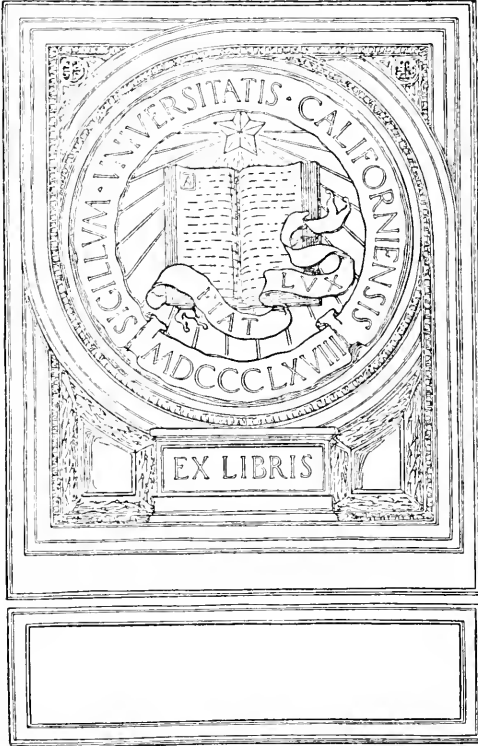


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# BRITAIN *versus* GERMANY

An Open Letter to

Professor EDUARD MEYER, Ph.D., LL.D.,  
of the University of Berlin.

Author of "England, her National and Political Evolution  
and the War with Germany."

BY

The Right Hon. J. M. ROBERTSON, M.P.

*Author of "The Evolution of States,"  
"War and Civilization," "The Germans," etc.*

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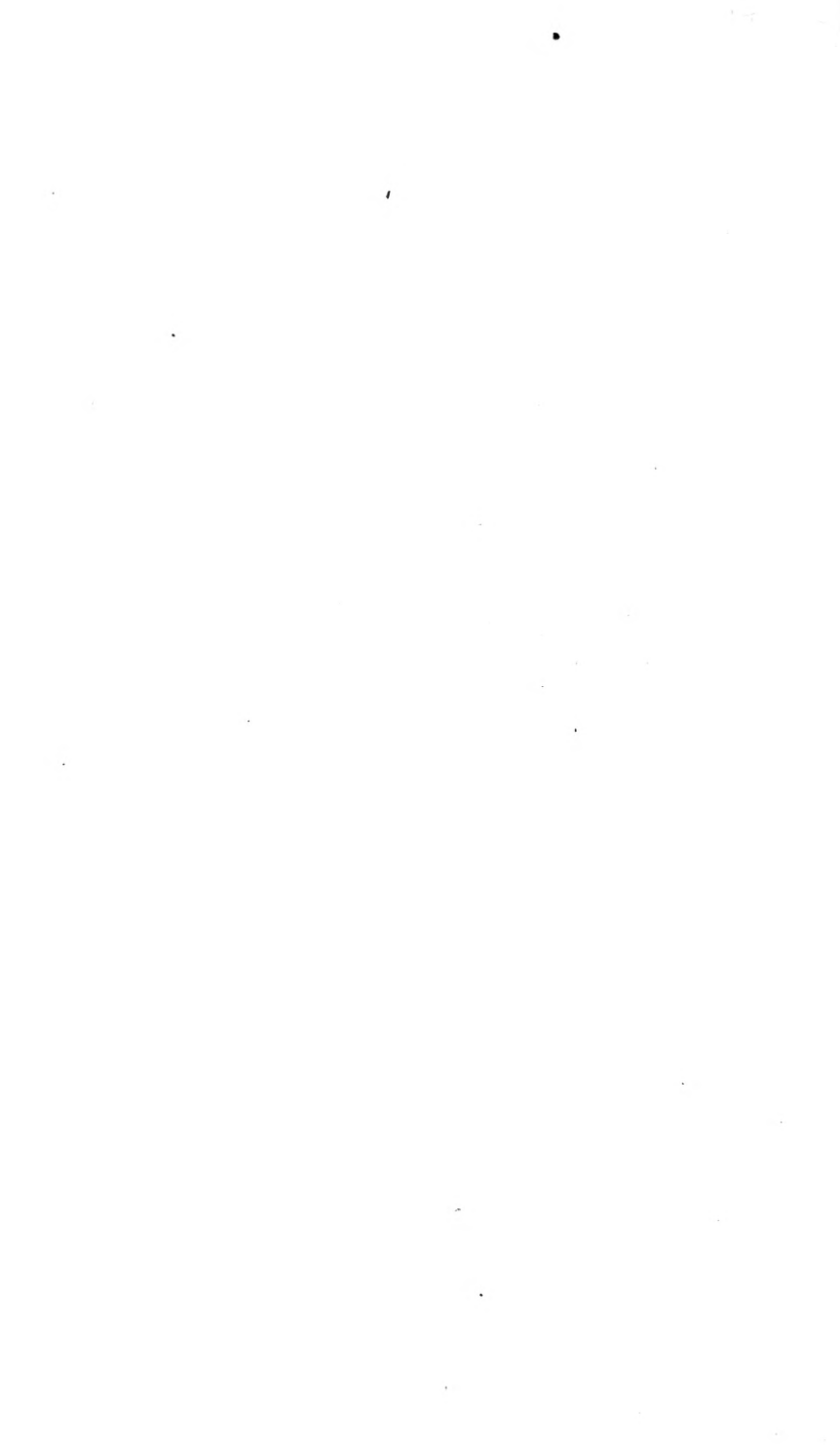








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1917



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# BRITAIN *versus* GERMANY

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of Berlin.

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTORY



EIN HERR,

I observe that your book, "England," has been translated and published in the United States by the firm of Ritter & Company, of Boston, who warmly recommend it in a preface in which they assert that "the Americans, who, as a whole, are readers of English literature only, have practically received their impressions of England and the English people exclusively from English sources—the *insider's* favourable view of his own state and his own people." This allegation indicates about as deep a knowledge of American life as most Prussian pronouncements do of English; but it need not detain us. The Americans are well able to speak for themselves. I merely take the occasion of the issue of your book in English to criticize it with the seriousness proper to an examination of any work of a scholar and historian of your distinction.

As one of your former British readers and admirers, I was specially interested in your per-

formance, at the outset. You were a student of social evolution, at least in antiquity; and in your youth you knew something of British and American life. As you have told us, you were for two years—1875-6—a tutor in the family of Sir Philip Francis, the British Consul-General at Constantinople; and you have given a vivid account of the sufferings endured by an educated German from the moment he sets foot on American soil till the moment he leaves it. You had earned, too, the reputation of being a man of large views and original historical grasp. It is true you exhibited from time to time, in your greatest work, the significant German tendency to reduce historical generalization to verbiage in terms of racial theories. I well recollect the astonishment with which I read, for instance, your generalization of the social history of ancient Italy—a point to which I shall recur later. In spite of such startling lapses, however, you handled ancient history to a large extent in a scientific spirit; and I have often profited by your research.

When, then, I first heard that you had gone the way of the Harnacks and the Euckens, unpacking your mouth with words, as Hamlet has it, seeking to shroud German national crime and military failure in a vapour of vituperation, my first sensation was one of pure surprise. The next, I am half ashamed to confess, was one of—shall I say?—malicious satisfaction. “So their better brains also are overthrown,” I mentally commented. Von Harnack and Eucken I had never put in that category. Von Harnack is to

Baur, in point of thinking power, what Eucken is to Hegel. Häckel is now a very old man; and, as a specialist, in natural science, with no qualification as a humanist, he counts for little when he takes to political doctrine. His verdict on the action and policy of a people is about as valuable as would be mine on the life of the Radiolaria. But you had been a student of societies and their growths; you ranked, in my opinion, above Mommsen in that sphere; and you comforted yourself as did poor Häckel.

A study of your performance, then, is of some critical importance, and I desire so to handle it. To this end, I will abstain from putting in the forefront of my critique any such account of your race and country as you give in your "Foreword," where you assert that "English gentlemen do not shrink from any crime, not even from that of assassination, if only appearances can be preserved"; and that when you first wrote those words you were "fully informed of a plot made by the English Foreign Office to assassinate Sir Roger Casement." For these assertions the sole proof you offer is an unverified document which purports to plan the *capture* of Sir Roger Casement. When, later, I shall have something to say of the crimes of your Government, I shall offer rather stronger evidence. In this connection I will merely point out that it is not an English or a French or a Russian manual that lays down the following principles:

"International law is in no way opposed to the exploitation of the crimes of third parties (assas-

sination, incendiarism, robbery, and the like) to the prejudice of the enemy. . . . The necessary aim of war gives the belligerent the right and imposes upon him, according to circumstances, the duty not to let slip the important, it may be the decisive, advantages to be gained by such means."

That is the teaching of the manual on "The Usages of War on Land," issued by the Great General Staff of the German Army. It is the same authority that observes:—"A prohibition by international law of the bombardment of open towns and villages which are not occupied by the enemy or defended was put into words by The Hague Regulations, but appears superfluous, since modern military history knows of hardly any such case." That defect, you are aware, no longer exists. Perhaps, on the whole, you had better have avoided such topics.

Indeed, your whole book raises a preliminary question as to the state of the German official mind. After the date appended to your preface, but some time before the publication of your book, there appeared in Switzerland the German work "J'Accuse," written by a German born and bred, in which the deliberate causation of the war by the German and Austrian Governments is set forth with the deadliest completeness. It is a stone wall of proof against your idle reiteration of the charge that "England" was the instigator of the war. Yet I can hear of no official German attempt to rebut that demonstration; if there be one, it has not reached the other belligerent and

neutral countries as yours has done. Instead of answering the carefully drawn and completely documented charges of your own countryman, you have compiled, evidently with official countenance, what in German is called a *Schimpfwerk*, a work of abuse, vilifying the enemy instead of meeting the enemy's indictment.

The character of your tactic is made clear, once for all, when we recall that the official German *Weissbuch*, setting forth Germany's diplomatic case, expressly declares that the guilty Power is Russia. "How Russia and her Ruler betrayed Germany's confidence and thereby made the European War" is the sub-title. No sooner has England entered than you announce that it is she who "made the war." We are evidently dealing with polemicists bent on something else than truth-telling. In the meantime, however, it is desirable that your book should be examined, in these pages, in the temper of the study rather than in that of the court-martial or even of the police-court. You claim, of course, to write as beseems an historian, and I to write as beseems a critic. Is it not well, then, that we should preserve at least the semblance of the temper of the study before we come to the business of summing-up?

A recollection of the figure cut by Von Harnack, and Eucken, and Häckel, and other infuriated old German gentlemen—to whose attitude you so edifyingly assimilate in your preface—confirms me in my preference for another method. Yours is to create by a series of aspersive chapters as bad an

impression as you can achieve of English life and history in general, by way of winning, if possible, a hostile verdict on England as the real cause of the present war. A scrupulous judge, surely, would have sought a verdict on the merits of the case. But I will follow you in your course.

You begin your book with a singularly bald and jejune survey of English political history from the reign of Henry VII to the nineteenth century. As a summary of centuries of life it revives in me the question I have sometimes put to myself in reading your and other German histories of antiquity:—"What is the real content and the veridical value of these nutshell summaries of whole ages of evolution?" and I fear that henceforth that question will always haunt me when I read you. However, as you know little of English history, you doubtless did well to be very summary. As you once wrote: "In history generally, where we have no firm ground underfoot, a too-little is better than a too-much."\* The trouble is that in your opening chapter you have achieved both, as I shall try to show you. You will, I doubt not, pardon me if I give my own English renderings or summaries of your words. Your translator, laudably anxious to make a German style move in an American manner, has treated your book with a friendly freedom which on my part would be presumptuous. If you will compare the second, third, and fourth paragraphs of the translation with your German, you will see that your propositions have been gently

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\* *Geschichte des Alterthums*, ed. 1884, Vorwort, p. vii.

but firmly transmuted into more readable form. I cannot guess what you will think of the manipulation of your sentence on the divine right of kings (which I give in the next chapter) into two, of which the second runs :—"That it [monarchy] may be free ever to uphold the right, *its power must be unlimited*, and it cannot therefore be responsible to man, but to God alone."

That would perhaps please the Kaiser even more than what you have written; but it is hardly for me to lend myself to such transmutations. I prefer to follow your own utterance, at the cost of dullness. Taking your book as a whole, I find that your exposition falls into five logical movements, so to speak. You do not so divide it, but I propose so to deal with it, under the heads :—

1. The special political evolution of England ;
2. The defects of English civilization ;
3. The bias of England in international politics ;
4. The causation of the World War ;
5. Its course, and the probable consequences.

I shall try to exhibit it in its true inwardness.

## CHAPTER II

### ENGLISH AND GERMAN POLITICAL EVOLUTION

**I**N order to understand rightly England's place in world-history and the motives which have led her into war with Germany, you tell us, "we must clearly realize that England's political development has taken exactly the opposite direction to that of the continental States." On the Continent, the dualistic organization of the Middle Ages, in which the Overlord and the Estates were generally at strife, passed into monarchy pure and simple, the Estates lapsing into impotence and oblivion. "Thus was established the monarchic State,\* and with it the State-conception of the modern monarchy." And the typical continental monarchy not only subdued the chaos of mediæval anarchy, but secured "law and order, security, and well-being"; wherefore it "claims the authority of a higher Divine Right; the power of the ruler comes forward as Kingship by the Grace of God, which shapes law and possesses the law-giving power in the fullest degree, and therefore is responsible to no human being, but only to the Godhead." Let us not linger over the question of the amount of law and order that had been secured in Germany by the common run of its Princes, with "Faustrecht"

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\* *Fürstenstaat*. Your translator renders this "state sovereignty," which must puzzle Americans. The translation of your *Staatsrecht* (p. 17), again, by "Common Law," is rather staggering, and creates some mystery as to your meaning



in full blast down to the time of Luther. Let us try to see what you are driving at.

At the very outset, your case is divided against itself. Formally, you set out to show that England began her unique and evil course when she chanced to preserve the early forms of self-government in an age in which all the continental States lost them. Later, you are driven to avow that as a result she was in much better case than they in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. What, then, becomes of your formula? Your position would now appear to be that it was better to lose free institutions for centuries and then create them afresh than to develop on English lines. If it be not that, you have no theory left as regards the point from which you start to "explain" English iniquity.

Your starting-point is that England is a solitary case, in that she preserved her free institutions as aforesaid. This is in itself a bad historical blunder, the result of your preoccupation with the case of Germany. In a footnote you have confessed that in the Netherlands things went even further than in England, the Estates triumphing there "over the monarchic tendencies of the Spanish Kingship." So the Dutch and we are partners in reprobation, though you leave them, after the footnote, to their own consciences; and it hardly needed your severe aspersions on American life to indicate that you think the democratic evolution of the United States as lamentable as that of England. As for the Swiss, I infer that you find their case too hopeless even for a footnote refer-

ence. Italy, it would seem, you consider to have been saved from herself by her happy subjection in the sixteenth century to Spain, whose career was such a triumph of progress—intellectual, moral, and scientific—till she became infected by parliamentarism a century ago.

Supposing your first touchstone to be the true one, it would still seem desirable, on the part of a professedly scientific historian like yourself, that such a thesis should have been a little elaborated. To say that England is a solitary case in Europe ; to add in a footnote a mention of the Netherlands as another case ; to ignore altogether the salient case of Switzerland ; and to leave us asking whether the subjection of Greece by Turkey and of Italy by Spain were fortunate examples of the saving grace of the autocratic as against the “parliamentary” principle, does not look like the proceeding of an historian with his wits about him. At first, by your express thesis and your procedure of disparagement of even early English parliamentarism, you set us asking whether you think it worked worse than did the *Fürstenstaat* in Germany from the Reformation onwards ; whether you think the Thirty Years’ War promoted civilization ; and whether you admire the German spectacle from 1650 to 1750. But it does not appear that you really do. Your general formula is speedily thrown overboard ; the “unique case” is forgotten ; and we are presented with a “diametrically opposite” thesis, as you yourself might say.

In your section on “The English Idea o

Freedom" you avow that, bad as is the English parliamentary system to-day, it worked well "in the time of its establishment (!) and development in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, above all because it guarded the personal freedom of the citizens and called a portion of the population . . . to participate in public life, thereby strengthening the foundations of the activity of the governing power. Thereby came free play in commercial life and the resulting increase in the means of developing the State and the nation. But since then the English State organization has been long passed by ; and since the beginning of the nineteenth century England has fallen into the rear, and has slowly and against the grain and therefore only imperfectly caught up what in other States has long been much more fully developed."

What has become *now* of the primary thesis ? It is now declared that *while* England was a solitary case (which she was not !), she did very well. The uniqueness of her case, remember, was the first fact posited by you as explaining her political course and her special share in bringing about the present war. You now tell us that England has long ceased to be a solitary case, having fallen far in the rear of other States ; which means, I suppose, that she is more mediævally dualistic than not only Germany, but Russia, France, (Turkey ?), Holland, and the Scandinavian States. Belgium, you incidentally observe, is the most backward of all the northern European States. That, of course. After your

national crime against her, you are bound to insist upon her unworthiness. We can now always count upon that procedure from Germans. But supposing this pleasing proposition to be granted, what becomes of your account of England as having evolved in "exactly the opposite" way to that of the continental States? And, further, if she is thus far in the rear of political evolution, and as inefficient and incompetent as you allege, how comes it that she is able, as you affirm, to upset the lives of all the other States, which are so much more highly progressive? She first went wrong, you say, through being ahead; latterly she is still worse through being behind. Have you ever read Æsop's Fables?

