

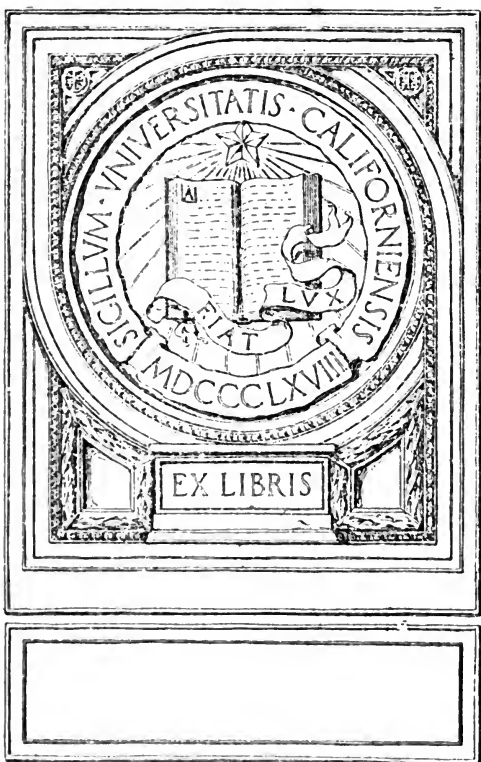
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FRANCE AND THE
ETHICS OF THE WAR

P. H. LOYSON



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FRANCE THE APOSTLE AND
THE ETHICS OF THE WAR

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FRANCE THE APOSTLE
AND
THE ETHICS OF THE WAR

THREE LECTURES DELIVERED BEFORE THE ROYAL
INSTITUTION OF GREAT BRITAIN
1916—1918

BY
PAUL HYACINTHE LOYSON
EDITOR OF "LES DROITS DE L'HOMME"
AUTHOR OF "THE GODS IN THE BATTLE"

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PREFACE

AMONG the many lectures and speeches which the author has delivered in Great Britain during the war, for the purpose of the war, he has chosen for publication the three which appear in this volume, first, for the sake of the honour done him by the Royal Institution in inviting him to address it, and, second, because the subject of these discourses is dealt with in as full and detailed a manner as the haste entailed by the duties and necessities of the time permitted.

A certain discrepancy of tone and style will be perceived between the essays. It flows from the difference in their composition and delivery. All three were delivered extempore, but the first, *France the Apostle*, was spoken in French and afterwards written out in that language and revised by the author; it has now been translated into English in order to render it more generally accessible. On the other hand, the two lectures which make up the essay, *The Ethics of the War*, were spoken by the author in English and taken down by a stenographer; and the text so recorded was afterwards retouched and enlarged by the speaker.

He desires to express his grateful thanks to the officials of the Royal Institution for the kindness

and courtesy he has experienced from them; nor can he omit to thank his friend Lady Frazer, to whom he is indebted, not only for the original suggestion of the lectures, but for the pains she has been at in editing the volume and undertaking the translation of the first essay from the French text into English.

The manuscript of this little book was sent to press during the battle of Picardy, when the noblest cause in history was face to face with the direst peril of all time. May these stray pages be accepted as an act of religious homage paid by a Frenchman to the humblest son of Britain who has given his life to that cause in defending the soil of France.

P. H. L.

May 1918.

P.S.—This volume was printed in England in June 1918, whilst the second battle of the Marne was deciding in France the fate of the world. The event proved to be the tragic illustration of the author's prevision in the latter part of these lectures. The supreme offensive of the Germans was not launched on France by the "genius" of Hindenburg, but by the treason of Lenin and the vanishing of the Russian front.

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FRANCE THE APOSTLE

A LECTURE DELIVERED IN FRENCH ON JUNE 2ND,
1916, BEFORE THE ROYAL INSTITUTION OF
GREAT BRITAIN

TRANSLATED BY LADY FRAZER

FRANCE THE APOSTLE

I CANNOT hide the emotion I feel on lecturing in French for the first time since the beginning of the war; the sound of my own voice almost startles me at this hour when the greatness of our cause merges our individuality in that of the nation. If to-day I break the silence I have hitherto kept, it is in order that I may ponder with you over this great catastrophe, even when I do not expressly speak of it; it is in order to denounce, if need be, in this world-wide convulsion, the total overthrow of reason, that sovereign power of men over things, and guardian of our conscience. It is in order that I may set my convictions face to face with yours; in order that I may gather from your presence and your silence something which, to the lonely orator, is more poignant than applause. I stand here to-day so that it may not be said, in so far as it depends upon any effort of mine, that the cataclysm which overwhelms the world has shattered the realm of the mind; I stand here lest the battle we are waging should, like Joshua's of old, arrest the course of the sun.

Everywhere, as my military duties send me backwards and forwards over land and sea, I have heard a cry of admiring astonishment, which dies away into a hushed whisper of adoration: "From this

great deep of horror," men say, "a spiritual splendour has arisen; a great collective personality, whom the other peoples misunderstand because she has been too apt to undervalue herself, is accomplishing her resurrection; out of the deluge of blood there stands, on a shining pedestal, a figure of pure gold. And that figure is France."

You must have heard that nothing annoys our "poilus" more than the constant reiteration of their heroism in the columns of cheap newspapers; and I admit that, abroad, every Frenchman who knows his France, and who has not forgotten his history, feels disconcerted at this chorus of praise in which he is asked to take his part.

Of course it is not for me to gainsay such encomiums. I only wish, with you this evening, to balance adulation by argument; for the reserve that tempers my patriotism forbids my seeking the source of this adulation only in recent events, rather I find it in our glorious past.

But why should I claim first honours for France? Have not other countries as good a right to the same? I admit that this consideration gives me pause. Let us briefly examine the right of others to claim the same apostleship.

Rome, surely, from the earliest times was the first maker of Law. Even to-day, the hidden foundations of her legal system lie at the root of our judicial institutions, like that pavement of the old Roman roads, which the trenches have opened up on our front. Still, so eclectic was she in the application of her methods of government, and so receptive was she to the institutions of the conquered, that Rome absorbed, rather than gave;

her right remained the right of conquest; Roman right, not by any means human right, the conception of which never even dawned upon her. It needed the light of Christianity to give the world the ideal of a world-wide order of things conceived otherwise than as oppression.

Another country, however, can claim with justice the right to this apostleship; I mean that great England, of which I am the guest and the obscure helpmeet—our actual Ally on the field of battle, and in defence of the same high principle. The England of Pym and Hampden, the England of the Long Parliament, of the Habeas Corpus Act and Magna Charta, has she not on her own account, according to her own experiences and her own necessities, remodelled and elaborated, in the light of modern developments, the civic jurisprudence of the old Roman Republic? The abiding laws of all democracy have been drawn up by England; it was she who, when once she had discovered the great principle, carried it out in her parliamentary institutions more than a full century before France. So, since then this happy country, harmonising her discords, has become in essence a republic, under the light sceptre of a citizen king, the loyal interpreter of the nation's will; while France wiped out her past, and ran up at haphazard a structure on the waste land, England had the wisdom to rebuild on the same foundations, carefully preserving all she gained from the time of the Commonwealth, that she might transform it into those forces which made her future so great. Thus King and Commonwealth have become indissolubly welded together;

and when, to-day, the King goes to open Parliament, he passes, not unaware, yet unresenting, the statue of Oliver Cromwell, as it stands on the threshold of the House, with drawn but lowered sword.

What an honour for Great Britain to be, in the face of all the great Republics, the first democracy of the world, the best ordered, and the most normal, always capable, in the worst dangers, of saving herself at the eleventh hour by the collective action of the national will! When this great war took her by surprise, all unprepared as she was for a continental struggle, no roll-call was necessary to summon her million sons (born, if I may be allowed to say so, far from their mother), from the farthest ends of the earth. It was the participation of the race in the same idea of Liberty, an instinctive sense of gratitude towards Old England—little queen of a vast empire—which animates her free peoples; this it was that prompted the spontaneous impulse which moved with one accord Australia, New Zealand, Canada, India, in fact all these defenders of her spiritual heritage. But England has received the most striking and touching proof of her benevolent rule from those whom she conquered yesterday, the high-souled Boers. Of their own accord the conquered have themselves forgiven the conquest, because from the moment of their defeat they were trusted and allowed autonomy. Smuts and Botha on the African battlefield did more than even the young conquerors of the Somme for the honour of England's name. It redounds to the good of her own people, of her own race, in short, of herself, that England has stood for Liberty.

Like a good housewife, however, entirely pre-occupied with the care of her own house, she has made no attempt to set up as a teacher of others. If it has come to pass that her institutions, so peculiar to herself, have yet proved, in essence, of worth to other peoples, it is because their practical excellence has invited imitation. She serves as an example, not as a seminary.

Whom next shall I call to the bar? Let us leave Italy to her unique office as guardian of the tabernacle of the ancient shrine, an office to which, ever since the Renaissance, in spite of many cruel hardships, she has been faithful; and let us also leave out the great modern democracy of Washington and Lincoln, who was not ashamed to draw the sword in defence of the high claims of humanity.¹ On its spiritual side that democracy was really an extension of Scotch puritanism, on its political side it was a forerunner of the French Revolution, like the snowy peaks of the mountains as they glow in the first red streaks of dawn, before the rising of the sun.

We have still to consider the claims of yet another nation to a great apostolic mission in the world. I name it with respect as to the past, and with circumspection as to the present: that nation is Germany.

Who will deny that Germany has been at many epochs of her history one of the noblest contributors to the progress of the human mind, to the accumulation of the treasures of the soul? Retarded in her national development and in her spiritual

¹ This lecture was delivered eleven months before the United States entered the war.

blossoming for many centuries by an unkind fate, she only came to the full consciousness of her genius long after England and France. But how magnificent was that late blossoming! During these last two centuries Germany has carried further than any other nation those critical investigations and those metaphysical speculations which lie at the heart of all the problems of the universe. Later, she founded the modern exegesis which enfranchised faith. In spite of the obstacles placed in her way by theoreticians, she gave us at the end of the eighteenth century, a whole wealth of splendid poetry, which enabled her to rival beforehand the claims of our great romantic bards, and placed her not so very far below those supreme masters of the lyre, the English poets. And then she was Music itself; the interpreter of the depths, the herald of the heights of human emotion; harmonising all our contradictions, liberating our poor broken aspirations in the ineffable air of infinity, and creating a new heaven and a new earth to the rhythm of perfection. What would it matter to the fulfilment of the world's destiny, though the whole of the past were suddenly wiped out, if only the symphonies of Beethoven still soared triumphantly over the abyss? But, however much we recognise these splendours, which made the Germany of yore the mother¹ of high thought, I ask what connection had all this with a mission to propagate in the world the social principle of a better justice? In order to aspire to this latter honour, the German genius would have to include logic, contrary to its very nature; it would be

¹ *Germania mater.*

necessary that the German criticism, so ready to demolish, and so prone to build up in the void of the purely abstract, should not stop short upon the very threshold of action. How different in this respect were our own *Encyclopédistes*, who, from the calm yet menacing seclusion of their studies, stormed the Bastille years and years before the event itself, and hurled a king's head over the border! The German philosopher creates a world and then imprisons it in his own skull. The Frenchman, as soon as he gets an idea in his head, converts it into action. In history the word "logic" is synonymous with France. The social genius of Germany only radiates heat under the ardent influence of ours. German literature from Opitz to Gottsched, during the whole of the seventeenth century, was struggling for its very life, stifled by the literary predominance of France like a plant deprived of the light. So, too, when at last, after all the "Storm and Stress,"¹ she emerged again from the shadows, her outward freedom was only a freedom of form, for again it was the ascendancy of the French idea that stirred in the German philosophers and poets that virtue of humanity which gained them the ear of the world. The "Storm and Stress" flowed directly from Rousseau, following on him as a fit of raving madness may succeed to a tender reverie. Lessing was the pupil of Diderot, as Wieland was of Voltaire. Schiller, who inscribed upon his first work the proud invective "In tyrannos," and who was proclaimed a French citizen by our *Convention*, because he was a citizen of the world, Schiller, by his philosophy was the

¹ *Sturm und Drang* period.

adopted child of Kant; and Kant himself, the republican, the first apostle of perpetual peace, who in his turn drew his philosophy from the great Cartesian Leibnitz and from the English sensation-ists, built up his political doctrine on the principles of the *Contrat Social*. The *Aufklärung* was the child of the *Encyclopédie*. What shall we say of the great master, the Olympian Goethe, the most Latin of all the Germans? Looking back a thousand years, we may compare him in literature with Charlemagne in politics; that is, he reduced the German chaos to order, by infusing into it the spirit of antiquity, by revealing the South to the North, but emphatically not the North to the South. In all civilised countries his poetical glory is immense; his social influence is non-existent. Jove-like, he holds the world in the hollow of his hand, but he does not enrich it by a single thought; while the tiniest grain of wheat sown by Jean-Jacques on any wind that blows will reap an endless harvest. Morally, therefore, at the height of her literary expansion, Germany remained the vassal of France. We must admit that there was one moment when she burst into flame of her own accord, at the Reformation under Martin Luther. But here again, here above all, and without any mean desire to exalt my own country at the expense of a great people, I am obliged to admit that the work of Martin Luther was entirely confined to Germany. Where Luther, in order to settle the question between the Pope and himself appealed "to the German nation,"¹ a Frenchman would have invoked the Truth. Luther unquestionably

¹ His own words.

had a great idea, but he confined its scope, he clipped its wings. Doubtless thereby this religious emancipation did help to prepare the way for a German political unity in the far distant future, and to build up the ascendancy of Prussia; it was felt even at Versailles during the proclamation of the Empire, and is perhaps in some measure accountable for the sullen virtues of resistance which Germany is displaying at the present time.

But for the same reason the influence did not spread into foreign countries. The splendour of the new ideas, their conquest of the Anglo-Saxon world from Holland and England to America and the British Dominions, was the work of the Frenchman, John Calvin. It was through Knox that the Reformation struck root in Scotland, and Knox, once a pastor at Dieppe, was a disciple of John Calvin. It was through the agency of the Walloon Guy de Bray, the Fleming Dathenus and their fellow apostles that Holland adopted the Reformed religion, and all of them were disciples of John Calvin. Calvin himself, the author of the *Institutes*, was formerly a lawyer and a disciple of our great Cujas. Thus the force of world-wide expansion is everywhere to be traced to its source in the logical French genius, the organisation of action, and the permanent tradition of law or Right.

Only in virtue of a single new moral and social conception, affecting the society of nations, can Germany claim to have created a dreadful something which she means to impose by force on the whole world in order to obliterate every trace of ancient civilisation. That something is *Kultur*.

Nobody dreams of contesting her originality in that respect. I will not waste a word upon it.

I think I have run over all the great nations of the world and have questioned each on its title to a mission to which none of them in fact lays claim.

It is hardly necessary for me to remind you that in undertaking this survey I restricted myself to examining the particular titles to a very definite historical mission, that of the apostleship of Right. Each of the nations I have interrogated, and even those which I have passed over as less qualified to stand this test, might well point with pride to other not less glorious contributions which they have made to the common patrimony of mankind. The nations are not assembled for a competition in which only one can gain the prize; hence, in what follows, I am far from awarding that prize to my own country. Confining myself, therefore, strictly within the lines I have laid down, I have, on an impartial investigation, eliminated the other competitors and come now to examine the claims of France.

More than that of all other peoples, her history has been confused and agitated, a medley of glory and crime; the gusts of passion of a warlike race, which only learned discipline through the experience of those calamities which it inflicted on others; a steady movement forward, chequered by cross-currents, for which the race itself is answerable, and at every turning-point in its destiny two steps backward for every three steps forward; still progress after each recoil, logic in all these contradictions, harmony in all these antitheses, grandeur

in this interplay of forces, till one day from out this tragic chaos there leaps victorious the light, that rebel daughter of darkness—such seems to me the history of France, the most dramatic of all the nations on earth.

From the dawn of time, like the child under age whom some churches admit to the Sacraments, France, still unconscious of herself, received the badge of her destiny. As far back as the fifth century the honour fell to it, for the first time, of defending by the sword a civilisation threatened by an onrush of savagery so atrocious that for fifteen centuries the world has refused to believe that anything in the future could surpass it. On the same Catalaunian plains, hard by the Marne, which have echoed a second time to the heavy flight of the invader, the fury of the Huns dashed itself in vain against the intrepid constancy of France, then named Gaul. But already the first of her two great woman saints, Geneviève, kept her mystic guard on the ramparts of Paris; already the Franks rallied under the command of Aetius, that is, under the ægis of the Roman genius, the two races attesting by this alliance that fruitful harmony by which they were enabled to save the world, the ark of Aryan humanity, and at the same time the German peoples themselves, who in their panic had sought the protection of France. If, therefore, Europe escaped the Mongolian yoke of Attila, she owes her escape to the French victory of 451; if she escaped the yoke of the Saracen, she owed it to that other French miracle, the battle of Poitiers. Thus France, though not yet the champion of that absolute Right, which all the

peoples, including her own, still identified with Might, was already in the happy position of being able, even at that distant time, to lay a firm foundation for the championship in the future.

By her geographical position and her union of races France was already the centre of history, the scene of the drama, the battle-field of all opposing forces; and even as in the Olympic stadium the wrestler anointed his thews before a bout in order to ensure a suppler grip, so from that epoch history was preparing the French genius for all its combats in the cause of idealism by anointing it with the holy oil of sacrifice.

Three centuries and a half had elapsed after the last of these invasions was repelled, three quarters of a century had passed after that delirium which, at the approach of the year one thousand, impelled the crowds into funereal excesses among the tombs, when in answer to the appeal of Peter the Hermit the same people rose from their knees, pinned their faith on an earthly object, and plunged into an heroic activity.

I admit that the vast torrent of the Crusades, that extraordinary ebullition of spiritual life, was sometimes reinforced by turbid and muddy tributaries. The thirst for vengeance on the Moslems, the terror of whose arms was still deeply impressed on the popular memory; the allurements of pillage on the long, long road that led to Jerusalem; the crimes which many a soldier of the Cross found the means of cloaking under his red-barred tunic—these and many other motives no doubt had their share in securing recruits to the host of the Crusaders, and Philip Augustus and Richard Cœur-de-Lion,

the two greatest Kings of Christendom, ended by quarrelling over the spoils, like brigands in a tavern. Above all, the West committed the fatal error of undervaluing and despising the grandeurs of Islam, and the mistake entailed a long series of disastrous consequences. Yet, when we have allowed for all that, the movement was sublime. On France and on the world it exerted a purifying and renovating influence. For the first time all the races in France, from all the provinces, met at the muster-place of the ideal, looked each other in the face, and were knit together in a unity of soul. The classes who had regarded each other with deadly hatred, the barons on the one side and the villeins on the other, the feudal drawbridge which had long divided them being lowered at last, now mixed with each other in the bivouac of the common cause, a sort of distant anticipation of the Revolution. Better still, some of the barons voluntarily renounced their rank, and sold their lands and castles to defray the cost of the war—a presage of the night of August 4th, 1789. Finally the Crusade was a truce imposed on the baleful intestine quarrels by which the mediæval world was rent; but it was not a “truce of God,” which lasted but a few hours at the signal of the cross raised by the bishops; it was a truce of the people, spontaneous and permanent, a solemn calm under the shelter of a higher principle; “a great silence fell,” so Guibert de Nogent tells us, “on the whole nation”; it was the first covenant of a sacred union. What an example for the whole West! How those words rang out in the silence, “It is God’s will”! But since nothing is nationally great that is not suscep-

tible of universal application, and since, let me say it once for all, nothing is truly French that is not also human, the movement overleaped the boundaries; England was carried away by the enthusiasm of France; the two countries concluded an alliance—the first adumbration of an *entente cordiale* for the triumph of noble causes, the first germ of the *Internationale* by the communion of consciences! From this spiritual point of view, how novel and grand is the spectacle! This, the most formidable of military enterprises, gravely and minutely prepared, and destined for two whole centuries to exhaust the nations which carried it on—this strange war owed neither its inspiration, nor its origin, nor its obstinate prolongation, to any instinct of nationalism. That human torrent of a million men, which rolled in successive waves, from continent to continent, strewing the whole length of its dry bed with its corpses and its wreckage, moved under the impulse of idealism.

The only migrations that can be compared to the Crusades for magnitude were the invasions of the German barbarians, but these latter swept over the ancient world with no other motive than the base lust of pillage or the mad fury of destruction. When Godefroy de Bouillon advanced at the head of the first Crusaders to the walls of Jerusalem, in answer to the call of an abstract idea, and drew crowds after him towards the same star, he was the very incarnation of Napoleon III's fine saying about the French flag: "*A great idea marches in its van, and a great people follows in its rear.*" Truly a noble epic, and characteristically French. A spiritual kinship, a profound logic of the

emotions links together those two great French epics, the Crusades and the Revolution. Posterity will find nothing to match them except the *Iliad* of Homer and the present war for Liberty. At the two extremities of history we thus see French mysticism marching towards a Promised Land; two different symbols, I own, but both discovered by France in something above and beyond herself, in the aspiration of the human heart. What the homesick France of the Crusades pursued in the distant mirage of the Syrian sands was the New Jerusalem, which will "issue from the depth of the desert,"¹ that perfect city of peace and love, where all troubles will cease; that ineffable good, for which every soul sighs; that eternal somewhere which is nowhere! When from the chariots drawn by slow-paced oxen the youngest members of the expedition espied, at the turning of the road, the distant towers of some abbey or castle, "Is that Jerusalem?" they would ask. So at the present hour the sigh goes up from the whole tortured world, "Is it there? Is it there—the end of all these massacres, the end of this nightmare of terror?" And when, breathless, the army of the Crusaders reaches the goal of its immense efforts, when every eye glisters with a tear, dazzled by the fulfilment of the great dream, by the accomplishment of the impossible, when all these passionate pilgrims fling themselves on the stones, on the dust of the Holy City, to embrace their possession, what will they discover behind these walls to recompense them for all their fervour and all their trials? An empty tomb! A tomb empty indeed,

¹ Racine, *Esther*.

yet filled for them with the splendour of their faith, a faith stronger than the spells cast athwart their path by the material world; an empty tomb, appalling symbol of the whole universe, in which the fierce forces of nature bring to the birth only to devour, where the worm, impatient and insatiable, lies in wait for the unfolding of the tiniest germ, where horror answers to terror, where blood streams on blood, where all pity, all nobleness, all perfection is swallowed up; an empty tomb across the ages, across the heavens, but one which the conscience of man rejects, while, prophesying in the name of the world itself, he demands and inaugurates, from this time forth, a justification for suffering, a necessity for harmony, that is to say, the soul's revenge which Christians call God and all believers the Absolute.

From the Crusades onwards, France has been entrusted with her mission; henceforth she was to be the messenger of the idea, the vanguard of the West; at every great crisis of her history, which was to be identical with the history of the world, she was destined to tear herself from herself, from her quiet, her security, her most obvious interests, and to plunge whole-heartedly, blindly, into every sublime adventure. Her aim, no doubt, might change, though soon it was to gain in precision, but her apostolic duty was not to change; in virtue of the unprecedented example she then set of the devotion of multitudes to the service of a high ideal, France was ready, a thousand years later, to-day, in response to the call of humanity, to head the greatest of all Crusades.

But from the exhausting pursuit of these grand

but visionary aims France was recalled to her domestic concerns by an imminent danger. Half a century after the last Crusade, France, which had raised the standard of brotherhood in the West, saw her national unity threatened by the Power which had so lately been her ally. Thus the Hundred Years' War proved to be, for France, a melancholy return to the stern realities of political strife; yet, though she believed herself to be fighting for her own interests only, she terminated the war in such a way as to transform her victory into the splendour of a new principle which she radiated abroad on all nations.

