, and in the composition of which Herr Pernerstorfer, as one of the principal leaders of this section, doubtless had a hand. The attitude which he adopted towards the same Government a few weeks later, and, as we see, maintained with gusto, is in the most glaring contradiction with this appeal.

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respectable representative of the "materialistic conception of history." Should he fail to do this, there would certainly be no lack of people to point out that Herr Pernerstorfer's attitude furnished an illustration of Börne's assertion, and this, in the interest of his good fame, I should sincerely regret.<sup>1</sup>

\* \* \* \* \*

For the sake of completeness we must refer

<sup>1</sup> Since Herr Pernerstorfer entitles his article "A German Ephialtes," I may venture to point out that there are two Ephialtes in Greek history—a rogue who betrayed to the Persians the footpath to the pass of Thermopylæ, and a sturdy democrat who by his uncompromising attitude set a limit to the omnipotence of the Areopagus and helped on the work of the Athenian democracy. Both have been regarded as traitors to their country—the first by every decent man in modern as well as in ancient times, the second only by the persons in power in his day, who took the precaution of having him assassinated.

Things have not changed much since then. The Ephialtes of the *second* order are regarded now, as they were regarded then, as traitors to their country. Only that at the present day (as is proved by the case of Liebknecht) they are murdered by their own comrades. More arrogant, more positive, more autocratic than ever, the modern Areopagus gazes insolently down upon the Fatherland, for over it Pernerstorfer and his like are mounting zealous guard.

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here to the pamphlet, "The Origin of the World-War in the Light of the Publications of the Powers of the Triple Entente," by Dr. Karl Helfferich<sup>1</sup> (Georg Stilke, Berlin). It is, to be sure, not a direct reply to "J'Accuse," but, since its author is the present German Secretary of the Treasury, we may regard it as a semi-official attempt at self-vindication on the part of the Government.

Unfortunately, this attempt is incomplete. Was this due to indolence, or the sense of a clear conscience, or want of time, or under-estimation of his readers' competence to form their own judgments? In any case, Dr. Helfferich dates the origin of the War from July 31st, and tells us on the second page of his work that it was Russia who definitely kindled the conflagration, and that it was "her general mobilisation, ordered by the Czar in the early morning of July 31st, and his refusal to revoke

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Karl Theodor Helfferich (b. 1872) was a Professor of Political Economy, who became Director of the *Deutsche Bank*, and is now German Finance Minister.—ED.

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this measure when requested to do so by Germany," which was the direct cause of the War.

But Dr. Helfferich knows as well as we do that the crisis which led to the World-War did not make its first appearance on July 31st, but on July 23rd. Before, therefore, we discuss the question of the Russian mobilisation (which, in any case, was a result of antecedent events, and not a cause in itself) we must ask him to be so kind as to discuss the numerous other diplomatic incidents which preceded the outbreak of the War.

For instance, I do not understand why Dr. Helfferich examines in such detail the telegrams which were exchanged between the Czar and William II. on July 30th and July 31st while he makes no reference whatever to the Czar's telegram of July 29th containing the proposal that the Austro-Serbian dispute should be submitted to the Court of Arbitration at the Hague? Was such a proposal, emanating from such a source, considered beneath notice?



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In regard to the proposal made by Grey (English Blue Book, No. 88; German White Book, p. 11) that Austria should content herself with the occupation of Belgrade as a pledge for a satisfactory settlement of her demands, Dr. Helfferich remarks: "This proposal was transmitted by Germany to the Austro-Hungarian Government, with a *recommendation*; likewise by the French and English Ambassadors to the Russian Government (French Yellow Book, No. 112)." We are delighted to have this information, because "J'Accuse" declares that no such recommendation was ever made by Germany. But, in order to enable us definitely to proclaim the statements of "J'Accuse" as falsehoods, Dr. Helfferich must name the document which (like No. 112 of the French Yellow Book in the case of Russia) affords proof that Germany did recommend the proposal to Austria. In view of the lamentable fact that the whole world is striving to lay the blame for the World-War at the door of Germany, Dr. Helfferich should realise that the bare assertion that Germany

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recommended this proposal to Vienna is not sufficient.

Dr. Helfferich declares further: "The [above-mentioned] proposal [from Grey] had not yet been answered by Austria, and Russia also had not yet published her views in regard to it, when the general Russian mobilisation was effected." But, your Excellency, if a person is really eager to find some means of preserving the peace (and surely this was the case with Austria) he answers such proposals *immediately*. In this instance there was absolutely nothing for Russia to reply to. But that Austria, from July 29th to July 31st, should have found no time for an answer, although she knew that the whole of Europe was waiting in agonised suspense, hoping for a peaceful adjustment of the dispute—this is such an incredibly dangerous dilatoriness that she must surely have had some really weighty reason for it. If anyone should say: "I have not yet paid up, and already the bailiff is in my house," there would be something a little comic in this "not yet." But when Dr. Helf-

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ferich merely writes: "Austria had not yet answered and already Russia was mobilising," there is an element of real tragedy in his "not yet," because on this "not yet" the peace of the world hung suspended for three days. Why does Herr Helfferich mock his readers with these tragi-comic "not yet's"? Is it possible that he does not realise that this "not yet" is at once an absurdity and an admission of guilt?

Space does not permit us to examine Dr. Helfferich's composition more closely, but it will be clear from what has been said above that it is serious in intention, but not in execution. For he promises us an examination of the subject "in the light of the publications of the Powers of the Triple Entente"; but he actually examines not one-fifth of those publications. This arbitrary selection and rejection is an insult to our much-extolled German thoroughness. Either we Germans are thorough, in which case we must refer to and discuss fully *all* the available documents; or else—as is apparently the case with Dr. Helf-

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ferich—we have not time for this, in which case we naturally convey the impression of shirking an unpleasant duty. In the interests of Germany's cause we therefore entreat Dr. Helfferich most urgently to take the time and pains necessary for the examination of *all* the documents. A drama is meaningless if only its final act is presented. The Russian mobilisation was only the final act in the diplomatic drama which culminated in the War. Since Herr Helfferich simply strikes out the first act, that is to say, makes the World-War originate from an end which has no beginning, he produces on the thoughtful reader the quite erroneous impression that he is Helfferich (*i.e.*, resourceful) not only in name, but also in deed.



## IV

WE have seen that the book "J'Accuse," no matter what fault we may find with it, is none the less a seriously written, logically constructed, substantial piece of work. The sales of the German edition already amount to 30,000 copies, and it has been published in French, English, American, Dutch, and Swedish translations, and reviewed in the Press of the whole civilised world.<sup>1</sup>

While, however, expressions of appreciation and genuine criticisms of this work have emanated from all the neutral countries (especially Holland, the United States, Sweden, and Norway), the answers to it which have emanated from Germany or the friends of Germany

<sup>1</sup> Moreover, Russian, Italian, and Spanish translations are advertised to appear shortly.

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have been, considered as impartial investigations of the truth, absolutely valueless. Any one who reads these answers with a patriotic predisposition in their favour will, if he has any intellectual integrity, be forced to admit that they are not only worthless from a legal point of view, but that the whole tone of them is absolutely frivolous. They give the impression of answers which have been written because, in view of the enormous sensation created by "J'Accuse," the necessity of some reply to the book was felt even in Germany. I only regret that the tone and logic of these replies must necessarily prejudice thoughtful readers rather in favour of "J'Accuse" than otherwise.

I say that I regret this fact because, as a German, I do earnestly desire that "J'Accuse" should be honestly and thoroughly refuted, that is to say, that the guiltlessness of the German Government in regard to this War should be incontestably *proved*, instead of merely asserted.

But even after the book has been genuinely

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refuted we must not merely put it on one side. The important thing in "J'Accuse" is not that it makes an accusation against Germany and Austria-Hungary, but, above all, that it does make an accusation. The legal standpoint taken by "J'Accuse" in dealing with the supposed instigators of the War is, in fact, something altogether *new* in the literature of war. Every true friend of peace who is resolved to combat war by other means than learned theories and systems of brotherhood will agree with him in principle.