All that is clear is that the foundation and formula of your opening have already gone to pieces. The "solitary case" has vanished. And as regards the past, down to the nineteenth century, we are left with the fact that not England but Germany is the awful example. While France and England can each cite twenty remembered and distinguished names in literature for each of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, you have not one between Hans Sachs and Leibnitz. I do not say this by way of taunt. I utterly repudiate the pseudo-principle you lay down in regard to the civilization of ancient Italy, that what a people *does not* do, it proved that it *could not* do. I am simply discussing your nugatory thesis. For the rational historian, a nation's evolution is a resultant of the organism and *the conditions*. You allege that a certain condition is bad, and the contrary good. Where does your evidence begin?

The plain fact is that the "solitary case" in the political evolution of Western Europe is that of Germany. While every other State has followed, sooner or later, the footsteps of England on the path of constitutional government, Germany has remained essentially mediæval, unfree, unconstitutional. The promises held out by the Prussian Government to its own patriots in 1814-5 were never fulfilled; the Prussian constitution is to this day a fraud, in which democracy is stultified; and the Imperial constitution accepted by the German States in 1870 is one of Prussian hegemony, assented to by them partly in a state of war fever, partly in despair of anything better. The system under which the Prussian Kaiser is uncontrolled master of war, peace, and imperial taxation is one that has been abandoned by every other Western European people.

It is in keeping with your logic that as you go on you nevertheless treat the adoption of a parliamentary system of some sort as a necessary development for civilized States. After a time you actually boast that Germany has universal male suffrage and that Britain has not. Once more, what has become, then, of your thesis? Is it that you find comfort in reflecting that in Prussia the suffrage is stultified by the system of representation which preserves class supremacy in the Diet, while for the Empire the Reichstag is powerless to impose any policy on the Kaiser's Chancellor? You are entitled so to argue. But do you? All that you make clear is your hope that in Germany the political power will never

lie in the hands of the representatives of the people.

Whether England is too democratic or too undemocratic is a question as to which you evidently cannot make up your mind. In turn you take up every possible position. Her monarchy was once absolutist, and yet was not ; the power of the Crown was destroyed, and yet Edward VII was able to raise it to unheard-of heights ; he determined the whole course of recent international politics, and yet he was finally a failure ; the Cabinet completely dominates Parliament, and yet Parliament retains its monstrous control over taxation, and all members individually are ruled by their constituents ; the country is swayed by the caucus, and yet a small minority always turns the elections ; the mob rules, and still England is the most aristocratically ruled country in the world. Thus do you blindly throw your missiles in all directions.

On one point, however, you are comparatively clear. In your chapter on "The English Idea of the State and the English Idea of Freedom" you expound anew your conviction that Britain has developed in a "diametrically opposite" direction to that of foreign States in respect to the British notion of the idea of the State :—

"England, or let us say the United Kingdom, has no conception of the idea of the State as it has been evolved on the Continent" [or, "let us say," in Germany alone?] "in relation to the regal power. For us, not only in political thought but intimately in the experience of every citizen,

the State is the highest expression of the collective unity of all the powers of the people included in the boundaries of the realm in active efficiency (*active Wirksamkeit!*), the indispensable expression of the life and the activity of every individual, and therefore entitled and bound to secure from each the fullest devotion for the carrying out of its task. . . . The State and its organ, the Government, is bound to stand free and independent of all the conflicts of individuals, of classes, of economic groups, of parties; and as against these to represent the interests and problems of the whole. . . . It is something much higher than any of these groups, and infinitely more than merely the aggregate of all the individuals included in it; it has a life of its own; its task is unending; its existence is in theory—if it be not destroyed by force from outside—eternal, all generations, backwards and forwards, co-operating towards a unity, to a mighty historical entity. This idea of the State, which for us is bound up with our flesh and blood, is not only unknown to the English constitution, but is wholly alien to the thought of the Englishman and also of the American."

After this dithyramb, you avow that both Britain and the United States have nevertheless attained to the notion of unified State action, the latter achieving it as against the principle of State-sovereignty through the Civil War; so that Britain pursues an energetic foreign policy and has a "strong national feeling." But for all that, you tell us, it is with us, as with all States governed by Parliaments, always a question of

majorities and minorities, never of a definite unity of the State. "So it is explained that the unitary State-idea does not exist in England. The word 'State' is not translatable in English: there is no possibility of rendering it in an equivalent, embodying the idea. The Englishman knows only on one side 'the Empire,' which is something much wider . . . and on the other side 'the Government,' which is something much narrower. Instead of a unified State ruling over parties, party rules." Hence constant changes in British foreign policy—except in so far as it does not change!

Finally, "like the idea and the word 'State,' the Englishman lacks the idea and the word 'Fatherland.' . . . The Englishman has indeed a 'home,' but no 'fatherland.' The feeling which the German connects with this word, which signifies for him his highest and holiest possession, and frees and stirs all the deepest sentiments of his soul, is to him entirely foreign." We cannot understand, you inform us, your national song, "Deutschland über alles, über alles in der Welt," in which, by a puerile misconception, we see an aspiration towards world-dominion. At the same time you inform us that "Britannia rules the waves" is an assertion of England's mission to supremacy on all oceans, as against the aspiration of any other people "to maintain its independence in the world *and in general to signify something as a national unit.*" This aspiration, you say, our popular song treats as an injury to English interests and a crime against humanity.

I have never met with a more remarkable



exhibition of self-deception, or a more idle display of verbal sophistry by a writer of distinction. The puzzle is to know what you think you are proving. That Germans now in general worship with human sacrifices the abstraction of the State, we knew. That is our indictment. It is the claim of a resultant moral superiority that eludes our powers of comprehension. Broadly speaking, the Briton's *concrete* idea of the State is that of a commonweal *in* which he shares, paying his taxes and voting with the idea of improving the total life; while the German's is that of a great machine *to* which he belongs and *in* whose army he must serve when a quarrel is picked with any other State. As you expressly argue, the British power of aggression is small: the Navy, the typical British force, is essentially one of defence. The German is essentially one of aggression. How, then, should the latter elicit the less aggressive frame of mind?

If the argument is to turn on popular songs, can you explain to yourself or to us why "Deutschland über alles" is now habitually (or was, earlier in the war) sung by German soldiers as a *battle* song? We knew well enough that it was originally a call to national unity, as against the ruinous particularism, the internecine hatreds which left the German States bloodily divided against each other in the Napoleonic wars, some zealously aiding him against the rest. "Deutschland," then, was to be the ruling thought, as against the old separatism. But what had *that* idea to do with the entry into Brussels? Was it still necessary that

Bavarians and Saxons and the rest should strive to forget their old hate of Prussia?

Your argument from a popular chorus to the conclusion that Britannia is bent on dominating all other nations comes delightfully from the spokesman of the State that championed Austria in her attempt to crush Serbia, that herself bludgeoned innocent Belgium, and that warned the small States, by the mouth of Herr von Jagow, that their day is over. As you have not named one instance in which Britain has interfered with the freedom of the seas in peace during the past hundred years, we can at once draw the proper inference. Britain's crime, as we all know, is to put her fleet between you and France when you plan to attack, as Germany put her "shining armour" between Russia and Austria when Austria annexed Bosnia and Herzegovina.

But your most memorable performance is your dissertation on "State" and "Fatherland." It recalls, at first, the criticism of Dr. Guttmann, in the *Frankfurter Zeitung*, that your knowledge of the English language is very imperfect. But there must be more in it than that. Supposing even that "the State" were not as much discussed here as in Germany, in a hundred books carrying the word in their titles, could you really suppose that the *notion* is excluded from English consciousness by the fact that here parties can aspire to Government, while with you they cannot? Is not the very fact of party strife an extra reason for insisting in debate on the interests of "the country"? When you are good enough to admit

that there is a "strong national feeling" in England, do you attach any idea to what you say? You realize, apparently, that "England" is very determined in this war to beat Germany. What, then, do you think is meant in English by the phrase "For England's sake"? The Government's sake? The party's sake?

Your theorem about the word "Fatherland," I confess, wellnigh baffles serious discussion. It suggests a wrangle between the children of rival villages as to the merits of their respective idioms. Apparently you suppose that when an English poet sings of "England, my own," or an American repeats "My country, 'tis of thee," he is thinking just of a quantity of land, with towns and houses on it, whereas your ineffable countrymen soar into the empyrean of the high and holy when, over beer and sausage, they say "Fatherland." As regards the educated class, it is a somewhat modern development, is it not? Lessing, you may remember, observed that that kind of sentiment was a noble weakness which he was glad to be without. Goethe, you may also remember, wrote of "the eternal blundering complaint, 'We have no Fatherland, no patriotism,'" and commented: "From the patriotism of the Romans, God deliver us!" And it was Schiller who declared that mere love of country was important only "to unlearned nations—to the youth of the world."

Those renowned Germans would clearly not have acclaimed your State could they have foreseen it in the spirit; and their great contemporary, Kant, was one of the first to see and say

that while nations regarded only their own interest, and kings were uncontrolled masters, there would never be secure peace in the world. So far from praying for a world of apotheosized States, he yearned for a Republic of the World. You will tell us that you have changed all that. But, granted that you have, are you sure that the other nations, which were nations long before yours, may not also retain the love of country which in them is innate and not inoculated? Are you not jealous of the Dutch, who speak both of "Vaderland" and "Moderland," "going you one better," as they say in the United States?

German patriotism has the rawness of a new cult. At a time when Germania was a world of internecine strife, Englishmen knew "the common-weal," which relatively ethical expression meant for them both "State" and "Fatherland." Becoming part of their instinctive natures, it has not latterly had to be employed as a toast or a war-cry. But the instinct has not changed. I am really not concerned to explain to you that "my country" means just what "*la patrie*" does; and just what "Fatherland" does, or "Motherland." "The land of my fathers" was an English expression before your German Fatherland-State was welded; and it carries memories which are non-existent for Germans. A professed scholar who does not spontaneously understand all this is on that side mentally and spiritually defective: there is no other way of describing him, unless we say "war-mad." I doubt whether it is worth while to point out to you the counter-sense you

are creating in your general case. You do not appear to deny that the French, with their love of *la patrie*, are as much as England the enemies of Germany. What is the connection, then, between the English psychology and the war at this point? And if the English are, as you say, devoid of the conception alike of "the State" and "the Fatherland," why did your diplomatists ever attempt to have any dealings with them? Clearly, having a fundamentally different psychology, they could have no community of ideas with you. Could they even be relied upon to have the same multiplication table? I will confess to suspecting that there is one radical difference between the two populations. The English capacity for talking nonsense is finite: the German infinite.

That is the conclusion suggested by your theorem about "the State." But there is really a special psychological fact behind your dithyramb. The idea of "the State" is an old battleground in England. Hobbes fought thereon when Germany, shattered into three hundred segments, had been hurled back to barbarism by the Thirty Years' War; and, ever since, students have been operating over it. But the effect of Hobbes's doctrine here was to set men on their guard against a wholly non-moral conception of the State, an idolatry of a "Leviathan" without a heart or a mind. In France, the "*l'Etat, c'est moi*" of Louis XIV had a similar effect. Rousseau worked at the problem before your philosophers took it up; and, whatever his fallacies, he kept hold of the fact that the essential thing in "the State" is

just the good life of its people, considered as part of the human race.

In Germany, you have not yet attained to that simple conception. Your "State-idea" is just the idea of the tribe, physically expanded to cover a "Reich," but morally expanded not at all. You have but blended the hundred particularisms of Germany into one German particularism as against non-Germany. The new cult is not yet fifty years established: hence its primitive character. One of its founders, Hegel, began political life as a champion of Napoleon, and but for the chances of war might have remained a good Cæsarean under Napoleon's flag. The same ethic and the same temper, turned to German account, give us the German State-Fetish. Your ideal, as revealed by your culture-class in this war, is to affirm your national superiority to all other nations, and your determination to impose your will on Europe. We shall see this in the most exact detail when we come to your account of the causation of the war. For the present I am dealing with your theory.

The French and English peoples, being morally ruled in the main by common sense and common honesty, avoid building up an ideal of the State which is only a menacing magnification of the ideal of the fighting tribe. They know that "the State" is simply the aggregate of national organization, representing what the majority have so far enacted. Your exposition, stripped of its verbiage, tells in effect that "the State" is the Imperial Government, culminating in the Kaiser. All your rhetoric about something independent of

parties, something apart from majorities and minorities, means just that in your Reichstag there is one official fixture, that very poor phenomenon, the Chancellor. As your own jurist, Jellinek, tells you: "The State can exist merely through its organs: imagine the organs away, there does not remain a State as the operator of those organs, but merely a juristic nullity" (*Nichts*). Your State is, finally, just the *power* of Germany, wielded by its War-Lord. Delbrück has avowed that Prussian officers "would never tolerate the rule of a War-Minister drawn from the Reichstag." Such is the true inwardness of your precious "State."

You tell us that we cannot "understand" this marvellous psychological development of yours. It is really not in the least difficult for outsiders to understand; in fact, it is only outsiders who can explain it. An English writer gave the rationale of the matter long ago:—

"Instil from his earliest infancy into man the idea that he *belongs* to another, is the property of another; let everything around proceed upon this idea; let there be nothing to interfere with it, or rouse suspicion in his mind to the contrary, and he will yield entirely to that idea. He will take his own deprivation of right, the necessity of his own subservience to another, as a matter of course. And that idea of himself will keep him in order. He will grow up with the impression that he has not the right of ownership in himself, in his passions, any more than he has in his work. He will thus be coerced from *within himself*, but not

*by himself*; i.e. not by any active faculty of self-command, but by the passive reception of an instilled notion which he has admitted into his own mind, and which has fastened upon him so strongly that he cannot throw it off."\*

The passage is worth the attention of your psychologists; let them improve upon it if they can. The German State-idea is simply a manipulation of the feudal idea, carried by you in Prussia to a great height, though not higher than it was carried in Zululand under Cetewayo. For the name of the chief or overlord has been necessarily substituted the name of the State, but the resultant is an abstraction behind which the overlord operates much more effectually than he did in the Middle Ages. The old German Kaisers were generally powerless just because the function was avowedly embodied in the man. Your Kaiser is at a pinch all-powerful just because you call the power which he embodies and dominates "the State," and because the abstraction is really believed by the many to be the object of it all.

The illusory abstraction which you have thus created, you alone among modern nations may be said to have deified, very much as Athens made Athene out of the idea of itself. But your ideal is no Pallas: it is much more the Assur that Assyria made out of *its* abstraction. Of course, you think yours the noblest of all hypostases. So did the Assyrians.

In a word, the countries now confronting Germany, even the more imperfectly developed

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\*Mozley, *Ruling Ideas in Early Ages*, 1877, pp. 42, 43.



among them, have in general transcended alike tribalism and feudalism, and seek an international life in which nation shall respect nation. Until this is brought about, until all the nations realize that a nation is *to* a nation what an individual is to an individual within a nation, a *fellow*, bound by a law of reciprocity, there is no security for mankind. You avowedly tolerate no such conception. Kant proclaimed it; Hegel repudiated it; and Treitschke, growing more and more of an immoralist as he grew Prussianized, has for your generation made the anti-moral ideal the current one. Have you not told us that for you the wholly self-regarding State is the highest conception—the earthly infinite? Have not all your mouth-pieces for half a century proclaimed that you are *the* nation, without peer? That is just what other people have learned to shrink from saying. Over a century ago, Burke, whom you rather ignorantly extol, spoke in a certain mood of “the great mysterious incorporation of the human race.” It is a recognition of *that* ideal that governs the ideal of the State in the nations that are now fighting Germany.

Of course, you have occasional glimpses of the idea. While you officially sink all German humanity in a Germandom which is, as you would say, “wholly foreign” to humanity in general, you begin to have dark visions of a “Götterdämmerung,” a Twilight of the Gods, in which all civilization is in jeopardy as a result of the German cult of the German Self. What is to become of the polity of the nations, of the general civiliza-

tion of Europe? you ask at the close of your book. You may well ask it last ; it is the last thought to reach the German intelligence. But is it not rather incongruous with your dithyramb about "the State," the ineffable, the earthly infinite, the all-sufficient, the political Absolute? *Can anything else really matter?*

Sooth to say, you are beginning to learn the Nemeſis of Egoism even as the child learns it, if one can speak of your people in terms of anything that is innocent. It always needed hell-fire to teach them collectively any vital social lesson. It took thirty years of mutual massacre to teach them religio-political toleration. The Napoleonic wars could not bring them to political unity. Their appointed Moses, Bismarck, rightly realized that only over a blood sacrifice could they ever be got even formally to fraternize. Only when wading in a sea of their own blood, it seems, can they begin to think of the welfare of a collective humanity that is greater than their State.