Now for the second time she was charged with a mission; not, as before, for the confusion of an infidel race, who might on their side lay claim to a pure monotheism; not a mission based on a vague sense of the superiority of the Aryan West to the East; no, it was a mission of the Right in the strictest sense of the word, incarnate in the divinest figure of woman of whom history holds record. What matter the contradictions which obscure the history of the Hundred Years' War? I am aware that Paris was English, and that the English Court was French. But the logic of principles, the good sense of the people, and the heroism of a shepherd maid sufficed to cut all the knots in the tangled skein of facts. Joan appeared, and at once, in the clear light of her genius, the moral boundaries loomed in sight. The kingdom, as it then existed, was painfully built up on the mingled ruins of two different elements, the Gallo-Roman and the feudal, and it was as precarious as the wagging head of its feeble king; the country,

accordingly, partook of the same instability, rent between the contending forces of a rapacious nobility which it was the aim of the monarchy to break and subdue. But the people, where were they? They hardly made any figure; and certainly they lacked all consciousness of self. They were little more than a mass of suffering humanity, sighing for the voice that should herald the dawn after the night of sorrow.

Joan appeared. She uttered that voice; she revealed the people to themselves; she gave them a name; she was their godmother. A people is a single race, a single language, a single soul—a single soul sometimes, as in the case of France, in spite of diversity both of race and of language; that is to say, it is a single will to live united and free in the same land. "I like the English very well, in their own country," said Joan with her gentle playfulness; and by that sally she did more to establish modern Right than all the jurists of antiquity. A profound truth it was which thus passed those childish lips. We may admit that the people existed, but the fatherland (*la patrie*) did not; the very name was as yet unknown. The virgin was herein about to bring forth. The ancient world knew only the "city," that is to say, a fatherland of aristocrats founded on the subjection of the masses, who lacked all social or moral titles to the rank of citizens. If the noble name of Fatherland (*patrie*) is a legacy of Rome—which the French tongue did not inherit till a century after the martyrdom of Joan, the reality preceding the name for it—the word did not, under the Roman rule, express the meaning which we have given to

it; on the contrary, it limited and restricted the meaning, since only the high-born had a fatherland, that is, had *fathers* (*patres*), and a family religion, a place in the forum and on the battle-field.

Joan appeared, and, familiarising the world with the idea, threw open the fatherland to all. All those are sons of the fatherland, from the least to the greatest, who have a heart to love it and sinews to defend it. Joan wept at the sight of French blood, from whatever vein it flowed, whether the red blood of the peasant or the blue blood of the lord. She was the first to worship France, France as a unity, without distinction. She loved it, even when people believed in it no longer or believed in it not yet; she loved it as a young expectant mother cherishes jealously her secret treasure; she was, in the full glory of the words, the Virgin Mother of the fatherland.

But what is the first duty towards that country which Joan conceived and created in her heart? To deliver it from the invader, to purify it from that stain, above all; "Out with them!" is all her thought, all the impulse of her instinct, the instinct that is shared in every age and every land by the sons of the soil when that soil is threatened and the Right is defied. For those who are animated by a common will to live united and free in one land have acquired thereby a right to make that will respected. The principle is so clear and sacred that henceforth even those who violate it will feel obliged to proclaim it, and will have to resort to every subterfuge in order to prove that they have not violated it.¹ For the universal

¹ "Another [French] aviator has thrown bombs on the railway

conscience has branded with infamy the so-called right of conquest, and all the peoples have recognised that the national integrity of each is the essential condition of the future federation of all. But it was Joan of Arc's purpose to preserve the purity of that fatherland to which she had given birth, that fatherland big with the future of humanity. She felt no hatred for the English, whom nevertheless she combated with all the impetuosity of her nature. In vain did the judges at her trial insidiously attempt to entrap her into an outburst of ignoble feeling. "Does God hate the English?" they asked her. "I do not know," was her answer. More than that, she used to bend in pity over the wounded English, and she wept even over our French victories because they were bought at the price of carnage. Thus in her noble heart, where instinct spoke with the accents of reason, the highest conception of Right found clear and concrete expression. Her patriotism, like her person, was immaculate; to defend her own country, to respect that of her neighbours, to stop the war at the boundary, when once France was rid of the enemy—these were her simple principles. She recognised that the English, whom she liked very well in their own country, were entitled to the same privileges which she claimed for the French. They, too, had a right to the possession of their own land: the principle which she created is valid for all peoples; and thereby,

near Carlsruhe and Nuremberg" (Declaration of War on France August 3rd, 1914). The Burgomaster of Nuremberg and the General in command of the Third Bavarian Corps publicly acknowledged the falsehood of this assertion (*Deutsche Medizinische Wochenschrift*, May 1916). This German lie was homage paid to the Right.

though she knew it not, the gospel which she preached transcended the limits of France. Joan, the Virgin Mother of her own fatherland, is Mother also of the very conception of fatherland in general.

Very soon her heroic figure was magnified, or perhaps I should rather say, realised by legend; for it is the glory of France to create legend for mankind. The Maid added a fresh diamond to the crown of humanity; and neither the mordant wit of Voltaire,¹ which like an acid had dissolved so many paste jewels of fraud and iniquity, nor the lambent flame of Anatole France's² artistry could melt or besmirch that pure and adamantine crystal. What need for us to scrutinise so closely the earthly phantom of her, the shepherd maid, who fed her flocks under the oaks of Domremy, or of Him, the carpenter's apprentice, who fed the souls of His disciples beside the Galilean lake? That which is immortal, because it is fruitful, is legend; and of legend they were at once the outward or historical symbol and the inner or animating principle. Legend is truer than reality, because in legend the people has remoulded history by the plastic force of instinct; because in legend we see new popular aspirations floating like morning clouds, on one side dim and grey in the light of the present, on the other side shot with the beams of the rising sun of the future; far from contradicting facts, legend crowns their hard granite peaks with a diadem of glittering snow. Hence the idle quibbles of modern historians have gone no further than to question the strategic value of Joan's leadership in our victories of the Hundred

¹ *The Pucelle d'Orléans.* ² *Histoire de Jeanne d'Arc.*

Years' War. Her messianic mission as the inspirer and creator of the deepest truths was the fruit of her noble life, of the burning ardour of her soul, which has dazzled posterity through all the glare and smoke of the pyre that consumed her body at Rouen. Her thoughts, her words, her very gestures—we can see them all mirrored, and as it were throbbing with reality, in the report of the trial drawn up by judges who had no intention of immortalising her:

I am Jehanne, the Maid, daughter of God. . . . God made my path for me, it was for that I was born. . . . Send me back to God, from whom I came.

Has history heard such an avowal of a messianic mission since the day when a similar avowal rang out before the judgment seat of Pontius Pilate? In rousing France to a consciousness of herself as a nation, Joan was fully conscious of her mission. Like Christ, to whom the modesty of the "poor little shepherdess" would have shuddered at my audacity in comparing her; like Christ, she had but three years for her great mission, and like Christ she knew that she must die a dreadful death, a death even more heroic in a little girl of twenty, to sanctify an idea.

The mission of Christ was purely moral, and, although it was doubtless the divinest ever performed by man, yet its principles, conceived and enjoined under a belief in the approaching end of the world, were scarcely applicable to the life of a society destined to survive through ages of evolution. The mission of Joan was purely social, and, though

its principle was less lofty, yet, like a flight which skims the ground instead of soaring into the clouds, it reached farther, being applicable in every age to the needs of every people. "Let there be no more violence, not even to repel violence," so said Christ. "Let there be no unjust violence; but, if such there be, then repel it with just violence," so said Joan, little suspecting that in saying so she was correcting her Master. Yet between the two the affinity of soul is such that it suffices to reconcile these antinomies. Did not Joan support her warlike mission on her faith as a Christian? And who were they that first accused and then condemned her? Were they not those Pharisees of the Temple who kill the spirit and the prophets in order to save the letter and those who trade on it? The same Church which had headed the Crusades against the infidel now burned the greatest championess of the Cross who had gone forth to deliver France from the sepulchre where she lay, not dead but sleeping, under the guard of English swords. Henceforth what appeal could there be against the Law except the appeal uttered by Christ?

Set the secret voice above the teachings of the Church and the ordinances of authority; let there be inspiration, but free inspiration; let there be revelation, but personal revelation; let there be submission to God, but to what God? To the God within us.¹

Liberty of conscience, that, put into modern language, is the creed of Joan, and therein also was she a French prophetess. Freedom is the

¹ Michelet.

genius of France, freedom in the order of thought, freedom in the order of action. Joan thought, acted, breathed only in the vivifying air of that principle. Though she did not know it, these twin liberties were equally indispensable to her. She who would have spurned as a mortal sin the least idea of a religious schism, was yet the first to speak with the accent of a Huguenot heretic; she whose sweet appeal it might seem monstrous to associate with the hoarse invectives of the Sans-Culottes, nevertheless supplied them with their war-whoop; in the religion of Liberty, she is the sister of Madame Roland and of Charlotte Corday; it was she who, though forgotten, rallied the volunteers of the year II; it was she who, like a Marseillaise crowned with fleurs-de-lys, hovered over the battle-flags of Valmy; it was she who, having created the fatherland, prepared the nation, that is, the full maturity of those peoples who aspire to marriage with humanity. Thus the flames of her pyre, like golden wings, lifted her above the war of factions in France and wafted her beyond our boundaries to all the peoples of the world, who saw in her the anticipation of themselves and were transfigured at her approach. Never was her glory more splendid than when her greatest poet, the German republican Schiller, set up in the sight of Germany this pure model of innocent patriotism; and never was a more touching homage paid to her than when the humble English "Tommy" brought their simple offering of nosegays, in a church at the front, to the statue of the French heroine, who had defeated their people in the past. Thus it has come about that the foes of yesterday

are the friends of to-day, because through all the combats we fought with each other we have found each other in the communion of the same ideal.

I told you that every step in the moral progress of France had to be paid for by a momentary recoil, by a contradiction of fact that subverted the principle, by a reaction of one order of things against another. Truth admits not of limitations, and at this point I owe her a mortifying confession; indeed, I am compelled to reinforce my confession by citing examples of a sort which unfortunately abound in the turbid and confused course of our annals, as in that of the annals, be it remembered, of all other nations.

Louis XIV was a very great king, who by the deeds he performed and the institutions he created has earned for himself some high eulogiums. An inspirer of arts and of letters like Pericles and Leo X, he composes with them a trinity of sovereigns, who, conscious of a sovereignty higher than the political, lowered their sceptres before the pen in token of respect. Thus he gathered about him that ideal Court whose light still illumines the ages, the only Court whose ghost still haunts the resounding gallery of history after sentence has there been pronounced on his reign. By the ascendant which his own genius exercised over the geniuses whom he trained, Louis laid the French language under the same trammels and leading-strings under which, by his organisation, he laid the kingdom of France. He took regal France and buckled on its armour, crowned it with a unity it had never known before, and furnished it, if I may be allowed the expression, with the thews and sinews of a

powerful administration. That is an acknowledgment which every Frenchman is bound to make who would renounce none of the past glories of France. But they are the only true, the only solid glories to which he can lay claim. I am compelled to declare that the wars of Louis destroyed his work, that Louvois undid what Colbert had done, that the buckle of the armour burst, that all this grandeur left a void behind, that the Sun-King (*Roi-Soleil*) only consumed himself, and France with him, by the excess of his radiant heat. From the point of view of my present study it is my duty to avow that the principle created by Joan of Arc for France, but not against anybody, nay rather for all the peoples, was distorted by hypertrophy till it became a serious menace to all the rest of Europe; the sword forged by justice was usurped by despotism and sullied by it in the use.

Universal domination is the monstrous dream of heads dizzied by their elevation to the pinnacle of supreme power, on which the grovelling multitude is content to leave them in solitary grandeur; for human pride, like the human conscience, yields to the seduction of the infinite, be that infinite only an ocean of blood. In that crimson sea great kings, like suns, have set before now, and from its foam are born deified emperors; and so from Alexander to Cæsar, from Charles V to Philip II, from Louis XIV to Napoleon, and from Napoleon to William II there moves across the stage of history the ghastly procession of conquerors, whose horses are splashed breast-high with blood, and whose hoofs trample on the pangs of humanity.

No doubt the fascination exerted over him by the example of Charles V at last drew the ambitious genius of Louis the Great out of its natural orbit. But the Thirty Years' War, which ended during the minority of Louis, sanguinary heritage though it was from the historical past, not only left the power and reputation of France unimpaired, but served the best interests of Germany; for by the Treaty of Westphalia we secured the independence of the German principalities and the liberty of conscience of the Protestants against the House of Austria, according to the wise policy of Richelieu. Thus France saved Germany for the second time since the days of Attila. It was from the year 1667 that the glory of Louis began to be stained with crime. The war of Flanders, or of Devolution, had for its pretext a miserable pettifogging plea of casuistry. Hear what was said of it by our historian, Victor Duruy, former minister of Napoleon III, whose histories have served as text-books in our republican schools.¹ "That war was useful and legitimate, so far as any war of invasion can be so."² The timid scruple thus whispered by the historian is repeated in somewhat louder accents when he comes to speak of the war with Holland. The French historian candidly acknowledges that, like the war of 1870 and that of 1914,³ it took its rise in a forgery; I refer to the affair of the pretended medal, which was said to have reflected so injuriously on the

¹ School edition of 1884, published by Hachette.

² *Histoire de France*, vol. ii. p. 235.

³ During the present war the German press has defended the garbling of the Ems telegram as a very honourable act. As to the affair of the airmen at Nuremberg, see above, p. 31 note.

honour of the king of France, but which in reality was never struck except in his own crafty imagination.¹ Then, after the famous passage of the Rhine, worthily celebrated by the most wretched of our poets,² "a military operation of the fourth order" in the judgment of Napoleon I, an exploit performed every day by the smugglers of the river according to the ocular testimony of Voltaire, I say, after the ridiculous theatrical display got up by a coward masquerading as a hero (so we learn by the revelations of Brienne),³ we come next to the massacre of prisoners who had surrendered at discretion.⁴ But what are all these villanies compared to the two invasions of the Palatinate? You will pardon me, gentlemen, for not dwelling on that topic in face of the enemy, but do not accuse me of partiality. If at a time like the present I recoil from the painful recital of these monstrous abominations, perpetrated in the past in the name of my people, I expressly call your attention to them, and, having done so, I leave them to the crushing indictment of the greatest of French historians, Michelet.⁵

That is how our writers, even on the morrow of 1870, far from setting themselves to inculcate on future generations the impious dream of a reign of force, had the courage to write our history for our children and the world, by the cold light

¹ "It is now certain that the medal never existed" (*Histoire de France*, vol. ii. p. 237).

² Boileau.

³ Brienne, *Mémoires*, vol. ii. p. 325.

⁴ All these quotations are taken from the history of Victor Duruy, vol. ii. pp. 240-41.

⁵ *Histoire de France*, published by Flammarion, vol. xv. pp. 381-8,

of truth and in the splendour of a new principle which they believed to be established for ever. Thus that truth, to which I have paid due homage, allows me now to reap the reward of my veracity; for in turn my country will take her revenge, a moral revenge to which the world can show no parallel, a revenge which none will dream of disputing with her, and which some perhaps will envy. I have branded the crimes of a despot, and, despite these crimes and because of these crimes, I maintain that France, guilty France, still yearned to resume her mission in the world as apostle of the Right. Firstly, after the frankness of these confessions, I may be allowed to recall to you the circumstances of the times in which these events happened; to remind you that the troops who committed these excesses were a rabble of mercenaries and not a whole nation in arms rushing forth to harry and devastate; I may be permitted to say emphatically that if Louvois disgraced himself by secretly encouraging his officers in the worst cruelties, he would not have dared to do so publicly in the orders to the army, like the War Lord of 1914, to placard these encouragements on the burnt walls, and to plume himself on them before the world. Lastly, and above all, I would plead that these infamies, in which the whole brutal public of these times took a fiendish delight, date from 1689 and not from 1916, and that thus France is morally ahead of Germany by more than two centuries. But no, I will not plead in such a cause. Far be it from me to allege extenuating circumstances in excuse for the violation of right. For my part,

I prefer to say that the crime received its just punishment and was duly expiated. The punishment came first and was administered by Europe, roused as it was by the crime to form against France the first of those vast coalitions in which nations unite for the preservation, not merely of their existence, but of what is still higher, their freedom. And I note with admiration that on each occasion it was the victim, the small State of the Low Countries,¹ which, invaded by the oppressor, first unfurled the banner of Right and rallied round it a troop of mighty champions; and it is no matter of surprise to me that England, already the guardian of the Continent, passed from our side to that of our enemies,² just as Italy in 1915, despite her recent alliance, flung herself into the fray to defend the cause she judged the nobler. But all that, all these cruel reverses, that humiliation, that calamity, were so many punishments inflicted on us by others; they did not suffice to satisfy our national conscience, there still lacked a public and voluntary expiation. Yes, since in our great people, as in every great people of history, a Government had been found guilty of falsifying its true glory, of raising a throne on hecatombs of human victims, of battenning on iniquity, it was needful that our people, and no other in the world, should under the same Government rise up to call its masters to account for their crimes, to unburden its conscience, to blame its own passivity, to punish itself, to ransom itself,

¹ The reference is to Holland, which was the soul of the three coalitions—the Grand Alliance of the Hague (1673), the League of Augsburg (1686), the Grand League of the Hague (1701).

² In 1678.

to avenge itself, to hiss the coffin of its conqueror a few years after his triumphs,¹ to behead his heir and with him the whole dead past, in a word, to convert the Nemesis of the nation into the deliverer of all the ages. And that was done by my people, the French people; and that was called the French Revolution; and that is our French way of settling accounts with those who drown the whole world in blood.

The Revolution is an event of abiding historical importance, of which all that can be said has been said during the last century, and of which nevertheless all will not be said until those two daughters of the Convention, International Justice and Social Justice, have uttered the decisive word in the debates of mankind. Thus, by a titanic movement, a new sun was launched on the sky of the Absolute, round which the whole of modern thought was destined to gravitate. I do not deny that the dawn was sanguinary, and that the mighty orb lit up some dark recesses and putrid swamps. I as little agree with those who defend the whole Revolution *en bloc* as I agree with those who would wholly ignore it, proposing to cut it out of our history entirely and then to fit the two amputated stumps together without it. Free-thinkers are constantly examining their idol, the Revolution, and retouching the marble into a higher perfection. For my part, I am content to represent the Revolution just as it was; I do not stop to plead that it came into the world in a season of storm and stress, that its fury was born of its pity, and that its Assemblies conducted their deliberations sitting

¹ The funeral of Louis XIV was hissed by the populace of Paris.

astride a barrel of gunpowder.¹ Posterity judges of men and peoples by the permanent marks they have made on the history of thought, and not by the extravagances of their method. With its feet in ashes and its hands in blood, the Revolution nevertheless, even in the darkest hours of the Terror, still held its head erect and high in the light.

For the purpose of this study, the lesson I would draw from all the complex facts of this tremendous movement is, first, that the Revolution carried to its highest point that analysis of the national principle which had been prefigured by Joan of Arc; and, second, that by its idealisation of that principle of Right the Revolution extended it to all the other peoples, thus restoring the tradition of our spiritual mission which had been perverted by the old régime.

The Revolution is tantamount to the Rights of Man. That is the corner-stone of granite built into the foundation of society. That principle, while it is of universal application, is at the same time in every nation the charter alike of each individual citizen and of the nation as a whole. The crazy maxim: "I am the State," was elucidated by its author, Louis XIV, with the following bitter reflection, in which we may perhaps detect a presentiment of the coming downfall of autocracy:

The subjection which compels the sovereign to accept the law dictated by his people is the worst calamity that can befall a man of our rank.

To that the reply of the Revolution was: "The

¹ Michelet.

sovereign is everybody.”¹ And by everybody was meant the 5,000,000 of Frenchmen who voted for the first time at the elections to the States General for the purpose of affirming by their mandate the very principle which conferred the sovereignty on them. It meant, in the language of Michelet, “the establishment of law and the retribution of justice,” and, at the same time, I would add, a death-blow struck at Divine Right, at Infernal Right, at the caprice of all the “old gods,” whose heads the Revolution cast disdainfully into the basket of the guillotine. Thus the Rights of Man and the Rights of the Nation are the two first steps raised by the Revolution in its reconstitution of the social fabric. On these foundations it was destined to complete the edifice to its summit in a style as harmonious as it was magnificent, proclaiming Man among all men and Humanity among all nations.²

The Right of the Peoples—that was the coping-stone and crown of the Holy French Trinity. It is true that the Republic did not coin the phrase, yet it was impelled in the direction of the idea by the force of its own nature, by the generous logic which is only another name for France. For the Rights of Man and the Right of the Nation are simple inferences from a principle which transcends them, which magnetises only to polarise them in a higher unity.

It was no question, as in England, of an appeal to the

¹ “The sovereignty resides essentially in the whole body of the citizens” (Declaration of Rights, XVII).

² “All men are born free and equal in respect of rights,” and not Frenchmen only (Declaration I).

written law, to disputed charters of the Middle Ages; it was no question, as in America, of ransacking the archives of State after State in order to evolve *a posteriori*, from the comparison, a general formula embracing them all; the question was that of creating, from on high, the creed of a new age in virtue of a sovereign, imperial, pontifical authority. And what was that authority? It was Reason.¹

Yes, Reason, the *logos* of antiquity, was the gospel of the Revolution; that was the word that closed the gates of the past and threw open the gates of the future. For the second time since the Crusades, France appeared as the Universal Nation, no longer under the banner of a dogma that was to be blown to tatters by the wind of progress, but under the external standard of a certitude which every man discovers in the depth of his heart, and which every nation has only to open its eyes to discover also. Is Reason a privilege enjoyed only by France? Reason imposes obligations to all peoples, and the rights of each imply duties to all: it is Duty alone that justifies a Right. Hear how Condorcet defines the identity rather than the logical sequence of this principle:

Philosophers condemn injustice even when, perpetrated in a foreign land, it cannot affect them personally; they condemn it, too, when it is committed by their own country against other peoples.²

“I am free, I will be just!” cried France; “I am free, be ye free also, O my brothers!”³

¹ Michelet.

² *Progrès de l'Esprit humain*, 9^e époque.

³ Michelet.

The Rights of Man and the Rights of the Peoples are thenceforth the two flags which France has nailed to the same staff to float in the breeze of peace above the fruitful emulation of the nations, or to flap in the hurricane of a just war as the rallying-point of the human conscience!

In the Revolution, in the Revolution at last France was fully conscious of her mission. The Crusades mistook their object; Joan of Arc had but a dim presentiment of hers. The Revolution, in her head and her heart, discovered Humanity. It knew and proclaimed its discovery. To speak exactly, it legislated for all peoples. Behind the benches of its assemblies, came crowding millions of phantoms, all the citizens of the world, awaiting the signal to start to life. What a stirring and solemn scene! France, which had just renounced the Church, felt herself more deeply religious than she had been under the oak of St. Louis: "*In presence of the Supreme Being . . .*"¹—these were the first words that rose to her lips when she set herself to renovate the world. With all her gaiety, her blitheness, so easily mistaken for levity, she combined at that hour a mystic fervour. Every one of her acts was at the same time a symbol, I had almost said a rite. The meeting of the chosen few in the tennis-court (*Jeu de Paume*), when they swore to hold together till France had received from them the charter of its constitution, was as it were the Revolution incarnate, swearing a solemn oath to the peoples that she would not sheathe her sword till they, too, should be established in their sovereign rights. Again, the nobles,

¹ Opening of the Declaration of Rights.

who, on the night of August 4th, 1789, stripped themselves of their privileges as of a penitent's garment, and of their jewels as of a prisoner's shackles, who divided their substance among the nation in the enthusiasm of giving up their all, these men were also an incarnation of the Revolution, which, like the Redeemer at that Easter of humanity, cried to the peoples: "Behold my flesh sacrificed for you on the battle-fields of my freedom; behold my blood shed for you on the Calvary of my Terror; take and eat, take and drink, be satisfied with my sufferings!" Above all, let us remember the act which struck the note of all that Passion of a people, the proclamation of the citizen Fauchet, who, after the victory, descending into the dungeons of the Bastille, at the head of the awestruck populace, cried out before the skeletons which he found riveted to the walls:

The day of Revelation is come, the bones have risen up at the voice of French liberty, they bear witness against the ages of oppression and death, prophesying the regeneration of human nature and of the life of the nations.¹

Yes, these apocalyptic words were the echo of the last trump, the lurid light of the last judgment illuminating the deliverance of mankind from the human hell.