Hitherto men have been under the spell of the heroes of war. They have looked upon war as an inevitable phenomenon which occurs periodically in the history of nations. The decision by battle has been regarded by the nations as a decision from God, and they have bowed themselves before it without question. Although now and then some murmuring was heard when the miseries of war became excessive, yet these murmurers never had the courage to treat war as a crime and the instigators of war as criminals. The enormity

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of the present War, which has developed into a world-catastrophe, promises to crush out the popular superstition concerning war. At the present day the whole world realises that modern war is a senseless stupidity and an unspeakable crime, which might easily be avoided with the aid of a little goodwill on the part of those who hold the reins of government. At the same time that "J'Accuse" boldly institutes proceedings against the originator of the War (in which it is to be hoped that he is mistaken concerning the guilty party), he breaks finally with the thousand-year-old tradition of the respect due from the nations to the majesty of war. At the same time that "J'Accuse" demands that the fate of the human race should henceforth be decided by a *criminal* judge, in accordance with universally admitted notions of right, he sets the most sacred right of present-day humanity (the right to be a free agent) above the irresponsible right of the supermen of war. In this respect "J'Accuse" is an expression of the national conscience of our time.



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In other words, in so far as we are Germans, it is a matter of the deepest concern to us that the accusations brought by "J'Accuse" against the German Government should be adequately refuted. On the other hand, in so far as we are pacifists and democrats, we are anxious that the proceedings instituted in "J'Accuse" should be carried through to a logical conclusion. We desire to know, and we must know, *who* was to blame for the War (for *what* was to blame we have known long since).

Starting from these two demands—the patriotic demand for an adequate refutation, and the pacifist demand for a systematic continuation of the inquiry into the question of guilt—I want in the following pages to discuss briefly the fashion in which we Germans ought to enter upon the discussion of this book, if we do not wish to convey the impression that Germany is under the intellectual dominance of mere brawlers. The conditions requisite for such a discussion are intellectual integrity and judicial impartiality—that is to say, the condi-

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tions observed by all honest patriots, historians, seekers after truth, and friends of peace.

I.—The history of the events leading up to the War does not in the least belong to the discussion. "J'Accuse" remarks very justly at the beginning of his third chapter: "The history of antecedent events up to 1914 evokes the 'strong suspicion' (as they say in criminal procedure) that Germany meant to have the war earlier or later. . . . Suspicion, however, is not the same thing as certainty. That which emerges from preceding events as a probability is not a proof of guilt. This proof of guilt can only be derived from the actual circumstances of the case—that is to say, from the diplomatic documents which describe the genesis of the World-War."

We need have no more talk, then, about antecedent causes, toasts, books, documents, and diplomatic ingenuities dating back to a time *before* July 23rd, 1914. To discuss them in this connection is to indulge in futile pot-house ranting, since all of them may be twisted

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and turned in such a way as to enable everyone to deduce from them just the conclusion that he sets out to deduce. We have a terrible example of this sort of thing in Professor Schiemann, who tries to make us believe that "preventive" is really "defensive," and that "Imperialism" is really "Pacifism."

II.—The sole question which has to be discussed and answered is: Who was it who proceeded from threats to deeds? Who was it who, in the twentieth century, had the criminal hardihood to let loose war upon Europe, not in words, not in carefully laid intrigues, not as a diplomatic threat and a possibility on paper, but war as an iron fact, as murder and arson, war in the most hellish sense of the word?

Since these fundamental questions (I cannot repeat it too often) can never be satisfactorily answered by ingeniously compounded histories of the events preceding the War, since certain German professors are not ashamed to approve the principle of the precautionary war, and by judicious lying to turn the precautionary war

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into a defensive war (a proceeding which is, of course, utterly incompatible with reasonable discussion), we can only arrive at an authoritative answer if (1) the diplomatic negotiations which immediately preceded the War are examined with judicial impartiality, and if (2) we find some standard of right universally valid for all parties, from the standpoint of which the proceedings may be conducted, and in the name of which justice shall be administered. Upon these suppositions "J'Accuse" poses, examines, and answers the following questions :—

What was the reason for the insulting tone of the Austrian ultimatum to Serbia, which made demands such as never before in history have been made to an independent State?

What was the reason for the blunt refusal of Austria when the Powers of the Triple Entente begged for an extension of time for the Serbian answer?

Why was the Serbian answer (which astonished the whole of Europe by its humility, and therefore promised a complete success for



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Austrian diplomacy) none the less refused by Austria?

Why would not Austria condescend to discuss the only points in the Serbian answer (5 and 6) which remained in dispute?

Why was Sir Edward Grey's proposal for a conference of the Ambassadors of the four Powers who were not involved in the dispute eagerly accepted by all the States with the exception of Germany and Austria-Hungary?

Why did Germany declare (German White Book, p. 9) that Austria "could not be summoned before a European tribunal"?

Why did Austria declare, when Grey showed the absurdity of this objection, that "she must decline the English proposal" (German White Book, p. 9)?

Why, when Germany had declined Grey's proposal and had proposed instead a direct negotiation between Vienna and Petrograd, did Count Berchtold declare to the Russian Ambassador that "Austria would neither recede from her position nor enter into any discussion in regard to the Serbian Note"

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(English Blue Book, Russian Orange Book, German White Book), and in this way nullify the proposal of his own ally?

Why did Herr von Jagow make no reply whatever to the proposal made by Grey two days after Austria's declaration of war to Serbia—namely, that Austria should satisfy herself with the occupation of Belgrade and the neighbouring districts as a pledge for a satisfactory settlement of her demands and allow to the other Powers time and opportunity for mediation between Austria and Russia?

Why did Austria herself make no answer either to Grey's first proposal, or to Sazonof's first proposal, while Herr von Jagow only replied curtly to the first suggestion for an agreement made by Sazonof (Russian Orange Book, No. 60) that it could not be accepted by Austria?

Why did Austria and Germany make no reply whatever to Sazonof's second proposal (Russian Orange Book, No. 67), which is in the nature of an amalgamation with Grey's proposal?

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Why did Germany never definitely counsel her Austrian ally to moderation in her conflict with Serbia, although it is actually admitted in the German White Book "that in this we were fully aware that in the contingency of an attack by Austria-Hungary upon Serbia Russia, too, might be brought into the arena, and that we ourselves, in consequence of our treaty obligations, might also be drawn into a war"?

Why did Germany speak with such insistence of a localisation of the Austro-Serbian dispute when, from the above sentence, it is clear that a localisation was an absolute impossibility, and that therefore salvation would have to be sought in its internationalisation?

Why was the dispatch of the insulting Austrian Note to Serbia approved in Berlin, although it was realised that Russia might intervene and that the result might be a European war?

Why did not Germany recommend to Vienna Grey's request that the humble answer

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from Serbia might at least be allowed to serve as a basis for further negotiations?

Why does the German White Book afford absolutely no definite proofs that (as the German Government subsequently asserted) Germany tried to pacify Vienna?

Why was Germany continually harping on the antagonism between Vienna and Petrograd, although it was perfectly clear that the difficulty was not at Petrograd, but at Vienna, and that Russia could not negotiate until Vienna had adopted a more conciliatory attitude?

Why does the German White Book (p. 9) expressly declare that Germany approved the principle of Grey's proposal for a conference of the four Powers, while it makes no mention of the fact that the Triple Entente were prepared to embody this principle in any form that Germany might desire?

Why does the German White Book omit the Czar's telegram of July 29th, in which the latter makes the proposal to the German Emperor that the Austro-Serbian dispute



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should be laid before the Court of Arbitration at the Hague?

Why was this important proposal neither answered by the German Government nor referred to in the German Press?