To speak thus may to some look like a mere answering of your railing with railing. But I am not forgetful of my negation of your vain pronouncement about ancient Italy. To her, you wrote, however she might energize in politics and law, "there was denied the capacity to shape a culture [*Cultur*, not *Kultur*!] for herself, to energize *independently and creatively* in the sphere of art, poetry, religion, and science."\* Before writing that, you had expressly argued that *Greece* developed her culture only under the

\* *Geschichte des Alterthums*, ii, ed. 1893, p. 530.

stimulus of foreign culture; and that Western Greece, though as richly endowed by nature as the eastern parts, failed to develop simply because "here there lacked the foreign stimulation." When I write on German evolution, I do not say that Germans have been denied the *capacity* to shape a culture for themselves, though their culture, like other cultures in general, is mainly derivative; and theirs is in a special degree derivative from those of Italy, France, and England. As little do I say that they are racially incapable of transcending tribalism. I simply say that they have not yet done it, and that it is their retrograding tribalism and feudalism that have dragged us all into the World War.

Attaining political unity last of all among the leading nations, they are still civically in the barbarian stage, worshipping a Tribal God ("Gott mit Uns"), and kneeling to their Kaiser as to his vicegerent. Holding the creed of barbarism, they do its deeds. That it is a creed recently re-learned at the hands of their professors does not alter the fact, as it does not alter the infernal consequences.

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\* *Geschichte des Alterthums*, ii, ed. 1893, p. 155.

### CHAPTER III

## ENGLISH AND GERMAN CIVILIZATION

**F**OLLOWING your national practice of vilifying the opponent before you come to the issue as to what he and you have just done, you devote several sections to the defects of English life and civilization as you see them. These sections illustrate the state of mind to which a German historian can sink. In time of peace, even you, I suppose, would recoil from a battle of mud-throwing. Civilized men in general, at least outside of Germany, had been supposed to have reached the perception that civilization at its best was terribly defective; that all countries had much to learn and to do; and that each did well to learn from the others. It is significant that in Germany, the country whose civilization is most largely derivative, which only in the past two generations has got rid of the dirt of the Middle Ages, and which owes most to the culture-example of neighbour lands, there has always been and is now the maximum amount of boasting about its native superiority.

In France and in England, for generations past, the national effort has been directed to social reconstruction, political reconstruction going on as a means to that end. It would be difficult to name an eminent English writer of the past seventy or eighty years who has not gravely criticized English civilization, and who did not

owe some of his influence to such criticism. Coleridge, Carlyle, Mill, Ruskin, Spencer, Arnold, Dickens, Thackeray, Tennyson, Mrs. Browning, George Eliot, Morris, Morley—all have abundantly criticized the national life in all its aspects. Since the beginning of the present century, the tendency is more than ever pronounced. In all political parties, social reconstruction has become the absorbing thought. To say this is to say that all recognize grave defects in the national life. So far, your case is given you ready made. Even in Germany, with your ritual of boasting, you have a certain undercurrent of criticism, as you well may, since your literature reveals a social corruption not to be matched in any western land.

But what has all this to do with the question of who is responsible for the World War? This, of course, that you hope to get a verdict by vilification before you come to the real issue. But from whom? To write your book for Germans was surely a task of supererogation. The "Hymn of Hate" was being roared all over Germany before your book appeared. Your book was surely written for neutrals—unless it was written for us in England, on which view you are grown puerile indeed. Now, educated neutrals know that in England there is far more competent criticism of English social blemishes than you can supply. In England, no educated man dreams of denying that the criticism of home life by leading writers is beneficial, though it has been said of Mill and Arnold that they exhibited "the bias of anti-patriotism."

We did not need you, then, to tell us that we need reforms ; that alongside of wealth we have poverty ; that there is a Highland question ; that there is an Irish question. These things we anxiously discuss, in war time as in peace time. Your characteristic attempt to turn them to the discredit of the British people invites the question whether you think the modern handling of the Irish question is on a level with the Prussian handling of the Polish. No one could conceive of a present-day British Government officially flogging thousands of Irish children as your schoolmasters in Poland have flogged Polish children to make them say their prayers in German, and further sentencing their parents to long imprisonments for making a protest. After generations of dragooning, your Danes, your Poles, and your Alsations, are more anti-Prussian than ever. Of course, this will not disturb Prussian self-sufficiency. Goethe tells that in his day there was an old German gentleman who said : "Even in God I find defects." It is only in the imperialized Germany of our day that there are none—in the opinion of her academics.

But what then ? The superiority of German *Kultur* was pleaded in 1914 as a defence of German massacres and rapes in Belgium, and the plea appealed to nobody. Even the notoriously musical character of the German speech is not a proof that the German people, or the academics, or the Government officials, are truthful. You used to write a good deal better than you write now ; but even in old days your style could not atone for a

bad sophism. What is the *relevance* of your argument from English defects?

The most important part of your indictment, I suppose, is your tirade against the English conception of freedom, which is so different from the German. I admit that that is so, and that it has its limitations. We are not accustomed, for instance, to ask a foreigner travelling in our trains in peace time a set of questions about his private affairs, and his income, and his earnings, as (*teste me*) you do in Germany. I do not say that we might not learn from you in these matters. We are still an unduly shy people, though we have our exceptions. Not having been under the thumb of the police and the drill-sergeant for centuries, we are still apt to be restive under extensions of Government control. But in war time we have learned to put up with a great deal, having regard to the necessity of bringing Germany to her knees.

When, however, you come to the question of mental freedom you are an extremely bad witness. You tell us that when you were a tutor in the family of Sir Philip Francis you one day expressed the wish to read Mill "On Liberty," and that he told you it was quite unnecessary for a German to do so: "what it seeks to do for England you had reached in Germany a hundred years ago." If Sir Philip said that, he made a very ignorant pronouncement; and you must excuse us for not thinking your account of the episode absolutely trustworthy without corroboration. Mill's book is very much more than a plea for free thought: it discusses at some length the theory of the State,

upon which you perorate ; and it much behoved you to study his argument, though it is inconclusive. But still more astray is the criticism as regards Germany.

At the date of which you speak, a hundred years had not elapsed since Kant's mouth had been closed by State authority. When Wilhelm von Humboldt in 1791 wrote his book on the State (which inspired Mill's, and which also you might profitably peruse), it could not find a publisher. In Heine's opinion, all the German philosophers and their ideas would have been suppressed by wheel and gallows but for the intervention of Napoleon in 1805. Germany indeed gained a large measure of speculative freedom in her universities by reason of their very number ; but Fichte had no very happy time ; and the ostensible freedom of the university chairs has never precluded a very real repression of serious heresy. Feuerbach was turned out of academic life ; Bruno Bauer's brother Edgar was sent to prison in 1843 for four years, on account of a pamphlet on "The Strife of Criticism with Church and State." Büchner was turned out of his chair of clinic at Tübingen in 1855 for publishing his "Force and Matter." Eduard Zeller found himself driven from scientific theology to specialism in the history of philosophy by the professional ban on innovating thought ; and Albert Schweigler was in the same fashion driven from the theological field to work on the history of Rome.

You ought to know these things. If you will read Zeller's preface to his book on the Acts of the



Apostles you may learn something of the state of mental freedom in Germany about the time you were born. From Albert Schweitzer and from Hausrath you may learn how Strauss's life was darkened by clerical and official persecution, and how one of the three old friends who spoke at his burial, being an official, was denounced by the Swabian clergy for having spoken kindly of a heretic. Much more serious than that, however, is the virtual suppression, in your public and academic life, of all serious criticism on living issues. Your ethicists, even twenty years ago, notoriously did not dare to speak out; for nigh fifty years, almost, no German ethical writing has counted for anything in Europe. In the words of Mr. Owen Wister, an American writer who eulogized the successes of German civilization before the war, but saw its deadly defects:—

“They blindly swallowed the sham that Bismarck gave them as universal suffrage. They swallowed extreme political and military restraint. They swallowed a rigid compulsion in schools, which led to the excess of child suicide that I have mentioned. They swallowed a state of life where outside the indicated limits almost nothing was permitted, and almost everything was forbidden. . . . Intellectual speculation was apparently unfettered; but he who dared philosophize about Liberty and the divine right of Kings found it was not.”

He goes on to say something of the decline of your music, and the degradation of your literature, to which much might be added. But it will be

more strictly relevant to point to your official statistics of prosecutions for *Beamtenbeleidigung*, contempt of officials. In the work "An Australian in Germany" (1911), whose author resided there as a teacher for something over two years, I read:—"During the time I have been in Germany the list of cases of fine or imprisonment inflicted on journalists and others for commenting on officials' actions would fill several pages." The same work indicates that far more heresy-hunting was recently going on among the German clergy than among the English. Doubtless you have a "freer Sunday"; but I have read that when your Kaiser once told some recruits at Potsdam that "only good Christians could be soldiers," and your chief comic paper published thereupon a cartoon in which Satan removed from heaven, as his property, Alexander, Hannibal, Cæsar, Napoleon, and Frederick, the editor was sent to prison for two months.

Striving to understand what you mean by freedom in any general sense, I note your diatribe against American life:—

"From the moment he lands on the New York pier to the moment he leaves it, the educated German feels himself under a constraint that is to him strange and antipathetic, but which he cannot evade. Everywhere he comes up against firmly fixed usages and dominating notions which demand that he shall absolutely submit to them, and which curtail his rights of personality, his inner freedom. He who really knows America will recognize as the special problem presented to him

by that 'land of contrasts,' that of comprehending how this people is inspired with the belief that it is a free people, or rather *the* free people, when it really lies under a burdensome compulsion, which, however, having grown up thereunder and regarding it as a matter of course, it does not perceive to be a burden; under the constraint of countless traditionally sanctified conceptions in social life and, above all, in the field of religion, which fetter free expression of opinion and independent thinking; under the constraint of 'public opinion' and what passes for such, making itself daily felt in the intolerable plague of the obtrusive interviewer and the incursion of publicity in all the private affairs of the individual and his family (as to which nobody is secure that next day the grossest trumped-up charges will not appear against him in the newspaper, from which he has no means of protection); and, further, under the frightful tyranny of organized labour and the domination of an unscrupulous crowd of 'politicians' which rule State and community, and which the ordinary American regards as an unavoidable evil, letting it multiply as it will. 'Politicians are despised in this country'; but he gives them a free hand."

To offer you condolences might suggest sympathy. Personally, I have found life as free in the United States as elsewhere; the restraints of which you speak being of the same order as subsist in your own country, and far less stringent. It is much safer to criticize the President with them than to criticize the Kaiser with you;

and I doubt whether anything would have happened to you if you had courteously explained the superiority of the German political system to the American. Perhaps you preferred other methods. In most countries one has to take a little care not to tread upon people's corns; and in yours there subsists a law forbidding mutual criticism among religious sects. But I prefer to leave it to Americans to speak for themselves. I will merely say, in this connection, that many thousands of your countrymen seem to prefer American life to German, as thousands more prefer English; and that I have heard of a German who could hardly contain his delight when he got back to New York after a visit to the Fatherland. He jumped upon the driver's platform of a car, and when the driver cursed him for getting in the way he "could have hugged him," as he afterwards avowed. All that, I admit, is very un-German. Evidently the idea of "freedom" varies greatly from land to land.

An American, like a Briton, knows that he has a one-vote control in politics, and knows that it counts. If the vote of his party altered the majorities in the Legislature, or the tenure of the Presidential chair, and yet no change happened, he would certainly feel outraged. In Germany, where no vote in the Reichstag can alter the Chancellor's policy, you are well pleased with your "freedom." Doubtless politicians are abused in all countries; it happens, alas, even in the Fatherland. Is it not Prince von Bülow who has declared that Germans are the worst politicians

in the world? We outsiders can give the explanation: where politicians count for nothing in policy they are necessarily inept. But you appear to feel that under a constitution which excludes all control by the nation, either of policy or taxation, you are secured a kind of "freedom" which does not subsist among the English-speaking races.

What you mean, I confess, I still cannot divine. There is certainly no more criticism either of Church or State, religion or Government, beliefs or doctrines, in Germany than in Britain. No eminent German — certainly not Strauss — ever said with impunity such things about Christianity and theism as have been said with perfect impunity by Arnold, Spencer, and Swinburne, to say nothing of the avowed militant freethinkers. No German critic of religion ever had the popularity and status of the American Ingersoll. Certainly, bigotry still operates, as it does in Germany; but apart from the comparative freedom of your university professors to undermine the creeds they ostensibly support, I have never been able to see any special freedom of speech or thought in Germany. In Britain there is a "conscience clause" for parents who object to having the orthodox religion taught to their children in the schools. In Germany there is no such thing.

Even if things were as you say, it would still be impossible to see what bearing such charges have on the question of Britain's entrance into the World War. If the question of relative freedom arises at all in this connection, it must surely be on the political side of things; and I am unable

to find in your book a single relevant argument—unless it be a false assertion—going to show that the alleged lack of public freedom in Britain could in any way affect British relations with Germany. You yourself allege a general British hatred of your country. You grossly err as to pre-war feeling; though certainly there was no appreciable amount of opinion, even among Socialists, against the war from the moment of the invasion of Belgium. Whether the amount of peace feeling among German Socialists would under any system of representation have overruled German Chauvinism I do not pretend to say.

Your most specific assertion in regard to freedom of political speech in Britain is that while there are no prosecutions for *lèse majesté*, “every infraction of the ‘privileges’ of Parliament, every attack on Parliament and its Acts, was and is still relentlessly prosecuted and punished with heavy and degrading penalties: an unsparing criticism of Parliament, which in continental States passes as a matter of course, is still not permitted in England; and he who ventures upon it must very carefully choose and weigh his words.” A more ludicrously false account of the case was never penned even in Germany. Prosecutions for infringement of the “privileges” of Parliament are latterly very rare, being laid only for special technical offences; and the culprit usually escapes with, at most, a slight penalty on pleading contrition. And such prosecutions never take place in respect of “criticism of Parliament or its Acts.” Any journalist can criticize Parliament or any of

its Acts to his heart's content ; it is done every day. You evidently have not the faintest comprehension of what "privileges of Parliament" means. If you wrote ancient history as you write modern, your tenure of your Chair would soon be in danger.

Equally absurd is your solemn statement that any member can cause the expulsion of strangers from the galleries during a sitting of Parliament by announcing that he "spies strangers." That usage of an age in which most of the continental States had no semblance of a Parliament at all is now resorted to only by way of dealing with a disturbance or securing a "secret session" such as you have had of late in the Reichstag—a very rare event in the British Parliament. Do you seriously suggest that any Legislature should be deprived of the power to hold such a session ? If you do not—and I do not see how you can—your remarks on the subject amount only to another irrelevant display of ignorant malice.

To the same order belong your remarks as to the opposition which in the past has been made to reforms in England. If in any country important reforms were ever made without opposition ; if in Germany there had not been furious opposition to all reforms, political or social, made since the time of Napoleon, your words might be worth answering. But even you, I suppose, will hardly pretend that the abolition of serfage in Prussia in the early years of the nineteenth century was accomplished without resistance. Do you happen to remember that in 1819 Stein and Gneisenau were put under police supervision ?

Such attacks as yours reveal the consciousness of "a bad case." To meet your tissue of petty aspersions with a list of the sins against freedom in German life would be an easy enough task. The imprisonment of journalists for a jest about the Holy Coat of Treves or about the Kaiser's theology; the ten thousand punishments of men, women, and children, for *lèse majesté* in respect of irreverence to the Kaiser and for *Beamtenbeleidigung*; the endless imprisonments of Socialists, from Bebel and Liebknecht—these alone would make a sufficient answer to your unctuous claims. But on this whole matter of comparing the general aspects of civilization in the two countries, I decline to follow your lamentable lead. In war time, apparently, the Berlin Chair of History becomes a department of Wolff's Bureau. In other civilized countries such work as yours is not undertaken by men of letters.

If, however, you want to know how your vituperation *can* be countered, you should try to procure an English book called "Degenerate Germany." But I ought to warn you that it may drive you either to frenzy or to despair. For every pebble of spite you throw, here are a dozen hearty half-bricks. The horrors of German history, from the Thirty Years' War onwards; the backwardness of your civilization; your grossness; your table manners; your crime; your vice; *le vice allemand*; your satyrs; your voluptuaries; your sexual perverts; your corrupt and decadent literature; your physical degeneracy; your brutalized and depraved officer caste—you



will find it all handled here with a malice equal to your own; and all more or less documented, which can hardly be said of your farrago. When the book appeared here it was condemned by all the decent journals: not that they doubted its general truth, but that that is not in Britain an accepted style of polemic either in war or peace. You, I gather, have had a more favourable reception for your work in Germany. I will just say, then, that if you care to see your abuse met with abuse *plus* criminal statistics, police reports, and abundant extracts from German and other works illustrating German manners, morals, and degeneration, you may find it in the work I have mentioned.

If you want something more readily obtainable in war time, you might do well to read a few of the novels on Army life which have made such a sensation in Germany in recent years. I have read several—with an effort. They are poor novels, as all German novels now seem to be; but they are a terrible offset to your polemic of alternate panegyric of the German Army and abuse of the British. The latter kind of aspersion is pitiful enough to make your friends uneasy. The “contemptible little army” had broken the rush of a German one five times its strength; its cavalry had ridden through yours wherever they met; and you take your academic revenge by vilifying its *personnel*. On this head I will not trouble you with a defence. The future histories of this war will tell the tale of the stand that broke the rush of your hosts to Paris and to Calais. German

historians will doubtless continue to get comfort from aspersing the little army that did so much to foil them. The history of other nations will tell the tale of the massacres wrought by your heroes upon unarmed citizens in Belgium and France, the slaughter of old and young—men, women, and children—the devilries, the robbery, the rapes, the incendiarism. Your writers will continue to deny it all: the neutral world, faced by the collected evidence, will estimate you accordingly. The trouble for you is that the record is so largely made up of facsimiles of pages from German diaries, and by neutral testimony.