Am I, then, within my rights in now affirming that the French nation is great among the nations, the nation which was at that supreme hour at

¹ These are the very words of Fauchet.

once the future conscience and the inspired head of humanity? Am I within my rights in saying that the whole of humanity at once recognised its own likeness mirrored in the glass held up to it by France? That, even in the distant empire of the Czars, at the crash of the edifice of the Past, people embraced each other with enthusiasm?¹ And, lastly, that the great Goethe, on the evening of the battle of Valmy, lying on his elbows in the camp of the defeated Germans, his ears still humming with the hitherto unknown cry of "Vive la nation!" to which echo replied "Vivent les nations!" in the last dying tumult of the epic battle, wrote in his diary these words as a homage to the French, a homage which it is impossible to pay to certain other enemies: "*At this date and in this place begins a new era of the world*"?

Alas! I am aware that this fruitful torrent was doomed to break in foam against a rock which it rolled along in its own waters, a rock that barred its progress and turned its current into a back-eddy under the influence of those baleful stars which from time to time reverse the whole course of French history.

As a republican I shall be as frank in my condemnation of Napoleon as I was in my condemnation of Louis XIV, but at the same time I shall endeavour to be fair to him also. If, in respect to the Monarchy, the Republic was a daughter who killed her mother on coming into the world, Napoleon was a modern Œdipus who violated his mother, the Revolution. No one has ever denied that the first campaign in which he gave proof of

¹ At St. Petersburg on the news of the taking of the Bastille.

his genius and earned his laurels, I mean the Italian war, was a legitimate war of defence. It was still the Revolution which repelled the threatening advance of the Allied despotisms and, in order to break through the circle of the enemy, turned it by what in military language is called "external lines." The pyramids of the Egyptian campaign were the pedestal of that first crime of Bonaparte, known as 18th Brumaire. The sickly fumes of the East, exhaled from the corpses of the Pharaohs whom he consulted in their sepulchral vaults, were the source of the first intoxication which turned the head of the young general. Henceforth he was under the spell of an evil destiny. His original violation of the principle of the Rights of Man carried in its train that long series of crimes against the Right of Peoples of which the most lamentable example was the Russian campaign, when he sought to strike at England through the vengeful fires of Moscow, and of which the most shameful for us was the invasion of Spain, where an heroic people cursed us in the name of the very Right which we professed to be vindicating for them. But the greatest crime, which included all the rest, was the perversion of that sublime genius which might have completed the Revolution after the manner in which Mirabeau had begun it, repressing its extravagances, assuring its continuity, and establishing instead of destroying it. That perversion was foreseen, with a shudder of disgust, by the honest republican Hoche; it was cast remorsefully in the teeth of the Master himself, at the height of his glory, by Lannes dying on an imperial battle-field; it turned Wellington and

Nelson into defenders of liberty against the mother of liberty; it enlisted against us in the service of the Right that sleepless sentinel of Europe—England—whose happy privilege it is to save other peoples by saving herself—England, the democratic sister of France, whom time's vicissitudes have led to champion alternately the good and the evil cause in her long wars with us—the worst cause in the days of Joan d'Arc and the Revolution, the best cause in the days of Louis XIV and Napoleon—until the great ideal, which we share in common, revealed to us our errors and ranged us for ever on the same side.¹

But how comes it that in spite of all the evil that Napoleon did to France by brutally turning back towards the past the noble tide that was setting so strongly towards the future; in spite of all the evil he did to the world in bequeathing to feeble imitators the example of his sanguinary frenzy; how comes it, I say, that a vague aureole still encircles the brows of the "little corporal"? That an invincible fascination still draws to him not only his own people, whom he exhausted, but the other peoples whom he trampled on, not excepting even the Germans? That free America itself, who never knew a monarch, almost ranks him above Lafayette? That the greatest poets

¹ Since the beginning of the war a warm feeling of sympathy for France has led the English to change "Trafalgar Day" into "Nelson Day." Thus our chivalrous Allies celebrate the glory of their great sailor without commemorating our defeat; nay, more, the column in Trafalgar Square is decked on that day with the French colours. The author of this discourse had the honour of being the first Frenchman to address the crowd from the foot of that column, on August 6th, 1916, to seal the final union of the two western democracies.

of the last century, while they stigmatise the despot, have yet tempered their anathemas with an undercurrent of panegyric? In a word, how comes it that, after more than a hundred years, the imagination of the world is not cured of its love for Napoleon?

The causes of this obsession, I take it, are two-fold; one of them is of the moral or sentimental order, the other of the philosophical.

Above all, in the eyes of posterity, the man Napoleon remains popular because he was a living epic: a very insignificant reason, in my opinion, and one that is little to the credit of such as are satisfied with it; still, he appeals to us because his character, despite its egoism, was not wholly unworthy of his glory; because through his genius there ran a vein of magnanimity, at least of the visionary sort, which cast a splendid pall of words over his morbid ambitions; because he was a man not wholly without heart, and that heart remained plebeian in the intimacy of his old soldiers; because, at the sight of the German spies, those handsome, fair-haired youths whom he caused to be shot, and who at the volley uttered with their last breath the cry "*Fürs Vaterland*," "the little corporal" turned aside his head and furtively wiped away a tear¹; and, lastly, because his methods of war mark a very perceptible moral advance on the methods of Louis XIV and on those of William II. I will not dwell on the comparison, but, if I did, Napoleon would shine by contrast with the Teutonic Cæsar.

He did not plunder wholesale. He did not

¹ Historical.

massacre in crowds. He did not deport in masses. He did not light incendiary fires to the lilt of music. In a word, he was chivalrous. Believe me, it was to these causes that he owed in large measure the enlistment of the Saxons under his banners, and the applause with which the ladies of Berlin greeted him from their windows on his entry into their city. Believe me, too, that if Goethe hastened, on a sign from the Emperor, to hobnob with him, and carried away from the imperial interview an impression of blind, enthusiastic admiration, Sainte Geneviève would have scrupled to accept an invitation from the modern Attila, the Kaiser, to mount the chariot at his side.

To these psychological reasons, if I may call them so, which inspire us with sympathy rather for Napoleon personally than for his work, we must add others of a more serious nature, which bear more directly on the subject of the present discourse.

Considered with reference to the results of his reign, if Napoleon "*left France smaller than he had found it, drained of blood and treasure, stripped of eighteen Departments which the Republic had added to it,*"¹ we must bear in mind to set off against these calamities the material and even the moral benefits with which this greatest political genius since Augustus dowered his unhappy country by the hasty reconstruction of all her institutions.²

¹ Victor Duruy, formerly minister of Napoleon III, ventured to conclude: "*Our fathers had their share of responsibility in the misfortunes of our country, for, in entrusting full power to Napoleon, they allowed him to drink of the intoxicating draught which absolute power holds to the lips of despots.*"

² The Civil Code was redacted in four months.

Externally, the Napoleonic architecture restored the royal fabric in its great lines, and in this connection a particular incident is invested with a more than fortuitous symbolism: the remains of the Emperor came finally to rest under the dome of the King; the two dead dynasties met in a common tomb, both were banished to the *Invalides*.¹ Internally, on the other hand, the arrangements of the edifice were completely transformed, though the old materials were employed in the reconstruction. Thus the Empire was forced to acquiesce silently in the gains secured by the Revolution. Thus, while the Emperor shamefully abolished the political franchise which the Revolution had established, he preserved the social heritage bequeathed by that great movement. It is paradoxical but true that the Emperor cursed the Monarchy, and the adherents of the Monarchy abhorred the Emperor. When he escaped the attempts they made on him, he remarked: "*It is the Revolution which they attack in my person; I am the Revolution!*" And we cannot say that he was an utter hypocrite in thus turning the phrase of Louis XIV, "*I am the State,*" into the shape, "*I am the people.*" What a social abyss yawns between these two phrases! After all, Napoleon was haunted by regrets for the scenes of his youth; despite his passion for a strumpet glory he kept for his first love, the Revolution, as for poor Josephine, a tender place in his heart, a tenderness quickened by remorse. France recognised, the whole world felt, the effects of that tenderness and that remorse. Wherever throughout

¹ Hospital for invalided soldiers founded by Louis XIV.

Europe, in the train of the imperial rout, the torrent of blood rolled by, it made breaches through which the people might march, it fertilised the soil behind it with the germs of a happier future. How much does not Italy owe to this son of her race and of her genius! In the very sufferings which he inflicted on Germany did not the nation receive from the shock a far-reaching impulse to unity? If he outraged Spain, was not his first act to free her from the Inquisition? Thus the same man who in France set back the course of political progress for fifty years, hastened it everywhere else in Europe, despite his faults, despite his crimes, despite even his will; because ever since 1789, if France could still profane her mission, she could never wholly betray it; because, ever since 1792, the prick of a French bayonet always leaves behind it the vaccine of liberty in the wound.

Henceforward the spring of the French principle, which had been compressed but not broken, was released, and in its natural rebound, I had almost said its remorse, it soon recovered all the ground it had lost, and that too notwithstanding the exhaustion of France, the confusion of affairs, and the rapid vicissitudes which ushered in the nineteenth century.

It was fitting, no doubt, that the great culprit should close his stormy career at St. Helena, a Prometheus nailed to the rock for having set the earth on fire; it was right that he who had set a great gulf between the principles of his epoch and their practical application should be banished from the world of the living to that remote solitude. But, by virtue of the paradox which I mentioned a

moment ago, the dead Napoleon was destined to become the most potent auxiliary of the Revolution. His ghost was fated to revive his true mission, to haunt the anachronism known as the Restoration, to take his revenge, in the name of the peoples, for the ephemeral victory of the kings, who fondly imagined that in 1815 they had resoldered the broken crown of their "divine right." All through the century the Treaty of Vienna might be heard cracking under the impulsion of that French idea which Napoleon had tried to dishonour and suppress. The nineteenth century was the age when peoples everywhere aspired to independence, when nations aspired to unity, when countries aspired to be one in humanity. I am aware that in the course of the century several of these nations were strangled and even divided piecemeal; I am aware, too, that one predatory dynasty, I mean the Hohenzollerns, waged national wars and undertook fresh enterprises to extend their dominion. But year by year the principle gained in strength; even those who violated it, I repeat, had to mask their foul designs under fair exteriors, till in the last year of the century, when France called the world together at Paris to celebrate the festival of labour,¹ she believed that in the name of all her guests she could proclaim the advent of peace, the establishment of Right, and the abolition of war by the institution of international arbitration.

However, in contrast to the upheavals of the past, that reaction of one principle on another, which we have postulated as a tragic law of French history, no longer operated in the nineteenth

¹ The Universal Exhibition of 1900.

century after the manner of a flood sweeping away the dykes that for a time had withstood it. Thenceforth the revival of a principle that had been forced under ground took place by infiltration, bursting out here and there in jets, or, to adopt the figure which best characterises the ardent ebullition of the Revolution, that movement no longer found vent in a single grand volcanic eruption, but contented itself with opening here and there a series of crevasses to allow the boiling lava to escape. Worn out by the effort of spawning monsters, the giantess was in no haste to bring to the birth the true god whom she bore in her womb.

You will understand that I refer to the three French revolutions of 1830, 1848, and 1871, and the extraordinary effects which the two former had on Europe.

Our "three Glorious Ones"¹ of 1830 opened a triumphal breach in the restored wall of the old régime, allowing a free passage for the banished principle, the Rights of Man and of the Citizen, which thus returned to the land of their birth. Hence we behold a return to constitutional government, a half Republican monarchy, and France recognised by all Europe.²

In England the Tories resigned themselves to the Reform Bill; in Spain the Revolution secured a footing; in Germany the infatuated princes

¹ The three days of that Revolution.

² "A legitimate resistance," writes Duruy, "since the middle class and the people fought those who had violated the constitution." Louis Philippe, King of the French, who imposed their conditions on him (Duruy, vol. ii. p. 674), had fought at the battle of Valmy. His father, Philippe-Egalité, had voted for the death of Louis XVI.

hastened to grant constitutions, in Saxony, Hanover, Brunswick, and Hesse-Cassel; while the Germanic spokesman of the European reaction, the old fox Metternich, at sight of the French lion rampant which he had thought mortally wounded, bitterly denounced "the faction which seeks to introduce the modern idea of the sovereignty of the people under the guise of a constitutional government." What shall we say of what passed in Italy? The Holy Father himself promised liberal reforms; you might mark the train of gunpowder laid and ready to explode at Modena, at Parma, indeed from one end of the Peninsula to the other. Then it was that beneath the triumphal arch of the new era there came marching the Sacred Band: Mazzini, Gioberti, Balbo, Azeglio, the vanguard of the *Risorgimento*, which thus made its first appearance in history.

France had thrown open the door of a tomb. But the phrase which summed up the truth of the hour, the illuminating phrase which revealed the power exercised over the world by every act of the New France whenever she does not renounce her mission, was pronounced at Brussels. There, by a coincidence that might pass for symbolic, the news of the French Revolution arrived when *The Mute of Portici* was being played at the Opera; immediately the consciousness of the people, *mute* till then, found utterance, and the audience exultingly cried out, "*We, too, will do like the French!*" It was the first infantine cry of a new-born nation instinctively addressed to its mother. France had placed the cradle for the infant. And eighty-four years afterwards, in

August 1914, the faithful Belgium, daughter of France, interposed her own body to shield her mother.

“To do like the French,” what a lesson is that inscribed on the programme of the peoples! The Revolution of 1848 gave to the world a decisive demonstration of the lesson. This time the white-washed wall of the old monarchical régime tumbled down at a blow, the last blocks of it were razed to the ground. It was a direct return to the pure democratic form: idealism, with Lamartine for its apostle, succeeded to power as in the best days of 1789; the reflection of this resurrection was so intense over all Europe that everywhere it kindled the light of dawn.

In Italy there were insurrections at Naples, Milan, Venice, and in Sicily and Sardinia; and the Italian tricolour uncoiled itself from the French flag like a twin flame of the same ideal to burn thenceforth at its side in all the wars of liberation. Then in old Austria, the theocratic, reactionary Austria, the Revolution triumphed; students and citizens cried, “*Down with Metternich!*” and demanded the dismissal of the statesman who had imagined himself the conqueror for ever of France. More than that, a constitution was granted to the people, based on the model of the Belgian constitution, which was a work of democratic France; more than that, the emperor and his family were forced to fly to the Tyrol; and, strangest of all, at Vienna itself there was founded a “*Central Committee for the defence of the Right of the peoples*”—in 1848, mark the date, and not in 1925. Immediately Hungary rose at the voice of the great

Kossuth, and the brave Rumanian peasants bestirred themselves to vindicate against their Magyar masters the imprescriptible rights of their national origin.

As for the events which followed each other in rapid succession in Germany under the inspiration of the French idea, I will not attempt to describe them; I leave that task to history; here is what took place in Berlin:

The proclamation was made on the morning of the 18th of March. In the course of the day the crowd assembled in front of the palace to acclaim the King, who thanked them from the balcony. But, instead of dispersing, they remained on the spot in spite of the orders of the officer of the guard. There had been skirmishes between the crowd and the army for some days previously, but now the battle suddenly broke out. Two musket-shots were fired by accident, and the crowd fled with cries of "Treason!" Several persons who took part in the demonstration were killed; the troops posted in the castle sallied forth, there was a volley of infantry and a charge of dragoons. The crowd then pillaged the shops of the gunsmiths to get muskets; the workmen came armed with bars of iron; there was a fight near the castle; the streets were barricaded in the style of Paris. This street warfare was directed by journalists, students, and foreign revolutionaries. The fight lasted till midnight. The army had gradually repelled the insurgents, and prepared to crush them on the morrow; it was the King who suddenly recoiled from civil war. Next morning appeared the proclamation, "To my dear people of Berlin!" He implored the inhabitants of Berlin, in the name of the Queen, who was unwell, not to allow themselves to be set by the ears by a gang of malefactors (the revolutionaries) and to pull down the barricades, promising at

the same time to withdraw his troops. The insurgents required that the King should first withdraw his army. On the advice of the royalist citizens, the King yielded; he caused the streets to be evacuated by the soldiers; allowed the citizens to arm, and changed the ministry. The citizen guard was master of Berlin and of the Government. Prince William, surnamed the Grapeshot Prince,¹ was ordered by the King to leave Berlin, and he went to England. The King, horrified at the bloodshed, had allowed the people to vanquish the army. . . .² The corpses of the victims were carried into the courtyard of the palace; then the crowd called for the King with furious cries; he appeared on the balcony, with Queen Elizabeth, sick and livid, on his arm, and saluted the corpses. . . .³ Frederick William,⁴ suddenly renouncing his doctrines, and adopting even the revolutionary vocabulary, behaved as a constitutional prince, head of the national movement. On March 21st, by the proclamation "To the Prussian people and the German nation," he pronounced for "true constitutional institutions with responsibility of the ministers, oral and public procedure, criminal juries, equality of civil and political rights." Then, dressed in the colours of the Empire (the red, black, and gold of the students), he rode through Berlin on horseback, addressing the crowd, and in the evening he said: "My people will not abandon me, and Germany will trustfully unite with me; henceforth Prussia is absorbed in Germany." At one blow the King accepted all the "revolutionary" institutions of France: a written constitution, a single national assembly chosen by universal suffrage, and

¹ The future Emperor William I; he fled from Berlin disguised as a lackey, and took refuge in England.

² *Histoire Politique de l'Europe*, by Seignobos, Professor at the Sorbonne, pp. 420-21.

³ *Histoire générale de Lavisse et Rambaud*, vol. xi. p. 73, chap. iii., by Ernest Denis, professor at the Sorbonne.

⁴ The German historians have pointed out some striking analogies between this monarch and William II.

caused all these measures to be voted by the Landtag which met in assembly for the last time.¹

So speaks history. What became of these institutions it is not for me here to inquire. I only wished to show, by the bare testimony of facts, that never was the example of France so influential on the other peoples as in the most recent times. And this mission of Apostle of the Right, which all these people acknowledged in the nineteenth century to be peculiarly her own, France was not content to discharge only by her example; she enforced it also by her armies, which carried freedom in their train.

For there are holy wars; there are pacifist wars which have been emulously waged or preached by the Washingtons, the Lincolns, the Gambettas, and the Jaurès²; wars in which Peace would be dishonoured if she came to terms with Crime; wars in which Right would commit suicide if it did not resort to force to break the yoke of oppression! No doubt in the nineteenth century, not to speak of the colonial expeditions, which raise the same question of conscience for all the peoples of the West,³ France allowed herself to be led

¹ Seignobos, *ibidem*. These passages from history have been read out in German by the author of this lecture in the course of another lecture at Basle, during the war, only a mile from the German frontier.

² Jean Jaurès, *L'Armée nouvelle*.

³ In the negotiations with England in July 1914, Germany proposed to that country to strike a bargain over the French colonies; both before and during the present war, Germany formulated her demands on the Belgian Congo, the victim being expected to pay for its calamities. This in reply to the arguments of certain Germanophiles, who charge the Entente Powers with colonial ambitions.

astray into two wild adventures abroad, the Crimean and Mexican wars, the lamentable absurdity of which we have long and bitterly rued. At least it is to the honour of France, and a proof of her moral progress, that in the space of more than a century, which has elapsed since Waterloo, she has made no attempt at conquest on the European continent, that is, in the very heart of civilisation. And then we can point to three noble wars, three pure and generous wars, whose sublime legends France has inscribed on the banners of Joan d'Arc and of 1792: the war of American Independence, the war of the resurrection of Greece, and the war of the liberation of Italy.

If the first of these was undertaken under the old régime, it fired instinctively all the revolutionary ardour in sympathy with this revelation of itself.¹ The second was a repetition of antiquity. Navarino was a second Salamis, with the Muse erect in the midst of the army, with Byron singing and fighting for liberty, then dying for her like Cynægeirus. Significantly enough, the Restoration, which made this war, was constrained to appear outside our boundaries in the panoply of the Revolution; and the three Powers who struck the blow for freedom, and whose flags draped the cradle of the young Hellenic nation, formally inscribed in the treaty of peace the wise provision, that they would resist every future violation of the Greek constitution, however illustrious might be the perpetrators of that treason.² Lastly, in the

¹ It was the author of *Figaro*, Beaumarchais, who at Havre freighted the ships on which Rochambeau and Lafayette embarked.

² King Constantine.

third of our noble wars French and Italian soldiers fraternised against a common foe ; the souls of two peoples, devotees of freedom, united for a common crusade ; the logic of the same ideal triumphed in advance over the contradictions of our papal policy and the treachery of a Machiavellian diplomacy.¹ The war of Italy, at once so French and so democratic in the spirit which animated it, was destined, half a century later, to bring distant events together and retrench the vain gulf of years ; it was the prologue to a long epic, which began at the rock of Quarto,² where Garibaldi embarked to sail for the shores of the future, and which received its most fruitful consecration in the forests of the Argonne,³ when the race of the Forerunner there gave the baptism of blood to another republican war, and caused, by these first-fruits, the whole Italian nation to spring to arms from the ground !

I ask, where are the democrats who would disavow these three wars ? I ask, where are the pacifists who would excommunicate Lafayette and Garibaldi on the ground of bloodshed ? I ask especially, and I insist on it, what other country than France can, out of so many wars of sacred defence and so many wars of culpable aggression, claim so many wars of self-sacrifice undertaken for the deliverance of other peoples and the affirmation of its ideal ?

France now rose to the summit of her fame.

¹ Reference to Crispi, the Italian statesman.

² D'Annunzio's historic speech at Quarto in the spring of 1915.

³ Garibaldi's two grandsons were killed on the French front in Argonne (the country between the Meuse and the Aisne) ; they were fighting for France in the " *Légion des Volontaires Garibaldiens* " *before* Italy entered the great war.

Nevertheless, once again, and for the last time, the terrible law of regression was to be verified as if to prove, by the last relapse of the principle of Right, the final impotence of the contrary principle to maintain itself in position. I have just paid a merited tribute to the international policy of the Second Empire, hesitating and incoherent as that policy was in many cases. Shall I pay the black-guard of December the Second¹ the compliment of lingering for a moment over his rascality? His travelling show, defiling in front of august ruins, was, so to say, the funeral march of the whole monarchical Restoration played on a "scannel pipe of wretched straw." The music, to be complete, required this note of discord; democracy required this reduction of monarchy to absurdity; despotism required to be discredited by this grotesque distortion of itself in the glass of history. France thereafter appended her signature to all the sarcasms and lampoons of Victor Hugo by giving the poet of *Les Châtiments* his revenge, the day after his death, in the most magnificent apotheosis of which any Frenchman has been the object since Voltaire. I therefore simply express the opinion of modern and official France when I say that the function of Napoleon the Little was to serve as an expiation for Napoleon the Great. The crime was bound to entail its own punishment; the inflexible logic which runs through our history required it; the new conscience of our people demanded it still more imperiously. A single page was wanting in the *Philippics* composed by

¹ *Coup d'État* of Napoleon III, perpetrated on December 2nd, 1851.

Victor Hugo in Guernsey ; it was one which the poet could not foresee, but which the hand of fate added as conclusion to the whole imperial epic ; that grand act was accomplished by the Commune—an insurrection both wild and bewildering, which broke out under the eyes of the enemy and was rendered infamous by the assassination of the hostages even before the massacres perpetrated by way of reprisals ; yet we must remember that it was an insurrection inspired by a love of justice, passionately national, and frenziedly patriotic, which preached, or rather yelled, war to the death. Yes, the great act was consummated by the Commune : the bronze Cæsar was hurled from the top of his pillar, and lay there biting the dust in the Place Vendôme. Never again ! that was the curse that resounded in the crash of the mighty mass. Never again ! That was the verdict which was to give the law for the whole future of our liberties. The whole past of our autocracy met its death at Waterloo and found its epitaph at Sedan : it was buried at Paris, at the same hour when another people founded the same régime at Versailles.