Why did not the German Chancellor answer Grey's invitation (English Blue Book, No. 101) appealing for such a joint effort in the interests of peace as had proved effective in the late Balkan crisis?

Why did Germany proclaim that the situation threatened a danger of war, and why did she dispatch to Russia on July 31st a 12-hour ultimatum, at a moment when the diplomatic negotiations were still in full progress and the world in general had gained the impression that things had taken a turn for the better?

Why did Germany, on July 31st, demand from Russia a demobilisation, while she did not make the same demand, at any rate in a modified form, of her Austrian ally, although she knew that the latter had likewise mobilised on the morning of July 31st, and thus might

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be quite sure in advance that Russia would not fall in with her request?

Why, above all, was it *Germany* who made this demand, and not Austria? Why did Germany, who hitherto had appealed so expressly for a localisation of the dispute, suddenly interfere in it, thereby herself internationalising the struggle and to a certain extent adopting an attitude more Austrian than Austria?

These are a few (but not all) of the preliminary questions which "J'Accuse," on the authority of the official documents belonging to the period of the critical eleven days, puts forward and examines before finally coming to the answer to the main question, which results, according to his view, in a verdict of "guilty" on Germany and Austria-Hungary.

It is possible (and as a German I wish with all my heart that it may be so) that "J'Accuse," after the fashion of all public prosecutors, has only gathered from the official documents just what, as a result of his political views, he wanted to gather from them. But this can

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only be proved against him by means of no less convincing documents and no less convincing methods and reasoning than those upon which he bases his accusations.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> In reply to a question of the deputy Liebknecht, in the session of the Reichstag of December 14th, 1915, whether the Government was willing to produce the official documents having relation to the outbreak of the War, and to institute a parliamentary Commission of Inquiry, the Secretary of State, von Jagow, with the approval of the House, made the following statement: "The Government does not intend to recommend the institution of a parliamentary Commission of Inquiry. The responsibility and the expiation concern only our opponents."

We do not understand. In more than one quarter the German Government is accused of being responsible for the War; for seventeen months she has been asserting her innocence, and declaring over and over again that Germany was the victim of a treacherous attack, and that she is waging a sacred war of self-defence. And yet now she indignantly repudiates the proposal for a serious investigation! Herr von Jagow ought to realise that it is not sufficient to keep on merely *asserting* the guilt of the enemies of Germany; this guilt has got to be *proved* by documentary evidence. The dogmatic tone in which the German Minister has declaimed all too frequently concerning the guilt of others, the bluntness with which he has refused any closer investigation into the question of guilt, have often produced in neutral countries the painful impression of wilful evasion and indirect

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We have seen that neither the professor nor the academician, nor the neutral nor the Socialist, has seriously examined a single one of the questions brought forward by "J'Accuse." The same may be said of all the other "answers" which have been published in Germany. The manner in which the authors of these answers set to work produces the very unfortunate impression that any serious discussion of the questions raised in the book would be painful to them, and that, in legal questions, they are incapable of counting up to three. With the pathetic gesture of

admission of guilt. We hope sincerely that, in order to wipe out this painful impression, Herr von Jagow will shortly be prepared to agree to the institution of a Commission of Inquiry. A man with a clear conscience (and we do not doubt that Herr von Jagow's conscience is clear) must seize every opportunity which offers itself for the demonstration of his innocence. One of the most important of these opportunities is offered by a parliamentary Commission of Inquiry.

On the other hand, it is devoutly to be wished that the German national representatives should cease to clap their approval, when the rules of modern legal procedure and the highest privileges of Parliament are so openly trodden under foot, as they have been by Herr von Jagow in this instance.



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superiority of the outraged patriot, they cry "Shame!" and "Murder!" upon the supposed traitor to his country, and then start composing their "Histories of the Events leading up to the War."

Now an accused person standing in the dock may very well be defended by pointing out his lack of education, his hereditary disabilities, his abnormal way of life, and other defects of his intellectual, physical, or social condition. The counsel for the defendant may rouse the sympathies of the jury by a moving description of the wretchedness of the prisoner's family life, of his hunger, and of the desperate state of mind which drove him to the act. But the judge, even if, after an examination into the antecedent history of the prisoner (which is naturally presented by the public prosecutor in quite a different light from that in which it is presented by the counsel for the defendant), he becomes convinced of the presence of extenuating circumstances, will none the less draw a very sharp line between these antecedent circumstances and the crime itself. He

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will say : This man contained within himself a thousand criminal instincts and motives for crime. Nevertheless, in the legal sense, he was innocent up to the day on which he committed his crime. We know that within every individual, within every party, race, class, or nation, there slumber potentialities and elements of crime. But if we were to accept the evidence of mere suspicion we should have to take the whole world into custody. Therefore it is not until it has actually been *committed* that an act can be considered a crime demanding that we should take action in the name of public peace and security.

Therefore we repeat once more : We do not wish to know either who is the author of "J'Accuse," or what are his views, or how his book came into being ; nor yet whether this or that State had this or that reason for mistrusting its neighbour (the reasons are thousandfold on all sides). But we do wish to know whether "J'Accuse" resorted to any dishonest methods in his analysis and valuation of the official documents (in the third chapter), or

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whether, on the contrary, his accusations and arguments are legally sound. We wish to know *who*, in those critical eleven days, committed the criminal act of provoking the War.

Meanwhile every other question is a side-issue. If it is made clear, as the result of an unprejudiced investigation, either that the author of "J'Accuse" was not impartial in selecting his documents, or that he gave them a wrong interpretation, then there is still time to pass sentence on him. But until this evidence has been secured we have no right to do so.

III.—From what has been said above, it follows as a matter of course that any idea of the justification of a "preventive" war is under no circumstances admissible. It is surely a disgrace that, in the twentieth century, there should still be men who can seriously and "scientifically" support this notion. And it is a disgrace to us Germans that countless German scholars should have come forward to defend it. Bismarck himself, who knew the

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ins and outs of these questions, more than once, with a clearness which admits of no misunderstanding, rebuked those criminal block-heads who in the 'eighties appealed to him to embark on a "preventive" war against France.

But the main concern of us modern pacifists and democrats is this: In the twentieth century there ought no longer, under any circumstances, to be two morals—one for the people at large, and the other for the State and its princes. Machiavelli is dead, dead finally and for ever! A nation, a State, a dynasty, are at the present day subject to the same moral notions and the same laws as the private citizen. They must conduct themselves like honest men, and if from this standard they are found wanting, they must, in the name of public peace and security, be arraigned before the court of justice just like any private criminal. They must not be allowed to plead in their defence any other reasons than those which are valid in criminal law. For at the present day there is no longer any *raison*



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*d'état*, any special law applicable to the State endowed with undisputed power to overrule the standards of ordinary private morality. Any vestige of it which still lurks in diplomatic documents and in the brains of certain scholars will be finally exterminated as a result of this War. Henceforth there will reign in Europe only one universally valid moral law, to which all alike are subject—the king and his dynasty, the citizen and his fatherland.

Discussions concerning divine rights, higher reasons, necessities-which-cannot-be-named-here, political imponderabilities, special privileges of the supermen—in short, the whole mediæval lumber and rubbish of *fait du prince*, *raison d'état*, &c.—are to be ruled finally and emphatically out of court. True, there still exist a host of learned bonzes who kneel before the purple of the tyrant, prepared to support the “scientific” justifiability of anything which their ruler may see fit. True, there exists the danger that these “learned authorities” on State law, supported by the

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Press, the police, and the rabble, may attempt to shout down the voice of the national conscience and to convert the legal proceedings into a comedy for the diversion of their masters. Yet it is to be hoped that, after this horrible catastrophe, all the serious scholars and scientists of the world will combine together to close once and for all the mouths of these reptiles, for on *this* point at least there must surely be absolute unanimity among all the decent members of the human race. What would be the result, for instance, of our admitting the plea of a "precautionary" measure as an excuse for the declaration of war by a State? All our modern notions of blame, responsibility, law, and punishment would therewith collapse completely. For then it would be open to every thief and assassin to come forward with the assertion that he had been obliged to steal and murder, because he knew very well that otherwise his victim (who wore a revolver in his belt, behaved in a suspicious manner, and so forth) would have attacked him. Or some enterprising "Captain" of

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Köpenick<sup>1</sup> might organise a robber-band on the plea that he was a superman with a lofty mission, and hence not subject to stupid *bourgeois* laws and regulations, which have no application to such supermen as himself.