Those testimonies are quite enough for me; and I proffer no indictment beyond what they convey. As to the character of your own Army, I am content to refer you (1) to your German "Army novels," which have drawn a far worse picture of it than was ever drawn by aliens in time of peace. They make intelligible what your armies have done in war. For the rest, I am content to cite the published extracts from the diary of Private Becker, 6th Company, Ersatz Battalion, 3rd Foot Guards, Landsturm, who in civil life had been Professor of Latin in the Bonn Gymnasium, and who served on the Eastern front in August–September, 1915. Of a long transcript taken from the diary found upon his person, I have elsewhere published extracts.\* They record (1) the habitual brutality of the non-commissioned officers to the younger recruits; (2) the habitual under-feeding of the men, while the officers—commissioned

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\* *War and Civilization*, 1916, p. 150.

and non-commissioned—feed themselves (where possible) abundantly, the latter “sticking close to the travelling kitchens”; the former “stealing bread and wine from the wagons,” though all the while “drawing big rations.” Further, (3) the officer in command of the company, also the section leaders and the non-commissioned officers, stay behind, while the sections and groups without leaders attack an enemy position in an “indescribable jumble,” suffering “heavy losses.” Three weeks later (4) the officer commanding the company gets the Iron Cross; (5) a week later he is drunk for an entire day.

This is a transcription from the diary of a German Professor serving as a private. I invent nothing and exaggerate nothing. It seems a sufficient reply to your aspersions and your correlative claims. The summing-up is, in the Professor's words, that “the German soldier has no personality: he is a machine.” If I were to recite British narratives of German villainies in war I could fill a volume. But I make no use of such evidence. I am content to take German testimony as to the degradation of the German soldier and the morale of the officer class, adding only that I believe there are many naturally good men in both classes.

But is not the essential worthlessness of your whole polemic in this connection revealed by one sentence? In the third section of your first chapter you tell us that “a mercenary army can be held together only by rigid discipline”—this by way of aspersing the English Army. Now,

when your Army was accused of committing a multitude of foul deeds in Belgium, what was the German answer to the charge? It was that the "iron discipline" of your Army made impossible such savagery and licence as were alleged to have taken place. So that "rigid discipline" is the damning mark of a "mercenary" army; and it is also the regular boast of the German Army! Is it not well, in such an undertaking as yours, to preserve some small semblance of judicial decency? Is it well that the world should see the Berlin Professor of History carrying on criticism in this fashion?

Certainly your Army still preserves, for certain purposes, a good deal of its "iron discipline." An American reporter, officially welcomed to witness the efficiency of one German army on its passage, has told that he "only once" saw a German officer slash a soldier twice across the face with his whip for forgetting to salute him. And Private Becker has recorded in his diary how hungry soldiers "are tied to trees for eating [? stealing] biscuits and apples," while well-fed officers steal "bread and wine from the wagons." Discipline, for certain purposes, is evidently still cherished. Private Becker tells how Captain B——, after a repulsed attack in which his regiment lost 170 men, muttered: "It is stupid to attack so strong a position." "All the same," adds the diarist, "that did not prevent him from firing on his own men." We have many accounts of the strict concern for discipline with which your officers march behind their troops, revolver in hand, like

Captain B——. The British discipline, I admit, is different. But you are the first Prussian writer whom I have known to suggest that rigid military discipline is a British specialty. We used to be taught that rigid discipline was a German invention. Savagely brutal discipline certainly was. To which position do you propose to hold?

Of one of your subsidiary miscarriages I cannot here forgo mention. In a footnote you observe that among the mass of the English and a great part of the people of the United States "the blind belief in the letter of the Bible far exceeds anything in the most orthodox circles of Germany, and this not seldom among men who in other fields think very freely and independently." You explain that the habit of treating religion thus as a thing apart enables the British people to ignore religious and moral considerations when they conflict with the interests of the individual or the State. This comes indeed deliciously from the colleague of Von Harnack, who has proclaimed to pious Germany that the invasion of Belgium was a parallel to, and was justified by, David's eating of the shewbread!

It was, I learn, another leading light of German theology, Dr. G. Adolf Deissmann, Professor of Theology at Berlin, and author of "Bible Studies," a work of high scholarly pretensions, who early in 1915 published an interpretation of the vision of the four horses in the Apocalypse, showing that the white horse, which "went forth conquering and to conquer," is Germany! When similar things are said by provincial clergymen in

England, educated English people smile. It is among the foremost professional scholars of Germany that they are produced and acclaimed. And it is only in Germany that preachers and theologians can acclaim the war as a splendid expression and excitation of religious feeling, and can announce that "God is a Pan-German"; "God is not neutral." It is only fair, however, to add that one preacher is recently reported to have been prosecuted for saying that "God is not a Pan-German."

To be told by you, after these things, that British religion is hypocritical, is indeed edifying. One thing you may be said to have proved for us afresh, that the ordinary moral standards have practically disappeared from German academic life. In another of those footnotes in which you so particularly shine you state that when your ships bombarded Scarborough and West Hartlepool in December, 1914, the English loudly complained of the act of bombarding an unfortified seaport, and at the same time announced that the forts of West Hartlepool had returned the fire. This appears to you to be a striking display of inconsistency. Do you, then, suppose that Scarborough and West Hartlepool are the same place? Or do you argue that if a place with a fort fires when bombarded the German Navy is thereby justified in bombarding an entirely unfortified place? Some such theory, perhaps, underlay the German massacres in Belgium, when crowds of women and children were shot down on the rumour that "some one has fired." It is interesting to find a

Professor of History applying that principle in the way you do.

The facts are simple. One division of your raiders attacked Scarborough, which has no fort; another attacked Whitby, which has no fort; and the Hartlepoons, which have one old fort, with a battery of small and antiquated guns, which were duly fired. You will doubtless be gratified to learn that your naval heroes killed far more women, children, and babies at the Hartlepoons than they did at Scarborough or at Whitby. Your remarkable comment on the episode reveals the thorough sympathy between your academic class and your naval authorities. The latter selected seaside resorts for bombardment *because* they were undefended. Had Scarborough and Whitby and the Hartlepoons possessed modern defences, they would not have been attacked. And yet it was your Baron Marschall von Biberstein who at The Hague Conference of 1907 said this :—

“Military proceedings are not regulated solely by the stipulations of international law. There are other factors—conscience, good sense. A sense of the duties which the principles of humanity impose will be the surest guide for the conduct of seamen, and will constitute the most effectual safeguard against abuse. The officers of the German Navy—I say it with emphasis—will always fulfil in the strictest manner duties which flow from the unwritten law of humanity and civilization.”

And now it is the scholarly countryman of

Baron Marschall who affects to convict us of inconsistency when we denounce the dastardly bombardment of undefended Scarborough and mention that the old fort at Hartlepool did what it could with its old guns. Some day, perhaps, your countrymen will be surprised to think that you should have dwelt on these things. You might leave it to us to remember them. I never had any doubt about the defeat of Germany from the moment when your rush on Paris was herded back ; but when I read the news of that raid on Scarborough, and when I saw next morning the companies of volunteer recruits in the London streets multiplied fivefold, I knew with a deeper certainty what the end would be. If we have to fight till we are in rags, we will out-stay your State. And this heightens my interest in your demonstration of the defects of English civilization.

Perhaps the best summing-up of the issue is that the country whose scholars so laboriously—and incompetently—go about to indict her enemies for incivilization, is the country which, when one of her submarines had sunk the non-combatant *Lusitania*, drowning hundreds of women and children, made the occasion one for a festival in its schools, and celebrated the event with rejoicings, even as far away as the German club in Chicago. In view of all that, your polemic about the inferiority of non-German civilizations savours somewhat of low comedy.

Boasting, we know, is the specialty of the savage, and no civilized nation boasts with the




systematic zest of yours. On the eve of Jena, your Prussian officers were boasting that the French would run away at the sight of them. As soon as Napoleon was down by the help of Russia and Britain, the boasting recommenced, and it has been in *crescendo* ever since. That gives us our clue. Not only was Germany the last of the Western Powers to undergo modern civilization (Herder, you remember, wrote: "the inhabitants of Germany a few centuries ago were Patagonians"; and Goethe said something similar), but Prussia was one of the last States in Germany to exhibit the influence in average life. Consulting the Prussian criminal statistics of last century, I find that of the seven provinces of Old Prussia, Prussia proper was nearly the worst. In 1822 it was the worst. Whereas in Pomerania, in respect of crimes against persons, the proportion was one criminal to 2,634 persons, in Prussia it was one in 1,242. In 1819 it was one in 1,044, only Posen having a worse percentage. In 1825, with one criminal to 2,749 persons in Pomerania, there was one to 1,433 in Prussia, Posen again being the only State that was worse. During 1835, when the population of Berlin was about 250,000, the number of German civilians arrested by the police was 10,134; so that about one in 25 of the inhabitants spent some part of that year in prison.

I do not pursue this line of investigation. I merely indicate these facts as being historically suggestive in a much broader way than are your random impeachments of English life. If eighty years ago Prussia was, with one small exception,

by far the most criminally given of all the Old Prussian provinces, we can understand the effects in war to-day of the predominance of Prussia in German life.

## CHAPTER IV

### ENGLAND'S INTERNATIONAL BIAS

OMING to your sections on British foreign policy, I involuntarily recall how in 1814 Count F. L. Stolberg wrote to the publisher Perthes apropos of the attempts of the German revolutionaries of that time to blacken England. He called her "that country whose constitution secures the liberty of the individual and the welfare of the nation more than any that ever existed, while at the same time it is the bulwark of the independence of every other country in Europe; defeats every attempt to subjugate any continental country; has no desire—can have none—to make conquests in Europe; and has just freed the whole of Europe from the hardest and most ignominious yoke. To reproach England with acting from selfish motives is to reproach her with having her welfare inextricably bound up with our existence, her freedom with our independence, no less than our freedom with her independence."

That was written before Waterloo; and Perthes agreed—Perthes, to whom Niebuhr was already preaching, in the Prussian manner, your gospel of the great State, "in which a full and free life is now alone possible." At the same time, other Germans were writing that "Prussia is actuated solely by the thought of her own personal interest, and her own aggrandizement."

That period in Germany's history you naturally pass over, commenting merely that in resisting German demands for the dismemberment of pre-Revolution France in 1814, England sought "that Germany's strength should remain as much as possible restricted, so that she should not grow into a commercial rival." Thus you reach the conception of "the ruthless selfishness of English policy." Your proof in detail is interesting. On page 90 you inform us that in the great wars from the eighteenth century onwards "a ground principle of English policy came clearly to light, which up to the present has always ruled her: she allied herself with the weak States of the Continent, in order to fight the stronger"—a curious kind of evidence of her selfishness. On page 102, however, you announce that "she was powerful only against the weak and the timid: for a serious war she betrayed a deep-rooted aversion, only too well grounded in her inner organization." Thus do you continue to exhibit the critical rectitude of your method and the unity of your thought.

Now, I am not at all concerned to maintain, even as against such a critic, that British foreign policy in the past was not as a rule addressed to what seemed to be the national interest, or even to deny that in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries it was at times unscrupulous. It never, indeed, attained to the cynicism of Frederick; but it acted on Bismarck's principle that all nations seek their own interest. And it was not always just. English historical literature abounds

in impeachments of past British policy. Past English misgovernment of Ireland has been as severely arraigned by Englishmen as by Irishmen ; and a great English party is pledged to secure for Ireland Home Rule. Can you say anything similar in regard to Prussia's dragooning of the Poles, the Danes of Schleswig, and the people of Alsace ?

But our self-criticism does not end there. Our fathers' treatment of Holland under Charles II and later ; our beginnings of empire in India ; our policy in the Crimean War ; our opium wars with China—these and other matters you will find discussed in our books in a fashion to which Prussian historiography offers no parallel. I do not remember to have seen a Prussian history of the Seven Years' War in which Frederick's brutal aggression was otherwise than gingerly criticized. Ranke, who was always so fluently moral in censure of the acts of French kings, when he came to deal with the deeds of Frederick simply declined to discuss the question of his claim to Silesia, pronouncing that "happily this is not the task of the historian." Such is the ethical operation of the Prussian mind.

I will waive, then, the task of answering in detail your edifying characterizations of all English foreign policy. One item will suffice as a sample : your assertion that in 1839 "in the midst of peace Aden was torn from Turkey." In 1839 Aden was held by an independent sultan, as it had been since 1735, when the sheikh of Lahej threw off his allegiance to the Sultan of Sana (who had held the supremacy after the Turks relin-

quished their conquests in Yemen) and founded an independent line. When in 1837 a ship under British colours was wrecked near Aden, her cargo was plundered and her passengers cruelly ill-used. On being challenged by the Bombay Government, the Sultan agreed to make compensation, and also to sell his town and port. When an agent of the Bombay Government went to carry through the transaction, the Sultan was deceased, and his son, now in power, declined to fulfil his father's undertakings. Then an expedition was sent, and the place was annexed. Turkey had nothing to do with the matter.

This is the unvarnished truth as against your untruth in one clause ; and to deal with the whole series of your charges would take a great deal more space than they are worth, especially seeing that no educated person in Britain pretends to think the entire foreign policy of his country in the past is at all points strictly defensible. A vital difference between Britain and Germany is that the former aims at the purification of international morality, and the latter at its annihilation. I prefer to come to your main argument. You allege not only that Britain's policy was always self-seeking, but that this made her generally distrusted and detested—at least (such is your delightfully Prussian way of putting it), after she began in the second half of last century to show a disinclination for great wars.

Here, to begin with, one has to challenge your veracity. Despite the talk of your revolutionaries, the majority of the people of the anti-Napoleonic

States in Germany were friendly and grateful to England for a generation after 1814. Spain was not unfriendly after England had helped her to throw off the yoke of Napoleon. Portugal has remained friendly. Greece seemed rather grateful than otherwise for being helped to secure her independence; and even Turkey regarded England as her friend until recent years—as she well might, after the Crimean War, waged by France and England in her defence, and after the Berlin Treaty. Curiously enough, even now, in Austria there is said to be much less hatred of England than in Germany. Hungarians, again, used to speak habitually of England with friendship, having known something of English sympathy; and though it was France that freed Italy from Austria, Italians, like Hungarians, recognized that they had always had the sympathy of the island kingdom in their struggles. Bulgaria, too, used to be grateful for Gladstone's championship, though gratitude is not a Bulgarian specialty; and the other Balkan peoples have not shown themselves distrustful of Britain.

So far, then, your argument from the general detestableness of England refuses to march. It is true that during the Boer War there was much anti-British feeling on the Continent. As Prince von Bülow has so candidly informed us, Germany then refrained from attacking us only because her Navy was not yet strong enough. It is one of the most edifying things in history to realize that the nation which bludgeoned Belgium in 1914 was quite indignant in 1899 against Britain on the

score of the Boer War, in which the Boers committed the mistake of declaring war first. You are much chagrined to note that the hostility of the other continental States on that score had died down years ago. Did it ever occur to you to ask yourself why that happened?

The answer is not difficult. It was because within five or six years of the close of the war the British Government granted complete self-government to the former Boer States. The result of that example of benighted British Parliamentaryism is that not only did the mass of the Dutch stocks in South Africa stand fast to the British connection in spite of all German blandishments in 1914-15, but that the two renowned Boer generals, Botha and Smuts, have taken a leading part in driving your countrymen out of their former possessions in Africa. And now we come to grips with your general thesis.

I need hardly ask you whether you think any one believes that Germany, had she conquered the Boer States, would have given them self-government. You would scorn to pretend such a thing. But, you see, these things count. No sensible Afrikander believed for one moment that the victory of Germany in this war could mean anything but the subjection of this people to a strictly despotic German rule. Between Britain and Germany there is thus one vital difference. Britain is known to do things for freedom and Germany is not. Outside of the empire, half a dozen small States regard Britain as having done them a good turn. Could you name any country that takes that view of Germany?



This is the simple test that puts in the category of absurdity your arraignment of British foreign policy in the past. Britain has some old misdeeds to answer for. Germany has nothing else! Once, in a moment of expansion, when out of office, Gladstone declared that no man could lay his finger on any spot in Europe and say that there Austria had done a good deed. It was an indiscretion, seeing that we were then at peace with Austria; but it was not an untruth. And if that can truly be said of Austria, what is to be said of Prussia? An unselfish deed by that State is not recorded in any earthly chronicle. Her whole history is one of rapacious aggrandizement; her policy never for an instant had any higher motive than avarice; of all modern European Powers she has been the most shameless in aggression; and she has latterly inoculated with her character the German Empire.

