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STUDIES AND DOCUMENTS ON THE WAR

German theory and practice of war

by

E. LAVISSE and Ch. ANDLER

Professors in the University of Paris

Translated by L. S.

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STUDIES AND DOCUMENTS ON THE WAR

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PREFACE

Two reports have been presented to the President of the Council by " the Commission instituted with a view to investigating acts committed by the enemy in violation of international law " (1).

This Commission consisted of Messieurs Payelle, First President of the Cour des Comptes ; Mollard, Minister Plenipotentiary ; Maringer, Counsellor of State ; Paillet, Counsellor at the Court of Appeal.

The investigators examined the witnesses according to the forms of a judicial enquiry, after having administered an oath to them to speak the whole truth and nothing but the truth. They checked the information thus obtained and submitted it to severe criticism, so as only to retain those facts which had been established beyond dispute. They state that they omitted those facts " the proofs of which were, in our view, insufficient, or which, however destructive or cruel they were, might have been the result of acts of war properly so called, rather than of wilful excesses attributable to the enemy " (2).

(1) The first of these Reports is dated 17th December, 1914, and the second 8th March, 1915. They have both appeared in the *Journal Officiel*. An English translation of the first Report appears in a pamphlet entitled : *The Black Book of the War — German Atrocities in France and Belgium*, published by *The Daily Chronicle*.

(2) It is known that the Germans have maintained that their violence against the civil population was everywhere in Belgium and in France provoked by the civilians who fired on their troops. It is possible that sometimes this happened, but more often, as has already been shown even by German witnesses, acts of violence have been committed without provocation. Besides, nothing can justify the massacres of old men, women and children which were committed in Belgium and in France.

We will not give here a full analysis of these documents; we will merely extract from them a few actions characteristic of the German practice of war, in order afterwards to prove that this practice is the application of a theory, and that this theory is based on certain ideas, and thus expose what might be called "the German philosophy of war."

GERMAN THEORY AND PRACTICE OF WAR

I

THE GERMAN PRACTICE OF WAR

ACCORDING TO FRENCH DOCUMENTS.

Four episodes.

Nearly all the phases of the German methods of war are to be found in four episodes.

At Gerbéviller, in the Department of the Meurthe-et-Moselle, on the 24th August, about 60 french *chasseurs à pied*, after heroically withstanding the attack of the German troops, retired. The Germans rushed into the town, pillaged, burned and massacred. More than 100 people disappeared from Gerbéviller during the day. At least 50 were massacred. Fifteen bodies found with their hands tied behind their backs were buried by their fellow citizens at a place called "La Prèle" which had been chosen by the Germans as an execution ground. Other victims were killed in the houses and in the streets.

The soldiers entered the house inhabited by the Lingenheld family, led away the son, aged 56, and shot him. They returned later, took the father, aged 70, to La Prèle, and shot him there. The mother as she was escaping saw the body of her son stretched out on the ground, still moving. Some soldiers drenched the dying man with petrol and set fire to him.

Other Germans knocked at the door of the house where M. Dehan lived with his wife and mother-in-law, Mme Guillaume. The latter, an old woman of 78, went to open the door. She fell, struck by several bullets, into the arms of her son-in-law who ran up behind her. "They have killed me," she cried "carry me into the garden". Dehan and his wife carried her into the garden and placed a pillow under her head and a blanket over her legs. The poor old lady expired after an hour's suffering. Mme Dehan covered her body with the blanket and placed a handkerchief over her face. At this moment soldiers entered the garden and led Dehan away to La Prèle where they shot him. Mme Dehan was taken on to the Fraimbois Road where she found about forty people, principally women and children, who were awaiting death. The next day the Germans let her go. She returned to Gerbéviller where she found the body of her mother still lying in the garden, the skirts had been pushed up, and there was a gaping wound in the stomach.