A moment's reflection suffices to convince us that the notion of a "preventive" war passes into the realm of phantasy, and that, if we are to admit it as a valid excuse for a State, there will cease to be any question of crime, but only of acts committed either in alleged self-defence or by alleged supermen.

It is, as we have said, a matter for regret that, in the twentieth century, in the fatherland of modern legal science, we should still be compelled to force such self-evident truths as these upon the attention of those who deem them-

<sup>1</sup> Köpenick is a small town near Berlin where in 1906 a rogue named Wilhelm Voigt appeared in a captain's uniform, and, by the mere effect of this disguise, overawed the Burgomaster into handing him over the contents of the town treasury.—ED.

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selves the most distinguished representatives of Germanism. Will they never understand that it is *they* who have earned for us the epithet of "barbarians"? Will the Bernhardis, Keims, Schiemanns, Gelbsattels, Rohrbachs, Reventlows, Lassons, Hardens,<sup>1</sup> and their like, never

<sup>1</sup> Friedrich A. J. von Bernhardi, born 1849 in Petrograd; an ex-cavalry general, and author of the now celebrated book, "Germany and the Next War."

August Alexander Keim, born 1845 in Hessen, is a retired Major-General; an authority on military history, especially in regard to Napoleon. He was a contributor on this subject to the "Cambridge Modern History."

Dr. Paul Rohrbach, born in Lithuania, 1869, is author of a German "imperialistic" work, "Der deutsche Gedanke in der Welt," which has been very widely read in recent years.

Ernst, Graf zu Reventlow, a retired naval officer, born 1869 at Husum, is an author of some works of importance, including "Die englische Seemacht" (1906). He has been well known since the War as an advocate of "frightfulness." He is on the staff of the *Deutsche Tageszeitung*.

Adolf Lasson, Professor of Philosophy at



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feel ashamed to hawk about such theories as these?

Anyone who, like Herr Professor Schiemann, has the ill-judged temerity to answer to the book "J'Accuse": "Admitted, Germany did declare the War, but she was obliged to forestall her neighbours, since otherwise her neighbours would have forestalled her," deserves to have his house burnt over his head and then to receive the derisive explanation: "What else do you expect, my good fellow?"

Berlin, born 1832 at Altstrelitz, has distinguished himself since the War began by utterances so violent and so arrogant as to cause remonstrances even in Germany. Herzog describes him as a "zweihundertjähriger Mummiengreis," and declares that his lectures on philosophy have long been the mockery of his pupils.

Maximilian Harden is the pen-name of a famous erratic Jewish journalist, editor of *Die Zukunft*. He was born in Berlin, 1861. His real name is Max Witkowski. He has glorified the present War expressly on the ground that it is a war of aggression and conquest for the establishment of a great German Empire.—ED.

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Your conduct had been rousing my suspicions for a long time. You are a sly rascal. Your house was the resort of people who excited my disapproval. Besides . . . and then . . . as I have said, I could not wait until the plot which you had been hatching against me should be quite complete; I was obliged to forestall you as a measure of prudence. A collision between us was bound to come in any case; it was 'in the air.' My action was thus a measure of self-defence, dear sir, a stern and absolute necessity."

Every reasonable man will admit that such logic as this cannot be admitted in the present century, and that therefore it is just as vicious and outworn in its application to a State as it would be in the case of a private individual.

IV.—There is a certain class of very advanced thinkers who refuse to lay the blame for the outbreak of the War upon individuals, and who take infinite pains to shift the responsibility upon systems, inner causes, ideas, tendencies, higher powers—in short, so-called "imponderabilities." For instance, Dr. A. H.

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Fried,<sup>1</sup> one of the leading German pacifists, in his latest book, "The Restoration of Europe" ("Europäische Wiederherstellung"), declares that the World-War "was the logical consequence of the peace which we then possessed." Other pacifists, especially snivelling theologians, endeavour to hoodwink us with the notion that we were *all* to blame for the War, because we had lived and thought and worked in such-and-such a fashion. Others again—for example, the Marx school of Socialists—come to us with the ark of the covenant of the hallowed Marx,<sup>2</sup> and declare that the War was the inevitable result of an accursed capi-

<sup>1</sup> Alfred Fried, born in Vienna, 1864, founded the German Peace Society in 1892, and is author of many works on disarmament, international arbitration, and peace propaganda.—ED.

<sup>2</sup> Karl Marx, son of a Jewish lawyer, was born 1818 in Trier. He edited the Socialist paper *Vorwärts* from 1844 onwards. His work, "Das Kapital" (1867), has supplied modern Socialism with its theoretic basis. He died 1883 in London.—ED.

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talistic society. And so on. So many parties, so many "imponderabilities," severally responsible for the War.

Thus these pacifists and Socialists, with varying degrees of lucidity, and in accordance with their several political standpoints, declare the War to be a moral, social, demographic, or some other sort of necessity in the world's history. Apart from the notorious Imperialists and a few professors of theology, who look upon war as a divine institution and, like Moltke, scoff at "eternal peace" as a dream, "and not even a beautiful dream," all these people are of one mind in regarding the War as a crime against humanity and in insisting that its recurrence must absolutely be prevented. But since they cannot, or will not, or dare not conceive that the War was brought about by individual men, they produce all kinds of metaphysical explanations for it, and fancy that it would be sufficient to alter the system, &c., which in their opinion generated the War.

There is something about these advanced



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German intellectuals which recalls the actor who appears on the boards as a hero directing the movements of armies, while in the privacy of his home he is only a poor henpecked husband. Whereas they plume themselves before all Europe on the boldness of their ideas, the sublimity of their culture, or the profundity of their erudition, and appear to be directing all the hosts of progressives and revolutionaries, at home, in the privacy of Frau Germania's *ménage*, they are not permitted the tiniest suspicion of a republican idea. In the midst of their "intellectual treasures" and the blessings of their culture, they preserve a submissive silence on the subject of those private domestic miseries of which they are perfectly conscious, but of which they dare not speak openly. They are forbidden to think out to a logical conclusion the possibilities implied in Germany's still feudal constitution, for instance, to investigate its influence in determining war and peace as thoroughly and systematically as other imponderabilities. Their objective method of writing history entirely

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ignores the fact that almost the whole of German history (with the possible exception of the War of Liberation) is a history, not of a nation, but only of dynasties.<sup>1</sup> They cannot, or dare not, perceive that throughout the world's history the interests of a dynasty have always been in opposition to the interests of the people. Although the history of Prussia during the last hundred years furnishes a continuous chain of blatant proofs that the freedom of the dynasty can never be the same thing as the freedom of the people, they dare not so much as hint at this axiom, and even fall into a rage if anyone mentions it.

The consequence of this peculiar fustian heroism is seen in the sublime products of

<sup>1</sup> Even to-day they are still declaring that Germany is fighting for her freedom and culture, for the German idea, for free development, and other ideals. On the other hand, the German Chancellor and the *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* replied to the question, "What are the Germans fighting for?" with an enthusiastic "For King and Country!" The whole world continues to ask, but the learned German progressives remain silent.