These issues, observe, are not of my raising. Nobody in Britain ever pretended that the guilt of Germany in this war was to be proved by a catalogue of Prussia's political crimes. It was not the Allies who claimed privilege of *Kultur* for an act of gross international wickedness. It was the academics of Germany. The Allies, like the bulk of the rest of the world, have said all along that the question of the guilt of this war is a perfectly open and simple one. They have tabled all their documents and defied sane mankind to find any but one verdict. The issue has been patiently and dispassionately expounded, step by step, in a multitude of writings by British as by French and

Italian writers. These expositions said nothing whatever of Germany's past. They were judicial documents. The country that in this dispute has from the first resorted alternatively to vilification and self-laudation sufficiently indicates the state of its consciousness. A litigant who can rationally and juridically defend himself does not spend time in libelling the ancestors of his opponent and assuring the jury of his own moral and mental superiority.

Since, however, you have appealed to the character test, to the character test we will go. We shall not falsify German history: malice could hardly hope to outgo the reality. We start with the Prussian State as Frederick the Great found it, a people bred like sheep and ruled like dogs, and we follow its aggrandizement. The seizure of Silesia, at his outset, is an act of national burglary not to be matched in modern history: it belongs to the polity of the Assyrians and the Redskins. It led in due course to the Second Silesian War and the Third or Seven Years' War, an inferno of misery that recalled the devastation of the war of Thirty Years, the last great German act in the tragedy of civilization. In his first war, which he began by tearing up a national treaty as your Government has torn its "scrap of paper" in regard to Belgium, Frederick thrice betrayed his allies.

Prussia had thus found her first great man, the forerunner of Napoleon, the criminal type of the man of military genius; and for his efficiency he has been haloed as the national hero. His chief

victories were won over a woman ; and with all his efficiency he was saved from ruin at the end of the Seven Years' War only by the death of the Russian Tsarina and the accession of her crazy son, who was Frederick's admirer. But that does not affect the Prussian worship of Frederick ; and it is from his worshippers, Treitschke and the rest, that there comes the charge of national self-seeking against Great Britain. After inflicting untold miseries alike on his own people and on their antagonists, he became of necessity much concerned for peace ; and thenceforth a profession of peace-seeking also becomes part of the ritual of national self-glorification. The next Prussian triumph was the Partition of Poland. Already, presumably, there was a Prussian love of Fatherland. Through Frederick, it operated to the acquisition of another people's Fatherland. For the First Partition there was the sorry excuse that the territories taken by Prussia had three centuries before been under German dominion. German they had never really been ; and the Teutonic Knights had themselves been invaders among a Slav people, who actually sought the protection of Poland against their Teutonic oppressors. There was further the pretext that in 1772 Poland was anarchic. But in the case of the Second Partition, carried out by Frederick's successor in 1793, the last excuse was not available ; and Frederick William III, who had actually made a treaty of alliance with Poland in 1790, gave as the pretext for his treachery an alleged dissemination in Poland of "the spirit of

French democracy and the principles of that atrocious sect." The self-pity of the Prussians during their and their king's later sufferings under Napoleon never induced any self-reproach for his treachery to Poland and his annexation of fresh Polish territory. Yet the Prussian King had pledged himself by the treaty of 1790 to protect Poland from foreign interference "at any time or in any manner."

It is pleaded that Danzig, which was annexed in that episode, was a German city. But it was a Hanse city, whose freedom had been guaranteed in 1767 by five Powers, *including Prussia*, and it had not the slightest wish to be annexed to Prussia. The very pretence in regard to Danzig is the condemnation of the seizure of Thorn and Posen. Prussian ethic condones and eulogizes the whole procedure of the Partitions of Poland as having been in the interest of Prussia. It is the same moralists who profess to condemn Britain as a State always pursuing its own interest. You, I presume, have nothing to say against the robberies and the treacheries of either Frederick or his successor, or, for that matter, against Austria, whose Empress, as Frederick observed, "wept, but took," and later even forestalled Frederick William III by annexing Zips. You would really have been well advised to leave the history of the eighteenth century out of your survey. The Partition of Poland has become a byword for international iniquity; and in that iniquity Prussia was the efficient mover.

Your charge of self-seeking in foreign policy

doubtless holds good against England in respect of her support of Frederick against Austria and France. The motive was a desire to help the "Protestant State" that was in danger of being crushed by the Franco-Russo-Austrian combination. British subsidies and Anglo-Hanoverian forces accordingly saved him at one stage as Russian reversal of policy saved him at another. It may or may not have been a moral impulse that moved George III at his accession to withdraw British support, while faithfully stipulating in 1762-3 for the cession by France of all Prussian territory in French possession. It may have been a simple common-sense recognition of his absolute faithlessness to his allies. However that might be, Frederick, the most shameless of all treaty-breakers, furiously denounced Britain for openly and justifiably deciding to withdraw from an alliance by which she gained nothing. At any moment that suited him, he would have thrown over Britain or any other ally, as he had cheated one ally after another in the First Silesian War, to make an advantageous peace with any enemy. The one ethical principle for him was that Prussia must receive the fidelity she never gave; and that simple principle has become the gist of German thought on international questions. For Prussia, "the end justifies the means," be it in stealing Silesia or in partitioning Poland. Treitschke has no difficulty over that issue. But that any other State should consult its own interests, even without resort to crime, is a thing not to be endured.

The fate met by Prussia twenty years after

Frederick's death is a revelation of the true inwardness of the State policy of militarism, calculated aggression, and autocratic "efficiency." Rule by divine right, with no ray of hope for self-government, and no smallest opening for individual political initiative, reduced Prussia in half a generation to a state of utter impotence. Beginning by an insolent and inept intervention in the affairs of revolutionary France, in which she was shamefully defeated, her Government in its relations with Napoleon played a pitiable rôle of vacillation, cowardice, and fear. The great army, on which had been spent the bulk of the national revenue for a century, ruled by an arrogant and incompetent officer caste, broke like paste-board at Jena, to which it had gone with a litany of boasts of coming victory; and for six years Prussia drank the cup of humiliation to the dregs. The example of Spain, which made an instant and unflinching resistance to the invader of which Prussia was collectively incapable, and for which half of Germany had no wish, gradually inspired her patriots, and with the help of Russia and Britain the great oppressor was overthrown.

Then Prussia resumed her autocratic and militarist course, all the aspirations of her democrats being trodden under foot with the promises that had been made to them; and instead of a general evolution towards international fraternity there began a new progression in autocracy and militarism, heading towards new aggression, new aggrandizement, and finally to the World War. For Germany, the wheel has gone full circle. All

her progress—intellectual and material—has been subordinated to the non-moral cult of the State, of Power, of national vainglory. Everything—the thought of the philosophers, the research of the scholars, the education of the people, the skill of the men of science, the enterprise of the merchants and captains of industry—has gone to build up a Napoleonic State, worshipped as at once the abstraction and the concentration of racial pride and national lust of dominion.

The national destiny was determined by Bismarck. Always there were men in Germany who yearned for a nobler way of life than that of subjection to autocracy. They aspired eagerly in 1814 and for years thereafter; they aspired again in 1848, when the initiative of democracy in France had again stirred the waters. But they lay under the curse of inherited unfitness. Never having had any training in self-government, they were utterly unprepared to begin at the point at which they proposed to begin. And so Bismarck and his school triumphed, and the Frederician policy was recommenced. First the attack on Denmark and the annexation of Schleswig-Holstein, with the complicity of Austria; next the war to humiliate Austria, leaving her, however, intact, to keep her quiet when the war with France should come; then deliberate preparation and no less deliberate provocation of the war with France, who had submitted her destinies to a Cæsar who was incompetent.

Thus was achieved the Prussian dream of supremacy in Germany, and in no other way

could it be attained while Prussia stood determinedly in the way of any true federal union. Your assertion that in 1848 England "stood on the side of the opponents" of the German movement for national unity is a sample of your method. England did nothing, and could do nothing, in the matter. You yourself admit that she always sympathized with Liberal movements in Germany: that is part of your grievance against her. Prussia was determined that there should be no union save one in which she was dominant. She could have had union at any time on a federal basis, bad as was her reputation in Germany for absolute self-seeking. But she always lived up to her reputation. It was always a Prussian administration that she offered to the German peoples. On the eve of Jena, boasting how they would put down Napoleon, the Prussian officers passing through Gotha "behaved as if in a conquered country," with all the insolence and licence of their caste. In Napoleon's place, they would have done all that Napoleon and his marshals did. The Napoleonic policy of universal plunder was their ideal: it is the German military ideal to-day. It was only the military triumph over France in 1870 that reconciled the other German States to an empire which meant the barely disguised perpetual domination of Prussia. They made their bed, and they have lain on it. Under a constitution which gives them no real power over their own destiny, they have been but the instruments of traditional Prussianism.

And this is the summing-up on the issue you



have raised as to the comparative political evolution of the British and the German States. During the nineteenth century, the self-governing States have been advancing not only in civilization and well-being, but in international morality. The conception of self-interest, as inevitable in national as in individual life, has been gradually modified in international as in social life. The law of reciprocity, which is the foundation of all ethic, has been continually widened. The habit of boasting, long ostracized in private life, has been in non-German countries restrained in public life. Conscious of their imperfections, the nations have increasingly substituted self-improvement for self-praise, and they had for a generation past been more and more concerned to guard against war. Those menaced by Germany naturally drew together; but still they hoped for better things than Armageddon. In the case of the last Balkan wars, British statesmanship was acknowledged by the German Government to have preserved the peace among the great Powers.

Meantime, what has been the development of Germany? No one could glean an idea of it from your book. You tell us in the customary manner that the German people, from the Kaiser downwards, desired above all things peace. Meaning what? A peace, apparently, in which Germany could impose her will on Europe. Here are your own words (page 135):

“Thus had Germany in the shortest time developed . . . into a mighty and aspiring empire, that already through its commanding

importance (*Schwergewicht*) exacted respect and could always enforce it. For England she became more and more the chief competitor. That in the affairs of the Continent Germany spoke the decisive word, and by her Army preserved the peace (!) of the Continent and made impossible the wars between European Powers which were so advantageous to England's expansion, had to be submitted to."

When, then, wars *did* take place in Europe, it was by Germany's wish. The essential thing was that Germany should always "speak the decisive word," and "enforce respect" to her decisions.

Meanwhile, what decisions was she preparing? The student of German political literature of the past dozen years is faced by a whole literature to which you make no allusion. I refer to the literature of Pan-Germanism. I do not ask you to take my account of it: I refer you to the summary of its propaganda given in the work of the American Professor Roland G. Usher, first published in 1913. With that literature there is absolutely nothing comparable in the modern world. French officers might from time to time produce a book on the next war; and English romancers might occasionally follow suit; but here is a literature permeating a nation, and representing an ideal of universal conquest which had its devotees in all classes. You may tell me that it was not governmental, and that it did not represent the feeling of the nation. What, then, do you make of the work of Professor Ottfried Nippold, "Der Deutsche

Chauvinismus," published in 1914? Here are his words :—

"Chauvinism has grown enormously in Germany during the last decade. This fact most impresses those who have returned to Germany after living for a long time abroad. Many such Germans have expressed to me their surprise at the change which has come over the soul of the nation in recent years ; and I myself can say from experience how astonished I was, on returning to Germany after long absence, to see this psychological transformation.

"Hand in hand with this outspoken hostility to foreign countries are conjoined a one-sided exaltation of war and a war mania such as would have been regarded as impossible a few years ago. . . . These people not only incite the nation to war, but systematically educate the nation to a desire for war. War is pictured not as a possibility that may come, but as a necessity that must come, and the sooner the better. . . . From the idea of a defensive war for urgent reasons the Chauvinists have advanced with the utmost facility to the idea of an offensive war for no reason at all ; and they flatter themselves that the German nation has undergone the same transformation."

Against that testimony, what credence do you think is to be attached to your pretence that the German nation above all others desired peace? That the better men in Germany protested, we know ; their very protests are the proof of the spread of the mania. "Never," wrote the editor

of the *Neue Rundschau* in April, 1913, "never was the idea of an offensive war so vigorously or so criminally played with as in recent years." And all the while the militarists were explaining that there must be not merely war, but conquest. Laymen like Medical Councillor Dr. W. Fuchs eloquently explained that "war is the only means of saving us [Germans] as a nation from the physical enfeeblement and demoralization which to-day imminently threaten us" (*Die Post*, January 28, 1912). But the militarists were more practical. In March of 1913, General Wrochem told the new German Defence Association that "a progressive nation like ours needs more territory, and if this cannot be obtained by peaceable means it must be obtained by war." And in January of the same year, General von Liebert told a Pan-Germanist congress at Hamburg that "nations which increase in population must carry on imperialistic policy and a policy of power aiming at territorial expansion. A people which has increased like the Germans is bound to carry on a continuous policy of expansion."

Such was the prevalent gospel in 1913, in which year, we know, the Austrian Government, in concert with the German, desired to make war on Serbia. That multitudes of your merchant class desired war no less than your militarists and your aristocrats is notorious. In what other European country did men openly reckon on the national wealth to be obtained by new indemnities to be extorted by war from defeated antagonists? That your Kaiser had long hesitated about pro-

voking the conflagration is doubtless true. That he had begun to give way to the general clamour in 1911 is, however, no less true; and in that year war would have broken out were it not, as you are aware, that the Berlin bankers were financially unprepared.

What, then, remains of your case, thus far, against English development as making for a planned war with Germany? Had Britain shown any desire for new territorial acquisitions? The German grievance was that she needed none: it was Germany that for ever sought expansion; and there you are at one with the Pan-Germanists. You are bitter against Caprivi for his conviction that expansion in Africa was valueless. Your Crown Prince latterly seems to have agreed with him; for it was he, was it not, who declared a few years ago that you had not a colony "worth twopence"? Your trade with civilized countries was, in point of fact, enormously more profitable than any you could do with your African colonies. But the dream of *Weltherrschaft* had captured your nation; and the Pan-Germanists carried all before them.

You admit that the British Government repeatedly made overtures to the German for a joint restriction of naval armaments, the last being for a "fleet-holiday-year"; and you comment that it "fell through as impracticable despite the strong sympathy (*starken Entgegenkommens*) of Germany." You know that this is untrue. You know that Prince von Bülow had declared that no scheme whatever could be

devised for a reduction of armaments that would be acceptable to his Government. And you yourself go on to declare that "no independent Great Power can bind itself in this way in matters vital to its independence, and thereby give a foreign State the right of control over its measures and war material, even apart from the fact that according to English usage it was perfectly certain that England would get round the agreement by one or other of the formulas she has always at hand, and that Germany would be the dupe." So the "strong" disposition of Germany to accede is your figment? May one further ask, in this connection, why, with such "perfect certainty" as to England's treachery, the German Government was at any point surprised, as it professed to be, at England's hostile action?

The rest of your case consists in a strenuous assertion that, conscious of her military weakness, England grew more and more afraid of the "German peril"; that in countless publications the dangers of a German invasion were set forth; and that "even as in France, in the whole popular literature and in the school-books, down to the little children's copy-books, the Germans were pictured as bloodthirsty barbarians, who shrank from no cruelty and no crime. The Government did its part to stimulate and spread this frame of mind," and so forth. Upon this it may suffice to cite the comment of Dr. Guttman in the *Frankfurter Zeitung*:—"I hereby testify, in so far as England is concerned, that this is not true; that this is a wide generalization from a few solitary

examples." Dr. Guttmann knows England: you do not. And this raises the question: Upon what kind of information do you found your aspersions in general?

In a passage in which you parade some of your crudest psychology and sociology, you enlarge first on the "arrogance and conceit" of the English, then on "the deep-rooted lack (*tief eingewurzelter Mangel!*) of mental elasticity" which, "as a result of the fixed traditions of English culture and education," has "become an important characteristic of the nation." They are so unteachable that even their study of foreign languages in recent years has had no effect whatever. They cannot understand the ideas and institutions of other countries; and so forth. But after this tirade you go on to avow that "it would be a serious error on our part to suppose that in Germany a deeper comprehension [of foreign affairs] is extended through a wider circle [than that of the well-informed English]. Especially of England and North America and their ideas and life-conditions, so widely divergent from our own, a really penetrating knowledge is limited to a very narrow circle. Our daily Press is almost entirely uninformed on the subject, and brings us only scanty and inadequate news. Very often, indeed, we find among highly educated Germans the most incredible judgments and opinions."

Whether this startling confession of German ignorance of British and American life was intended to suggest that, after accusing us of arrogance and conceit, you could at a pinch be

modest, I will not stay to inquire. I rather go on to note your avowal that this ignorance of British affairs is the heavy penalty for "the inconceivably short-sighted and narrow-minded school policy of the Prussian Government, which, having no perception of the true needs of life and the problems they set up, has completely neglected English in the higher schools, and in the collegiate schools treats it as a completely subordinate and merely optional secondary subject." You add that ignorance of English is a very grave injury to the students leaving those colleges, hampering and even almost arresting their development, seeing that alike in the fields of philosophy, history, and natural science, American literature has attained an ever-increasing importance.\*

The outcome is, you avow, that a knowledge of English is much commoner in your middle and even in your lower classes than in those responsible for the guidance of the intellectual life. "How little distinguished is our diplomacy for knowledge of foreign affairs, how little it is thereby prepared and able to keep in touch with and to influence powerful circles abroad, we have constantly seen in recent decades, as well as in the pre-history of the war, and even during its progress." It would appear, then, that in respect of inacquaintance with each other's affairs England and Germany are in your opinion on one footing. But you collect yourself to affirm that while your ruling classes know next to nothing of us we know still

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\* Your translator has modestly omitted this testimonial to American scholarship.



less of you. We lay under a "total ignorance" of Germany, a "complete incapacity" to understand your prevailing ideas, and "the therefrom arising national and military institutions"; whence our "monstrous undervaluing" of your military power, your organization, "and, above all, the living national feeling" that inspires you. Your residual proposition, then, would seem to be that "in the kingdom of the blind the one-eyed is king."