This massacre of Gerbéviller lasted a whole day during which 450 out of the 475 houses of the village were burning,

The church remained standing. A few days after the massacre and the five, Sister Julie, Mother Superior of the Hospital, entered the church and found the door of the tabernacle pierced with bullet holes round the lock. The soldiers had tried to force the door in order to steal the ciborium which Sister Julie removed and found to be pierced by a bullet.

In the case of Gerbéviller the pillage had at least been preceded by an engagement. This was not the case at Triaucourt, in the Department of the Meuse. It is thought that the soldiers were exasperated by a complaint which Mlle Hélène Procès had made against them. They set M. Gand's house on fire and killed the unfortunate owner himself as he was trying to escape. They spread all over the village, firing right and left and setting fire to everything. Mlle Procès,

her mother, grandmother, aged 71, and her aunt, aged 81, took refuge in their garden. With the aid of a ladder they attempted to climb over the trellis work which separated their garden from a neighbouring one. Only the young girl escaped; the three old women were struck down by rifle shots.

The curé of Triaucourt came and performed the last rites over the bodies and had them carried into the house, after having collected the brains of the octogenarian. In the evening the soldiers billeted in the house played the piano.

At Lunéville in the Department of the Meurthe-et-Moselle, on the 25th August, in the afternoon, M. Keller, the mayor, went to the hospital and saw soldiers firing towards the attic of a neighbouring house. Some Germans declared to him that they had been fired on. He offered to go round the town with them in order to convince them of their mistake. He started, accompanied by a detachment of soldiers under the command of an officer. They came across a body stretched out in the road. "It is the body of a civilian," exclaimed the officer who has been killed by another civilian as he was firing on us from a house near the Synagogue; thus in accordance with our law, we have burnt the house and executed the inhabitants. Indeed the officiating Rabbi Weill and his daughter aged 16 had been shot. While the mayor and the soldiers accompanying him continued their round, a fire broke out in several parts of the town. The Hôtel de Ville, the Synagogue, some houses in the Rue Castara and the Faubourg d'Einville were destroyed. Two workmen were killed in a tannery. Some soldiers entered the house of M. Steiner and summoned him from the door of the cellar where he had taken refuge. Mme Steiner flung her arms round her husband and attempted to hold him back. She was hit by a bullet in the neck. Steiner was led into the garden and killed. The house was set on fire; Mme Kahn aged 98 was burnt to death in another house. Some soldiers

by breaking the windows entered a house in which were Mme Dujon, her daughter, aged 3, and her two sons. The little girl's face was burnt by a rifle shot. The mother, seeing her youngest son, aged 14, lying on the ground, called to him to get up and escape with her. The child was disembowelled, and did not move; he was holding his entrails in his hands. His charred remains were found among the ruins.

In the suburbs of Lunéville, Wingerstmann and his grandson were digging up potatoes. They were placed against a wall and shot.

The next day, 26th August, the Germans continued their massacre.

A few days later, the 5th September, the Commander-in-Chief, von Fossbender, issued a proclamation. He accused the inhabitants of having committed acts of hostility (which have been denied, and are indeed improbable), and summed up his declaration in the following words :

“ On account of these acts of hostility a contribution of 650,000 francs is imposed on the Commune of Lunéville. The mayor is ordered to pay this sum — 50,000 francs in silver and the remainder in gold — on 6th September at 9 o'clock in the morning to the representative of the German military authority. No protest will be considered. No extension of time will be granted. If the Commune does not punctually obey the order to pay 650,000 francs, all the goods which are available will be seized. In case payment is not made, domiciliary searches will take place and all the inhabitants will be searched. Anyone who shall have deliberately hidden money or shall have attempted to hide his goods from the seizure of the military authorities or who seeks to leave the town, will be shot. The mayor and hostages taken by the military authorities will be made responsible for the exact execution of the above order. ”