My task is finished. I have described for you the curve of the moral mission of France, a broken yet ascending curve, which after every break unites and solidifies harmoniously, a sinuous trail of meteoric light condensing into a sun. Certainly the parabola was long and the aberrations numberless. I have shown you this, the true France groping her way across the ages and the confusions of her history ; struggling, exhausted, yet unwearied, under the dominion of two conflicting principles, which by their conflict have perplexed

all other nations also, yet none so much as the tragic nation whose awful honour it is to be ever, at the dramatic hour, the protagonist of the rest, the foaming Pythia on the tripod, a prey to the torments of divination, on whose lips the world nevertheless hangs in silent, anxious expectation of her oracular utterance. Madcap and Saint in one, who has done herself more wrongs than she has inflicted on others; who has given more than she has kept; who, of all the sister democracies, was perhaps the least prepared, by her ethnical complexion and religious tradition, to benefit by the mission which she had adopted, to live by the principle which she revealed, to organise her own discoveries; but who has all the more resolutely set herself to vindicate that principle even at her own expense in order that she might proclaim it to all; dreamer of the future, rearing her ideals, not on the solid earth, but in the ethereal realm of the absolute, like some vast fresco painted on the clouds; seeker after progress in every field, eager in the chase of every fresh possibility, looking the sun in the face and shooting her arrows in its golden disc; pioneer of the nations, ever losing touch with their heavy lumbering caravan, stumbling in all bogs, bruising herself on all obstacles, but always struggling to her feet, girding up her loins, and resuming her endless career in pursuit of all the visionary aims which she vivifies only to outrun,—that is France as she exists in her deepest instincts, for it is thus that she chooses to see her image reflected in her past, the most logical and the most daring of all living expressions of humanity, she who of all the nations has deserved

the greatest love, because her aspirations have been the greatest.

I have reached the crowning canto of the epic, the consummation of all the past in the present, and with it the incontestable proof that during the last half century France has worked out her own salvation, has changed her method and her mood, but by no means her character or inspiration, since, on the contrary, during that period she has laid her own lessons to heart and fed herself with the bread of wisdom which she has scattered broadcast to the fowls of heaven. But it is not for me, a Frenchman, to draw this conclusion from my discourse; I have not the right to place the wreath on the brows of the heroine; I stop on the brink of the gulf of this war, the gulf of horror and of glory, where France stands erect in the perfection of her destiny, since 1870 never more a madcap, since Verdun more than ever a Saint.

Yet what I have a right to do, without offence to any one, is to proclaim in your democratic country what France has stood for as a nation before the world, in this war. For us Frenchmen, in our invaded territory, she is France, simply France, and that is enough to call forth the sacrifice of all her sons, a sacrifice which equally ennobles all who make it. Under the Mother's eye political disputes have ceased; there is no wrangling in the hour of battle. Let every Frenchman picture to himself the ideal figure of our common France in the form that suits him best, and let every soldier slip the picture in the pocket of his jacket, next his heart, for the hour of peril, as the image of his secret adoration. On the morrow after peace has

been won by our arms, all opinions will be lawful, even, by the favour of the Republic, such opinions as tend to her undoing; for every hue in the French soul will have its place in the rainbow of victory, for in virtue of the "Sacred Union" our young royalists march to the assault singing the verses of the "Marseillaise," and heretics clink glasses with country parsons on the battle-field to drink to France.

But if the Fatherland is the Fatherland without distinction or reserve when that Fatherland is attacked, the nation which embodies it politically and organises it militarily, which supports it on the fasces of the law and clothes it in an armour which must be of one piece, that nation, being one and indivisible, bears on its features a definite stamp which has been imprinted on them by its constitution, the decrees of its high court of justice, and the will, from which there is no appeal, of its sovereign people. Thus, the French nation, such as I have described it, which, in the purgatory of the trenches as in the hell of the attacks, silent, impassive during twenty-seven months, has imposed a truce on its dissentient citizens, won the admiration of foreigners, and extorted respect even from its enemies, that nation, I say, is the same Republic of which, before the war, some people confidently predicted that it would not bear war because it was too fondly attached to peace; it is the Republic whose passion for peace has been, by the wind of aggression, fanned into fury for its defence; it is the Republic "*which may be proud of the army it has created*"¹ for the battle-

¹ Order of the day issued by General Joffre after the battle of the Marne.

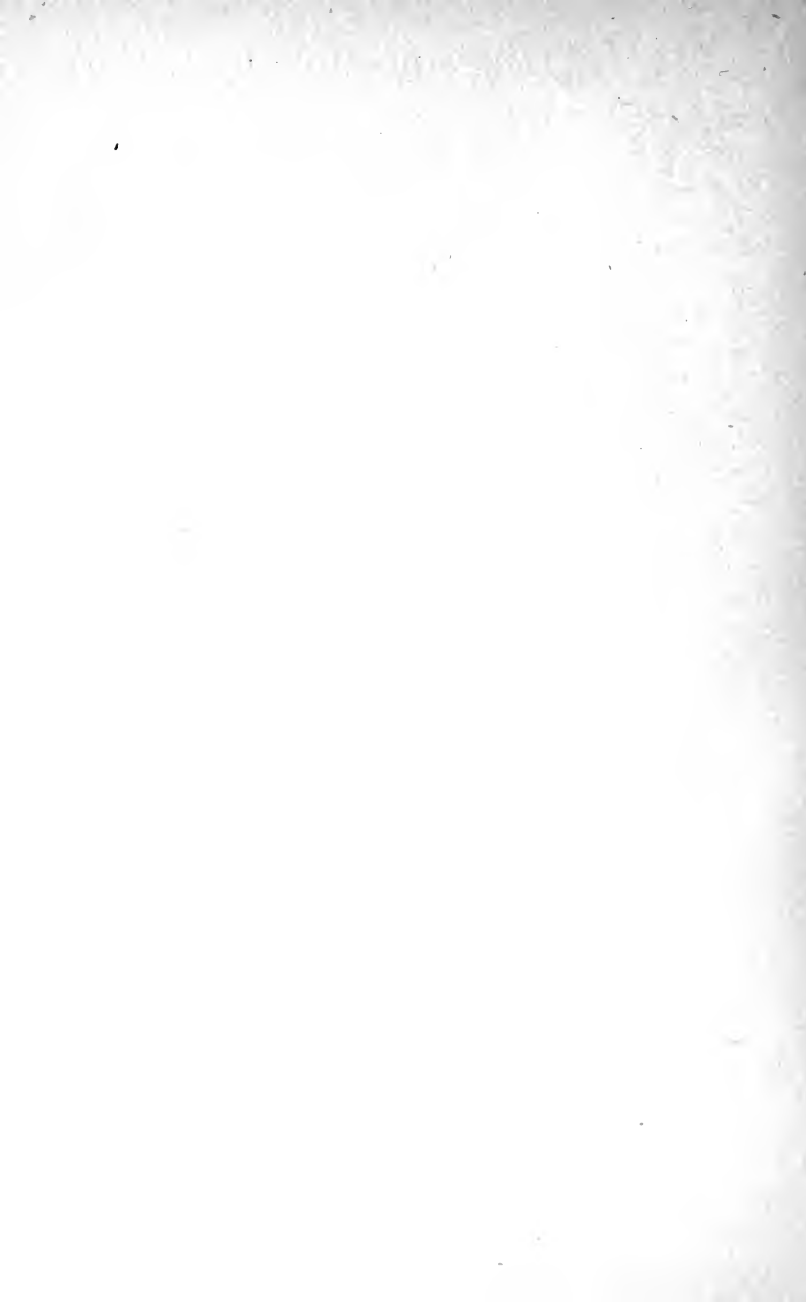
field of the Marne; the Republic which saved France when France was undone by the old régime; the Republic which has never had its Waterloo because it refused to have its Austerlitz! Yes, the France of this war is that Republic which, as devoted to social justice as regardless of all her interests, less than twenty years ago, from the throes of a grave civic crisis, gave birth to the purest of moral triumphs¹; the France of this war is that Republic, which, while it respects all consciences, is yet so confident of the strength of modern principles that she has built all her future on the lay and national schools which, since 1870, have steeled the souls and braced the bodies of the epic generation; and to conclude, the France of this war is that triumphant Republic of May 1914, which, by the acknowledgment of a famous German, attested by a definite act that after forty-four years of peace "she willed that peace with dignity."²

Such, in the eyes of the world, and in her own eyes, when she stands united on the edge of the trench, is the France of the Great War, who, to the very moment of taking up arms, still endeavoured to realise the two principles of her ideal, Truth in the sphere of thought and Justice in the sphere of action. That is why you love France, because she has remained the embodiment of the Revolution; of Boldness that outruns the laggard pace of Time; of the Idea, which springs perpetually from the ground to deck with marble figures the public places of the capital—with the statues of Voltaire and Rousseau,

¹ The Dreyfus case.

² Words of Maximilian Harden in May 1914.

of Condorcet and Diderot, of Camille Desmoulins and of Danton, with the *Marseillaise* of the Arc de l'Étoile and the *Convention* of the Pantheon; all, all these stones are thrilling and throbbing at finding themselves in the thick of the struggle which renews and lifts to a higher plane the drama of French history; these are our dead but sceptred sovereigns; these our chiefs and our sureties; it is for their past that we fight, as they contended for the present time; and still more, and long before them, all the pure glories of ancient France which prefigured our ideal—the mystic sacrifice of the Crusades, the strength and tenderness of Geneviève, the valour and spirit of Joan of Arc—all, all the treasures of the soul of France that have been laid up in the shrine of ages, all are concentrated at this hour in the Republic which guards that soul for the future; the Republic it is which has the honour, looking Fate in the face, to represent the whole of France—a resolute and wild-eyed Marianne, who has crowned her Phrygian cap with the helmet of Minerva!



THE ETHICS OF THE WAR

TWO LECTURES DELIVERED IN ENGLISH, ON
FEBRUARY 2 AND 9, 1918, BEFORE THE
ROYAL INSTITUTION OF GREAT BRITAIN

LECTURE I

THE CAUSE TRIUMPHANT

THE course of two lectures which I have the honour to begin to-day at the Royal Institution of Great Britain is merely a rough sketch of what might be termed a moral History of the War. I could have adopted the title of "The Philosophy of the War," but such a title would be too comprehensive; moreover, it would lend itself to manifold conclusions, and there are even such things as philosophies without moral conclusions. Again, I could have confined myself to "The Psychology of the War"; but such a term would imply a special study of the influence of the war on the individual. No man who has lived through the events of these three years, from August 1914 to February 1918, remains the same man; no matter whether he has himself sustained the shock of the battle-field or has suffered the loss of those near and dear to him, or whether, though free from personal afflictions, he is but a man with a brain and a heart, he must have experienced within himself a moral and intellectual upheaval which has shattered the very foundations of his being.

What I propose to investigate in the brief course of these lectures is a more general problem, namely,

the Ethics of the War; the only interest of such a study being in the fact that so far it has not been attempted.

I take the word "ethics" in its original meaning from the Greek *ἠθικός*, as used by Aristotle and first translated into Latin by Cicero as *moralis*, and then taken up by Spinoza. Ethics are the objective code of morality. First, I shall deal with the international code of morality as it seemed to be recognised before the war and down to 1914; next, I shall trace the application of that code to subsequent events, noting the infringements which it has suffered and the various developments which it has undergone.

I think the question is a momentous one. From the outset of the war—although I was not then aware of what was taking place in my mind—I began studying the problem and have done so conscientiously for three years. I say the question is important because, unlike any previous war in history, this has been a twofold war; there has been a physical war on the battle-field, in the trenches, behind the battle-field in the factories, and also in the Government offices which superintend and direct the war; and at the same time and from the beginning there has been a moral war above the battle-field and above the nations.

This moral battle has greatly influenced the physical battle. It has followed it step by step, sometimes dominating it, sometimes even checking it. Two adverse principles were clearly to be discerned from the first which have more clearly developed every day. Verily this war has now become what it was meant to be—the clash of

principles above the armies, and a fight for an ideal in the midst of hell, or, in the words of old Homer, who depicted such a battle among the gods above the fray between the Trojans and Greeks :

For on this side and on that, the gods went forth to war. Then uttered Athené a cry, and a shout uttered Ares against her, terrible as the blackness of the storm.

This war, from the moment it broke out, was felt to be a disgrace to humanity, an infamous blot on history. It fell, as it were, from the blue, like a monstrous aerolite. Why so? Because the moral progress of the world, as regards international intercourse, had never been so great as it was in the course of the nineteenth century. I know that the seeds of war were ripening. I know that each individual man was perhaps no better than his forefather many hundreds of years ago, and that no European Government stood absolutely above reproach. There was such a thing as secret diplomacy—a method which, speaking as a French democrat in a democratic country, I cannot refrain from disowning, despite the fact that our pro-Germans disown it, whilst they themselves are practising it during the war, in France, in England, especially in Russia, more thoroughly than all the autocrats put together; for a sound truth should never be left as a privilege in the hands of our enemies. I lastly admit that never had we witnessed so many important and most cruel wars as we have seen within the last twenty years: between Turkey and Greece, 1897, April to September;

between the United States and Spain, 1898, April to December; between Great Britain and the South African Republics, 1899-1902; between Russia and Japan, 1904-1905; between Italy and Turkey, 1912; the two great Balkan wars, 1913, the prologue of the World-war.

Yet in spite of these armed conflicts, the further we progress from the war of 1870-71, which was the last great continental war, the greater grows the aversion to war, the bitterer are the curses showered upon it, the more unanimous the belief that the great war will be averted. It seems as though all continental nations, simultaneously preparing for the great coming conflict, had decided to postpone it as late as possible or at least to divert it from the great powder-magazine of Europe—the pyramids—of munitions that were being piled up in Germany and France. To sum up—public opinion throughout the civilised nations of the West, even apparently in Germany, knowing what the scientific massacre would be, had pronounced in favour of peace, of permanent peace.

This flowed from several influences acting in conjunction. The first of these influences derives from the spirit of the French Revolution, however much Napoleon had warped and perverted that great spirit; the second from Christianity, which went hand in hand to that effect with a growing Socialism. Christianity was Love; Socialism claimed to be Justice. Justice seemed to come to the rescue of Love. Then we must not neglect the importance of other factors. Since the second half of the nineteenth century, greater facilities of intercourse between nations and individuals had

been created through the railroad, telegraph, telephone, and all the other inventions of modern science, which have gone far to annihilate time and distance. The effects of this more intimate relationship between the peoples were to be seen on the one hand in the multiplication of private friendships between individuals of different nations, and, on the other hand, in the rapid growth of International Exhibitions and Congresses of all sorts. It seemed as though a new nervous system, a finer one, had been placed at the disposal of the human race; it was only waiting for a central brain.

These general conditions having been set before you, let me examine what the forms of organised action had been in the second half of the nineteenth century which made deliberately against war.

First of all, there was organised pacificism. The first Pacifist Congress dates back as far as 1843; the first Peace Associations date back to that period also, and were all British, for which homage must be paid to this country: the Working Men's Peace Association, the Women's Peace Society, the International Association of Arbitration and Peace. The first solemn Peace Conference was held in Paris in February 1848, after the Revolution, and Victor Hugo said of it: "We are turning to-day the most sublime page in history"—a page which has been turned back many a time since by the gust of war. After the Crimean War sprang up another enterprise, again of British origin, the Peace Society, whose general secretary, Henry Richard, moved that "*in the future any case of war between nations should first be submitted to the arbitration of a neutral*

Power.” In 1864 the Red Cross Convention took place in Geneva, due to the initiative of M. Dunant. The Exhibition of Paris in 1867 proved to be a sort of spontaneous festival in honour of peace, Prussian and Austrian delegates fraternising for the first time after the battle of Sadowa. Then the French began their move. My old master, Frédéric Passy, founded the league called La Ligue Permanente et Internationale de la Paix. Next, Monsieur Charles Lemonnier, in Geneva, started La Ligue de la Paix et de La Liberté. A few years later Frédéric Passy’s League had the great honour of averting war between France and Germany on the occasion of a minor squabble about the Luxemburg Duchy. Then came the war of 1870. Immediately after the war, Frédéric Passy, a most moderate man, and nothing at all of a Socialist, published a pamphlet called *Revanche ou Relèvement?* His conclusion was that, as French citizens, we should never condone the crime committed against Alsace-Lorraine, but at the same time that we should trust in the natural progress of ideas to obtain the restoration of right. This was the first public declaration uttered by a Frenchman against *revanche* by force of arms. In 1873 the Institut de Droit International was founded in Brussels. In 1889 another great French Exhibition was held in Paris which also proved a sacrament of peace; an inter-parliamentary union was founded, which since that date has held as many as eighteen sessions. In 1899 the Tsar Nicholas, now sawing wood in Siberia, convoked the first international conference at The Hague, to be followed by a second in 1907. At those two

conferences, Germany of course among the great nations was foremost to evince strong opposition to the limitation of armaments. Truth compels me to add that Belgium and Switzerland offered a similar opposition to that limitation; but can we say they were wrong when we look upon their decision in the light of the events of 1914? In 1913 we have as many as 112 Arbitration Treaties concluded between the various Powers. In 1913 we see a Union of International Associations, commercial, moral, social, which holds a Congress where as many as 169 Societies are represented, and, officially, 22 Governments. Lastly, during all that later period the Bureau Permanent de la Paix had been working at Berne, Congresses of Peace were held every year in a different metropolis, and The Hague Palace of Peace had been inaugurated by the Queen of Holland a few months before the outbreak of war. May I be allowed to say that I visited that Palace during the war and that the sight of it, in all its fresh paint and gilding, made a strange impression on me?—a brand-new ruin as it was, in which no sitting had been held—and the truth was there borne in on me that human civilisation and progress are far ahead of individual or racial progress; ideas are always far in advance of the men who give them birth. Also I think meet to recall that the iron gates of the garden were a present of the Kaiser, those gates that remained persistently shut when, in July 1914, peace knocked at them, and knocked in vain.

Let us now pass to the second form of organised action against war. I mean Socialism. The first embryo of the Internationale dates back to 1847,

when a handful of political refugees—mostly Germans, we are told—founded in East London the so-called Communist League. Not till 1864, however, was a regular organisation set up under the name of the International Working Men's Association. This came to an end in 1876, and is commonly referred to as the "first Internationale." Thirteen years later the "new"—and present—Internationale was inaugurated, and its official Congresses were as follows: Paris, 1889; Brussels, 1891; Zurich, 1893; London, 1896; Paris, 1900; Amsterdam, 1904; Stuttgart, 1907; Copenhagen, 1910; Basle, 1912.

Among these the Congress of 1907 in Stuttgart stands out as a most important finger-post in my subject. At that Congress two adverse policies as to practical means of preventing war came into sharp conflict: the French majority, headed by Jean Jaurès and Gustave Hervé, were of opinion that the international sections of all the European countries should pronounce in favour of the principle, and take the pledge, of a *general strike* in case of war. Nor is there any doubt that, if such a scheme could have been effectively carried out, we should have had no war. A minority of the French, headed by Jules Guesde, opposed this view of the French majority, and was supported by the German delegation, headed by Bebel. They came to the decision that no practical conclusion at all should be pronounced, and that, as all war must have capitalism as its source and origin, it was sufficient to develop Socialism to prevent war *ipso facto*.

You see, thereby, very clearly the frame of

mind of the average Frenchman—thorough-going logic carried to an extreme; also, as a contrast, the frame of mind of the German, who keeps a more prudent footing on the hard earth. Guesde and Bebel, no doubt, had very different motives at heart in voting against the general strike. Should it be assumed that the German Socialist leader was already yielding to the overwhelming pressure of pan-germanic ambitions, and that the French leader suspected as much on the part of the German “comrades”? Howbeit, the propaganda in view of a general strike to impede war was now practically abandoned, and the Congress at Copenhagen, in 1910, only served to reveal its complete discredit, owing especially to the growing reluctance of half of the German section to oppose Imperialism. Preventive action was no longer sought for, and a dangerous illusion took its place: “*The organised Socialist Workers of all countries*”—so ran the resolution of Copenhagen—“*are the only reliable guarantee of universal peace.*” Nor did the last of pre-war Socialist Congresses, that of Basle in 1912, succeed in rousing the conscience of the Internationale to a new and more resolute attempt of virile determination, not even in the glare of the Balkanic conflagration which had provoked that gathering. In truth, the black shadows were moving swiftly nearer and nearer; the situation was felt to be of a most solemn character; the red banners of the procession, as they waved along the streets from the Barracks to the Cathedral where Jaurès mounted the pulpit, the last great apostle of peace, spoke to every eye the protest of Peace against War; but the only definite policy

advocated by the motion was to the effect that, *after* the great war should have broken out, it should be used by Socialists to "hasten the downfall of capitalistic class domination." Thus the long trend of Socialist efforts during the last sixty-five years resulted simultaneously in the most violent reprobation of war, and the most complete incapacity to prevent it. The next Congress was expected to be held at Vienna, on August 23, 1914, a meeting of the various sections of the Internationale which took place, indeed, on a grimmer field.

To sum up, the whole of the great moral movement which I have thus passed in rapid review before you—a movement which found its threefold expression: (a) in the general evolution of public opinion throughout the world; (b) in the organised action of Pacificism; (c) in the organised action of Socialism—had resulted, at the beginning of the twentieth century, in the following conclusions, which seemed to be universally admitted:

- (1) The peoples in all countries were opposed to any manner of war whatsoever;
- (2) They were opposed still more to a continental war;
- (3) If a war was on the eve of breaking out, the case should be submitted to arbitration;
- (4) If, in spite of these efforts, war broke out, all the consciences of the world should turn against the aggressor.

Indeed, although we only half believed in the efficacy of these resolves, we fondly hoped that

this great movement might work towards the fulfilment of Michelet's great prophecy: "In the twentieth century France will declare peace to the whole world." All the best of us in the various countries had united our efforts, our pride, our hopes, our sufferings in modelling this new ideal for humanity. Pygmalion was chiselling the lovely Galatea, and she was almost quickening into life when the sword of Prussian militarism lopped off the two hands of the sculptor, and Galatea froze into marble again.

After this preliminary analysis of the moral forces of the world which had been at work against war before war broke out—a tedious study, I confess, but an indispensable one, for historical speculations should above all others be based upon a sober investigation of facts—I now approach the very heart of my subject.

The question of The Origin of the War is not merely a diplomatic problem; it is, above all, a great moral consideration which has influenced the whole course of the war and will still dominate the future long after the war is over. But at this moment more than ever, and especially in a psychological survey of the war, it is necessary to turn back to it. First of all, because we owe truth to history, and, if I may be allowed to use Christian language, because the book of right and wrong should be laid before the throne of God; secondly, because we are apt to forget a good many things, and our impressions of these things grow dim after three years and a half of war, all the more as some people in our countries are doing their best to make us forget; thirdly, because only if we are confident

that we are fighting in a sacred cause can we have faith in its success and hold out to the end ; lastly, because the state of the world, as it is to be determined by the treaty of peace, must be very different from that which prevailed before the war ; for the moral factors will then have to be thrown into the scales just as much as the military results.

We are persistently told by our pro-Germans that the responsibilities for the war are innumerable. I do not think so, and I will tell you why. The causes are one thing and the responsibility another. I admit frankly that the causes are countless. We have the physiological causes : man, after all, is but a species of the brute, only cunninger to work out evil, as this German war demonstrates. We have the historical causes : on the Continent, especially as regards France and Germany, they may be traced back to 1870, then to Napoleon, then to Louis XIV, and even back to Charlemagne and up to the Roman Empire. We have the economical causes, in the competition between the various national industries, and especially between the German and British markets. Both these historical and economic causes have, no doubt, brought about the system of the Balance of Power which was supposed to spare us the atrocity of war, but did not ; nor can I condemn this system, since it was the only stumbling-block in the way of German rapacity, and at least served to prevent France from being crushed by Germany, thanks to Britain's loyalty to an unwritten contract. It should be, moreover, remembered that the Balance of Power system was first forced upon Europe by victorious Germany herself when she

concluded the compact of the Triple Alliance with Austria and Italy in the face of lonely and defeated France, who only found, many years later, a necessary counterpoise to this abiding menace by entering upon an alliance with Russia, Britain then standing aloof in her splendid and neutral isolation. The supposed "encircling" of which Germany has so often subsequently complained was, therefore, the direct creation of her threats and ambitions, after she had built up a huge military citadel in the centre of Europe resting on three bulwarks.

I admit, however, that every one, in the remote past, had some blame to lay on his own conscience. But even when we confine ourselves to the causes which, since 1870, have operated to bring on the war, the greater part of them must be laid at the door of Germany.