It will not, I fear, gratify you to know that we really had a very high estimate of your military strength and organization, and knew perfectly that in entering on this war we were probably beginning the greatest struggle in which our nation ever engaged. But such is the fact. And as the question at issue now seems to be, Which of the two nations made the greatest miscalculation in regard to the fighting power of the other? I propose to offer rather better testimony as against Germany than you offer as against Britain. In that regard you place your usual reliance on asseveration. That you personally considered the fighting power of Britain to be contemptible, as apart from the Navy, you show us all along. The only obscurity on that point is the co-existence of so much exasperation with so much contempt. Since we are so weak, why all that fury over our intervention? Leaving the riddle unsolved, I come to the question of the German forecasts of the course of the war. Your severe indictment of your diplomatic service seems at the very outset to indicate that in your

opinion your department of Foreign Affairs was very ill-informed. And it certainly was.

Let me again present to you a German pronouncement, made, I think, in April, 1915, by *Der Tag*, the German journal which in the first month of the war exclaimed: "*Herr Gott, sind diese Tage schön!*" ("Lord God, how lovely are these days"). Eight months served to bring disenchantment to this extent:—

"So many of our calculations have deceived us! We expected that British India would rise when the first shot was fired in Europe; but in reality thousands of Indians came to fight with the British against us. We anticipated that the whole British Empire would be torn to pieces; but the colonies appear to be closer than ever united with the mother country. We expected a triumphant rebellion in South Africa, yet it turned out nothing but a failure. We expected trouble in Ireland; but, instead, she sent her best soldiers against us. We anticipated that the party of 'peace at any price' would be dominant in England; but it melted away in the ardour to fight against Germany. We reckoned that England was degenerate and incapable of placing any weight in the scale, yet she seems to be our principal enemy.

"The same has been the case with France and Russia. We thought that France was depraved and divided, and we find that they are formidable opponents. We believed that the Russian people were far too discontented to fight for their Government, and we made our plans on the supposition

of a rapid collapse of Russia ; but, instead, she mobilized her millions quickly and well, her people are full of enthusiasm, and their power is crushing. Those who led us into all those mistakes and miscalculations have laid upon themselves a heavy responsibility."

In the last sentence you would seem entirely to concur ; may we, then, infer that you assent to the entire jeremiad ? It really matters little whether you do or not. The world knows that it broadly and accurately sets forth the prevailing expectations in Germany. And, to come to the vital point, this avowal is the annihilation of all your rhetoric about the peaceful purposes of Germany. These miscalculations as to what was going to happen to the British Empire were not mere hasty estimates framed after the 1st of August, 1914. They were the estimates that had been current in Germany for years, the estimates upon which your Government and your militarists and the mass of your people were not merely confident of the impotence of Britain, but eager to demonstrate it by war. When some of them began after the first failures to raise the plaint that Germany had been "forced into the war," Herr Maximilian Harden in his journal gave them the lie, praying that the Teutonic devil might strangle such whimperers. "We wanted this war," was his truthful declaration.

It is quite true that your Government did not want to have Britain on their hands *at the same time* with France and Russia. That goes without saying. They despised the power of Italy ; but

they naturally did not want to fight four Powers at once. No, in the German calculation, Britain's turn should have come either sooner or later. The naval situation prevented its coming sooner, as Prince von Bülow has avowed. You would have attacked in 1900 if you dared. But in view of the pleasing practice in your Navy of drinking to "The Day" of war with England, and all those estimates of British impotence avowed by *Der Tag*, and revealed by the whole course of German intrigue in India, Ireland, and South Africa, the general disposition in Germany to crush the British Empire is just as certain an historic fact as the war itself. Your pretences to the contrary are surely very idle when your very partisans in the neutral countries—for instance, Professor Steffens, in Sweden—vehemently claim that Germany was *bound* to destroy the power of Britain.

So your indictment of Britain as war-guilty beforehand by reason of the evolution of her foreign policy has come to nothing. After asserting that her practice in the eighteenth century was to attack great continental Powers, and that she has adhered to that policy down to the present, you declare that in the nineteenth she was bold only against the weak. You appear to think that you salve this contradiction by asserting further that she thought Germany weak—an absurdity too gross for contradiction. At the same time you affirm that her consciousness of military impotence made her dread Germany's power! Every conceivable proposition finds its place in your farrago of blind aspersion. The sole semblance of support

for your imputation of designs of conquest is the citation of the fact that Britain showed herself ready to stand by France against a wanton German attack. That we not merely admit, but avow.

On the other hand, your own avowal concurs with a mass of German testimony in positing the growing determination of modern Germany to dominate the world, and the habitual calculation of the possibilities. The gross folly of that calculation is a result not merely of that essential ignorance of foreign conditions which you angrily impute to your own governing class, but of the spirit of overweening arrogance that inspires the German view of things in general. On the side of political science, your people approximate to the level of the Chinese of a century back, or, for that matter, to the Ariovistus of Cæsar's day. You remember: *Ariovistus ad postulata Cæsaris pauca respondit: de suis virtutibus multa prædicavit.*

In one of the hundred boasts with which, in the German manner, you punctuate your book, you announce that "the Englishman" is wholly devoid [everything is "wholly" with you] of that concern to frame a theory of the universal which is inborn in every German. It is true that you have that predilection, alike in philosophy and in sociology. In a space of forty years you had at least five outstanding philosophies—Kant's, Fichte's, Schelling's, Hegel's, Schopenhauer's, each destroying those which went before. What is now current among you, I do not pretend to say. They were all, broadly speaking, ideal constructions of the cosmos in terms of the ego; and as

that is equally the principle of your racial sociologies it may be that the political predilection has for the time swallowed up the other. The fact remains that it is latterly your national habit to sum up the communities of mankind as you used to sum up the cosmos. And you do it with the same perfect confidence in your power to realize all things in your inner consciousness.

I somewhat fear lest I follow in your footsteps in thus summarizing one German stream of tendency. You are all so ready to sum up the life of any other country, and you are mostly so ignorant of your own. But this really does seem to explain itself. You of the academic class are all specialists, ill-related to the totality of things; and yet you must generalize on the totality of things. You are a specialist in ancient history; and you now set yourself to generalize that of modern England, incidentally producing fifty generalizations on the whole life of a great nation which you know mainly through books, German newspapers, and German gossip. Is it not in this very fashion that your governing class reached those egregious forecasts of what was to happen to the British Empire as soon as Germany gave the push? Are you really in a position to reproach your diplomatists? On page 187 you inform us that Mr. Charles Trevelyan resigned his position "at the same time that his father, Sir George Trevelyan, . . . left the Cabinet." Sir George Trevelyan withdrew from parliamentary life in 1897. Your diplomatists could hardly beat that, could they?

The fundamental trouble, learned sir, is just the national vice of systematic self-praise. Nothing more surely undermines a man's judgment of others than a cultivated vanity; and still more fatal to sound judgment of mankind in general is the eternal iteration by a people of its own praise. That has been the Germans' rule of life for over a hundred years. The very backwardness of their civilization set them upon comforting themselves, first by boasting of their past, and then by boasting of their present as soon as they felt they had one. "The old national vice of self-laudation" was imputed to them by a highly sympathetic English critic seventy years ago. How things went after 1870 I need not recall to you. Making up your minds in advance that you are at once the salt of the earth, and the sun, moon, and stars thereof, how could you possibly have a "penetrating knowledge" of any other nation, any other State? How is knowledge of anything to be acquired in a vertigo of vanity?

In the process of auto-intoxication you have wholly lost the mental leadership of Europe. Nobody now talks of new German philosophy. German energies have indeed been abundantly addressed to the practical side of life, with important results; but that inner life for which the practical life ultimately exists (according to civilized ideals) seems in Germany to have descended to the physical plane. In other lands, the idea of national greatness has more and more taken the form of an ideal of national good life, to which peace is indispensable. In yours, it has

more and more meant expansion, territory, *Weltmacht*, *Weltherrschaft*, supremacy in arms, the power to dictate, the dominion of the holy Germanic stock over all other races. Your people have produced a whole library of such doctrine in the past twenty years. That way national madness lies ; and the fit came in 1914.

Thus have we followed you step by step in your polemic, everywhere finding irrelevance, self-contradiction, nugatory vituperation, defect of evidence. At last we come within sight of the issue which a justice-loving investigator would have put in the front and not at the back of his inquiry—the issue as to who actually forced this war on Europe. If “England” were the guilty party, why not show as much in terms of the documents of the war? If she were guilty, what matter her national blemishes, her past, her inferiority to a Germany which is superior to everything earthly? The guilt of causing the World War is surely great enough to swallow up every other : you yourself say as much. And yet only after 175 large pages of historical preliminaries do you come to the point, to which you devote seventeen, whereafter you resume the congenial task of simple vituperation. To the real issue, then, let us come.



## CHAPTER V

### THE CAUSATION OF THE WAR

**A**S we approach the real issue, your precursory narrative more and more reveals the fact you are concerned to conceal, namely, that for years before 1914 the German Government and the German nation were becoming more and more determined on a European war—or, rather, series of wars. You reveal as much by your *crescendo* of anger. The policy of Edward VII, the Entente with France and Russia, the military conversations with Belgium—all constitute in your eyes a damning indictment. You represent them as plans for a general attack on Germany, knowing very well that they were strictly defensive. They were the simple outcome of the obvious determination of Germany to become *the* World Power, with the “decisive word” on sea as well as on land, mistress of the very life of Great Britain as she was mistress on the Continent. And you reveal that you know this: you expressly insist on Britain’s consciousness of her real danger from German power. All you omit to mention is the voluminous literature of German aspirations. The anger of Germany at British foreign policy long before 1914 you reveal all along. Then Germany was by your avowal in a consciously hostile attitude. Your counter-asseveration that she was full of peaceful senti-

ment is simple counter-sense. I have already indicated the facts of the case.

On the real issue, I will first of all simply state your case as you put it, and, *assuming it to be true*, draw the plain inferences. Nothing else is required to expose Germany's guilt.

England, France, and Russia, you say, had completed their arrangements for a war in the spring of 1914. A war of what kind? Of attack on Germany? Upon what pretext? All the menaces of war since 1871 had come from Germany. It was she who threatened it to France in 1906, to Russia in 1908, to France again in 1911, when she made ready for the rush, only to be held back by her bankers. On what grounds did you expect the Entente to declare war? You do not on that point give us a single hint. You proceed, perforce, to deal with the actual origination of the war—Austria's ultimatum to Serbia. It has taken you long to reach it, but there you at last arrive on page 179.

And this is your argument. By the Austrian ultimatum, Russia was given the choice of letting Serbia fall or going to war in her defence. For her to yield to Austria, as you avow, would have meant recognizing Austria's supremacy in the western part of the torso of the Balkan peninsula—a tolerably stiff proposition, as you admit. On the other hand, you contend, the subjection of Serbia was necessary to Austria's "existence," now that the Serbian agitators had taken to assassination. The proper course, then, was for Russia to stand aside and let Austria work her

will on Serbia. And this, you feel sure, she would have been able to do if only England had refused to be a party to the war. Russia would have given way to Germany's menace as she did perforce in 1908, when Austria annexed Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Russia was still too weak and disorganized after the Japanese War to fight. Russia yielding, Austria would have done as she wished with Serbia, and we should all have lived happy ever after. THAT IS YOUR CASE !

I really desire no more damning indictment of the Austro-German alliance. What you call "peace" is the peace of European submission to every Austro-German aggression. Once the Central Powers were supreme in the Balkans, they could proceed to their further designs. The Bagdad Railway, as their Pan-Germanists proclaimed, would put them in a position to seize Egypt, whereafter they could absorb Turkey. At that stage Britain would presumably be a comparatively easy morsel. But even at the start, the "existence" of Germany, as you and your statesmen inform us, called for the subjection of Belgium. As it was Russia's duty to stand by and see Serbia subjected, so it was ours to stand by and see Belgium bludgeoned. How long it would take to make the seizure of Holland necessary for Germany's "existence" you do not inform us ; but, enlightened on that subject by your Pan-Germanist literature, we can guess. The necessity would certainly not have been long delayed. And then would have come "The Day" for reckoning with England.

It is quite unnecessary to argue the latter point. Your express positions in regard to Serbia and Belgium are absolutely sufficient; and there can be no more overwhelming proof of the madness that has seized the German mind than your assumption that these positions constitute a tenable case. Perhaps, indeed, I do you personally an injustice. The fashion in which you hurry over this—the real issue—suggests that perhaps you know as well as I do the monstrosity of your argument. You speak of what you call the “cool effrontery” of Lord Grey’s handling of his terrible dilemma. I will not pretend to impute coolness either to you or to any other champion of Germany. As for effrontery, the only ground for hesitation about applying the epithet is the fashion in which, as aforesaid, you hurry over the real issue in seventeen pages after spending 170 in preliminary irrelevance. Perhaps the accurate description would be “suppressed shame.”

It is after your avowal that the Kaiser’s speech on June 20 indicated the near approach of war that you make this egregious assertion:—

“The German Under-Secretary went so far [in striving to avert war] as to explain to the English Ambassador that the German Government had not prompted the hurried return of the Kaiser from his northern summer trip, which was expected on the evening of July 26th, and that they regretted it because ‘thereby disquieting rumours might arise.’” And you add the footnote: “The German Kaiser had undertaken this journey in spite of the murder of the heir to the Austrian

throne, and had not yet cut it short, in order to show all the world that Germany stood aloof from the negotiations and was making no military preparations, but was quietly awaiting the course of events."

Such is your official lesson, duly recited. I doubt whether any intelligent neutral will feel complimented by your assumption that stuff of this kind will serve to hoodwink neutrals in general. The make-believe of the Kaiser and the German Foreign Office is too gross to deceive a child; and you contrive to make the farce still worse by obviously confessing elsewhere that on June 20 the Kaiser had made up his mind that war was at hand. Had he then gone to the north to try to recover a peaceful frame of mind? Would it not be well to stick to one line of fiction at a time?

Yours is indeed a pitiable position. With what semblance of conviction, I wonder, did you frame your proposition that the assassination at Serajevo had made it necessary to Austria's "existence" to lay her hand on Serbia? You were, of course, aware that Austria had formally proposed to Italy that the Triple Alliance should make war on Serbia in 1913. You will doubtless deny this; but if you will turn to your book you will find that on page 179 you expressly admit that the assumption of a coming war was made in Germany before the assassination. When at the launching of the ship *Bismarck* at Hamburg on June 20 the Kaiser repeated, "with a rising emphasis," Prince Bismarck's phrase: "We Germans fear God, and

nothing else in the world," his words, you avow, left hardly a doubt that war was at hand. Quite so. Multitudes of Germans had been expecting it for a year and more. And you had further revealed, in your immediately previous remarks on the damage to German prestige that had accrued from the Turco-Bulgarian War, your conviction that Germany *needed* somehow to reaffirm herself. The assassination at Serajevo was simply seized on as a pretext either for the war determined on or for a blow at the prestige of Russia and a decisive imposition of Pan-German power on the Balkans.

Whether Germans really believe that Russia and France would not have gone to war if Britain had remained neutral, I am not greatly concerned to inquire. You all pay extraordinary compliments to Britain's influence, after all your declamation about her effeteness, her impotence, her cowardice. Some Russian statesmen, on the other hand, seem to have held that if Britain had definitely declared from the first that she would join in any Russian resistance to Austro-German aggression, Germany would have given way. These generalizations, obviously, are alike incapable of proof. Even if war could have been staved off in 1914, the evolution of Germany was fatally advancing in the one direction. The growth of Chauvinism which so startled and alarmed Professor Nippold was going on at an accelerating rate. A nation which could put forward, through its scholars, such a plea as you advance in regard to the general duty of letting Austria work her

will on Serbia, and such a plea as your *literati* framed for German *Kultur* as justifying the atrocious invasion of Belgium, had passed the point of rational recovery. •

The more carefully your pleas are weighed, the more monstrous are they seen to be. If ever there was an international case in human history in which a settlement was feasible, it was the case of the assassination at Serajevo. Serbia's acquiescence in Austria's demands was carried to the very verge of utter national humiliation: it surprised all observers. Were it not for the plain fact that Austria's ultimatum was meant to bring about either war or abject submission, every sane man in Europe would have counted on a settlement on some of the lines suggested by the Allies. But, as you avow, all efforts for peace were frustrated by "the determination of the Vienna Cabinet to take no backward step."

Here we come to our last issue. You in effect suggest German regret that Vienna was so inflexible. No German document has ever been produced to show that Berlin put any pressure on Vienna to modify its demands; but you quaintly cite an intercepted letter of the Belgian *chargé d'affaires* at Petrograd, to the effect that both there and at Vienna Germany had tried "every means to prevent a general conflict." What, pray, does that mean? We know very well that Germany did not want a general conflict at that moment. She wanted a walk-over for Austria. But did she press Austria to limit her demands? On your own principles, it was her duty to do so.