At Nomény in the Department of the Meurthe-et-Moselle the Germans, after having fired on each other by mistake, entered the town about mid-day. They pillaged, burnt, and

fired without cessation. About 50 victims must have fallen in the streets and in the houses. A man of 86 was shot in his armchair, and a soldier (referring to the corpse) invited Mme Bertrand to have a look at "that pig there". Several people had taken refuge in the cellar of M. Vassé. As the house was burning they rushed out of the cellar. As soon as M. Mentré appeared he was shot; his son Léon who was holding his little sister, aged 8, in his arms, fell struck by a bullet. Another bullet fired at point blank range blew out his brains. Mme Kieffer was wounded in the arm and in the shoulder. Her husband was killed. Her little boy and her little girl, aged respectively 10 and 5 were killed. Also M. Striffert, one of M. Vassé's sons, and M. Guillaume were killed. Mme Mentré was wounded by three bullets. A young girl of 17 came out of the cellar last, carrying in her arms her sister Jeanne, aged 5. The little girl's elbow was shattered by a bullet. Her elder sister threw herself on the ground and feigned death. A soldier pushed her with his foot thinking her to be dead, — "Capout" he cried. Finally an officer arrived and ordered the survivors to get up, and as he considered that Nomény thus conquered was henceforth German territory, he exclaimed "Go to France".

For two days Nomény was a prey to the flames. When the Commissioners arrived at the pretty little town, only a few houses were standing. For the rest, only blackened walls and a mass of ruins in which charred remains of animals and human beings could be seen.

Murders.

To these abominable acts committed by the soldiery in outbursts of fury, must be added many others of a similar nature which were daily recorded.

In the neighbourhood of Emberménil in the Department of the Meurthe-et-Moselle, Mme Masson met a German patrol

who asked her whether there were any French soldiers at Emberménil. She replied that she did not know, and she really did not know. The Germans then entered the village and were received by our soldiers with rifle fire. A few days later, on the 5th November, a Bavarian detachment arrived at Emberménil. The officer in command ordered all the inhabitants to collect in front of the church and, having referred to the incident of the German patrol which had been misled, asked : " Who betrayed us ? " Mme Masson stepped forward and asserted that she had not lied in saying that she did not know that French soldiers had entered the village. The officer made her sit on a bench. A young man was chosen haphazard from the crowd and placed next to her. Eight soldiers, drawn up in double file, took up their position in front of them. The terrified crowd begged for mercy and pity. " One woman and one man must be shot. Those are the Colonel's orders. What do you expect? It is war ", was the answer. Three volleys were fired, and the two bodies fell. Mme Masson was obviously pregnant.

On the 29th August our troops bombarded Heriménil, in the Department of the Meurthe-et-Moselle, which was occupied by the Germans. The latter ordered the inhabitants to collect in the church. Mme Winger was walking along accompanied by three servants, — a woman and two boys. A captain, considering that she was not walking quickly enough, cried out an order. The four bodies fell, and remained lying in the street for two days.

A German detachment entered Monchy-Humières in the Department of the Oise on the 31st August. The inhabitants watched the soldiers pass. An officer thought he overheard the word " Prussian ". He ordered three dragoons to fall out and fire into the crowd. A little girl of four was wounded. M. Grandvalet's shoulder was pierced by a bullet. Young Gaston Dupuis was killed. — At Sancy-les-Provins in the Department of the Seine-et-Marne, some Germans discovered that young Rousseau was of military age. They

stripped him and pronounced him to be fit for military service. He was shot.

At Crézancy in the department of the Aisne, on 5rd September, some soldiers made Lesaint, aged 18, come out of his house and led him before an officer who shot him with his revolver. Another officer to whom remonstrances were made as to his colleague's action, admitted that the latter had certainly acted a little hastily, but excused him on the ground that Lesaint, even if he was not actually a soldier was "on the way to be one".