After Alsace and Lorraine had been wrenched from us, natural and legitimate as was our desire and talk of *revanche*, we French never seized the opportunity to fulfil this dream. Year by year we felt it to be vanishing, and we allowed it to vanish silently. The nation resigned itself to the loss, and this silent resignation was certainly the greatest effort that could be expected from a great people. As for the French extreme Liberals, Radicals and Socialists, amongst whom I am proud to rank, they openly claimed, on the one hand, that the offence committed against Right in 1871 remained imprescriptible, and on the other that a crime should not be retrieved by a greater crime at the cost of the blood and sacrifices of the whole world. We had, I admit, our *irredenti* patriots

who clung to the idea of *revanche*, headed by their chivalrous chief, Paul Déroulède, who, when he died, shortly before the war, little suspected that his thought was pregnant with a far higher significance, namely that, if the *revanche* were forced upon us by Germany, as was the case in 1914, that national claim of France would become a rallying symbol for the whole of humanity to test the power of Right over Might, and re-establish the world on the foundations of Justice.¹

But if we had our Jingoës, so had the Germans, and theirs were the more brutal and the more influential and without excuse for their agitation. They got hold of the Government in Germany from the first, which ours never did in France. From the morrow of their victory, the Germans had instituted a military drill of the whole nation, not only from the cradle but from the womb of the mothers; the individual soul of every German was trained to the goose-step. We scorned such a debasing education, and our school-books, so tolerant to victorious Germany, stand as vouchers for the fact. Moreover, the Germans, in 1875, a

¹ A month after this lecture had been delivered in London, on March 1st, 1918, the French Minister for Foreign Affairs, M. Pichon, made known an unpublished letter from the Kaiser Wilhelm I to the French Empress Eugénie, dated October 26, 1870, in which the founder of the German Empire admitted that Alsace and Lorraine were not to be torn from France on the ground of historic or ethnical principles, but solely on those of military advantages for Germany in the future: "*This consideration alone, and not the desire of increasing the territory of a fatherland which is large enough as it is, prompts me to insist on the cession of territories, which has no other object but that of removing farther off the starting-point of the French armies which in the future will come to attack us.*" So much for the sincerity of the German ethnical claim in Alsace and Lorraine. As for the starting-point of the French armies, let us remember how it was withdrawn 8 kilometres by the French Government in August 1914.

few years after their crushing victory over France, and only two years after the last German soldier had left our territory, sought to renew the conflict on the ground that France was rising too soon to her feet, and only by the Tsar's veto was Bismarck prevented from carrying out his aggressive designs.¹ For almost half a century, the incidents on the frontiers were all due to the Germans, not to the French, the most famous being the Schnoebelé Case, in 1887, when a French guard was shot on French soil by German guards, and war was only averted through our diplomatic *sang-froid*.

According to this precedent, during the last years previous to 1914 such incidents multiplied; every month or so we had a German Zeppelin, or some other balloon, lighting on French soil; the wind seemed always to blow from Germany to France, never from France to Germany, nor did we allow the blast of our legitimate anger to take that direction. Then, in 1913, we had the Zabern affair, in Alsace, when a young Prussian officer, Von Forstner, insulted the magistrates of the city, a local case which soon developed into a national one, with the result that the military power had the last word over the civil power, in spite of the crushing majority in the Reichstag,

¹ A month after this lecture had been delivered the Paris *Temps* of March 2nd, 1918, issued an unpublished letter of Gambetta's to his friend Ranc, dated March 3rd, 1875, in which the great republican patriot wrote: ". . . I know that the Chancellor [Bismarck] does not yet desire war, but that he wishes to render it inevitable. He is already taking steps towards it. Steps for the time being? Steps only transitory? For to-morrow? No, better than that: permanent, definitive measures to last as long as France, by the invincible courage of her men and their indomitable valour, will remain a nation to be dreaded. For, do not let us make a mistake about it, the German brute fears the French trooper."

in that memorable debate; the nation backed the Reichstag, but the Kaiser backed the Chancellor, and the Chancellor remained in office, despite the reproof administered to him: a striking demonstration of the truth that public opinion and public institutions are of no account in Germany. The social democrat Peirottes summed up the affair in these words:

We used to speak in our country of a second or military government; to-day we cannot speak of a second or military government; to-day the military authorities *are* the government.

In the same year 1913, when the German Government had brought forward its new military bill, which suddenly and permanently increased the German Army in peace time to the formidable number of 860,000 men, and swelled the German budget by 1,000,000,000 *marks* of military credits—a measure, it should be remembered, to which the passing of the French “three years’ service law” was only a subsequent answer—whatever its value might be—in that same year, I say, when the German Government, as has been shown since by so many documents, apart from the fact of that aggressive bill, was already plotting for war,¹ what was the attitude of the French in view of this impending menace? An interparliamentary

¹ See the secret telegrams published by a well-known pro-allied Russian revolutionist in the *Petit Parisien*, especially that of the German General Headquarters, dated January 2nd, 1914, seven months before the war, whereby the military authorities throughout the Empire were ordered to “*report within three days, by telegram, the quantity, species, and distribution of intact military stores of raw material*” (*Petit Parisien*, February 5th, 1918, i.e. three days after this lecture was delivered).

conference was summoned by the French at Berne to discuss with the Germans the appropriate measures to avert the disaster. How many members of the Reichstag answered the invitation? Forty-five! How many French deputies made the journey to Berne? Over one hundred. Thus the will against war was doubly stronger in France than in Germany.

True, we had our attempts at the revival of Jingoism in France in the Boulanger and Dreyfus cases; but remember that in both instances, in 1889 and 1906, the military caste was worsted and the civilian power and justice had the last word, contrary to what always occurred in Germany. In my synopsis of the pacifist and socialist movements which made steadily against war, I could not include the Dreyfus Case which came properly under neither of those headings, but partook of both, and far exceeded both. A special emphasis should be laid on its twofold international significance. As regards the tension between France and Germany, which this supposed case of treason did not fail to bring about, the French jingoes were finally defeated by the verdict of rehabilitation of Dreyfus, and so was the military caste of the time by the justice of the civil power. As regards the wider bearing of the case on international ideals, it proved to be the occasion, as it were, of quickening into being the ganglion of all that fine nervous system of modern humanity which I spoke of at the outset. Two conclusions resulted from the Dreyfus Case for the world: the first was that there is no national case of justice which does not interest the whole of humanity; the second that

justice must always, against whatever odds, prevail. Such was the contribution of France to the modern ideal of peace by right, in the most bitter crisis of her national life.

It is claimed, however, by our pro-Germans, who are determined that the blame for this war, or an excuse for the Germans, shall be found on the side of the Allies, it is claimed by them, I say, that a neo-nationalist movement was carried on in France from 1912 to 1914. I will refrain from entering, in face of the enemy, into a debate on our internal politics; but I wish it to be remembered that this agitation, whatever it may have been, was only a rejoinder to persistent German provocations, when *Panthers* now and again were being sent to discuss, with unsheathed claws, our pending disputes with Germany.

We see the prophets of the I.L.P. and the U.D.C. perpetually hurling at us their shibboleth about Morocco. Personally I was not, I will own, very enthusiastic about the Morocco expedition, or any other colonial enterprise, but this would require a long discussion on the rights of the exotic races which all white nations have certainly discarded; however, to be fair and to make allowances for what is practicable in an ideal of any sort, any sensible person will admit that it was impossible for France to give up Morocco to German influence, impossible for France to allow Germany to occupy that antechamber of Algeria, and thus to level a permanent threat at our three North African departments. Agadir was on the line of the Vosges. Moreover—see how history justifies us—Bismarck himself it was who urged France to make the

conquest of Tunis, with a view of distracting our mind from the Franco-German frontier and Alsace-Lorraine. Germany, therefore, was responsible in a large measure for our North African policy. If it came about that Germany changed her mind, is it our fault? I remember, at the time of the Agadir menace, buying a German map of Morocco where there was a large black strip covering the whole of North Africa except Algeria. If we had no right to Algeria, what right had the Germans to any other territory? The proceedings of the German Government with regard to the Morocco business were intolerable. Three times the iron fist came down on the diplomatic table, at Tangiers, at Casablanca, at Agadir. Then again, if we had our eye on Morocco, what about the eye of Germany on the Hamburg-Bagdad line? That was the main German object of this war, and, if it were not for the British victories in Mesopotamia and Palestine, Germany would by this time have achieved her object. If, on the contrary, you look at Russia, whose racial interests were at stake at the origin of the war, you must acknowledge that she was lenient in all her difficulties with Germany. In 1908 she allowed two Slav provinces, Bosnia and Herzegovina, to be taken over by Austria without a whisper of protest. Also you will remember the serious effort made by Great Britain in extending a friendly hand to Germany, and the mission of Lord Haldane to Berlin is not to be forgotten, nor the lesson which it teaches. At that time, therefore, the hottest point of friction was between France and Germany; and that France was absolutely guiltless of medi-

tating war, the most pan-germanist of Germans, Maximilian Harden, testified only two months before the German aggression. General elections had taken place in France in May 1914. They were openly advertised as a criterion of the will of the nation, in face of the problem of peace or war. Had the jingo party won the day, it might be argued that the neo-nationalist agitation of the two previous years had served as an unquestionable factor in the responsibility for the war. Quite the contrary, an overwhelming majority of Radicals and Socialists of pacific tendencies was returned, one of whose avowed objects it was—whether rightly or wrongly—to repeal the “three years’ service bill,” which had been passed in 1913. Here, then, is the verdict of Harden on these elections, as given by him on May 16th, 1914, in his paper *Zukunft* :

The French Republic desires a pacific and urbane foreign policy, tending essentially to a dignified understanding with Germany; that is, in short, for us the most important result of the electoral contest. France wishes to avoid war so far as the dignity of the nation allows. France desires peace because she cannot do otherwise. Such is the meaning of the recent elections, and in that way they are an international event. We do not aspire to deprive France of the smallest hamlet, or a square inch of land. . . . The world would be the poorer if the Gallic genius lost its brilliance, if the voice of France died in a timorous whisper. Who would profit by a measure [war] which could only serve an end that is not desired? An attempt! . . . Then do not scoff at the recent elections; do not grumble. Restrain your tongue. This summer will be a decisive period.¹

¹ Quoted from *The Gods in the Battle*, p. 246.

The German tongue was not restrained, and the grumble turned into a bite at the decisive period.

For all these reasons I say that, even among the innumerable causes of the war to be distributed between all nations, Germany had her share, and the biggest share: she browbeat France for forty-four years.

But, I repeat, the *causes* are one thing, and the *responsibility* is another, and I shall proceed to prove it. Between causes and responsibility there is the same infinite difference as between a thought and an act, between temptation and sin. There is no honest man in this audience who has not had temptations, but many have resisted them. Responsibility is concerned with acts, with the putting of the conception into practice. Justice judges the acts, never the thoughts of the man who is summoned to the bar. Who can know the heart of man? Clear and sound as this distinction is, and perhaps because it is so, our pro-Germans are bent upon confusing the issue. War, they say, was inevitable; since the causes were there, the effect was bound to follow. I would reply, first of all, that nothing is inevitable in this life, that the development of history, at all times, in spite of its latent forces, is always subject to the birth and will of some great man who turns the forces another way. Secondly, if you do away with the notion of liberty in historical events, you do away with the doctrine of individual morality; you are a fatalist, a determinist. I am not. I leave that contradiction to pro-Germans, those paragons of higher modern ideals. I stand, in every sense of the word, for liberty. I claim that though, no

doubt, our actions are in a sense determined by inherent causes, yet a conscious man finds an independent motive in his own brain and heart to choose among those causes and make way for the act which he decides shall be done.

If we are not to go back to the time of the Flood, the debate should therefore centre upon the responsibility for the war. The whole of civilised humanity has pronounced, the noblest of the Germans themselves have pronounced, and there is not an atom of doubt that history will pronounce, that the responsibility lay, solely, totally, crushingly, with one nation only—Germany. All nations, in some or other measure, may have brought their wood to build up the pyre, but who put the torch to it? One nation only—Germany. I cannot attempt in this brief essay to give anything like a full enumeration of all the proofs of her crime; every day, every hour almost increases the number, and if these proofs were to be piled up, one on the other, they would rise to the skies, even higher than the mountain of millions of dead heaped up by this German butchery.¹

Read the British Blue Book issued on the morrow of the war, and compare it with the German White Book. Read all the diplomatic documents, into which I have not time to enter, and then examine the attitude of the Powers of the Entente in comparison with that of Germany. France

¹ A few weeks after this lecture was delivered the crushing revelations were published of Prince Lichnowsky, German Ambassador in London at the time of the outbreak of war, and of Herr Muehlon, one of the former directors of the Krupp factories, both of whom threw the responsibility for the war on the German Government.

began by giving a terrible proof of her good-will in making the greatest military sacrifice which a nation could make on the eve of aggression. France abandoned to the enemy 8 kilometres, 6 miles, of her eastern frontier, in order that no misunderstanding should be possible, that no rifle should go off of itself, that history might be taken as a witness that we did not attack Germany—6 miles that we had to win back, in the next fortnight, with the blood and lives of our soldiers; I beheld these costly efforts in the Vosges in August 1914.

Such was the importance which France attached to the moral aspect of the war, and so clean was the case of France that Jaurès, the Socialist, when he spoke in Brussels on July 29th, made this pronouncement before his international comrades who had come from every country, including Germany: "*I have a right to say that at the present moment the French Government desires peace, and is working for the maintenance of peace,*" adding to his testimony this remarkable prophecy of the Battle of the Marne, which I have from an ear-witness: "The horse of Attila is on the march, but he will stumble in the deluge of blood."

In truth, why was war declared upon France? Because, said Herr von Schoen, the German Ambassador in Paris, bombs had been dropped by French airmen on Carlsruhe and Nuremberg. A few months afterwards, on May 18th, 1916, a German paper, the *Medizinische Wochenschrift*, published two declarations of the Burgomaster of Nuremberg himself, and of the Commander of the 3rd Bavarian Corps, that no enemy aeroplanes had been seen about those cities, but that they

had only heard the news from the Berlin papers next day! Thus Germany provoked the war by a second edition of the Ems dispatch of 1870—an edition very much enlarged.

As far as Russia is concerned, let it be remembered that the Tsar formally, in a telegram of July 29th, 1914, besought the Kaiser to put the case, since it had become international, before the Tribunal of The Hague, and that the Kaiser did not even deign to answer this appeal in his next telegram. Let it be remembered also that Serbia, in answer to the Austrian ultimatum, gave in on all but two points which concerned her national independence, and that she offered in her turn the arbitration of The Hague to Austria, without Austria even condescending to a reply.

Yes, say the pro-Germans, but what about Russian mobilisation? That question has, to me, never offered any sort of difficulty. Who made the first menace? Austria to Serbia. Russia was entitled to mobilise if she chose. Germany was standing behind Austria; Russia knew it. It is debated to this day whether the Austrians or the Russians were the first to be generally mobilised. But here is the answer to the pro-Germans, and I find it in the Socialist paper, *Vorwaerts*, of August 1st, 1914, which mentions the German Government's view only to discard it!

Russia's mobilisation need not make Germany nervous. Russia, because of the enormous size of her army and the wide extent of her territory, certainly needs a far longer time for mobilisation than Germany.

Then we come to the other proofs given by the

Germans themselves of the guilt of their own country. The war was decided on by Germany, the first decision being come to at Potsdam on July 5th, and the last measures being taken at Potsdam again on July 29th, before nine witnesses, all the chiefs of staffs and of the Government, and the Kaiser, the Crown Prince excepted.¹ The proof of this fact was given a few hours later by a special edition of the *Lokal Anzeiger*, a Berlin paper notoriously inspired by the Government, which gave the news of the general mobilisation of Germany before there was a mobilisation in Russia, so as to incite the Russians to take the first steps. That edition was seized by the German Government itself and suppressed, in the course of the evening, but a copy of a second edition admitting and cancelling the fact of the first is in the hands of Frederic William Wile, in London.

Then we have the German bargains. We know, for instance, how they wished to bargain for the French Colonies with Great Britain, and, when you begin bargaining about spoils, it seems you have a certain intention of taking something.² But the most crushing evidence came from the German Socialists, who sternly confessed Germany's guilt. In *Vorwaerts*, of July 28th, we find: "*Fortunately England has taken the initiative in*

¹ These nine were the following: The Kaiser; the Chancellor, Bethmann-Hollweg; Herr von Jagow, Minister for Foreign Affairs; General Falkenhayn, Minister of War; Admiral von Tirpitz, Minister of the Navy; General von Moltke, Chief of the General Staff; Admiral von Pohl, Chief of the General Staff of the Navy; General von Lycker, Chief of the Kaiser's Military Cabinet; Admiral von Müller, Chief of the Kaiser's Naval Cabinet; Quartermaster-General von Plessen.

² The most extraordinary bargain of all has been revealed by

the maintenance of peace"; and next day, on July 29th: "This attitude places upon the German Government the most awful responsibility."

Then, again, on the same day: "In England the impression is quite general that the Kaiser bears the blame, and England is right," a confession evidently written before "*Gott strafe England*" was invented. Nor are oral testimonies wanting, delivered at the bar of history. On July 29th, in Brussels, Haase spoke thus:

The Austrian ultimatum was in reality an actual provocation to war, both longed for and expected. Austria wanted war. The German proletariat commands that Germany should not intervene, even should Russia intervene.

Furthermore, the German Socialist, Müller, visited Paris at the very height of the crisis, and, whether sincere or acting as a spy, said that in any event never would the Social Democrats of Germany vote the war credits if war was to be declared. Thus we have the honest confession of the German Socialists previous to the war; no Arabian perfumes of hypocrisy can wash it away from their lips. But what did Maximilian Harden write in the *Zukunft*, wrenching the mask from his face as soon as the hounds were let loose?

M. Pichon, the French Minister for Foreign Affairs, on March 1st, 1918, a month after this lecture was delivered. On July 31st, 1914, the German Chancellor telegraphed to Herr von Schoen, German Ambassador in Paris, instructing him to ascertain whether France would be willing to yield to Germany, as a guarantee of French neutrality during the coming war between Germany and Russia, the French fortresses of "*Toul and Verdun, which we [the Germans] would occupy and hand back after the war with Russia was ended.*"

On which side is right? On the side of might. Right or not, we shall hold firm. It is our will to conquer. History will not ask us for reasons. This war was not imposed upon us as a surprise. We willed it.

Lastly, we have the noble testimony of that handful of brave Germans who have settled at Berne and founded there a German republican party: the author of *J'accuse*, and Roesemeier, and Stilgebauer, and Schlieben, and Stuermer, all the editors of the *Freie Zeitung*, the staunch Hermann Fernau standing foremost to declare publicly that they "ceased to be Germans in order to remain men." Honour, I say, be paid to these men for the bitterest and the noblest proof given by them to history that the guilt rests on the head of their own country, the κτήμα ἐς αἰεί of Thucydides branded on the brow of Germany—a sign for eternity. I ask, where is the political body of men from the Entente Powers who have emigrated from Britain and France to found a party on a neutral soil in order to protest against the crime of their respective countries? Where, I say, and I challenge the answer from our pro-Germans at home.

But can we forget the golden proof, gilded with the blood of heroic martyrs, the magnificent, though vain, resistance of Belgium to invasion? How righteous and spotless must have been our cause for a little, peaceful, and rich nation to sacrifice its life and liberty to its honour! This last proof, the attack of Belgium, I would sum up in the following words: if a monster could give birth to a hero, our right was born of German crime.¹

¹ With reference to this outrage should be mentioned a German

So much for the course of events before the outbreak of war. I now come to the attitude of the various nations and sections of nations towards the problem of war after war was declared.

First, as to Germany. I am far from thinking that the majority of the German nation was craving for war or cared for it. I doubt whether, ten days before it broke out, if you had consulted the German nation by a secret ballot, you would have had a majority in favour of war.¹ But ten days afterwards you would have had an overwhelming majority. Except for the average Prussian, who remains a brute like his forefathers before him, the ordinary German individual is a man like you and me; they are jolly good fellows in general—I do not say at all as a *whole*—and perhaps they would not have been worse than anybody in this country if they had been given a chance by another education; but, from the moment they suck milk from their mother's breast, they suck the poison of German militarism, and the latent poison may seem harmless till the minute it breaks out into fever. No sooner does the Government lift its iron finger than the individual vanishes as a ghost before the

book, *France under Arms (Frankreich unter den Waffen)*, by one Baron Blanchard von Meisendorf, in 1887, wherein the invasion of Belgium is openly advertised by the author thirty years ago: "Is any value attached to the neutrality of Belgium? Not the least. . . . After we shall have committed that crime which diplomacy emphatically calls the violation of neutralities."

¹ Perhaps I am making too great an allowance in favour of the German people's pacific dispositions previous to war. Von Bernhardt, in his famous book, *Our Future* (chap. xi.), asserts that German public opinion was urging the Government to make war since 1911: "For what reason did not the Government place itself at the head of the country which called for action?" The Government did, in 1914, according to Bernhardt's own conclusion in that book, "choose the moment for attack."

wand of the enchanter, and the community becomes soulless, of the earth, earthy. And then they were so sure to conquer! Remember the cry of the Germans early in 1914: "*Ein frischer und fröhlicher Krieg!*" Why fresh and joyous, I say? Because it was not to last long. They would sweep the world at a stroke. A witness, a friend of mine, saw on the motor-lorries entering Brussels in August 1914, the following inscription: "In three weeks Paris, in three months London, in three years New York." Literally, they were carrying out the conclusion of Bernhardt that, when you get nine chances out of ten of being victorious, you must not hesitate to make war.

Of course pro-Germans will argue that the same phenomenon of patriotic contagion broke out in all the belligerent countries. I will ask them to compare the attitude of the populace in Berlin and the crowd in Paris on those tragic days. We had always had mobs, in Paris, whether frolicky or terrible. Yet there was no mob in Paris. But there *was* a mob in Berlin. The British Embassy was stormed, the windows pelted and broken. Not a stone was thrown nor a shout heard in Paris before the German Embassy. Paris was dignified and stern, with not even a cry. Thousands of men were going to do their war duty, all to kill and many to be killed; each individual with his message in himself. I had never seen Paris in that light; the shadow of the hills of Verdun was already on the walls of the capital. There was a feeling of holy terror devoid of fear, and the consciousness in every breast: We are attacked! Why not admit it, in 1905, at the time of the Tangiers affair,

there had been a sort of a shiver down the backbone of the nation. We knew that we were not ready, and felt that we would be beaten. In 1911, on the contrary, when we had done all we possibly could for peace, and secured it for the time being at the price of a compromise, we strengthened our minds and braced up our nerves for the shock which might come: we were ready for fate. August 1914 found us tempered by that first experience, and our teeth were set when fate did come.

Likewise, in England, those days have been depicted to me as stern and grim. No nation at that time more abhorred war and was less prepared for it. No Government, no Parliament, no people was more opposed to war. When Sir Edward Grey delivered his great speech in the House in which he broke the threatening truth to the representatives of the nation, a literary colleague of mine happened to be talking in Sir Edward's study at the Foreign Office with one of his secretaries. Every five minutes the secretary would ring up some friend in the lobby and inquire what sort of greeting Sir Edward's disclosures received from the House. He feared so much that the House would not back him or even follow him, not to say more, that, at every answer from the lobby on the 'phone, the secretary exclaimed in an increasing amazement: "Not a protest. . . . Not a murmur. . . . A few assents. . . . Now 'hear! hear!' . . . Now an applause. . . . By God! they're cheering!"

Such was in this country the craving for war with Germany! When we are told by anti-

Britishers—and there are not a few both in this country and elsewhere—that Britain went into this war out of self-interest, I say it is a downright falsehood. England would no doubt have eventually been dragged into the war when she witnessed the liberties of the world threatened on the Continent; but, as it is, Britain went straightforwardly into the war out of principle, and public opinion at once backed the Radical Government in taking that step, because Belgium was violated; you rallied round the “scrap of paper” as round the proudest flag in your history; I will not name a certain daily paper in this city, still more or less clinging to that policy, which dared on August 5th to urge the British nation to tear up the last shreds of the “scrap” and prove false to Belgium and France, even if Normandy were annexed by the Germans; that one discordant exception, which was at once hooted down, enhanced the unison of your people in favour of honour and right.