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German scholarship and German intellectual gymnastics, behind the resplendent haze of which lurks the fear of Germania's tyranny. Even if in their hearts they regard the German constitution and German politics as antediluvian institutions, they none the less discover some bold and progressive-sounding foreign word which delivers them from the painful necessity of calling the thing by its right name. Frau Germania may treat them as subjects whose political rights evoke the derision even of Serbian farm-boys; they only talk the more loudly of their "intellectual treasures" and raise up yet more splendid palaces of ideas in the cheerless desert of aristocratic and autocratic omnipotence. When people like Professor Lasson assert that we are the freest nation in the world because we understand best how to obey, they fail to perceive that this fact involves any blame. And how desperately embarrassed they are if anyone inquires quite disingenuously: "And the republic? Is it not the logical consequence

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of all your science, the rational crown of your culture? Is not the republican form of constitution a stage in the general ascent of humanity? Can that be a fatherland in the best sense of the word where the people do not govern themselves and proudly and freely direct the course of their own history?" Either they fall into a rage at such "totally unscientific" questions, or else they show signs of nervousness, and answer loud enough for Frau Germania to be able to hear it in the kitchen: "*Deutschland über Alles!* It is the Hohenzollerns who have made Germany great."

This learned German wariness and circumspection which for centuries has roused the derision of the whole world could not resist the opportunity afforded by the War for favouring us with a thousand-and-one metaphysical theories of its origin. The philosophical ingenuity of our German scholars is as astonishing as the systematic way in which they invariably avoid going to the root of things or calling them by their right names. For to



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declare in so many words that war is the hereditary trade of despots, and that, in the modern world, this ghastly trade can only be plied with the aid of antiquated conceptions, such as, in the case of Europe, only survive in Russia, Turkey, Austria-Hungary, and Germany, is forbidden to the representatives of German civilisation. If, for instance, the Haeckels and Ostwalds and Euckens<sup>1</sup> under-

<sup>1</sup> Ernst Haeckel, Professor of Zoology at Jena, was born 1834 at Potsdam. His "Riddle of the Universe," in which he develops a monistic theory, regarding matter as fundamentally intelligent, is well known in England. He has written with exceptional violence against the Allies.

Geheimer Hofrath Wilhelm Ostwald, born 1853 at Riga, is a distinguished chemist, and editor of the *Monist*. He has written much on scientific and philosophic subjects.

Rudolf Eucken, Professor of Philosophy at Jena, was born 1846 at Aurich, in East Friesland. He received the Nobel Prize in 1908. He was regarded as the great ethical teacher of modern Germany, but supported the attack on Belgium.—ED.

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took to pursue their "monism" to such an honest and logical conclusion as they have taught us to do in the case of religious and cosmic problems, they would be forced to admit that there is also a "dualism" in the politics of absolute governments, and that it is just this "dualism" which is more dangerous to the peace of the world than any national antagonisms or system of armed peace. In the same way, the Scheidemanns, Südekums, Heines,<sup>1</sup> and their like, unless they intend to pursue some ostrich-like policy, must admit that one single feudal constitution must be in

<sup>1</sup> Philipp Scheidemann, a printer by trade, born in Cassel 1865, joined the Socialist Party and entered the Reichstag, of which he has been Vice-President.

Albert O. W. Südekum, born 1871 at Wolfenbüttel, is a Phil.D. and Socialist member of the Reichstag. He is author of various works on social subjects, and of "Darwin's Leben und Lehre," 1891.

Wolfgang K. W. Heine, a lawyer, born 1861 at Posen, entered the Reichstag 1903. He is author of several juristic works, and is a member of the Socialist Party.—ED.

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principle more dangerous to the peace of the world than ten capitalistic administrations taken together.

For war is never a "logical consequence" (as Dr. Fried suggests) or a "necessary result" (as the Marx school maintain). War is a *will*. Not the will of a revengeful God nor of any other supernatural power, but the will to power of individual men. This simple truth, however "unscientific" it may sound to many of my learned colleagues of the pen, is none the less the only genuine truth which we do possess in regard to war. It is as true to-day as it was in the time of Machiavelli. The exuberant will to power of the few individuals who still, by virtue of antiquated constitutions, enjoy an absolute political power—that is the virus of war. That and that alone has the power to transform the latent war-madness existing in certain classes of the population into an acute war-crisis. It is true, of course, that the struggle of capitalistic interests (as the Marxists assert) or national ideas (as the "*bourgeois* ideologues" declare) may help in kindling

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these bloody conflagrations. It is equally true that certain systems and tendencies and conditions—for example, secret diplomacy, a standing army, corruption of the Press by the caterers for war, &c.—may help materially to pave the way for war. But who can fail to see that all these things—capitalism, chauvinism, militarism, policy of expansion, dreams of revenge, secret diplomacy, &c.—are harmless and innocent until some absolute despot has the hardihood—the criminal hardihood—to convert the idea into a deed? It is not imponderabilities, tendencies of the age, Gods, or nations that set the match to the train which leads to these explosives, but individual men. The world's history furnishes abundant proof that the step from the menace to the act of war has, for the most part, been taken by ambitious individuals who have fished for laurels in the blood of the nations. The wars which have actually been determined upon by the people themselves, and which, therefore, have been truly sacred wars (for instance, the war of the Swiss Confederation against Aus-



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tria, the French Revolution against Prussia and Austria, and the Prussian War of Liberation), have been defensive wars in the best sense of the word.

In regard to the present World-War, no less, the whole world is possessed with the firm conviction that it was desired by individual men, and that at a given moment it lay in the power of these individuals to prevent it. Up to three days before the War large meetings were held in Berlin, Paris, London, Vienna, and Petrograd for the purpose of protesting against the War, and all the most advanced individuals and newspapers of the whole world insisted with one voice that all the nations were filled with the unanimous and ardent desire that peace should be preserved. From this, as well as from a hundred other circumstances belonging to those critical eleven days, it is evident that the nations were not swept into War by any supernatural power or other imponderability, but by men, men subject to the same physical appetites and needs as you and I, and who, by means of their unlimited and

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irresponsible power over the police and the army, criminally overruled the clearly expressed desire for peace of the nations concerned.

Moreover, we must consider that this oppression is accompanied at the present day by infinitely more hypocrisy than was the case in antiquity or the Middle Ages. For, up to the time of the French Revolution, war was regarded as the uncontested and uncontestable right of God-ordained princes. The latter waged war admittedly for private interests, just as a business man embarks on speculations which may procure him advantage. For this purpose they hired mercenary soldiers, and they never dreamed for a moment of appealing to the patriotism of their subjects. They plied their war-trade like honest despots, and so long as they only enforced the business of hacking and thrusting and shooting on those who rendered these services voluntarily and for pay, they had, after all, a perfect right to pass the time with these warlike adventures.

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Modern wars are entirely differentiated from these early wars by the fact that they involve the employment of forced soldiers and of patriotic catchwords. Insomuch as they compel millions of men to hack and thrust and shoot—men who, like you and me, feel an unconquerable loathing for these things, modern wars constitute the most criminal oppression of the masses that has ever taken place on the face of God's earth. It might have been expected that, with the substitution of national armies for mercenary troops, with the collapse of the old form of State, and with the new ideal of the modern constitutional State, the absolute right of the ruler in the matter of war and peace would disappear and its place be taken by a popular court of investigation. Unfortunately, this was not the case. It is the most monstrous, the most criminal, the most shameful stain upon our civilisation that, in spite of the fundamental alteration in the conception of the State and in the military organisation, in regard to the *technique* (if I may use the expression) of the

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causation and declaration of war nothing has been changed. Now, as before, the transition from a latent to an actual state of war depends upon the will of individuals; that is to say, these individuals adopt just the same attitude towards that "triumph" of the modern world—compulsory military service for all citizens in the name of a formerly unheard-of love for the fatherland—as the despots of the Middle Ages adopted towards their mercenaries. In this matter the civilised nations of Europe have not yet attained the right of self-government of the Red Indians. The Indians decide the question of war in a solemn war-council, in which every member of the tribe has a seat and a vote. But the civilised nations of Europe, although they allow their Governments to impose upon them universal military service, none the less (who can solve this riddle?) leave the decision in regard to war and peace—just as they did in the Middle Ages—to their chieftains. If the latter consider war to be necessary (and even at the present day they may be pursuing private interests by this means!), it



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is not until *afterwards* that they inform the members of their tribe that they have resolved upon war, with the subjoined threat that further discussion is now not only superfluous, but would be high treason, since the Fatherland is in danger.