Two young men, Charlet and Gabet, were on their way to Saint-Quentin to answer their summons to the colours. They met two Belgians who were travelling in a carriage and who offered them a lift. Near Bessons they were stopped by a German detachment and taken to Marquéglise in the department of the Oise, and led before a superior officer. The latter questioned them. Belgians, he said, are "dirty beasts" and levelling his revolver fired on the four prisoners. The two Belgians and Gabet were shot dead. Charlet died the next day.

The farm of Remonville in the department of the Meurthe-et-Moselle was burnt down; four workmen belonging to it disappeared; the bodies of two of them, Victor Chaudre and Thomas Prosper, were found decapitated; the head of the last mentioned had been shattered. At Rehainviller, also in the department of the Meurthe-et-Moselle, some soldiers seized the curé Barbot and M. Noircler in the street; their bodies were found buried in a field; the severed head of Noircler was lying by the side of his hip.

At Sommeilles in the department of the Meuse, Mme X. took refuge with her four children, during the burning of the village, in the cellar of the Adnot family. Some soldiers went down into the cellar; they slaughtered them all. The bodies were found in a pool of blood. Mme X. had had her right breast and right arm cut off; a little girl aged eleven a foot cut off; and a little boy, aged five, his throat cut.

Pillaging and burning.

The Germans pillaged and plundered everywhere, in chance isolated cases, as well as in force and in obedience to the orders of their superiors.

At Baron in the department of the Oise, an officer had the safe of the Notary Robert opened, and took from it 8500 francs in gold. In the same place an officer was seen wearing nine rings on his fingers and six bracelets on his arm. Officers paid four marks for each piece of jewelry which the soldiers brought them. — At Congis, the soldiers arrested an old man and took his purse from him. It however turned out to be empty, and the old man was killed.

Lunéville and Baccarat suffered a systematic pillage. Two safes at Lunéville remained in the ruins, one of them fixed to a wall. Weiss, a non-commissioned officer, was informed of this fact. He knew the town very well as he had often been there on his business as a hop-merchant. On this account he was much appreciated by the *Kommandantur* and was entrusted with the work of requisitioning. Weiss blew up the wall and had the two safes loaded on a cart and taken to the station. — At Baccarat, the inhabitants were ordered to assemble at the station. Soldiers then entered their houses and cleared out the furniture, clocks and works of art. When this was done the inhabitants returned to their empty houses. A little later they again received the order to come out as it was intended to set fire to the place. 112 houses were burnt, but in the hasty execution the cellars were forgotten. Sentinels were placed by the ruins, to guard them, and the entrance to the cellars was opened out. "I did not think", says General Fabricius, who was in command of the Artillery of a Baden army corps, to M. Renaud the acting Mayor, "that Baccarat contained such a quantity of fine wine. We found more than 100,000 bottles."

Several châteaux were thoroughly pillaged. At Compiègne the objects taken from Count d'Orsetti's house were arranged in lots, inventoried, packed up and conveyed to the station in removal vans marked with the Red Cross. At Beaumont, near Montmirail in the department of the Marne, at the Comte de La Rochefoucauld-Doudeauville's house, writing-tables, bureaux and safes were broken open and jewel boxes were emptied. Amongst the names of those who stayed in the house and which are written up in chalk are those of Major von Ledebur and Count Waldersce. — At the Château of Beauzemont in the department of the Meurthe-et-Moselle, some motor cars arrived during the month of September in which were the wives of some officers. These thieves made off with hats, silk dresses and plate.

In the great châteaux, the German soldiers chose to leave their excrements as souvenirs of their visit. They have religiously preserved this custom by which in former days soldiers showed that they were ignoble brutes.

The means of lighting and fanning conflagrations had been carefully prepared. These means consisted of torches — soldiers had been seen wearing them in their belts as part of their accoutrement — hand pumps which squirted petrol, grenades, bags of compressed powder, sticks of resin and sticks of inflammable and fusing matter. No other army but the German army could have manifested such foresight, in collecting and docketing in its store-houses bags of powder and sticks of such a nature.