That is to say, if it was Britain's duty to try to deter Russia from fighting, it was Germany's duty to try to deter Austria. And, may I ask, do you really expect us to believe that Austria would have persisted if Germany had said she would not back her up against Russia ?

You considerably spare us that flight of dialectic. You in effect confess that Germany *would not* put pressure upon Austria. Here are your words (page 181) :—

“England . . . urged a conference of England, France, Germany, and Italy, which should make proposals of mediation. This proposal was, of course, unacceptable : it would be a heavy humiliation for Austria and also for Germany if the Hapsburg monarchy, of which the existence was threatened in the gravest degree and mortally injured (!), were to come before the Forum of Europe practically in the character of one accused (!), on an equal footing with the Murderer-State Serbia, and there let herself be pressed to make concessions.”

Now, at last, all the cards are on the table. Once more we learn that Germany held that Austria ought to have her way with Serbia. If the assassination of a prince or dignitary [or why not a simple citizen ?] of State A by a subject of that State is supposed to result from the machinations of somebody in State B, the former, being thus mortally injured “in its existence,” is entitled to demand to be let take over the police and judicial system of State B, because to ask it to accept any sort of arbitration would be to



propose to put it on the same footing with a Murderer-State.

To comment upon this masterpiece of Germanic ethic and jurisprudence would be to disturb the moral and literary effect. I will merely point the moral. When I first saw it seriously maintained that the assassination at Serajevo was really brought about by the machinations of the *agents provocateurs* of Austria, known to have been otherwise abundantly active in Serbia, I was strongly incredulous. Even Austrian corruption did not seem capable of such Satanism as that. But when I read (1) your vindication of Austria's insistence on the absolute submission of Serbia, and your deliberate attribution of the guilt of the murder (2) to the Serbian State, and (3) finally to Russia ("Russia was the really guilty one, and had instigated the Serbians to their procedure": page 180), I see something like a juridical compulsion to take up the point of view indicated. If Austria and Germany indict at once the Serbian and the Russian Governments for the crime, there is only one way of settling the question. The world-jury, if it is to consider your charges, must inquire at the same time whether the Austrian police engineered an assassination which, by your account, gave Austria an absolutely irreducible case for demanding the surrender of Serbia. That which seemed incredible, your polemic raises to the plane of the credible.

Pending the possible inquest which may one day disclose the facts, we must be content for the present to sum up over your proposition that

Austria could not be put to the humiliation of a peaceful settlement, that *her* war ought to have been permitted, and that the real peace-breaker was England, which encouraged Russia and France to shield Serbia, and wickedly declined to let Germany bludgeon Belgium, where no Teutonic prince had chanced to be assassinated. On that our debate ends. Let the issue go so to the world, to posterity, by all means. I have no misgiving about the verdict.

It will simply be that Austria was Germany's tool, and that, whatever were the true inwardness of the assassination, that event was fixed upon as the pretext for a course which must either precipitate war at once or ensure its early outbreak. "Quite striking," you observe (page 192), "is the fact that Austria, the ostensible originator of the war, immediately upon the last decisive negotiations was already thrust into the background: the Governments and the peoples were fighting not against Austria's seizure of the Balkan peninsula, but against the German Empire and the German people." Precisely so. Germany was the real mover; and your formulas about the impossibility of humiliating Austria and Germany by asking Austria to arbitrate would be merely nauseous if they were not so exquisitely absurd. Austria would never have forced war but for Germany's backing. The war was engineered between them; and there remains in Austria's regard only the memory of her startled perception, at the last moment, that after all her bullying she was to be taken at her word, and was to put

at stake her own existence for Germany's behoof.

By your account, the first move in the World War took place because Austria must not be humiliated when she made a monstrous demand. She has since had humiliations enough added to her long historical list—the humiliati<sup>o</sup>n, in particular, of seeing her invading army driven out of little Serbia by the Serbians, and Serbia re-occupied only by Germany's help. Had that and other things been foreseen, we should not have had the present war. The world is paying its immeasurable penalty because Austria has been, as of old, contemptible, and Germany more than ever insane. The wrecking of European peace is your joint work. On a simple survey of your own case, any honest jurist would be driven to pronounce that you are collectively either the most iniquitous politicians or the worst controversialists in Europe. The true summing-up is that you are both. The destruction among you of all sense of international reciprocity has entailed the perversion of the reasoning faculty.

If any rational neutral had any doubt as to Germany's having planned the war, he would find his solution in the simple fact that Germany was prepared for the war in every way save one. Her land armament was overwhelmingly strong, especially in great artillery. The one vital point at which she was utterly unprepared was her food supply. You tell us that she knew herself to be surrounded by unscrupulous enemies who were preparing to make war on her. How, then, came

she to omit the very kind of preparation which was so essential to defence? There is only one answer. Her Government had not the slightest expectation of being attacked. It had planned an aggression, and it expected to make that aggression with triumphant success. Shortage of food supervened precisely because invasion by others had never been dreamt of.

And this disappearance at once of scruple and of judgment was yet again illustrated by the act of your Government in disseminating the report that hostilities had been begun by French aviators who dropped bombs on the Nürnberg railways. That absolutely false assertion was actually given by your Government as one of the grounds of its formal declaration of war against France. And we now know from an indiscretion of your own Press that no such incident ever took place. The *Magistrat* of Nürnberg has avowed to Privy Councillor Riedel that all reports of the kind are false; and Professor Schwalbe has confessed as much in the *Deutsche Medizinische Wochenschrift* of May 18, 1916. But that particular report had been officially circulated by the Bavarian Hoffman Agency at the outbreak of the war, and officially endorsed by your Government as aforesaid; and we now learn from an American professor who was then in Germany that the story, which at first mentioned Neuenberg, was next day altered by the substitution of Nürnberg. The purpose of the fabrication was obvious: it was to make the German people believe that the war was one of

defence; and the same purpose, of course, dictated the falsehood in the official declaration of war against France. But in this matter, as in the oversight about the food supply, your Government failed to look ahead. It now stands convicted of systematic mendacity.

I am well aware that there were *some* men in Germany who sought international peace. I have had correspondence with some of them. Unhappily, they constituted by far the feeblest peace-party in Europe. When some of us hoped to attain reduction of naval armaments by securing the abolition of capture of commerce at sea in naval war, we appealed to them to try to bring the question before the general German public. They answered, quite truly, that they could do no good by such an attempt. In Germany, sectional public opinion is quite powerless against official policy; and the German Government was determined to have no arrest of armaments. Even German Socialists angrily proclaimed that we must be content "to see equality of power on sea as it existed on land." The latter statement was absolutely false. Germany habitually boasted that she had a preponderance of power on land. A German preponderance or even equality of power at sea, on the other hand, meant that Germany would have Britain at her mercy. It is upon the over-sea derivation of half of the British food supply that you base all your hopes of destroying us. And we knew what destruction by Germany means.

That there are Chauvinists in Britain as else-

where, nobody denies. But so little anti-German war propaganda has there ever been in Britain that your controversialists to this day cite an article which appeared in a London weekly journal in 1897. That article, which was vehemently condemned at the time by practically all who saw it, we now have the strongest reason for suspecting to have been inserted at German instigation. It was in all probability a base trick of the German Government to secure easy passage for its Navy Bill in the Reichstag. On the general question of British feeling, I state what is known to all neutrals with any real knowledge of English life when I say that no British Government could ever have had the consent of Parliament or the nation to a war of aggression on Germany. While there would have been in any case a strong disposition to aid France in a war of defence, nothing short of the foul invasion of Belgium could have reconciled the mass of the nation even to that. A war of joint-aggression no British Government would have dared to propose. It is German deeds that have made Britain the determined enemy of Germany.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE WAY OF THE WAR : ITS CONSEQUENCES

**G**IVEN before you go about to execrate the conduct of the war on the British side you put us in possession of the keynotes of your discourse. After mentioning that your Chancellor "openly and honourably avowed" that in the invasion of Belgium "a wrong had been done, and international law violated," you go on to cite "his addendum, that the German Government knew that France had planned the invasion of Belgium." What your Chancellor really said was this: "It is true that the French Government declared at Brussels that France would respect Belgian neutrality as long as her adversary respected it. We knew, however, that France *stood ready for an invasion.*" Belgium told Germany that she had no fear of a French invasion. Britain had received the express pledge of France that she would not invade Belgium. And you yourself confess that nobody believed the Chancellor's assertion concerning France save those who were wholly pro-German. Yet you pretend to believe it.

You complete the revelation of your intellectual ethic by declaring, as the Chancellor declared in his speech, that "Germany was under a *necessity* in which she must use *any* means of defence against the villainous attack"—the attack, that is, that she had forced by insisting on backing up

Austria's claim to occupy Serbia. If, then, *any* means were justified, why waste our time with the ever-repeated falsehood that France was about to invade Belgium? On your principles and the Chancellor's, it did not matter whether she was or not. As he put it, he could only consider "how to hack his way through."

From this, all the infamies committed in Belgium logically followed. The "necessity" which justified a treacherous attack on a neutral nation by a Power which was pledged to guarantee its safety is the key to the contingent crimes. Massacres of women and children, systematic incendiarism, bestial devastation, drunken rape, and robbery, were all serviceable as tending to terrorize the Belgian people. In the German manner, you speak of the unarmed victims as making "treacherous" attacks on your soldiers. The most searching investigations have proved that the alleged attacks were the drunken alarms raised by your own troops, who in a multitude of cases fired at random, thus arousing a panic cry that *man hat geschossen*. Some of your more intelligent mouthpieces, met with the evidence of foul crimes spontaneously committed by German soldiers, tell us that in every army there are some criminal types. True; but did not the commission of these crimes justify the Belgian people, could they have done it, in destroying your whole force by any means in their power? Do you think that any "effrontery" that men ever achieved can compare with that with which you ascribe "treachery" to a people whose land, whose



homes, whose women, your army was violating? The double treachery is yours, and yours alone. You broke your nation's pledged faith; and your officers brought false accusations to cover their own shame. The official whitewashing inquiry raised by your Government contains not one hint of inquiry as to the possible effects of drunkenness among your soldiers, though their drunkenness was open and notorious.

The simple history of the German epidemic of massacre in Belgium apportions the guilt. By the testimony of neutrals who were on the spot, it absolutely ceased at a given moment. That is to say, it was stopped by military order. That is to say, it had been previously permitted by military order. And on German principles, why not? "Necessity knows no law," your Chancellor had officially declared. Your official manual of *Kriegsbrauch* lays it down, along with certain exquisitely hypocritical pretences which I shall discuss later, that it is not enough to make war on the combatant forces and fortresses of a hostile State. "Equally strong endeavour must be made to destroy *its entire intellectual and material resources*. The claims of humanity, the sparing of human lives and of property, may be considered only in so far as the nature of war permits." That is to say, the *spirit* of the nation must be destroyed. It was on that principle that your commanders doomed to death the whole inhabitants of villages—men, women, and children—on the charge that "they" had been telephoning to the enemy.

Before we come to your attempts to transfer your infamies to British shoulders, let us consider for a moment your comments on the Kaiser's insolence to the British Ambassador before he left Berlin. You tell us that Herr von Jagow "made excuses" for the stoning of the British embassy by the Berlin mob. No fair critic would ascribe to a Government the deeds of a city mob; but you—after telling a childish story about coppers thrown in the street—avow that the Kaiser, in expressing his "regret" at the occurrence, at the same time told the Ambassador that he might gather from it what the German people thought of England. This you applaud. It reveals at once the national standard of chivalry in war. You do not mention, but I will recall for you, the other episode of the treatment of the French Ambassador, who was forced to leave Berlin for Denmark by a special train for which, during the course of the journey, he was compelled to pay, collecting the money from his suite. The only fit comment on these official proceedings is the word applied to them by the French—*canaille*. With such notions of official decency revealed to us in the official dealings of your Government with ambassadors (with which you may usefully contrast the calmly courteous procedure of the French and British Governments) we are prepared for German conduct in war.

It now becomes doubly piquant to find you imputing to "the English" a newly barbarous way of fighting, exhibiting a "moral decadence." Surely that is not imputed only at this stage?

Had you not been charging them with decadence during a period of centuries, and in particular throughout the nineteenth? Your demonstration is in keeping with the charge. It begins with the inane assertion that the British Fleet, "contrary to all expectation, was completely held back," whereas it had been commonly boasted in England that the German Fleet would be destroyed the day after war was declared. You forget; that was the formula supplied by your *agents provocateurs* in 1897, or framed at their congenial solicitation. Sane men in England knew well enough that your fleet would stay in port, at most sallying out now and then at a venture. I will not ask you whether the British Fleet has ever withdrawn when your fleet was in sight; or which fleet it was that fled from the Battle of Jutland, when yours claimed a "victory" that somehow had no effect on the blockade. I simply wonder whether any boasting quite so hollow as yours was ever done by any German from the days of Ariovistus.

So far as I can gather from your incoherent vituperation, your charge of "decadence" is supposed by you to be supported by assertions of savage practices in land war. You naturally do not mention that at the Battle of Heligoland British crews actually saved drowning German sailors while a German aeroplane was dropping bombs on them. In British histories of the war, the bombing is ascribed to misconception; and the German Navy is credited with having made a brave fight. If disparagement of one's enemy is a

proof of superior morality, the moral victory may be said to lie with you.

When we come to your details concerning the war on land, we actually find you claiming to show that England is not only "just as ruthlessly brutal as ever," but more so, owing to the fact that she is capturing all the German colonies. Thus, you say, "a powerful and beneficent work of civilization is being trodden down." I gather that in your opinion your colonies ought to have been left alone. You are justified in destroying Louvain and trying to destroy Rheims, but we ought to have left wild Africa to the beneficent administration of German officers, some of whom are wont to flog their native concubines. One is moved to ask what your cultured countrymen would have done had they got the upper hand in Africa. Do you suggest that they would have held their hands off the colonies of other European nations? You really carry absurdity at times to a point at which discussion is paralyzed.

More intelligible, but hardly more felicitous, is your explosion of righteous fury over the fact that Japan had joined the Allies against you; and that the Allies further have employed natives of India and North Africa at the Western front. Speculating as to what moral theory underlies your declamation, I recall that the German manual of *Kriegsbrauch* contains this passage:—

"All means of warfare may be used without which the purpose of war cannot be achieved. On the other hand, every act of violence and destruc-

tion which is not demanded by the purpose of war must be condemned."

After this characteristic piece of verbiage, which defines nothing, and leaves the soldier to make his own definitions and do as he will, the manual continues:—

"Among the means of warfare which are not permissible are: The use of poison *against individuals* and against masses of the enemy, the poisoning of wells or of food, and the spreading of infectious diseases; murder in every form; the use of arms or missiles which cause unnecessary suffering; the killing of incapacitated wounded men and prisoners; the killing of soldiers who have laid down their arms and have surrendered themselves."

Now, every one of the things here hypocritically forbidden has been done repeatedly by your combatants in the present war—unless it be that "use of poison against individuals" is deliberately meant to permit wholesale poisoning. Wells were poisoned by them in Africa; and wells and streams have been poisoned by them on the Western front in Europe. Statements as to the dropping of poisoned sweets and bacilli of glanders in Rumania have still to be investigated, so I leave them in doubt. But "murder in every form" was practised by your troops in Belgium and in France: we have the evidence in diaries found on German prisoners of war or on their dead bodies; the facsimiles have been published. "The use of arms or missiles which cause unnecessary suffering," if

it means anything at all, covers the systematic use of poison-gas, invented by your Army chemists and habitually employed by your armies. The killing of prisoners, wounded and unwounded, was in the earlier stages of the war practised in hundreds of cases by your forces. In the diary of Reservist Reinhard Brenneisen, Fourth Company, 112th Regiment, Mülhausen, an evidently loyal German, there occurs, under date August 21, 1914, this passage, which has been facsimiled:—

“There came a Brigade Order that all French, whether wounded or not, who fell into our hands should be shot. No prisoners were to be made.”

As to the similar treatment of British prisoners we have collected much evidence, with which I will not here trouble you. You in effect suggest that you would hardly dispute it, since you tell us (page 199) that your soldiers fight the English “with embittered hatred,” regarding them “quite differently from the French and the Russians.” Seeing that your officers at one time actually issued Brigade Orders to kill all French prisoners, wounded or unwounded, it is a little difficult to understand how they discriminate; but evidence given by Dutch journalists as to the exploits of some of your soldiers in the way of spitting in the faces of wounded British prisoners, and otherwise maltreating them in course of railway transit, is partly explanatory. It is only fair to add that there is abundant British evidence as to the frequent exhibition of good feeling by Saxon troops, who do not as a rule emulate the Prussian ideals in war.

As against the kind of evidence I have laid before you, I find in your book absolutely nothing to explain your assertion that "of the frightful barbarization that the war soon underwent, the English are much more guilty than the French." If so, the French have had their reward from you, have they not, for their humanity? It was doubtless on that score that your troops massacred or burned all, or nearly all, the inhabitants of certain French villages, as German soldiers' diaries testify. Your statement that the French taught the English the ruse of putting up a white flag and then firing on the approaching enemy soldiers is, I suppose, an oversight, to say nothing of its being a fable. You ought surely to have laid the guilt on the islanders! But the special barbarism of the English, it appears from the context of your assertion, consisted in interning Germans resident in Britain! You say this "drove you to reprisals," to which you were "much disinclined." I content myself with remarking that you know this to be fable *in excelsis*. One day, perhaps, we may learn from you whether the infamous policy of your Government, in the matter of wholesale deportation and enslavement of thousands of men and women from Belgium, France, and Poland, is a "reprisal" for the internment of Germans in England, where they are kept in comfort and safety.