For all these reasons modern war is not only the most terrible crime on the face of God's earth, but also (look at it how you will) the work of *individual* men, who take upon themselves the whole responsibility before God and men, for they have never lifted a finger towards the sharing of this terrible responsibility with their peoples.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> In the session of the Reichstag of December 14th, 1915, the Secretary of State, von Jagow, in reply to a question of the deputy Liebknecht, whether the Government was prepared to substitute for secret diplomacy a foreign policy subject to the control of publicity and to entrust the decision concerning war and peace to a national assembly, declared, with considerable asperity, that "the Government was not prepared to propose such an alteration of the constitution as had been demanded." This is as much as to say: It is a matter of indifference to us what the people wants; the Government alone is supreme judge in the question of war and peace. The people will

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Let us have done once and for all with those futile theories and cringing metaphysics according to which war is a necessity in the world's history, a logical consequence or a necessary result, and so forth, while the people who resolve and declare it are represented as the helpless tools of higher powers. Not only do we emphatically refuse to discuss such "imponderabilities" and "incommensurable factors," but we declare flatly that all those who in the twentieth century continue to make use of such arguments as these constitute themselves the protectors and guardians of the war-fury. For by their generalisations they dilute the question of responsibility until any answer

only have "equal rights" if the mysterious meanderings of diplomacy should chance to result in a war. Since Herr von Jagow declines in the name of the German Government to submit the decision in regard to war and peace to the people (who, none the less, now as before, are compelled to universal military service), it is not to be wondered at if we pacifists are more determined than ever in tracking down the *personal* responsibility for the War. Von Jagow's harsh refusal of Liebknecht's suggestion is a proof that the War has been, and is intended to remain, the private affair of the Government.

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sufficiently clear and definite to admit a practical application is rendered impossible. It would be difficult to afford greater satisfaction to the despots of war than by inventing the theory that war is not the offspring of any human progenitors, but that it has been inflicted upon humanity either by the grace of God or the machinations of the devil. In such mystical certificates of origin as these there is implied an indirect appeal to the war-despots and their successors that they should always keep in mind their supernatural mission, which requires that now and again humanity should be steeped in carnage, since otherwise it would be smothered in slothful peace; and there is, moreover, no question of any personal responsibility for the War.

We have had enough of such foul hocus-pocus; we ask to have done with such paltry metaphysics, which genuine reflection reveals as an abject grovelling before the great ones of the earth. We wish to know who are the men who have abused to such terrible effect the mediæval privileges, which they

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unfortunately continue to enjoy in the modern world in matters of war and peace. By summoning and sentencing these men before the bar of justice we shall bequeath to our, and their, sons a token that from this time henceforth a new era has set in, an era of free self-government of free nations.

V.—It is clear that, in discussing this question of guilt, every conventional patriotic sentiment and prejudice must be laid aside. The wars of early times only concerned two or three countries, and the question of guilt (if it came up for consideration) was the private affair of the individual nation concerned, which settled it as it was able or disposed to settle it. The present War, on the contrary, is a European catastrophe. Therefore, the question of guilt is no longer a national, but an international concern. Under these circumstances it would be childish to attempt to conduct the trial from a German, French, English, Russian, or Austrian point of view. Since the War is European (indeed, we might almost say universal), the inquiry into the question



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of who is responsible can only be conducted "in the name of Europe." Anyone, therefore, who is incapable of laying aside his patriotic prepossessions while the inquiry is in progress, on behalf of the interests of Europe as a whole, ought not to take any part in the discussion.

We are far from joining hands with those world-embracing 'revolutionaries' who maintain (or have maintained) that the national idea is a piece of "*bourgeois* stupidity," and that it is all one whether the workman be exploited by a Russian Grand Duke, or a Junker from east of the Elbe, or a republican potentate of commerce, since the exploitation is the same in each case. Rather are we convinced that love of country lives on in the heart of even the most crazy internationalist, if only in the shape of an inner partiality, a memory of home, a constant reversion of his deepest and most intimate thoughts to the land where his childhood was spent. But it is a long way from this natural sentiment to the blood-and-fury-breathing fanaticism of the super-patriots. It

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is demanded of civilised human beings in the twentieth century that, for the sake of their love for the fatherland, they should transform themselves into infuriated fanatics and traitors to their own nature. We are patriots in heart and soul, as long as we are not summoned to renounce our own private zeal for justice, truth, reason, and peace. That hinter-Pomeranian village magistrate who, for the reception of exalted personages, hastened to garb himself as a harlequin because some wag had assured him that "those gentlemen" had an extreme partiality for this costume, ought not to be accepted as the model of a perfect patriot. Patriotism and servility bear the same relation to one another as religion and superstition. It is not to be desired that we should make a fetish of our Fatherland. Anyone for whom the cry "The Fatherland is in danger" signifies a summons to renounce forthwith his critical faculty, his scientific caution, and his unbiassed search after truth, is no true patriot. And anyone who still finds words for the deification of his country's Government even when

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that Government is manifestly at fault, even when it is manifestly flouting all the laws of humanity (such a case is not difficult to conceive), is no patriot, but a miserable slave. A Government ought not to be a machine for dictating ideas to a nation. Was it not a King of Prussia who proclaimed himself the first servant of his State? We are not the spiritual slaves of our Government, but our Government is the first servant of the nation.

I have already remarked that love of country and bondage of the mind are not the same thing. Is it possible that, in the Fatherland of thinkers and logicians, we are to be denied the right to investigate the question of responsibility for this World-War in just the same way as any other question? Are we, in order to be esteemed patriots, to exercise our critical faculty and pursue our search after truth only on the lines prescribed by the Government? Is it possible that, in the twentieth century, a Government should dare to pronounce itself infallible, and to draw up articles of faith the non-observance of which

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is to brand a citizen as an "unpatriotic scoundrel"?

This cannot and must not be. For just because I am a German I would not, upon any inducement in the world, set my country higher than truth. The man who continues to defend the Government of his country, even when that Government is manifestly guilty of lying or brutality, is a fool. Right must remain right, even if thereby all the countries in the world be brought to ruin.

The supreme duty of every patriot is that he should keep his own courage high and assist in the triumph of truth and right. Truly it were a bad physician who, in the middle of an operation, should allow himself to be overmastered by physical nausea, and a cowardly patriot who should try to drown his fear of disagreeable revelations with loud yells of "Hurrah!" The desire of the true German patriot is for a noble and free and peaceful Fatherland. For him, Truth is no subject of the King of Prussia, nor is Right the dictate of Prussian State officials. He does not garb



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himself as a harlequin in order to curry favour with the great. He loves and defends his country, yet he does not drag other countries through the mire. He does not renounce his critical faculty, but he demands that his country should live in harmony with the laws of civilisation, humanity, and justice; for only then can he truly love her.

Therefore the true patriot will read the book "J'Accuse" to the end, just like any other book. The reading will possibly cause him pain, in so far as it will reveal to him matters of which he was ignorant. But he will overcome this pain. He will examine dispassionately the accusations and the evidence which it brings forward, and he will try to refute them. And if it should result that, despite every official assurance to the contrary, despite every infamy on the part of others, and despite this or that extenuating circumstance, the thesis of the book proves ultimately to be incapable of refutation, then he will, with a heavy heart, but he *will*, draw the necessary conclusion, and recognise in the author of

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“J’Accuse” that patriot who has rendered the most precious service to our Fatherland that could be rendered: he has proclaimed the truth.