Sometimes a fire broke out accidentally. Possibly the Wurtemberg soldier, who at Clermont-en-Argonne spilt in a house some spirits of wine which he had used for heating his coffee, had not received the order to set the house on fire. Nevertheless the fire spread. A villager ran to the shed where the local fire-engine was kept and naively asked an officer for men to work it. The officer refused and brandished his revolver; other officers were equally obdurate. The fire spread still further. The church alone which

stood by itself on higher ground, seemed likely to escape. Soldiers went up to it, and after dancing to the sound of the organ, threw grenades by the handful, and the church was consumed.

At Senlis, systematic and thorough conflagration was carried out. A detachment was drawn up in the street; the officer blew his whistle and several men fell out of the ranks. They smashed in the doors and shop-fronts, others threw grenades and rockets into the houses. The detachment withdrew, while patrols spread through the town, firing incendiary bullets into the houses which were not burning sufficiently quickly.

Alas! to think of the endless list of villages in ruins. A detachment arrives bringing incendiary paraphernalia. The officer in command bids the peasants leave the houses and the work is begun. Nothing remains of the village of Glannes. At Auve, 65 families out of 70 are homeless. At Sermaize-les-Bains 860 out of 900. Only the church, the *mairie* and two buildings remain at Somme-Tourbe. 5 houses are standing at Huiron, etc., etc. These are only a few examples taken in the department of the Marne alone. On every side, the Inquiry Commissioners write, our eyes rested on destruction... Towns formerly full of life are now nothing but deserts full of ruins; and in visiting the scenes of desolation where the invaders torch has done its work, one feels continually as though one were walking among the remains of one of those cities of antiquity which have been annihilated by the great cataclysms of nature.

Hostages.

The right of taking hostages, when put into practice, was the occasion of unheard of brutality.

In September, at Varedes in the Department of the Seine-et-Marne, eighteen hostages were chosen by a German detach-

ment as the latter was about to retire. Three of these hostages managed to escape. Of the remaining fifteen, three at least were massacred. M. Jourdain, aged seventy-three, who did not walk sufficiently quickly, received a bayonet thrust and was shot by a bullet from a revolver; Liévin, aged sixty-one, was shot in the cemetery of Chouy, after having blindfolded himself in order not to see the firing party; Ménil, aged sixty-seven, was beaten to death with blows of the butts of rifles in the vicinity of Chouy; Milliardet, aged seventy-eight, was shot at Chezy-en-Orxois.

The atrocities in connection with the practice of taking hostages were well illustrated in the incident of the people of Combres, a village of the Meuse. On the 22nd September at seven o'clock in the morning, the entire population was taken to the side of a hill where it was exposed to our artillery and rifle fire. The wretched people waved their handkerchiefs and hats and our fire ceased. At seven o'clock in the evening, the hostages were taken back to their houses and were given an hour to collect the things which they might require in their homes which had previously been pillaged. On pain of death they were ordered to re-assemble at eight o'clock. They were confined in the church. The next day at four o'clock in the morning, they were taken to the same spot as the day before and remained there the whole day exposed to our fire. Happily of the entire crowd only one person, a woman, was slightly wounded. In the evening they returned to the village where the inhabitants were again shut up in the church, where they remained for five days. On the sixth day, they were taken to Herbeville. The men were then ordered to fall out of the ranks and were taken to Mars-la-Tour. After long and weary marching, worn out with hunger, they were put on to cattle trucks and sent to Germany. The women and children remained shut up in the church of Herbeville for a month. Dysentery and croup raged there.

The use of hostages as a shield is a monstrous action of

which the Germans were several times guilty. Near Méry in the Department of the Oise, a battle was being fought between the Germans and the English. Some Germans entered a sugar refinery and carried off the manager, his family and a few work people of both sexes who happened to be there, in all twenty-five people. For three hours they forced them to march with them in order to shield themselves against a flank attack. Courtois, a foreman, had his left arm pierced by a bullet, and Mme Janssonne was killed.