Meantime, we come to that matter of employing "coloured" troops. Your manual of *Kriegsbrauch* does not discuss "colour"; but it puts the case thus:—

"Closely connected with means of warfare which

are not permissible is the employment of uncivilized and barbarian peoples in European war. Considered from the point of view of right, it is evident that no State can be prohibited to employ troops taken from its non-European colonies. However, with the modern tendency to humanize warfare and to diminish the sufferings caused by war, the employment of soldiers who lack the knowledge of civilized warfare (!), and who consequently perpetrate cruelties and inhumanities prohibited by the customs of war (! !), cannot be reconciled. The employment of such troops is as inadmissible as is the use of poison, murder, etc. The employment of African and Mohammedan Turcos by France in 1870 was undoubtedly a lapse from civilized into barbarous warfare, because these troops could have no understanding for European and Christian civilization, for the necessity of protecting property, and of safeguarding the honour of men and women."

History, I trust, will not lose sight of that incomparable pronouncement. Without dwelling on the pathos over the perversity of the French in 1870, I am driven to inquire why, exactly, your authorities think African troops unfitted for the employment of poison-gas, which, I gather, is not poison, since it is gas, and, above all, German gas? Do they feel that coloured troops could not be relied on to vie with German in their historic practice of depositing ordure in enemy furniture and on enemy food which they cannot carry off with them? Is it their idea that Turcos would not be capable of the system of massacre and murder



carried out by your troops in Belgium? Or is the whole immortal passage simply an indirect way of saying that since the Germans have no Turcos to bring, it is wrong for their opponents to bring them?

Of course, I do not forget that you now have Turcos of your own on the south-eastern front. In view of that, it seems a bad oversight on the part of your authorities to leave standing in the Army manual a passage which explains that the employment of Turcos in war is unworthy of a Christian State. Perhaps the passage has been amended in the later editions. You will reply, perhaps, that French Turcos are not the same thing as German-trained Turks. But are we, then, to assume that *all* of you in Germany agree with Count Reventlow in acclaiming the unimaginable massacre of three-quarters of a million of non-combatant Armenians—men, women, children, and babes—by your Turkish allies?

One of these days, I fancy, your people may desire to forget alike their rhodomontade about the wickedness of bringing Turcos into Christian wars and the monstrous horrors of their own Turkish alliance. But one cannot be sure. About twenty years ago I conversed in New York with a Prussian, an ex-officer, about the way your armed officers have of running their swords through any unarmed civilian who may chance to jostle against them in a German restaurant. I cited a recent case. He looked at me with unfeigned astonishment, and earnestly explained: "But that was honour!" I have no doubt that he

was an honourable man in everything unconnected with militarism, the rights of human beings against officers, and the rights of non-Germans against Germans. He was simply, like you and the majority of educated Germans, a man in whom the capacity for sane moral thinking as regards a large area of life had been destroyed.

It is that specialty of German *Kultur* that explains another historic record which will be remembered as long as men remember the World War. I refer to the celebrated address of your illustrious Kaiser in 1900 to the German troops about to be dispatched for the expedition to Peking. The immortal part runs as follows:—

“When you meet the foe, you will defeat him. No quarter will be given and no prisoners will be taken. Let all who fall into your hands be at your will. Just as the Huns one thousand years ago, under the leadership of Etzel (Attila), gained a reputation in virtue of which they still live in historical tradition, so may the name of Germany become known in such a manner in China that no Chinaman would ever again dare to look askance at a German.”

When that was published a flush of shame and anger passed over Europe. British officers grimaced in disgust; and I daresay some German soldiers who heard the message were ashamed. But in the mass the Kaiser's officers and soldiers obeyed him. We have sickening records—English, French, and German—of the savageries committed in order to show the heathen Chinese how Christian Germans reprobate the savageries of

*their* savages. Because Chinese miscreants had behaved as such, guiltless Chinese, women as well as men—it is always so in German history—were slaughtered by the hundred. From all these infamies the Japanese contingent stood scrupulously aloof. And now you edify us by holding up your hands in horror at the entrance of Japanese into a Christian war! And you are evidently quite serious. You have nothing but eulogy for your Kaiser, the “Prince of Peace,” as some of you call him. And I suppose even the Socialists have forgotten how he once told them that if he ordered them to shoot their fathers, sons, and brothers, it was their business to obey. Verily, a lover of peace! You, an old scholar, boast of the fact that in your State it is left to the will of one man to decide whether there shall be war or peace. This was the man.

It is now doubly edifying to go back to your section on “Edward VII and the Hatred of Germany” and read this (page 151):—

“In reality we are dealing in fact (*sic*) with a struggle of life and death between two State-forms, one retrograde and no longer efficient, and one which has advanced far beyond it and attained the mightiest efficiency. Either Germany, the German State with its organization and ideas that live in it, will in this war be so annihilated that it cannot recover, or England, in order still to count in the world for something, must change its ideas from the bottom upwards, and accept the State-form developed on the Continent (!), which has found in the German

State its most consummate and therefore its most powerfully efficient form."

I have no serious objection to your description of what is happening as between Britain and Germany, that is, as distinguished from a description of the causation of the war and on account of the totality of the forces engaged. You are fighting (unhappily for you!) France and Russia as well as Britain; so there must be more in the matter than you say. You happen to have every kind of State in the field against you: the Tsardom,\* Japan, the French Republic, the Portuguese, and the constitutional monarchies of Belgium, Serbia, and Britain. And your account of Germany as simply the completest evolution of the "continental" State-form is really too amusing. What, now, of Holland and Switzerland, and France and Norway, and Sweden and Denmark? Are you under the impression that all the kings in Europe are in the position of your Kaiser, ruling unrestrainedly over servile sham-Parliaments; and do you really believe that France and Switzerland are on the way to such a Cæsarism as yours? Have you consulted any German-Swiss professors on the subject? Or are you merely giving them a hint in advance of the fate that Germany is planning for their republic?

However that may be, I suspect that you are at one point nearer the truth than you suppose. Your mediæval Kaiserdom, which you adore as

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\* Since this was written the Tsardom has fallen, a free Russia carries on its war, and a free United States has taken up the gauntlet of Germany!

the height of political evolution, is in a fair way to be shaken to *its* foundations by this war. I do not rate highly the capacity of the German people, thus far, for taking their destinies in their own hands. Your Socialists, who boast on that theme as the rest of you boast on others—boasting being for you all a psychological necessity—are hardly the people to make a revolution. You remember Bebel's description of his and your countrymen as a people of lackeys? They were sufficiently so to stultify his memorable prediction that his party would be in power in 1897. But it is doubtful whether even the German *Kultur* system of Kaiser, drill-sergeant, schoolmaster, reptile press, and adoring professor, can wholly destroy the principle of self-determination in a people; and the probability is that your mediæval system will have to denaturalize itself and fall into line with the general march of man. The chances are that "government of the people, by the people, for the people," will not perish from the earth at the hands of the worshippers of Kaiser Wilhelm II. As you say, one State-form must give way. It will be yours.

You seem to me to show some misgivings on the subject yourself. We are now in the third year of the war; and in the first, with all the customary German parade of confidence, you shivered now and then with apprehension. In your closing section you draw for us a delightful picture of the death-grapple between Carthage and Rome—Carthage being England; though time was when a German could see the prototype

of England in Rome. It is indiscreet, is it not, to alter the parallelism? The author of the *Geschichte des Alterthums* can hardly venture to deny that it was the Romans who said: "*Delenda est Carthago*"; that it was they who were determined to rule the world; and that they picked the last quarrel expressly in order to annihilate the rival State. You even confess that in the First Punic War, about Sicily, on which you found your parallel, "Rome was the aggressor," whereas, of course, it was not Germany that forced the war about Serbia! Then you ask "Whether the outcome will be the same, who will dare to prophesy?" Who, indeed! But you make an attempt, rather half-heartedly.

You take great comfort from the statement of Polybius that Carthage failed because there "the people" were allowed too much share in the government. Had you been writing at this point the history of antiquity, and not a *Schimpfwerk* against England, you would have recalled your own dictum that Carthage was essentially an aristocracy, and pointed out that "the people" had no share in the government, only property-owners having a vote. You would further have noted that Polybius wrote to flatter the Romans; and that he gives a whole series of utterly disparate reasons for the fall of Carthage, the last being a mere negation of those which went before. You would further perceive that if concentration of political power in few hands is to be reckoned the secret of military success, Pyrrhus and Antiochus and Mithridates ought each to have

crushed Rome ; and that if "mercenary" armies spelt ruin, imperial Rome, with her "mercenary" forces, ought not to have existed for a day.

In your pleasing parallel, Germany is to play Rome's part to the extent of defeating Britain at sea. That was your hope at the beginning of 1915. At the beginning of 1917 it hardly looks as if it would be realized, does it? If you will read Wilhelm Roscher, who wrote his *Politik* (1892) not to champion Cæsarism, but to demonstrate how Cæsarism runs to ruin, you will find him explaining that Hannibal clearly had *not* the command of the sea, which is rather a bad augury for Germany, is it not? You may note also Roscher's proposition that Cæsarism is always much more efficient for attack than for defence. Apply that generalization to Germany's present case, and you will not find much comfort in the prospect. We are now nearing the last grapple. Happily for your deluded people, the triumph of the Allies will not mean the utter annihilation that ended the Punic Wars. It will mean that the State which aimed at world-dominion will henceforth have to pursue the works of peace, in a world which will never more let it leap at the throat of Europe.

Facing this prospect, you begin to grow tearful about the terrible dangers to civilization that the present war sets up. There we can all agree with you. It is a new note in German literature. In the twenty years before 1914 could you at any time have got ten German professors to warn the German nation that their dream of world-dominion

was a deadly delusion ; that their militarism was heading for destruction ; and that the "next war" of which they were so constantly babbling would mean a drain of blood, a harvest of hatreds, that would impoverish and enfeeble and darken the life of Europe for generations ? Had you a single statesman who dreamt of telling them that the hope of the world lay in the restriction of armaments ? You profess to repudiate Bernhardt. Did any of your statesmen ever repudiate him ? What have you yourself been telling us in your parrot-rote repetition of the pretence that Germany did not force the war ? That "Austria must not be humiliated" by asking her to arbitrate ; and that Germany would be humiliated with her if she were not allowed to crush Serbia *by war* !

You have raised the devil, and you tearfully deplore the difficulty of laying him. "So many of our finest youth killed ; such a terrible rupture of the culture life of Europe ; such a danger of a decline of Western civilization and a preponderance of Eastern, just as happened through the triumph and the world-dominion of Rome." Even so. But even after the war broke out, were not your scholars busy telling us that it is German *Kultur* that leads the world, and that all others ought to go down before it ? The road that began with the devilish invasion of Belgium seemed very fair to you all then. It was not the abominable slaughter of the people of an innocent nation that first disturbed your complacency. It was the beginning of the awful death-roll of your own sons. War is seen to be evil when it goes against Ger-



many—Germany, that has been singing Hosanna to Herself in the Highest for six-and-forty years of insolent ostentation of power, and that has six times in that period shaken her “mailed fist” in the face of France and Russia.

Yes, the tide of blood is still rising. A million German men, including thousands of your best, have been destroyed in little over two years, and three millions more stricken and maimed, because “Austria must not be humiliated” by being asked to keep the peace. Myriads of boys—innocent, full of promise, capable of inestimable service—have been crushed like weeds because your philosophers have taught, and your preachers preached, and your statesmen determined, that war is a “purifier,” an invigorator of national life. Your preachers are preaching it now, while the million broken mothers and wives are bowed over their dead. Even you may find that your *Schimpfwerk* is not German enough, not patriotic enough, inasmuch as it finally deplores—howbeit with concern mainly for Germany’s death-roll—the general danger to civilization, and does not duly proclaim that it is in the supremacy of Germany that civilization consists.

Certainly you can plead that you have done your best. With the blood of mangled Serbia on Austria’s hands, and Belgium’s on yours, you have vociferated to the last that “international law has been destroyed by England.” Since you wrote, your Government has outgone all the crimes of Napoleon by its deportation and enslavement of the non-combatants of Belgium,

France, and Poland. Whatever may be the military fate of Germany, she will not soon be shaken in her self-righteousness. The pæan of self-praise that began in the eighteenth century appears likely to endure through the twentieth. The violators of Belgium will go on proclaiming that they are an injured people. On two successive pages you tell us of the "impassable chasm" that has been dug between Germany and Britain, making reconciliation impossible, and then proceed to express the "hope" that "personal relations between individual scholars" of the belligerent Powers will be resumed—this after you have told your former Russian friends that if you and they live to the age of Methuselah you will never again meet in a friendly conference!

It is quite possible. You have perhaps observed that nobody has asked you for reconciliation. The one basis upon which the German people collectively can ever again be really welcome in a European Concert will be a basis of repentance, a consciousness of national guilt, a recognition that it was their national egoism and insolence that brought about the World War. And for the Germans of the present generation any such confession of sin seems impossible. Boasting has become the breath of your nostrils: your first national concern will be to find something new to boast about. And that will probably stand in the way of your participation in international congresses of any kind. A German who, like the author of "*J'Accuse*," avows the truth, while continuing to love his people like a true patriot,

will receive the respect and the sympathy of all honourable men. There is no nation whose sons have not cause to confess some national sin in the past. But the author of "J'Accuse" has few German adherents ; and if your individual scholars propose to continue the insensate pretence that everybody has been guilty of the war save Germany, they are certainly not likely to have many foreign correspondents.

The hope of the world lies not in the Germany of this generation. Your Chancellor, with exquisite fatuity, lately announced that Germany was prepared to "put herself at the head of" a League of the Nations for preserving peace in Europe. Even for purposes of a professedly desired organization of peace, Germany must be "at the head." You cannot realize, I suppose, how these revelations of German arrogance affect the rest of the world. For your own part, you had in advance declared that Germany would be no party to any European peace or organization. What you wrote was this :—

"Buried are all the dreams of the well-meaning visionaries concerning an eternal peace of the nations and an international arbitration tribunal that should make war impossible : dreams which in America, grown so completely effeminate in its temper, found so wide an applause. . . . Instead of everlasting peace, a series of long and bloody wars will be the mark of the new century, even if Germany should now win a complete victory and again become the safeguard of peace for the world. . . . The era of internationalism is past,

and will never return : instead of it the national rivalries, the struggle of the nations one with another, no longer merely in peaceful competition but on a far larger scale in war, will become ever more intense and relentless. We Germans have long enough given ourselves up to the folly of believing it possible by friendly overtures to win the honest friendship of other nations, to overcome all obstacles, and to win recognition on an equal footing of the free use of our strength within the limits set by the rights of others. But now the veil has fallen from our eyes : not only the attack of our open enemies, but perhaps in a still higher degree the attitude of the neutrals has shown us that we were wandering in illusions and pursued impracticable dreams. . . . Henceforth there must and can be for us only one object, and that is to devote ourselves to our people and its needs. . . . It would be a sin against our nation were we again to follow the path of internationalism."

So all the world has its warning. It is now avowed that in spite of all your self-certified virtues and the unrelieved criminality of England, even the neutrals do not take a favourable view of your case. You accordingly propose to give up seeking peace, and set about preparing for a century of wars. It is doubtless what many of you would like to do, especially those who will not be in the fighting. But even if your people should remain so besottedly servile as to be ready to let your Government of Divine Right send them again to the shambles, you will find that the world will not permit it. The Allies, who have lost their

millions as you have lost yours, who have seen the fabric of their civilization shattered by your crime, will not leave it in the power of a perverted nation again to endanger the general life of man. Henceforth the German Wolf will be chained.

The United States, insolently pronounced by you effeminate because its people care for peace, will in all likelihood take its share in the world's task of saving civilization. Even as I write these words, there comes the news of your Government's virtual ultimatum to theirs—a manifesto which some think is planned with the view of compelling it to declare war, and enabling the Germanic Powers to say that if they now surrender it will be because they have all the world against them. However that may be, the time is perhaps near when the carnival of carnage which your Kaiser opened will be ended, and your guilty race will be compelled to pay what penalties are payable, what reparation is possible as against the mainly irreparable evil you have wrought.

It is after that last invocation of the Gods of Hate that you shed your final tears over the dangers to European civilization which you see looming up on all hands. But you take care to conclude with another blast on the true German trumpet, and to proclaim to your countrymen that they must maintain inviolably “our military organization, the organization of our economic life, which secures to us subsistence independently of the foreigner [! this after declaring that England was wickedly trying to starve you!], and a powerful, independent monarchy, standing above

all parties, a monarchy whose beneficent creative power, combining all the forces of the nation in one living unity, we found at the outbreak of the war overwhelmingly strong in the fullest command of all material [exactly !], and daily find so in the course of the war."

Great is Dagon of the Philistines ! Whatever is to happen to civilization, you can claim that you have done nothing to help it. To the stupendous crime of your nation you have added your pitiable contribution—a worthless book.









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