To the discussion of this question of responsibility we ask the German to bring to bear his most distinguished qualities, his logic and his objectivity. Whoever should prevent us, as free citizens of a modern State, from seeking after the truth in the way that our great thinkers have taught us; whoever, as a German, conceives that, in this most important of all European questions of the present day, we should be influenced by any considerations of respect or deference whether towards dynasties, diplomats, or other human powers; whoever dares only to discuss the responsibility for the World-War according to the prescription and by the permission of the German Government, that man turns his *Germanism* into an *idiotism*, for which the honest patriot can feel only contempt.

For mark well! there is only one *Truth*, and it is capable of demonstration, provided, of

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course, that this demonstration is sought, not in Berlin, or Paris, or London, or Petrograd, but solely and exclusively in the name of Europe and in the universal sense of right of the modern world.

VI.—For the discussion of the questions brought forward by “J’Accuse” we must reject the standpoint of mediæval or dynastic theories of right, just as we reject the pathetic folly of patriotic surliness and indignation. I have already pointed out that, in the modern world, there can only be *one* morality for State and citizen, and that, for example, the theory of a “preventive” war is nothing else than a servile modernisation of the mediæval *bon plaisir* of the despot. The trial must therefore be conducted by duly authorised judges, and in accordance with the methods and the assessments proper to criminal cases; it must be conducted in the name of Europe and in the interests of the general welfare of Europe. Not the welfare of this or that dynasty, party, caste, religion, or world-conception may be allowed to serve as a criterion of right in this trial, but

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only the general welfare of the European nations.

A hundred years ago Napoleon, the Superman of War, was exiled to St. Helena because he had steeped Europe for twenty years in a welter of blood and horror. But Napoleon was unfortunately tried and sentenced, not by the nations of Europe, but by her princes. The judicial proceedings of the "Holy Alliance" were conducted, not in the name of the general welfare of Europe, but in the name and for the benefit of dynasties who were concerned for their own privileges. And since dynasties never execute the will of the people, but only the will of Providence, which enjoins upon them that they should stifle the presumptuous hankerings of their countries for free self-government, they organised a Europe after their own taste. They exiled a great man, Napoleon, in order to make room for a dozen little men. They organised peace, not as a lawful condition, but as a donation from God and His earthly representatives. War remained suspended over Europe, and its horrors



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were unchained as often and as long as these earthly despots gave the sign. Europe was a chess-board for royal players. But only in *one* case did a game end as a game of chess ought to end—with a checkmate; in the case of the others it was always a *remis*; the men were set up again, and another new game commenced, until finally, at the present day, this criminal passion for the game of war has caught in its toils the whole of Europe and has engendered the same condition, the same universal longing for deliverance from war, as prevailed at the time when Napoleon had driven all Europe to despair.

But this time we shall take care that it is no longer kings who sit in judgment over kings, that it is no longer merely a case of the expulsion of a rival by dynasties frightened for their own privileges. This time it will be the nations themselves who will decide concerning their future. If, in this, they exhibit no more intelligence than those individuals who represented their sovereigns in the year 1815, if they cannot bring into being a reason-

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able Europe, at any rate they will not have cause to cast reproaches on their sovereigns later.

In any case, in the course of this trial, an entirely new language will be employed, a language hitherto unknown to the dynasties and their servants. For instance, our neutral Swiss, who in the sentence quoted above referred to the "feeling" of William II. as a criterion for the policy to be adopted, would meet with a sharp rebuff if he used the word in this sense. In the Middle Ages, when, as we have said, there were neither conscript soldiers nor jeopardised fatherlands, the "feeling" of an individual absolute ruler may have sufficed for bringing about a war. But, at the present day, when the weal or woe of millions and the civilisation of Europe are at stake, the "feeling" of an individual must no longer decide, but must surrender to the feeling and the will of the people at large. Should such a ruler, in virtue of an alleged divine right, still endeavour to enforce his will, then he must be prepared to be called

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to account before the coming international tribunal.

A yet more typical example of the mode of discussion which must *not* be employed in this inquiry is furnished by the *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* of March 26th, 1915. To the English accusation (that Germany had made the War unavoidable by declining Grey's proposal for a conference of the four Powers) the following answer is made: "Germany declined the proposal for a conference because the affair in dispute concerned two Powers only, and because it would be incompatible with the *dignity* of her Austrian ally to regulate the measures which she might find it necessary to adopt as a defence against the criminal intermeddlings of a small neighbouring State, in accordance with the pleasure of other Great Powers not concerned in the quarrel."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This article practically amounts to a paraphrasing of the reason already given in the White Book (No. 12) for the refusal of Grey's proposal for a conference. "It is impossible for us to drag our ally before a European tribunal for the settlement of her dispute with Serbia."

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The "dignity" of Germany's Austro-Hungarian ally is a notion capable of such infinitely wide interpretation that it could never be admitted as a legal justification. If it is compatible with the "dignity" of Austria to employ diplomats who have been proved guilty of gross forgeries (*vide* the Friedjung trial and the Prochaska case),<sup>1</sup> then this "dig-

<sup>1</sup> The Friedjung case offers a parallel to the Parnell investigation in England. The Ban of Croatia, Baron Rauch, had instituted a charge of high treason against a number of Croato-Serbian politicians. It was discovered that the accusation was based on forged documents, and the accused were acquitted. Undeterred by this, the eminent historian, Dr. Friedjung, repeated the charges in the *Neue Freie Presse*, pledging his word as an historian and expert in documents that he could produce written evidence of his accusations. A libel action ensued (December, 1909), when it was found that he, too, was relying on forged papers supplied by one Vasitch. (See "The Hapsburg Monarchy," by Mr. C. Wickham Steed.) Herr Prochaska was Austrian Consul at Prisrend on the outbreak of the First Balkan War. Reports of his violent ill-treatment by the Serbians on



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nity" is certainly not incompatible with an arbitration by the European Great Powers. What is "dignity"? Consideration reveals that there are as many conceptions of "honour" and "dignity" as there are classes and private interests. When at the end of the fifteenth century a general peace was proclaimed, the robber-barons declared that it was incompatible with their dignity to abandon their arms and their feuds and to accept the judgments of ordinary civil law. They shouted and stormed that their good sword was their highest privilege received by them direct from God. To no

their entering that town were circulated by the Press Bureau of the Austrian Foreign Office, apparently with the object of creating a *casus belli* against Serbia. These reports were afterwards officially admitted to be wholly without foundation, a fact known to the Foreign Office at the time when they were circulated. The *Arbeiter Zeitung* wrote: "Who can believe that this unexampled scandal will fail to affect our international position? . . . The Prochaska case and its issue are equivalent to a lost battle for the Austrian State." See *The Times*, December 18th, 1912.—ED.

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purpose. They were finally compelled to realise that the safety of travelling merchants and the public peace of the country were more important than the dignity of aristocratic brawlers. They were obliged to submit. At the present day it would no longer occur to any noble to refuse the jurisdiction of a civil court on the plea of his peculiar aristocratic dignity.

In international life there will be, there must be, effected a corresponding revaluation of all such traditional conceptions. The "dignity" of Austria, the "prestige" of Germany, the "honour" of France, the "world-power" of England, and other such costly and quite vague and intangible notions, may be worth a great deal, a very great deal; but they are not worth the peace and tranquillity of Europe. When it is a question of millions of human lives and of thousands of millions of cultural values, it may be demanded in the name of humanity that such political imponderabilities should for a moment retire modestly into the background.

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Truly the world-conception of the diplomats is strange and in the highest degree dangerous; they refuse to accept an arbitration because the "dignity" of this or that State might suffer thereby. What would they say if a footpad were to declare proudly that his "dignity" forbade him to accept the decision of the court, and that he could not make his fate dependent upon the pleasure of other outside persons?