The attitude of the Socialist bodies in the various belligerent countries is of the keenest moral interest. The *raison d'être* of the Socialist party was the same all over the world. In the first place, it was to prevent war between nations in favour of war between classes. This it utterly failed to achieve through the defection and treason of the German Section, perfectly conscious, as I have shown, that the whole responsibility rested with the Kaiser's Government. In the famous sitting of August 4th in the Reichstag, the declaration of the Social Democrats, read by Haase and published in *Vorwaerts*, was to the effect that :

The responsibility for this calamity falls upon the supporters of this policy. We ourselves are not responsible, and now, bearing these facts in mind, we give our sanction to the voting of these moneys. . . .

What consistency in this conclusion with the scorching articles which the socialist *Vorwaerts* had published a few hours before against the crime of the Kaiser! And yet Haase, who, only eight days before, had pronounced in Brussels that the ultimatum to Serbia was a provocation to war, Haase, who at that meeting in Brussels had his arm fraternally clasped around the shoulder of Jaurès, as the witnesses have told us, Haase was an honest man, though weak, and is one to-day, and brave, for he has since revealed to us that he had sobs of remorse in his throat when he read this manifesto, which was against his conscience. What can be hoped of a country where a man, as I say, among the best, can read out a lie to the world in such tragic circumstances? In this same declaration the Social Democratic party asserted that :

In case this war of defence were to become a war of aggression, the Social Democratic party would withdraw their support from the Government.

The Chancellor heard of the sentence, came to the Social Democratic Commission and asked them to strike it out ; they did so. What can be hoped of a Socialist party which thus subscribes in advance to the crime of an emperor? The scene, indeed, which ensued a few hours later in the Reichstag was so dramatic that I cannot refrain from quoting this description by an eye-witness who was

at that time a neutral American, Frederick William Wile, in his book, *The Assault* :

It was the incarnation of the inflamed war spirit of the land. The more defiant the Chancellor's language, the more frenzied the applause it evokes: *Sehr richtig, Sehr Richtig!* All the eyes in the Press Gallery are riveted on the broad left arc of the floor occupied by the one hundred and eleven Social Democratic deputies of the House of three hundred and ninety-seven members. For the first time in German history, their cheers are mingling with those of other parties in support of a Government policy. That, after the Belgian revelations, is, beyond all question, the dominating feature of a scene tremendous with significance in countless respects. . . . There is nothing perfunctory about the enthusiasm of the Reds. . . . Not a man of them keeps his seat, . . . all are on their feet succumbing to the overwhelming magnitude of the moment. The Chancellor knows what it denotes: *Our army is in the field. The whole German Nation stands behind them!* . . . For two full minutes pandemonium reigns unchecked. Bethmann-Holweg is turning to the Social Democrats, his fist is clenched and he brandishes it in their direction, *not in anger as so often before, but in triumph*, and, as if he were proclaiming the proud sentiment for all the world to hear, he exclaims at the top of his voice: "*Yes, the whole nation!*"

Such was the attitude of the German Socialists, who knew they were cheering a crime. Now turn to France and suppose the same outrage on Right committed by the French Government. If, on August 4th, the French Premier had told the Chamber of Deputies that the French troops were at that minute trespassing upon the soil of Belgium, he would have been lynched at the tribune. More-

over, had the French Socialists not felt that our cause was pure beyond doubt, there would certainly have been not merely a revolt, but a revolution on the evening of July 31st, when the great universal leader of Socialism, Jaurès, was murdered by a fanatic whose brain had been intoxicated by reactionary papers. I witnessed the scene and the attitude of the people. Under this dastardly blow they might have risen and torn the murderer and his instigators limb from limb. Yet the French proletariat exercised the noblest self-restraint, and not a finger was lifted in protest. Thus the proof was made clear to the world that the victim was offered on the altar of a sacred cause, that of democratic defence in the face of imperialistic aggression. Four days later, the General Secretary of the Confederation of Workmen in France, Jouhaux, pronounced a great speech over Jaurès' coffin and pledged himself, on behalf of all our Trade Unions, to do his duty not only to France, but to her cause :

The hour of blood has struck, in spite of his will, in spite of ours. . . . I proclaim before this coffin all our hatred of the savage imperialism and militarism which are letting loose the awful crime. . . . Our ideal, the ideal which we have sown with Jaurès the world over, has roots too deep to be torn up by the storm provoked by the hideous militarism of Prussia.

In accordance with this unflinching attitude of the French proletariat, a French airman distributed over the German lines the following manifesto of the Internationale :

We submit to the German working class for consideration the great fact, the full meaning of which proves on which side was aggressiveness shown, the violation of Belgian territory. . . . It is with the certainty of supporting the principle of liberty, the right of the peoples to dispose of themselves, that the French and Belgian Socialists suffer the hard necessity of war.

And in December 1914 the French Socialist Party concluded another manifesto in these words : "That is why, as old Homer wrote, the French Socialists stand at the point of the battle."

The attitude of British Labour was not immediately as energetic and unanimous. Of the three sections of the party, all were certainly opposed to war out of principle, but after Belgium had been violated two came over : the Labour Party and the British Socialist Party. The Fabian Society also slowly came round, like a wise old spinster after reflection. Above all, the following words from the manifesto of Mr. E. D. Morel's Union of Democratic Control should be recalled to-day : "It is imperative that the war, once begun, should be prosecuted to a victory for our country." And also this significant confession from the manifesto of the Independent Labour Party, of which Mr. Ramsay Macdonald is the inspiring member : "Let it be acknowledged that in the days immediately preceding the war Sir Edward Grey worked for peace." Significant statements, I say, which we cannot allow those who made them to disown now after three years and a half of accumulated German crime. As it was, four members out of six in the I.L.P. voted against war credits in the House of Commons. True, the pro-Germans

boast that one of your Ministers¹ at that time left the Cabinet on grounds of conscientious objection. My answer is that more than half a dozen Socialist members for that one have rallied to our various Governments during the first three years of the war and accepted office. Why, then, has no German Socialist also entered the German Cabinet? Is it because they were willing to be accomplices of crime in the dark background, but did not dare to take their stand before history, as ours did?

Nor can I omit to recall that among those French Socialists, the most eager to enter the Government of National Defence on August 26th, 1914, and the most irate and unforgiving towards the Germans was Jules Guesde, the very man who at the Congress of Stuttgart in 1907 had sided with Bebel against Jaurès and the resolution of a general strike to prevent war. So had the followers of Bebel converted him to patriotism.

The darkest section on this map of Socialist opinion is unquestionably that of the Italian Socialists, who, it will be remembered, belonged for almost a year to a neutral country, whence the name of "neutralists," which they adopted. The great movement which carried King Victor Emmanuel's Government into the war was essentially a popular movement, not a Socialist one, and nothing more than that event serves to discriminate better the masses of a people from their would-be political leaders. The victory of the righteous cause is, however, all the more significant in that the Italian Socialist party was split in two long before Italy ceased to be militarily neutral.

¹ John Burns.

And this, among others, is a clear demonstration that, in this war, moral neutrality cannot exist. On the side of the Marxist "neutralists," practically pro-German and main supporters of the Zimmerwald disgrace, we find Serrati, Lazzari (now condemned and confined for high treason), Morgari, Modigliani, Francesco Cicolti, all the staff of the *Avanti*. From these broke away in a magnificent vindication of the true Socialist principle the "reformist" Socialists, Mussolini, the founder of the *Popolo d'Italia*, who fought for his cause and was wounded at the front; Bissolati, later a member of the National Government, who likewise took up the rifle and received the French *croix de guerre*; Barzilai, Bossi, Ettore Cicotti, Canepa, editor of the *Lavoro*, Mantica, and thousands of others, all the Socialist heroes who fled from the cave of those ruffians whose dastardly plotting and pernicious propaganda was to bring about, in the very words of General Cadorna, the disaster on the Isonzo.

Is it still worth while to mention Russia? I admit that the Russian Socialist party was divided, that poor country being nothing more than disintegrated protoplasm. The Revolutionary Party protested against the war, the whole section leaving the Duma on August 8th. But the Labour group rallied immediately and expressed the hope that the whole of the Socialist Party in Russia would stand by the Allies, the manifesto being signed by a man who is as feeble as he is honest, as guileless as he is responsible for the disaster, Kerenski. "We believe firmly," he said, "that the great flower of Russian democracy, together

with all the other forces, will throw back the aggressive enemy and will defend their native land." Immediately, also, all the most glorious exiles of Tsardom threw their full force into the moral battle, urging the Russian people to support the cause of universal freedom against the onslaught of Kaiserism. Bourtseff, who had sought refuge in France, immediately went over to Russia, offered his services to the Tsar, and was sent by him to prison. Heedless of this base retaliation, he clung to the cause in spite of the Tsar, and wrote from his prison a manifesto declaring :

All for war ! This one thought must dominate over all other matters ; all our thoughts and our energies must be centred on the one object : victory over the Germans. . . . To beat the German means to make good the principles of our national democracy !

A few months later, pronouncing a condemnation of the Zimmerwald treachery, another great exile, the father of Anarchism, Kropotkin, inspired and signed, in London, a declaration in these words :

The plans of the invasion of France, Belgium, and Russia, had been prepared by Germany in 1875, 1886, 1911, 1913. . . . Shall devastated ruins be handed back to us ? . . . We refuse to share the illusion of certain of our comrades concerning the pacific disposition of the rulers of Germany. We prefer to face the danger in order to avert it ; to ignore it would be to increase it. . . . Therefore, we Anarchists, we antimilitarists, we enemies of war, we, passionately devoted to the cause of peace and brotherhood between peoples, have taken our stand on the side of resistance, and declined to sever our fate from that of the rest of the population. . . . It is the only means to prepare the way for that portion of the German people which

has remained healthy and to give it an opportunity of ridding itself of its military party.

Such was the attitude of the Socialists and friends of freedom all over Europe: the German section of those parties, wholesale, wilfully and consciously on the side of what they knew and had declared to be the crime; all the Allied sections, except for the split in Italy, rallying logically and firmly round the cause after a slight wavering in Britain and Russia.

That there should have been a wavering is only too comprehensible. To make clear the bitter trial which Socialists had suffered in their faith and pride, I shall use a simple image. They had conceived the present state of society as constituted by two planes without any sort of contact or possible adjustment the one with the other: the Capitalist plane and the Socialist plane, the only contact contemplated between them being the cutting of the one by the other at right angles like two knives of imperfect temper, when the day of social revolution should come. Should war arise in the meantime, it could only set off more decisively the absolute opposition between these planes, as all war was expected to be of capitalistic origin and purpose. Now the war had come, and they had been forced to confess that capitalism was not its cause, that German racial ambition was alone, in fact, responsible for the crime, or, to put it in the words of Jean Grave, the famous French exponent of Anarchism, that—

This war is not due to economic causes, nor to conflicts

of interests, but purely and simply to the plotting of the German imperialist and militarist clique.¹

Therefore, if one "knife" had bitten into the other, it was that of German militarism into that of international ideals. So, under the constraint of facts, the Allied Socialists had to turn their conflicting "planes" round and adjust their Socialist principle to that of national defence. They did so, and nothing was indeed more logical, nor would have been more easy for any other political body less saturated with German Marxism, since national defence in this war was identified with Right. In so doing they carried out to the letter the prophecy of Jaurès in his *Armée Nouvelle*, the conception of a democratic army, by the way, which shows that this great Socialist admitted the possibility and the righteousness of war, contrary to the illusion of his party :

If the Motherland is sincere, if she does not mask under pretexts of national interest detestable schemes of cupidity or pride, if genuinely and in a loyal spirit she offers the adversary a fair peace through the arbitration of civilised humanity, if indeed it is to defend herself against unjust and savage aggression or intolerable claims that she calls her free citizens to battle—then there is not a Frenchman, there is not a Proletarian, who could resist the sincerity of such a summons. Every soul would quiver with a common will, never would so glowing or so abundant a

¹ The magnitude of the Socialist illusion was exemplified in a famous pamphlet published in 1911, *The Coming War (La Guerre qui vient)*, by a notorious Socialist writer, Francis Delaisi. Commercial competition between Britain and Germany was to be the decisive and only cause of the war; Britain was to drag France into the war, as an hostage; British and French troops were to invade Belgium. "In truth," wrote the author, "I vainly look for the reasons why Germany should attack us [the French]; I find none"

source of moral strength have been put at the disposal of a menaced country.

These prophetic words of Jaurès thus gave the perfect formula of adjustment between the conflicting ideals of Socialism and Patriotism, identified in a just war. Moreover, precisely in virtue of *this* war, another reconciliation was, *ipso facto*, achieved between two other principles which peace made contradictory. Liberals and Socialists, in peace time, had always stood for the restoration or recognition of oppressed nationalities, at the same time as they were standing for the maintenance of peace. The contradiction was obvious, since, if you wanted independence for the oppressed, you must have recourse to arms and break peace. Germany, again, solved that contradiction by going to war; she henceforth allowed those nationalities to hope for their liberation by war. That is what the Polish Socialists in Russia expressed on August 3rd at Warsaw :

The hour has come. Only traitors will withhold their allegiance, and with such we will deal without mercy.

Such were, from a democratic point of view, the two great liberations from contradiction brought about by German aggression.

On these grounds the courage of the Allied Socialists should have been a match for their good faith; they should have declared from the first that the old Internationale was abolished and a new Internationale reconstructed on new foundations, those of Democracy against Autocracy, those of

Right against Crime, the German section being excluded from the body till it had confessed and made atonement; in other words, the Allied Socialists should have publicly admitted that moral principles are superior to party watchwords and statutes, ethics to politics, and that the cause of true Socialism was bound up with the cause of the Entente, since no Socialism is possible except in democratic countries. Such an admission was, no doubt, beyond their strength. As it was, they were baffled cruelly enough in their expectations: Socialism was to have prevented war, and it did not, owing to the scandalous treason of the leading section of the Internationale in Berlin. With the immolation of peace, we Liberals had lost a dream, which we knew only to be a dream¹; the Socialists had lost an illusion, which they held to be a certainty, the very illusion by which they lived. That, under such circumstances, the Allied Socialists should have loyally stood by the cause of the Entente at least during the first three years of the war, is a fact to be inscribed to their credit, and in my eyes a most impartial tribute to the righteousness of our cause.

I have completed the preliminary part of my

¹ A dream; the author of this lecture begs to be allowed to quote these two passages from the many articles he wrote on that subject before the war: "*France henceforth will only touch the ambrosia of illusions with the edge of her teeth, for she knows that on that beautiful white table-cloth might be set before her, any minute, a fuming hecatomb*" (December 24th, 1911). "*It is as clear as daylight: our very country is in danger, and the most pacific amongst us feels a shrinking of his heart. . . . The wolf was sharpening his teeth We have put on iron-nailed boots to tread the path of peace. . . . The screen is flushed with a crimson glow, and in a low tone, behind the scenes, the strains of the 'Wacht am Rhein' are heard.*" These lines were printed on July 18th, 1914, five days before the ultimatum to Serbia, which nobody was expecting.

thesis by laying before you the moral groundwork of the world war. Never was such a clear case set before the judgment of history; never was so splendid a cause submitted to the arbitration of arms.

In the first place, it was obviously the cause of Democracy against Autocracy, the cause of the Rights of Man against the usurpations of the Tyrant, for even if the Russian Revolution had not broken out, and the Kaiser had been torn from his throne by our arms, do you think the Tsar could have remained the Tsar? In the second place, it meant the crowning of the Rights of Man in each nation by the Rights of Nationalities the world over; thus the French, the English, and the American Revolutions were being consummated and blended into one united reality for all time. Thirdly, in all our occidental countries, by the sheer strength of democratic logic and also as a reward for the sacrifices of the labouring masses in the war, and again as a result of the drastic communist measures taken by all Governments under the necessities of war, no greater than what should be the necessities of peace—for all these reasons, Socialism was to blossom out of the carnage, naturally and lawfully, unstained by civil bloodshed, as the final consequence of the war. Lastly, this war was, both in the strictest and the widest sense, a fight for Right against Crime, a supreme crusade to end war, the greatest chance ever offered to humanity, at the price of the greatest horror ever witnessed, to build the world anew after the crimson deluge. Yes, by its origin, its significance, its trend, and its necessary conclusion, this mon-

strous war of Germany was for us an ideal war, prefigured, as it were, by the weary pilgrimage of Virgil and Dante in the *Divine Comedy*, when, at the close of the poem, after ascending from the pits of hell, they are lifted up into the living rose of Paradise where the universal communion is sealed into one "knot":

La forma universal di questo nodo,

"And of such bond methinks I saw
The universal form."

CARY'S Dante, *Paradise*, Canto xxxiii, verses 85-86.

Having shown the war as it was meant to be, I will try to show in my next lecture what it became, how these moral principles developed in the course of events, and to point out what chances of triumph remain for them, and what duty remains for us.

LECTURE II

THE CAUSE IMPERILLED

I SHALL begin the present lecture by endeavouring to impress upon you the great fact that this war was destined to be a triumph for us morally and therefore materially ; I shall conclude it by pointing out that, in spite of the incomparable moral factors in our favour, there are reasons to fear that certain influences are at work to imperil our cause.

The triumph first. Since the very outbreak of the war, the neutral sympathies throughout the world were with the Allies—all the intellectual *élites* on the one hand and all the masses on the other. I do not deny that Germany had *her* friends in those countries, and I fully realise by what clever means she fostered such sympathies as those of the League against War (*Anti-Oorlog Raad*), in Holland, of the Friends of the Moral Unity of Europe, in Spain, of the League for the Progress of Humanity (*Die Menschheit*), in Switzerland.¹ But the rejoinder to these initiatives came

¹ The activity of the *Anti-Oorlog Raad* and of the *Menschheit* has constantly, since 1915, been directed to organising in Switzerland pro-German congresses, the characteristic of which was the abundant participation of the Germans and the abstention of the Allies. The one notorious exception to this rule was furnished by the Women's International Congress at The Hague (April 28th to

with an overwhelming force from public opinion on the one hand and from pro-Allied leagues on the other. In Holland arose the League of Neutral Countries, which, under the impending threat of the Germans at close quarters on the frontier, has not let slip a single occasion to stigmatise German crime. In Spain, all the Liberals of Catalonia issued scathing indictments of Germany by way of a Manifesto. In Switzerland there is no league, but the very soul of the nation is with us. Switzerland and Holland, in both of which countries there is a preponderance of Germanic blood, I have visited in war time, and I must say that our current appreciation of their moral dispositions in this great crisis is often erroneous. Not only have the *élites* been with us—and their brave attitude is summed up in the glorious names of Raemakers in Holland and Spitteler in German Switzerland,¹ but the masses of the people also have been on our side. I have personally witnessed, in Holland, the German war-films hissed by the public in the cinemas, and in German Switzerland the first trains of repatriated wounded from Germany to France aroused such scenes of enthusiasm—the cars, the engines invaded by the cheering throngs, and the railway track lined with

May 1st, 1915), where, I am sorry to say, numerous British women consented to meet with their German "sisters" without preliminary conditions. (See the Records of this Congress issued by the British Committee of Women, Queen Anne's Chambers, 28 Broadway, Westminster, London.) One Englishwoman, at any rate, Miss Amy Lillington, gave vent to her indignation at this promiscuity in a splendid outburst. (See *The Gods in the Battle*, chap. ii. and notes.) All the French women's associations declined to be represented.

¹ Professor Ragaz, of Zurich, and the German-Swiss journalist, Rusch, should also be mentioned in our list of gratitude

enthusiastic crowds for mile after mile, whereas the trains of German wounded from France to Germany passed in dead silence—that the Swiss authorities had subsequently to keep secret the hours of the trains that were bound for France. In both these little countries—which could not reasonably be expected to join in a war which, owing to their geographical position, would have meant national suicide—the only sections of opinion to support Germany were some of the military, political, or industrial elements¹; the brains and the hearts of the peoples throbbed with passion for our cause.

In America, from the outset, the spirit of Washington and Lincoln rose in arms on our side, in the person of Theodore Roosevelt,² that chained lion who never ceased to utter his roar for justice, whilst Woodrow Wilson was patiently taming the snakes and the foxes of his hyphenated menagerie. Then came forth the magnificent “Message of the Five Hundred” (March 1st, 1916), which rang like a moral declaration of war a year before the military declaration, signed by the most famous names of the Union :

We send to you, the nations of the Triple Entente and your Allies, this message : Our judgment supports your cause and our sympathies and our hopes are with you in this struggle ; in saying this we are confident that we are expressing the convictions and feelings of the over-

¹ In Switzerland the cases of the two Colonels, Wattenwyll and Egli, and of State Secretary Hoffmann, inspirer of Grimm and supporter of Lenin and Scheidemann, will be remembered.

² See his activity summed up in his book *Fear God and take your own part*.

whelming majority of Americans. . . . The American conscience cannot remain silent, it cannot run the risk of appearing to be neutral-minded.

Nor can I omit to recall the loyal stand and prophetic foresight of the Greek nation backing Venizelos with the sanction of popular representation, nor the heroic dash of neutral Rumania, hearkening to the voices of Filipesco and Janesku—and only grief for the crime of Russia's—our Ally's—double treason checks a further homage on my lips.

Lastly, history will not forget how Brazil and the many South American Republics in her train was summoned to action, when still neutral, by the great voice of Guy Barbosa.

Of Norway what shall we say but that she has been a loyal and active friend throughout the storm? The portrait of King Albert of Belgium is hung on the wooden walls of the remotest red cottage in the mountains and fiords, and her intellectual and political *élite*—deputy Castberg foremost—have openly expressed the sympathies of the nation.

Of Denmark also propriety forbids me to say much. With the gaping wound in her side, where Schleswig-Holstein was torn from her by Prussia, blocked like little Holland between the devil and the deep sea, she behaved in a correct and dignified manner. With the single exception of Brandes, who cringes and grovels before Prussianism, her worthiest intellectuals did their duty to the Right, foremost among them, Christophus Nyrop, the author of *War and Civilisation*, Professor at the University of Copenhagen, and Johannes Joer-

gensen, the author of *Roland's Bell*, which rang out like the tocsin of justice.

One curious circumstance, however, should be pointed out with reference to Denmark, that is the attitude of the Danish Socialists, who, unlike the Socialists of all other neutral countries, cast in their lot with Germany because a syndicate of German Socialists has been supplying them with coal, which has been the greatest source of Germany's power, and the strongest support of her propaganda in neighbouring neutral countries throughout the war—a practical argument, indeed, and verily a black ideal!

In two leading countries only has the German influence proved—for a time—successful: Spain and Sweden. It is incontestable that the smouldering embers of the Inquisition glowed afresh, in the land of Torquemada, on behalf of the Kaiser's cause,¹ yet there, again, the lowest and the highest took up the challenge in favour of the Allies, and that conflict to-day, as much as the war restrictions and the outrages of German submarine warfare, is pushing that country to the verge of revolution.²

Sweden alone, till recently, seemed thoroughly pro-German. But the reproach should be limited to the upper and middle classes of that country, whose attitude has been determined by special political causes. When Norway wanted to break away from Sweden in 1906-7, the Swedish Conservatives hoped for war, or, rather, supported by

¹ "Le Pape et l'Empereur," quoth Victor Hugo.

² The King, whose generous interventions on behalf of Allied victims, are innumerable, is said to have expressed the situation, early in the war, in these words: "*The rabble and myself are for the Allies.*"

the German governmental party and by the Kaiser himself, they hoped by means of a war to conquer and crush Norway. No war ensued, but the middle and higher classes in Sweden have retained ever since their sympathy with Germany, and thus the Swedish Government pursued a policy which had been initiated long before the present war broke out. What the outcome of such a policy has been we know by the Luxburg incident; but we must not forget that in the course of last summer a General Election took place in Sweden, and that the Liberals and Socialists, with brave Branting at their head, obtained a majority which made a mute but very effective demonstration in favour of the Allies.

Two great neutral Powers remained, however, which for the first two and a half years of the war strictly adhered to the principle of neutrality, and whose world-wide influence was to be either distorted or exploited by Germany and her friends against us with serious damage to the cause of Right. I refer quite impartially to President Wilson and the Pope of Rome. I shall deal with that matter in various passages of this lecture, as the subject evolves.