The editor of the *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* would doubtless burst into loud laughter at such a childish answer. I do not say that his answer to the English accusation is childish, but I venture to maintain that, if anyone, in the morning light of the twentieth century, refuses a conference which might safeguard the peace of the world, merely because the "dignity" of a country or of a dynasty is in danger, his conduct is criminal. When the whole of Europe is filled with trembling suspense, Austria must submit her dispute to the decision of the Powers who are not concerned in it, just as any private individual does

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when he submits a dispute with his neighbour to the decision of a court of justice. If the Government of a State conceives itself as too exalted to accept the impartial jurisdiction of Europe; if it is less concerned for the weal or woe of millions of civilised human beings than for the heedless pursuit of its own selfish interests; if, like the robber-barons of the Middle Ages, it claims a divine and irresponsible right to indulge in brawlings and feuds, then, in the name of the public peace and security of Europe, that Government must be brought to justice. For is it not true, dear reader, that, in our century, the dignity and welfare of Europe and her civilisation stand high above any diplomatic notion of the dignity of one of her States?

To repeat once again : The whole ideology and phraseology of incontestable "dignity," "honour," "special privileges," "divine missions," &c., have no application to the modern world. We should be forced to despair of humanity if it were incapable of getting rid once and for all of these dangerous tinsel-and-



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trumpery notions inherited from mediæval despots and diplomats.

We sincerely hope that the *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* may be able in the forthcoming inquiry to bring forward other reasons for the rejection of Grey's proposal. On the other hand, we confidently look forward to a time when German intellectuals shall cease to interpret the world solely by reference to dynastic dictionaries. After this War only the language of international law and of national welfare based upon free self-government ought to be employed.

## V

To sum up. The book "J'Accuse," no matter how we may criticise its thesis, has opened the debate on the question of the responsibility for the War. Since the writer accuses the Government of our country, and since this accusation has awakened echoes all over the world, it is absolutely necessary that we Germans should answer it with that thoroughness and downright honesty which have from all time been the pre-eminent virtues of our race. If, however (as has unfortunately been the case till now), we try to hush up the book or else to smother it with abuse, this proceeding may be taken to imply an admission of guilt.

If, on the one hand, it is urgently neces-

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sary that, on the part of Germany, the thesis of the book should be dispassionately and judicially refuted, on the other hand its significance would not end there. Rather, every loyal friend of peace must, as a matter of principle, participate in the bringing to trial of the instigator of the War. For the debate on the question of guilt demanded by "J'Accuse" is the most momentous undertaking that Europe has to accomplish if she means to rid herself of war. It is therefore urgently necessary that all Europe should realise the importance of such a trial, and not be misled by those numerous individuals who, consciously or unconsciously, obscure the question of guilt by all kinds of learned theories.

For these reasons, and because it is only by the conduct of this trial in accordance with international law that Europe can be safeguarded from fresh catastrophes, it is essential that it should be carried out in accordance with certain modern principles, namely :

- (1) War is in the modern world a crime, and

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its instigators are criminals in the legal sense of the word.

(2) The crime under discussion was committed during the period between July 23rd, 1914, and August 1st, 1914; histories of the events prior to this period afford, therefore, at the most no more than extenuating circumstances.

(3) The fact that an Imperialistic war of conquest, as the present world-catastrophe is declared to be by "J'Accuse," constitutes in modern Europe the most gigantic crime that human fancy could conceive, needs no further demonstration so far as we pacifists and democrats are concerned.

But also the mere notion of an objectively necessary or subjectively conceived, that is to say, an alleged "preventive," war deserves to meet with the most summary rejection and denunciation as a theory fit only for criminals and would-be criminals.

(4) Emphasis of the fact that wars are never engendered by an immaculate conception, but by the Will to Power of individuals.



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(5) The putting on one side of all patriotic prepossessions and conventional sentiments. Investigation in the name of Europe and of the general moral sense of the nations.

(6) The welfare of the nations as the sole admissible basis of discussion and the supreme goal.

Only after the resolute prosecution of this trial shall we have a Europe capable of organising such a condition of public peace as accords with human reason. Anyone who strives to establish such a condition without having first demanded the punishment of the criminal, anyone who is capable of appealing for assistance in the reorganisation of Europe to those who have hitherto declined to share the responsibility for war with their people, is setting a wolf to mind the sheep and constituting himself the protector of the war-fury.

In the name of the millions who have already fallen in this gigantic War, in the name of the millions perchance yet to fall, in the name of the public peace and security of Europe, in the

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name of the culture and civilisation of our earth, in the name of the inviolable, unwritten, and eternal right of the nations, I demand this trial and this punishment, and I demand them

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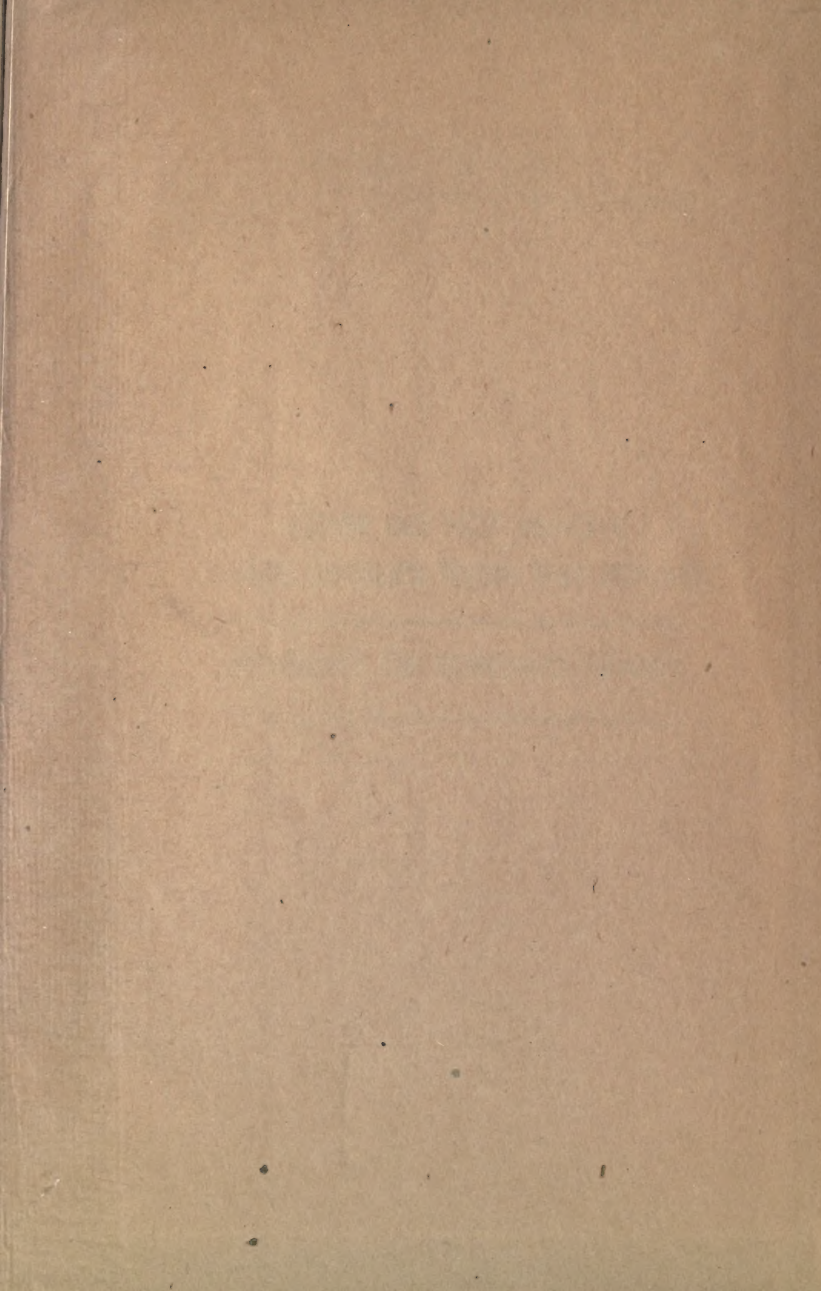
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