From all other sides, meanwhile, our cause has been steadily gaining ground in the eyes of humanity, the ranks of the Allies being swelled month after month by almost all the nations of the world. I am inclined to think that even in other planets we have won innumerable allies to our flag; as it is, on this earth of ours, by June 1917 twenty-three Powers were at war with the Central Empires, viz. :

Belgium.	Guatemala.	Panama.
Bolivia.	Honduras.	Peru.
Brazil.	Hayti.	Portugal.
China.	Italy.	Rumania.
Costa Rica.	Japan.	Russia.
Cuba.	Liberia.	Serbia.
France.	Montenegro.	United States.
Great Britain.	Nicaragua.	

What a galaxy of nations following in the train of Justice! Pro-Germans will say, perhaps, that these only came into the war because there was something to be gained or looted, or because their participation would serve their own particular ends alone. I do not think so by any means. I think that in such a cause as this it was morally necessary for every individual man and every individual nation to take their own responsibility and their own share in the struggle. Moral neutrality is an impossible equilibrium. From August 2nd, 1914, there took place all over the world a mobilisation of consciences. Political interests, economic interests were at stake also, no doubt, but the moral obligations were paramount. A law of the spirit is here to be felt in its imperious application. Take two examples. We must not forget that Italy, who among the great neutrals first took the leap, came into the war not primarily from *sacro egoismo*. For we know now that she might have recovered Trieste and the Trentino without fighting, provided she had been willing to betray the cause. Italy came into the war as a most impartial judge, leaving her seat by the side of her former allies, because Right was Right and Crime was Crime,

because of martyred Belgium, because deputies from that nation had gone through the whole country for months and had rallied all the mass of the Liberals. If Italy had not thrown in her lot with us, her Government—not to say more—would have been cast down the next day. It was the most ideal motive that prompted the realistic yet high-souled Italian to consecrate with blood his snow-clad Alps. Every hand of the Roman populace, at the voice of d'Annunzio and at the pealing of the great bell of the Campidoglio, was raised in the forum for justice and war.

Now turn to the United States. It may be argued, on very good grounds, that their interest perhaps was to keep out of the war, that that country would have been untouched by all the losses and trials, and would have grown far richer and more powerful than all the other countries in the world through trade-war after the war. It was not at all on grounds of interest that the United States came in. I grant, if they had not come in, they might have been threatened with a German invasion in the course of the next fifty years. But they came in for a reason identical with Italy's, and, if I may say so, loftier still, because the cry of the *Lusitania* victims rose unceasingly from the deep and the sound of their death-knell rolled ever over the waters, clamouring for vengeance on so devilish a crime. You remember the great novelist, Henry James, who decided in the early part of the war to become a British citizen because of the neutral attitude of his motherland; you remember Professor Baldwin, one of the victims of the *Sussex* who escaped—and many others, how

their protest rose to passion against the cold neutrality of their Government at that time. Their impulse was felt by President Wilson when he penned the immortal message and delivered it before Congress on April 2nd, 1917 :

The present submarine warfare . . . is a warfare against mankind. . . . Our motive will not be revenge or the victorious assertion of the physical might of the nation, but only the vindication of right, of human right, of which we are only a single champion. . . . We have no selfish ends to serve. We desire no conquest, no domination. . . . Right is more precious than peace. . . . To such a task we can dedicate our lives and our fortunes, everything that we are and everything that we have, with the pride of those who know that the day has come when America is privileged to spend her blood and her might for the principles that gave her birth and happiness and the peace which she has treasured. God helping her, she can do no other.

In these words the supreme moral law of the war was asserted, and the supreme judge had spoken : this war was waged for an Ideal, President Wilson had but by an heroic action adopted our cause, which we had already defined and maintained for three years.

Of the Papacy I shall say little, for I desire to speak on this point with perfect impartiality. The most that can be said in Rome's favour is that its scales seem to be slightly leaning for the first time on the side of Justice, not because of the moral crime committed by Germany at the beginning of the war, nor because of the physical atrocities accumulated by Germany since then all

over the world, but because these atrocities have come too near to the Holy See, on the map, and revolted its Italian flock. The bombardment of Padua has, in fact, elicited from Pope Benedictus a stronger protest than the butchering of 500,000 Armenians. When the war is over this important chapter of its ethical history will be dealt with more freely. Two remarks only will I venture to offer to-day, as it is my right and duty to do: firstly, it is beyond doubt, that the highest spiritual power of humanity, namely, the Papacy, wilfully refrained from exerting its supreme function, probably for fear of a schism on the part of the German Catholics, and was superseded in that function by the lay and Protestant head of the American Republic; secondly, that the fundamental question which we put to the Socialist Internationale: "Will you consent, after the war, to resume intercourse with the German *comrades*?" we put in like words, and with the same force, to the Catholic Internationale: "Will you consent, after the war, to be members of the same Church with the German *brethren*?" The rules of international ethics stand the same for all communities.

Since I have mentioned the German atrocities, let us consider these facts for a brief moment, not because they furnish us with a retrospective proof of German premeditation as regards the war, which is a point I have exhausted in my first lecture, but rather because they show the German method put into action during the war, and therefore account for that reaction of universal opinion against these methods which pertains to the subject of this lecture.

Here are some brief extracts from various German official authors previous to the war :

In the use of violence there are no limits to the absolute form of war.—*Klausewitz*.

A war of necessity sanctifies every means.—*Treitschke* (1896).

Terrorism becomes a necessary military principle.—*Hartmann* (1877).

Nothing should be left an invaded people except their eyes to weep with.—*Bismarck*.

You say a good cause sanctifies war. It is a good war that sanctifies every cause.—*Nietzsche* (1876).

Perpetual peace is not even a beautiful dream. War forms part of the universal order established by might.—*Moltke* (1890).

Let us by our terribleness sow terror and death among the nations.

Culture does not exclude bloody savagery ; it renders devilry sublime.—*Thomas Mann* (1917).

We have nothing to apologise for. We are morally. . . .—*Lassen* (1914).

And thou, O Germany, slaughter millions of men and heap up the smoking piles of flesh and bones higher than the mountain-tops.

Must civilisation raise its temples on mountains of corpses, seas of tears, and the death-rattles of the dying ? Yes.—*Marshal von Hessen* (1915).

Give no quarter. Be as terrible as the Huns of Attila.—*William II* (1900).

Prisoners may be shot. Hostages may be forced to expose their lives.—*Manual of German Headquarters Staff*, 1902.

Such was, and is, the doctrine. From the very first day when the soil of neutral Belgium was

violated and ravaged, the doctrine was literally put into practice.

- (1) The shooting of civilians ; over 6,000 Belgian civilians, men, women, children, and priests shot, and 1,500,000 Armenians done to death in various ways ; hundreds of thousands massacred, many of them by machine-guns, worked by German officers.
- (2) Hostages have been exposed in front of the marching troops, in Belgium and France (1914).
- (3) Cities burned to the ground, libraries (Louvain), and cathedrals (Ypres, Rheims) destroyed.
- (4) Fruit-trees cut down to the root (Ancre).
- (5) Factories wrecked, or the implements carried off into Germany, as well as all other kinds of booty sold by auction in Germany and neutral countries.¹
- (6) Gas waves inaugurated on the battle-field.
- (7) Poisonous germs dropped from aeroplanes in Rumania.
- (8) Open cities bombed (London, Paris) before our retaliation.
- (9) Sham surrender on the battle-field, as witnessed by the author of this lecture : the first lines of German troops raise their arms, and, the French advancing to take over the prisoners, a second line arises, behind the first, and shoots down the French.

¹ Advertisements in the *Politiken*, Dutch paper, and in the German Swiss press.

- (10) Invaded populations, more specially women, deported by thousands for various uses, and civilian and military prisoners made to work against the armies of their own countrymen behind the German lines, in cynic violation of the Hague Conventions.
- (11) Wanton and brutal murder of Edith Cavell, Captain Fryatt, and hundreds of others.
- (12) U-boat piracy wholesale and the sinking of hospital ships by scores in the way Count Luxburg advocated: "If possible, leave no trace."
- (13) Murder plots in the United States of America (Pierpont Morgan), factories fired and burnt, civil war fomented throughout the Union.
- (14) Piracy in other neutral lands, conspiracy in Mexico, bombs in Norway, etc.
- (15) A minor but typical incident which shows the charming ingenuity of the German: little barbed points of metal smuggled into the cans of American potted meat for the consumption of the Allies.

Such are the German methods of war: they suggest the reflection that, even if the Allies had not been fighting in a holy cause from the first, the subsequent proceedings of the Germans and their modes of murder would have hallowed the cause. But the cause, being just from the outset, was steadily strengthened, throughout the course of the war, by this natural outgrowth of the seeds of German Kultur. And so, as I have already shown, by the end of 1917 almost all civilised

humanity had risen against Germany, in the name of outraged morality.

The great climax in the moral ascendancy of our cause, towards which we were followed by almost all mankind, was reached in that sublime fortnight beginning with March 12th, 1917, and leading up to April 2nd of the same year. On the first date the power of the Tsar was overthrown, and on the second the United States of America believed in peace *with* victory, and, believing in it, made it good by their action.

At that moment we had secured the two greatest conquests possible, President Wilson on the one hand, and the better soul of the Russian nation on the other. There was one man we wanted in, Wilson; and there was one man we wanted out, the Tsar. We were satisfied in both cases. Morally the war was won; practically, we were never so near losing it. For, sublime as that moment was, the greatest moment in history since the birth of Christ; and because it was sublime, because at that moment history rose to the perfection of legend, such a perfection could not and did not last long. Only a few days after the Russian Revolution had triumphed we heard of the so-called "circular number 1" to the Russian Army giving leave to the soldiers to relax all discipline, and causing them to form themselves into military committees or *soviets*. As in Eden of old, there was a serpent winding around the tree of our democratic Paradise; there was a worm in the fruit, and the threat of treason in the very promise of triumph. On that day, when the fatal orders were extorted from the hands of General Kerensky

and his colleagues, the axis of the whole war was turned, the Fates cut the thread of our destiny; yea, the worm broke through the surface of the fruit, and treason imperilled the triumph of justice.

Observe that by "treason" I do not refer to Boloism, which presents no sort of philosophical interest to the moral historian of the war. We know that millions of German gold have been pouring, like a subterranean stream, into the lower regions of allied countries, in Russia, Italy, France, and Britain. But that problem is easily solved—or will be—by a score of bullets at point-blank range. I mean treachery of another kind, much less vile and much more wicked. I refer to those of our so-called countrymen who borrow their political principles, their arguments, their ideals from the enemy, and so, however sincere their motive, bring about the betrayal of the cause. Such a betrayal had begun long before the calamitous crisis of the Russian Revolution, but the seed sown had not yet found the fertile soil. In its worst sense Pacificism had always been lurking in our occidental countries since the beginning of the war, as I have shown in my first lecture. There had been a fanatical small minority, which was wonderfully organised and active, in favour of that betrayal against an overwhelming preponderance of public opinion in both our countries—Britain and France. Why was there, I say, this minority? What accounts for their fanaticism, whether sincere or equivocal?

There were, I repeat, many pressing reasons, relics of the time before the war, reluctance to abandon failing illusions, for one. But other

inevitable causes intervened to depress public opinion in our Allied countries after the first year of the war. To begin with, the prolongation of the war. Great strategists had prophesied the war would last for three months at the utmost. Great savants had said the world would starve after a year of war: a "great illusion" of everybody, the war settled down into a routine, almost into habit. Then, among the natural reasons for depression, was uncertainty as to the result of military events in the field. It is necessary that I should review these briefly.

The year 1914 was the sublime year. First, a victory on the side of the Russians, Gumbinnen on August 20th. But a few days later they retreated and lost the battle of Tannenberg. A French victory also at Mülhausen, and four days after the retreat from Alsace and the terrible blow at Mons.¹ Then the fall of Antwerp on September 6th. Then our great victories of the Marne and the Yser, each one an epic in itself worthy of a hundred Homers. On the whole, therefore, not a bad year under the circumstances and considering our unpreparedness for war. Germany had been checked in her pride, balked in her ravening, morally and politically beaten, but from that date on our fronts began to fossilise. The hopes which had swept like charging horses across the near future were compelled to fall back on a more distant prospect, like chargers led back sullenly to their quarters.

The year 1915 was the anxious year. Victories there were, but none decisive, or lasting, namely, the great threatening offensive of the Russians on

¹ Known in France as the Battle of Charleroi.

the Carpathians; the capture of Przemysl by the Russians in March, and of Lemberg in April; but both lost again in June, and also the great blow at Warsaw which was struck by the Germans in August. On May 3rd, 1915, Italy came in, with her flag streaming to the wind of national enthusiasm; but for a time even her heroic resolve could bring no practical decision: she inscribed her epic on the rocks of the Dolomites and truly essayed, if she did not achieve, the impossible. The French offensive in Champagne was apparently a success, but the price paid for it was high, and the result in territorial gain very slight. Gallipoli, that sinister name, needs no comment. The expedition, begun in February 1915, came to its fruitless end in January 1916. And almost at the same time the retreat of the stoic Serbs strewed thousands of other dead along hundreds of miles; nor can our expedition to Salonica be considered as a sufficient set-off to those two great disasters. On the whole, therefore, a dark year. The great hopes were still unabated, but the stagnation of the western front continued, and the only "wars of movement" in Russia and the Balkans had turned against us.

The year 1916 was a hopeful year. Verdun was held unconquerably by the French from February to October, a stern parallel to the Yser, and a more transcendent glory than the Marne. The battle of the Somme, inscribed to the glory of the British arms from July to November, was the best organised battle on the part of the Allies since the beginning of the war, and the greatest systematic effort to

¹ This expedition is called in French the Dardanelles.

abandon stagnation ; yet, if we compare the hugeness of the effort and the sacrifices of life with the immediate result, the victory fell short of its crown. The great offensive of Brussiloff (June to September) gave us also but momentary satisfaction ; the territorial gain, however, was great and the Stokhod River was crossed. Italy experienced a defeat at Asiago in the Trentino in May, but again in August she won a great advantage on the Isonzo by the taking of the town of Gorizia. Previously the glorious salvation of the surviving Armenians, the capture of Erzeroum by Russia, in February of that year, followed by the entry into Ispahan, gave hopes, which were not fulfilled, of the junction of the Russian troops with those of General Townshend. The greatest hopes were also aroused by the coming of brave Rumania into the war in August 1916, but in December 1916 Bukharest was taken and Rumania crushed, and with it the honour of treacherous Russia. On the whole, however, a better year than the preceding one, though suddenly overshadowed by this disaster. But, except for Rumania, Russia, and the Caucasus, everywhere the stagnation of the fronts was maintained, and the length of the battles was increased to what would previously have been deemed impossible : the battle of the Marne only lasted from five to six days on a front of 300 kilometres ; the battle of Verdun lasted almost a year. The war dwindled into marking time on the ground that had been trampled into mud by the feet of millions and soaked with the blood of thousands.

The year 1917 was the fatal year. It should

have been, both logically and really, the victorious year, but for the perversion of the Russian Revolution. Early in that year came the German retreat on the Ancre, the greatest event of the war so far as the yielding of the German forces is concerned, and an advance of the Allies almost equivalent to that in the battle of the Marne, thanks to the ability of General Gough and the valour of his troops. The storming, too, of Vimy Ridge, in April, was a further development of that victory. The French again won a victory in Champagne, with the capture of Craonne, an offensive, however, which is at present under discussion in the French Parliament because by some members the losses are held to have outweighed the gains. Then a victory of Italy on the Carso, and the taking of Bagdad by the troops of General Maude, and the dismissal of King Constantine, an *inter-mezzo* which should have been performed long before in the course of the great drama. Then, of course, the greatest new departure, both morally and materially, of the war, the belated but overwhelming intervention of the United States of America on the side of the Allies. Thus, all these events were fortunate and momentous, and the cause was at the climax of triumph, when the abyss suddenly yawned at its feet.

At this same moment the Russian Revolution broke out. Though any student of history could foresee that its course might deviate within a few weeks, those were minutes of enthusiasm and ecstasy for Liberals the world over. I have already touched on this point. The last hope vanished on July 9th after Kerensky made his victorious offen-

sive, and those very troops who had covered from thirty to fifty miles a fortnight before, yielded not only their trenches but hundreds of miles to the enemy, with Tarnopol, and a fortnight later with Riga, without as much as an attempt to save the honour of the Revolution. Thus, what might have been the victorious year for the Allies ended in a disaster that will be felt by them even to the end of the war. The result must be laid, without a doubt, to the charge of Maximalist Russia.¹ The whole course of events, the pivot of victory, had turned on Russia. If the German front had not been broken in the West, yet it had been both crushed and rolled back; it was the beginning of retreat, and only those who have been in a retreat know what it means for the morale of an army. Had Russia but held her trenches, the war would be over by this time, and the triumph of the Allies achieved.

My object in reviewing the military data of the three first years of the war was to show that one of the chief causes of depression in certain circles of our countries at the present time is to be found in the prolongation of the war consequent upon the defection of Russia, and the small result obtained at such huge cost. Whence follows, quite naturally, with some people, the weariness of the war, not to speak of the infinite casualties, of the trade which is interrupted, of the restrictions which are imposed, of that forgetfulness of the

¹ The author was in Russia at the time and can witness to the fact that Russian soldiers, in the streets of Petrograd, cheered at the fall of Riga, accounting for their rejoicing on the ground "that they were internationalists, and that every defeat brought them nearer to peace."

origin of the war and of German crime all along, which creeps into timid and doubting hearts. I must enlarge upon this point.

Those events of 1914 are so far back, years having counted for centuries, our children grown up into men, the very sensation of life abolished in our brains and nerves, and the whole aspect of the world transformed into an habitual nightmare. It is natural, I say, that some should forget in a measure even the outrages suffered, and if certain people had not taken advantage of this propensity to oblivion the evil would not have been so great.

The first party to exploit this psychological depression was, of course, Germany; but she was closely followed and encouraged by the pro-Germans of the Entente. Germany, after her first thrashing on the battle-field of the Marne, was suddenly visited with compunctions. For the first time, much to her own surprise and regret, but without losing a minute, she set herself to try and justify her crime before the world. You remember the quotation from Harden, "*History won't ask us for our reasons if we are victorious*"? Germany began to feel anxious about the opinion of history, she rediscovered the "imponderable" of Bismarck, that is, the moral significance of the war. Very cleverly and systematically, indeed, the Germans immediately undertook that moral warfare which is making its tactics so keenly felt among the Allies to-day, with the object of making us doubt our good cause, just when the Germans are beginning to doubt their own bad one. Boloism, as I have said, is of no psychological interest, and it may be argued, besides, that those millions were

a poor investment for Germany. A far better one was the money she put into the hands of certain treacherous fanatics, or slipped into the pockets of certain cranks, unawares. Here is a copy of the *Petit Parisien*, dated February 6th, 1918, which arrived in London yesterday and contains astounding German documents intercepted in Russia. In one, dated February 23rd, 1915, addressed to all German officials in neutral countries, we read :

This is to let you know that on the territory of the country where you are holding your office special centres of propaganda are being started by us against the countries at war with Germany. This propaganda will take for its object the artificial fomentation of social upheavals, of strikes, of revolutionary explosions, of separatist movements and of civil war, as well as an agitation in favour of disarmament and of the cessation of this sanguinary war.

Such a document testifies to the energetic resolution taken once and for all in this new field of action. The will did not fail to find the way, I mean to conceive and organise the propaganda. The Germans forthwith saw the necessity of having a doctrine and a method. In order to secure the enthusiasm of their people for the war, they had told them, of course, from the first, despite the contrary avowal in *Vorwaerts*, that it was a war of defence; they did not, however, emphasise that argument till after their defeat of the Marne. Before that sorry experience Kultur had reigned supreme. Then, they simply stole, ready-made, the principles of the Allies; that this war was a war of liberation, of civilisation, of Christianity, and

for redressing the wrongs of oppressed nationalities. And they did so precisely because they knew that we *were* standing for those principles, and because they saw that the whole world gave us credit for that stand. They faced the dilemma point-blank and took the bull by the horns, or rather they took the horns off the bull.

Kultur had tamed down to Culture, and I could quote innumerable examples of this aping of our morals, which reminds me of those steel-arrows thrown down from the German aeroplanes with this inscription scornfully engraved on each : "*French invention, but German make.*"

Such is the doctrine; now for the method, which has proved as varied as it is cunning. To begin with the main and felicitous trickery. There was a minority in Germany born of the protest of Liebknecht, the first hero in that country to be sincere. That minority of Liebknecht's, no doubt, gave serious trouble to the German Government, but see how cleverly they turned the danger to an advantage. Take, as an instance, the liberal league, *Neues Vaterland*, which was started in October 1914, just after the Marne. You find in it the historian of the Kaiser, Lamprecht, three other signatories of the manifesto of the 93, and that spiritual bastard of a great father, Björnson, in fact a whole medley of Liberals *and* pan-Germans.¹ The German Government favoured the league in the beginning, but as soon as they thought its propaganda was becoming dangerous for home consumption they suppressed it. Then they

¹ The name of the Frenchman, Romain Rolland, is coupled with those names. See *The Gods in the Battle*.

recalled it three months later into being, and offered a large hall of the Reichstag to give one of its prominent members an opportunity to expound his "liberal" programme, the "new Kultur." First they encourage, then they suppress, then they quicken into life these various movements, for the confusion and, it may be, for the perversion of Allied opinion.

The same procedure has been followed with the recent German strikes. The Government unquestionably encouraged them until they were menaced by them. They allowed them to develop sufficiently to impress the Socialist circles in France and England, and then suppressed them. Again and again we find the same process in their dealings with Russia. They encouraged and paid the Maximalists to the fullest extent, till they found there was a danger of contamination for the people in Germany, and now they threaten the Russians with breaking off the negotiations at Brest-Litovsk.¹

To encourage similar movements in the Allied countries, German propaganda did not neglect the slightest opportunity furnished by events at large—the various messages of President Wilson before the United States came into the war, the neutral declarations of Pope Benedictus,² and above all

¹ Since this lecture was delivered, the German peace with Russia has shown to what extent this process could be carried: among the conditions of peace imposed by Germany, one was to the effect that all Maximalist propaganda by the Russians in Germany should be immediately stopped.

² Since this lecture was delivered, the disclosure by the French Premier, M. Clemenceau, of Emperor Charles of Austria's fallacious peace proposals and the polemics that followed have made it quite clear that, in June 1917, the Pope was working hand in hand with the Austrian Government, through Monsignor Pacelli (see the *Temps'* editorial, April 20th, 1918).

the instinctive craving of all peoples for peace. There is no doubt that at certain moments "brain waves" or "soul waves" develop over Europe. Some have originated in foreign countries, and some in Germany itself; on all these waves German propaganda has sailed her paper boats, she has blown her breath full-cheeked on every ripple. The most striking instance of this method is certainly the famous resolution of the Reichstag on July 19th, 1917, passed by 214 votes against 110; it ran:

We are not moved by a desire of conquests. . . . We disown the idea of increasing our territory by means of force; the Reichstag pursues an amicable peace which will lead to the reconciliation of nations.¹

Two devices are further to be noticed among the favourite ones of the Kaiser. Firstly, in the very moment when his Government is making a peace proposal he brings all his means to bear upon preparing a new offensive. Secondly, to make this peace proposal, he always chooses the moment when his offensives have proved successful. More than that, he systematically appeals to the influence of Christian tradition, and for the last two years has put in his application at Christmas tide,

¹ Eight months later, the conditions of peace imposed by Germany on Russia (March 2nd, 1918) comprised the *annexation* of 56,000,000 Russian subjects and of 780,000 square kilometres of Russian territory, the area of France being of 536,000 kilometres. By a logical coincidence, the very image used by the author eight months before in this lecture in London was then adopted by Hermann Wendel in the *Frankfurter Volksstimme*: "The peace resolution of July 19th is to-day only fit to be made into a *paper boat* which we can watch floating cheerfully down stream" (quoted by the *New Europe*, London, March 28th, 1918.)

that time of "peace and good-will to all men," to offer peace to the Entente Powers, in the name of Christ Jesus. On what terms? It was not hinted. Surely on those of Mephistopheles. A very easy trick indeed, because both in 1916 and in 1917 Germany had just scored a victory: in 1916 the crushing of Rumania, in 1917 the downfall of Russia. But a very clever trick, too, because victorious Germany, fearing defeat in the year to come, thus appeared most magnanimous in extending the olive-branch. Clever for more than one reason. The fact of her territorial gains in both cases was meant to conceal the other fact of her economic distress. Also, as she was sure that her proposals would be rejected by the Entente, she was convinced that public opinion among the Allies would be deceived and embittered towards their Governments, having been deluded for a few hours with the hope of ending the nightmare, while at the same time public opinion in Germany, depressed as it was a few days before, would be again lashed into wrath because these ferocious Allies wished to carry on the war for war's sake! So the blood she had shed, and was going to shed, would fall back on the heads of the victims.

It has been argued that German propaganda is lacking in psychological finesse. I admit the reproach mainly as regards the deeper psychological knowledge of other countries *before* the war. In the weeks immediately preceding it, German diplomacy committed blunder after blunder. The Wilhelmstrasse thought Russia would yield about Serbia; it thought Belgium would allow her soil to be trespassed upon; it thought Britain would never think

of interfering for a "scrap of paper"; it never dreamt that Italy would side with France against Germany,¹ and, above all, the Germans had made a dogma of the degeneracy of France—that old earthen pot, baked too often at the fire, which was to crumble into dust at the first shock of their brand-new pot of iron.²

After their awakening to realities, however, the Germans caught up surprisingly. The Germans learn by their mistakes. Their only blunders since the war they have made in their methods of warfare, which I have reviewed at length. Minor faults they may have committed in actual propaganda, but they were pretty sound on the whole. So much for what Germany has been able to extract in her favour out of the general weariness and depression caused by the duration of the war or by events on the battlefield.³

Yet this German propaganda would have had no grip on our countries if some foolish or criminal

¹ Even in Bernhardt's prophetic book, *Our Future*, wherein war is contemplated and called for, Italy's military force is reckoned as a factor of victory in favour of Germany!

² The *Berliner Tageblatt* of April 16th, 1918, has published a straightforward confession as to this delusion of the Germans: "*To speak frankly, I am convinced that, previous to the war, we appreciated the French far below their true merits. . . . I had had conversations with men of letters, business men, abbés, and cocottes. . . . But the war came, and a might unknown surged up from the depth.*"

³ A most cunning device of German propaganda in Italy has been disclosed on April 17th, 1918, by the correspondent of the *Times* in Rome. German agents have been dispatched to that country to act as mediums among the credulous and superstitious population. They hold frequent spiritualist meetings in the course of which they cause the dead to foretell the military events decided upon by the German staff, such as the bombing of Naples by a Zeppelin. These prophecies being confirmed by the facts a few days later, the conclusion follows for the mesmerised audiences that spirits from the higher regions vouch for the victory of Germany.

hands had not been extended from our side towards Germany. I will only allude discretely to political parties, or to individuals in particular, although some names would be on your lips before my lips had uttered them. But I will point to the moral phenomenon in general, very immoral as it is. This sinister conspiracy existed amongst us long before the Russian Revolution, and it accounts in a great measure for the degradation and corruption of the Russian Revolution. It existed in Italy, as I have shown, from the first day, and it accounts for the disaster on the Isonzo, in the last days.¹ To give proofs of these facts by means of extracts from a certain press in our countries would be indeed an easy task for me, nor shall I neglect to do so in other circumstances, as I have all those proofs in hand; but I should deem it unseemly to enter upon these direct polemics under the serene auspices of the Royal Institution. If you agree with me on this point, I shall rather present you with a summary of the pro-German theory arranged under its various heads, for its inconsistency prevents it from forming an organic whole: it is a great jumble of sophisms.

They say: "Oh, the horror of war and the shame of it all!"

I answer: "Do not we feel it as much as you do? But shall our pity turn its back on justice?"

They say: "We have a right to criticise our Government."

I answer: "So you have in *our* democratic

¹ The dispatch of Generalissimo Cadorna on the morrow of Caporetto revealed this moral treason from the rear and its influence on his troops.

countries ; but are you sure you are limiting your attacks to the faults of the Governments, or are you not, beyond the Governments, stabbing at the heart of the cause ? In such tragic circumstances the greater the defects of individuals the greater the cause which they have not been able to serve even with the best of their ability. Is it your purpose to raise the men to the height of the cause or to reduce the cause to the size of the men ? ”

They say : “ We are the minority, and a minority is always right.”

I answer : “ Is a question of justice a problem of mathematics, and if you become the majority, as you are endeavouring to do, will you then be in the wrong and we be in the right ? ”

They say : “ We stand by the German minority, we stand by Liebknecht.”

I answer : “ You stand against Liebknecht. What did Liebknecht cry out to the Chancellor in the Reichstag a few days before he was arrested ? He cried out, ‘ *You it was who started the war !* ’ Even so, that is the conviction of the Allies. Is it yours ? And if Germany started the war, what is all your clamour about ? ”¹

They say : “ Let us forget the past and turn to the future.”²

¹ The author made this objection in a public meeting at Leicester to Mr. Ramsay Macdonald, in 1916, but failed to elicit any answer.

² From the *ABC of the U.D.C.*, a practical textbook for ignorant supporters : “ The question of *who began it* has never received a satisfactory answer in any dispute. . . . The Union, therefore, does not set out to apportion the blame for the present situation as between the various countries and statesmen. It rather looks to the future ” (pp. 13, 14). (In blank contradiction with this pronouncement, see *Ten Years of Secret Diplomacy* (published 1918) and *Truth and the War* (1916) by E. D. Morel, General Secretary of the U.D.C.) Likewise, a pro-German review published in

I answer : “ If you wish to forget the past, why are you perpetually wrangling about the origin of the war, and laying the blame on the Allies, and dragging out the old story about Morocco to condone the recent drama of Belgium, and then again, without the slightest sense of humour, drawing a parallel between the so-called violation of Greece by the Allies and the—of course exaggerated—violation of Belgium by the Germans? Let us remember, by all means, because the fruit of the peace to come will spring from the seeds of the war in the past. But perhaps the secret motive of our pro-Germans in beseeching us to ‘ forget ’ is, that, the crime being thus eliminated, no criminals would have to account for that crime—whence it would follow that we can embrace again our dear German friends after the war without any unseemly discussion about the war, and the way to this fraternal gathering has been pointed out in Stockholm, of which we shall speak anon.”

They say : “ Let us forgive ; the nearer we are

Switzerland thus advertises its aims : “ This particular paper has not been founded to inquire into past crimes, but to prepare a better future.” Again, according to the same tactics, a Dutch League held a great Festival about a year and a half ago in favour of “ forgetting.” Every one had to wear a badge in the streets with the inscription “ *Do not talk of the war.*” There is also a Committee in France which has taken to sending circulars to all the members of the various Schools, beseeching the Professors not to mention the actual war to the next generation. Here is the text of this appeal : “ It is necessary to prevent, after the war, any reminiscence remaining of the harm done by the German to the French, or any hatred against Germany. It is necessary that no place should be given in the future school-books to the history of wars, in order that the young generations may ignore what the conflicts between nations may have been in the past.”—Who can deny that this action is concerted?

drawing to peace, the less we must hate the enemy, or peace will be poisoned for years."

I answer: "We hate, not the enemy, but his crime; we hate it, and we do well to hate it; and were such a peace to ensue as that which you advocate, a peace which would betray the right, then should we hate that crime all the more, then should we submit to such peace with revolt in our heart and with foam on our lips!"

They say: "What are we fighting for, after all?"

I answer: "We are fighting because we were attacked, because we were invaded, because we want to beat Germany and rid her and the world of the Hohenzollerns."

They say: "But we are victorious! Why are we going on with the war?"

I answer: "Turn to Serbia, turn to Montenegro, turn to Belgium, turn to Northern France, turn to Rumania, turn to Russia. Is that the achievement of our victory?"

They say: "It is all the fault of secret diplomacy."

I answer: "I am not, as a democrat, a supporter of secret diplomacy. Many faults, many crimes may have been committed by it, but I ask how the Allied pro-Germans consider themselves qualified to be the antagonists of secret diplomacy, when during the whole course of the war they have been practising nothing else? They have had constant conferences with the Germans in Switzerland, Holland, and Scandinavia, all hushed up. The Swiss councillor, Hoffmann, sent Grimm to Russia under sealed orders to foster a German peace there. Lenin, Trotsky, and all his gang, as is disclosed by the documents of the *Petit Parisien*,

have had their hands in the 'unseen hand' of the Germans, and a mask on their faces all the time, since they all go under false names. How can the diplomacy of nations become open when those who champion this reform cling to the most secret policy?"

They say: "We wish to go to Stockholm in order to discuss matters with the German Socialists."

I answer: "You have done so already, stealthily, on innumerable occasions, at Zimmerwald and Kienthal amongst others. You now wish to go to Stockholm to fraternise officially with the Germans."

They say: "There is a more urgent reason for our wish to go to Stockholm, namely, to guard the young democracy of Russia against the snares of the Germans."

I answer: "The Allies have already sent their most prominent Socialists to Russia in the hope of guiding those frenzied fools.¹ What has been the result, I ask, except that those Allied Socialists were scorned as *bourgeois*, and that several amongst them only brought back Russian contamination to our occidental democracies?" *Also I answer:* "Are the Russian Revolutionists such infants that you must support their tottering steps, and, if they are such infants, on what logical grounds can you hold them up, at the same moment, to our admiration as the pioneers of Democracy?"²

¹ Vandervelde, de Bronckère, de Man, Henderson, Thorne, O'Grady, Saunders, Thomas, Moutet, Cachin, Lafont, etc.

² A third sophism of a more cynical type has been exposed since this lecture was delivered. Even after the infamous peace was concluded by the Russian Maximalists with Germany, and when, therefore all pretence at guarding the Russians against

They say: "We stand for the Internationale. 'Vive l'Internationale!'"

I answer: "So do I—I stand for the Internationale of the Allies. But may I venture to inquire whether, in *your* Internationale, you include the German section of the Kaiser along with the Socialists of Belgium? Why not make your claim clear and frank? Surely the fear of public opinion cannot restrain the expression of your noble ideals?"

They say: "We stand for the League of Nations. 'Vive la Société des Nations!'"

I answer: "So do we—for the Society of the Allied Nations, whose Magna Charta will not be a scrap of paper. It will be remarked that this principle is only a repetition of the former on national, but not on party, lines. Hence I make the same inquiry: Does *your* Society of Nations include or exclude the Germany of the Kaiser? If you presuppose that Germany, to gain admittance, should first be transformed by revolution into a democracy, then I say that your vindication of a League of Nations, comprising that of New Germany, is a flippant truism which does away with the problem before it is solved; and if you make a place in that League of Nations for the present Imperial Germany, then I say your vindication is nothing short of an infamy."

They say: "The Allied Governments should state their war aims publicly."

I answer: "The Allied Governments have

German intrigue had been swept away by the event, the Internationalists have nevertheless persisted in their will to go to Stockholm in order to meet the Kaiser's Socialists,

stated their war aims ten times over. When has Germany stated hers? *When have pro-Germans stated theirs?* In every issue of their weekly papers they hint at or clamour for an immediate, just, and lasting peace. *Why don't they ever tell us on what terms?* Why don't they practice what they preach? And if the peace is to be immediate, that is to say non-victorious, according to the present war-map of Germany, how can that peace be just and lasting? Or, perhaps, if the pro-Germans insist, as they do, on the necessity for the Allied Governments to declare their war aims—not as a whole, as they have done already time after time—but in every minute detail, can it be because the pro-Germans hope for some dissension among the Allies? ”

They say: “We vindicate the ‘freedom of the seas.’ ”

I answer: “What about the freedom of the lands? If Germany may stroll across Belgian and French territory, is that not a worse menace to the world than the blockade of a British man-of-war? When German supremacy on land is over, no doubt Great Britain will be willing to give up some of her supremacy at sea.”

They say: “We stand against *all* imperialisms.”

I answer: “So do I. What do you think will be left of the pale imitations when the harsh model is destroyed? But I add that to compare the frame of mind, the dignity, the constitutional power of King George with the attributes of Kaiser William is simply ludicrous. That sort of wit is made in Germany, though it may circulate in England.”

They say: "We propose a peace without annexations or indemnities."

I answer: "That is going too far. You evidently would wish us to let off the criminals scot-free. No annexation of German soil? Quite right, but what about the countries annexed by Germany on European soil, in 1864, in 1871, in 1914, 1915, 1916, 1917, 1918, and of the nationalities crushed under the yoke of Austria? No indemnity? Germany has attacked us, has assaulted the whole of mankind, has devastated the territories of Belgium, of Northern France, of Rumania, of Serbia, of Russia, for the last forty months; she has ruined them to such an extent that Hindenburg proclaimed only the other day that for a period of ten years the North of France will be fruitless, useless, uninhabitable; and shall she pay no indemnity? The victims, of course, shall pay for the crime."

They say: "Our principles are those of President Wilson."

I answer: "So are ours, and for a very simple reason, namely that, after having been strictly neutral for two years and a half, the wise and just President discovered *our* right, espoused *our* cause, rallied to *our* principles, the very ones for which, for thirty months, *our* apostles had striven and *our* heroes had died, and the world proclaimed its admiration. To our great hymn America has added no new words; she has only set it to a more powerful instrument. How is it that the pro-Germans only quote the sayings uttered by President Wilson when he was a neutral, and never those spoken by him since he entered the

war? Only those spoken when he was still searching for his way, and never those when he had found it?"¹

They say: "We oppose war because we do not believe in the violent settlement of differences between nations or anybody."

I answer: "What about Russia? You support the Russian Revolution in all its excesses, you have not one word of blame for them, pillage, rape, massacre, destruction. Is that abstaining from violence? Is that your reading of present history? Perhaps you agree, with Lenin, that such happenings 'are not civil war, only a class war,' even when it openly aims at the 'extermination of the *bourgeoisie*'? How sanguinary becomes your gospel of international peace when you apply it to your own country! Is that the practical outcome of all your idealistic movement? Is that what you are driving at?"

Here I will close this survey of the pro-German ethics of war, and from it I will proceed to draw the conclusion of my whole study.

Such are the feeble arguments diffused in hundreds of small papers, hundreds of books, and thousands of pamphlets by the allies of the enemy in the Entente countries. Their authors do not care, as a rule, to co-ordinate them into an organic doctrine, because such a doctrine would appear either too inconsistent in its logic or too consistent in its German inspiration.

¹ Since this lecture was delivered President Wilson has issued his message of April 6, 1918: "*Force, force in the extreme, without restriction or limitation.*" I notice our pro-Germans ignore that message.

What made this vague doctrine the more seductive to many was the cunning tactics of its authors, who utterly discarded reason. In the eyes of the pro-German 1914 does not exist, the war does not exist except as a natural cataclysm which must be resisted but not discussed, not made an object of discrimination and understanding, in short, a matter of argument, lest the whole doctrine crumble to dust. The highest faculty of man, reason, is eliminated by this process, and a persistent appeal is then made to the heart of man,¹ or, if you like, to his mutilated conscience, to a conscience groping in the dark and tumbling into the trap-holes of sophistry, deprived of the light of reason. Since the war is not to be admitted morally, and interpreted logically, it follows that the pre-war ideal of pacifism should remain untouched by the circumstances of the war, and that the policy of an entente with Germany, which was a lawful endeavour previous to 1914, should still be held as the only just solution of the conflict in 1918, be it the stupidest of conceptions now as well as the foulest of treasons.

By such erratic methods of ethics not a few neophytes of this doctrine were undoubtedly allured to believe that they were serving the purest cause in its days of greatest peril, and at the cost of personal risk, the rebuke of public opinion goading them into fanaticism. Thus the noblest instincts of these weak-headed people were turned to the vilest use by their crafty wire-pullers, and the very flame of the ideal blown

¹ A subordinate faculty according to Plato, the head being the "divine member."

back by a foul breath against the altar itself. An utter disregard for facts and a prostitution of an ideal, such were the strongest means of action in the hands of the pro-German staff.

The movement, which originated with the war, as I have pointed out in the first part of this study, remained for over a year subdued and prudent in its expression, scorned by the Government and by the public unnoticed.

It grew in strength and audacity with the first great set-back of the Allies, I mean, the retreat of the Russians on the Carpathians, in the summer of 1915; pro-Germanism was born on that date, or rather the mischievous infant first made its wailing heard at that time—the cowardly son of defeat.¹ In the course of 1916 it came of age with a surprising rapidity, and, in this country, for instance, turned its cries into shouts of “conscientious objection.” Finally, in the course of 1917, these shouts were transformed into cheers, not at the early glory of the Russian Revolution, but persistently at the growing symptoms of its worst degradation. And again we find ourselves at the fatal pivot of the war, whether the conflict be considered from the military or the psychological side, which are so closely associated.

As I am about to conclude what I have to say about this movement, I desire, in dealing with the present state of opinion in certain allied circles, to be very clearly understood, and understood beyond my words. Within the last few months a new name has been coined for the activity of the pro-

¹ In France the agitation in favour of M. Romain Rolland began exactly in August 1915.

German, a name which will endure stamped on their brows, a name which they furiously object to, because it perfectly meets their case: "defeatism."¹ "We are pacifists," they retort, "we were pacifists before the war and remain pacifists during the war; but we are not 'defeatists.'" Such a hypocritical subterfuge can be swept away in two words. That the whole of humanity—and the victims foremost, I suppose—should be craving for peace after three years of the most hellish war is only a natural aspiration which does not make one a pacifist. There is no room for pacifists in war time till after the triumph of right, unless you are willing to buy peace at the price of the triumph of crime. All those, therefore, who, in war time and in the face of the enemy, advocate and support pacifism are justly to be termed "defeatists." Not that many individuals are to be found who positively desire the defeat of their country—although such knaves there certainly are. The word has quite a different meaning, and a precise one for all that. All those who, in any way, or measure, by depressing public opinion or corrupting public conscience, help towards defeat or slacken the will for victory—all these are legitimately termed "defeatists," whether they stab our soldiers from behind or merely pull them back by their coat-sleeves.

Lastly, the name "defeatists" may apply in the near future, if not already in the present, to organised

¹ The word was first used in Russia with a sense of eulogy by those who claimed that defeat was the nearest way to peace; hence the admirers of Russian anarchy should not object to its importation.

bodies of men who are speculating on the defeat of the Entente to bring about social revolution in our countries, in the face of the enemy. Do you remember that motion at the Socialist Congress in Basle in 1912, which I alluded to previously?—

Should war break out, it would be their first duty [of the working classes] to intervene in order to bring it to a speedy termination and to employ all their power to utilise the economic and political crisis created by the war in order to rouse the masses of the people and thereby to hasten the downfall of capitalistic class domination.

There are signs in the heavens, on the earth, and underneath the earth that such a motion is now becoming a threat, and it is time that a voice should be lifted to denounce it. Again the two *planes* are out of gear and gradually turning so as to cut each other at right angles: these two planes are the national of the Allies and the international of the lawless. I have shown that the germ of the evil has been in process of incubation for two years, but since the Russian Revolution the pestilence is certainly abroad. The people who are spreading it over here never gave their sympathy to good and feeble Kerensky; they waited for a stronger and worse man to come; he has come in the person of Lenin. Perhaps in the minds of its authors, the combination was meant to threaten Germany also, but she has suppressed the peril, after using it against Russia, till Russia was dragged to the dogs. There are even symptoms of this huge plan being already carried out by Germany elsewhere. Mark that there have been of late murderous strikes in Zurich, and again that the

Swiss Socialists have threatened a general strike against defensive mobilisation, which would open that neutral frontier to the German army, immediately to be called upon to restore order first, and then to march against Lyons. Mark that almost at the same time there broke out riots in Amsterdam, with also a threat of a general strike. Mark that the torch is being carried round the outskirts of our countries, and that some sparks have already fallen on inflammable matter within our boundaries.¹

I say that the people who are hatching this monstrous scheme are wilfully blind to reality, and that this social upheaval would instantly result, as in Russia, in the triumph of military Germany over a Maximalist Entente. Because, were such a European revolution to break out, Germany would be the last country to rebel; because there is absolutely no chance for a revolution in Germany unless she suffers a crushing defeat in the battlefield. Whence the conclusion that such a Socialist victory—in the very worst sense of the word—would only be bought at the price of national independence and for the sake of pillage, massacre, and all manner of lust at home under the control of the enemy.

And even granting the impossible, I mean, even the case of a revolution in autocratic Germany, can we conceive, without shame, of a parallel

¹ In its issue of January 5th, 1918, the paper founded at The Hague by M. Huysmans, Secretary of the International Bureau, of which M. Vandervelde is the chairman, the *Socialiste belge* appeals to all the proletariats in these words: "*Soldiers in the trenches, down with your weapons! Comrades in the munition factories, fold your arms!*"

revolution in our democratic countries? Can we admit that our cause should be wantonly besmirched by ourselves? That crime, instead of being punished, should be enriched by new crime? No difference between the German Government and the Governments of the Allies? No difference between the nations? between the heroes and the tyrants? After the physical horror of the war, are the Allies to be threatened with a more infamous horror? Are they to take upon themselves a portion of the guilt which rests wholly on Germany? Is the most logical drama of history to end in world-wide shame? In a universal nothing? Are we, I say, to have a Russified Europe? Is the Internationale, which died in bloodshed in 1914, to be revived in this mud? And are we to witness the downfall of humanity for centuries?

Allow me to remind myself and to recall to you that I was, and remain, passionately a Liberal, a fraternal comrade of Socialists outside the political cliques, and, on that very ground, I say that, were such an event to occur, it would mean not only dishonour to Socialism, but dishonour to Liberalism, dishonour to Democracy, betrayal of our principles, betrayal of the past and the future, betrayal of all the oppressed nationalities whose chains we should have rendered not lighter but heavier, and all in the name of a counterfeit ideal cloaking possibly viler passions than those of the German invaders. After the treason committed by Russia, it would mean treason perpetrated by ourselves. I could not, for my part, contemplate such an infamy without despairing of humanity.

My task is ended. I have shown you how the moral curve of the war, after ascending sky high and direct from the first, has gradually faltered under the influence of inherent trials and military difficulties, but much more so, indeed, under that of pernicious moral factors born of those events and, still more, preying upon them. When the historian of the future shall look back on these times, he will at once perceive that the Revolution of Russia was the turning-point of the great tide, the great black mountain looming over the battle-field, at once a test for applied Socialism¹—which collapsed—and a test both physical and moral for the resistance of the occidental democracies—which will not yield.

On the eve, perhaps, of the most formidable rush of the war, when all the German hordes from their emptied trenches in the east will be let loose upon us less by Hindenburg than by Lenin, as I stand here to-day, a messenger from threatened France, speaking to this choice and learned audience, in the calm of this stately building, I cannot help reading out for you the signs written in letters of fire on the wall: we are certainly living at this very moment in the most tragic hour of all times. Oh! blind in the full glare of those signs are those who refuse to face the

¹ From the *Populaire*, the paper of M. Jean Longuet, the head of the French minority Socialists, in its issue of November 17th, 1917, after the triumph of Lenin: "No Socialist can deny that the recent insurrection and the seizing of power by the Maximalists constitute the culminating phase in the history of Socialism. . . . For the first time a revolutionary movement is of a definitely Socialist character. . . . Everywhere the political and economical crisis is being intensified by other crises which forebode the greatest social upheavals."

facts! We *shall* face them, and overcome. Menaced by the enemy from without, and by the "Prussian within our midst," if I may retort an accusation of the "defeatists,"¹ with many of our own weapons dropped or wrenched from our hands, we are receiving a last one which is being extended to us from over the great waters of the ocean, by the great people of Liberty; we can only reach it as yet with the tips of our fingers, but our fist will make good the grip and we shall set our teeth in the effort; we shall "bring our courage to the sticking-point," and to this strain of muscle and will we shall add the inmost might of the soul, we shall keep the "home fire burning," as your lads sing on the road to death—I mean the pure white flame of faith fed by the incorruptible element of the purest cause.

A Japanese general prophesied that those would be victorious who could hold out fifteen minutes longer than their opponents at the front. He was mistaken. Those will win who can hold out fifteen minutes longer—at Home.

¹ *The Prussian in our Midst*, by Norman Angell, a pamphlet published by the Union of Democratic Control.

THE END

THE GODS IN THE BATTLE

BY

PAUL HYACINTHE LOYSON

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH BY LADY FRAZER

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY

H. G. WELLS

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