The carrying off of civilians, which constitutes one of the grossest breaches of international law of which our enemies have been guilty, repeatedly took place.

At the end of February, ten thousand civilian prisoners sent back to France were distributed over the Departments of the Isère, Haute-Savoie, and Savoie. The Inquiry Commissioners visited these refugees who had been sent home. " They were women, children, young people under seventeen and old men of over sixty! " The remainder, those who were over seventeen and under sixty, have doubtless remained in Germany with the exception of those who have been recognised as unfit for military service.

Those who were sent home related their journey from their homes to the concentration camps in Germany, marches and nights spent in enclosures, in a station, in a church; days without food and crowded into cattle trucks. At Frankenthal, the officials opened the doors of the trucks in order to show them to the school children who had assembled for the purpose. And then the terrible scene at Lübeck! The men were ordered to get out of the train and were then taken in one direction while the women were sent in another. Sometimes the separation took place at the outset. " What was particularly revolting " add the Commissioners " was that the German military authority in seizing haphazard the people who happened to be on the spot, had no compunction in separating the various members of a family.... Little children were placed in one convoy and their mothers in another,

and some women are still ignorant as to the fate of their husbands ”.

The refugees have deposed before the Commissioners as to the way in which they were treated in the camps, but their very appearance was the most terrible evidence. Young people whose pale emaciated faces express hopelessness, whose chests are racked with ceaseless coughing, whose eyes speak of misery and terror. About twenty of these poor wretches were billeted in the school of Saint-Égrève. The women still thought they were imprisoned and dared not write a letter or leave the room without permission. Of the fresh convoys arriving, one was especially noticeable. When the tramcar arrived, about thirty women, amongst whom were many octogenarians, had to be carried out on stretchers. A doctor, a native of Argentina, Dr. Lapiné, student of the University of Geneva, examined about five hundred of these refugees. He found the majority of them completely worn out. Many old men were suffering from bronchitis, many died at Annemasse of congestion of the lungs or heart failure. Thirty or forty women were suffering from physiological troubles. The doctor attended three cases of insanity (1).

Outrages.

The reports enumerate a number of outrages of which we do not wish to speak except indirectly. Filthy bestiality let loose; victims eight years of age, victims of eighty; a gang hurling themselves on one wretched woman; parents obliged to look on; nuns outraged, before the corpse of a man killed while attempting to prevent the crime; a father who tried to defend his daughter thrown down into the street and killed; his grand-daughter, who was looking out of the window, killed; the outrage effected; fifteen soldiers.

(1) The report finishes with a lively expression of gratitude to the Swiss, who in welcoming our prisoners and giving them every aid and care manifested their warm sympathy. France owes Switzerland a deep debt of gratitude.

Destruction of monuments.

The reports have scarcely mentioned the destruction of our monuments. This is a very painful story still to be told, but told it will be.

Rheims is the greatest and the most terrible victim.

The Germans lied when they said that they bombarded Notre-Dame de Rheims because the French had placed guns on the towers and were using them as a post of observation. But they have given themselves the lie, for on several occasions, long after their shells had rendered the towers of the cathedral untenable they recommenced the bombardment as though in a fit of rage. There can be no doubt that they are trying their best to destroy Notre-Dame de Rheims.

Why? In order to show their strength, because every manifestation of strength rejoices their souls. Through joy of destruction, for this infernal joy bursts out in many dithyrambs on war. Through the savagery of old campaigners; a German newspaper reported this utterance of a general, " If all the monuments situated between our cannons and those of the enemy went to the devil we would not care a bit ".

Let us trace their motives further back.

The humblest of our school children knows that in this church our kings became kings by consecration. Charles the Seventh was only the "*gentil Dauphin*" when Joan of Arc took him to Rheims to receive the sacrament of kingship. Our children know that on the day of the consecration Joan stood up in the chancel and held his standard in her hand and prayed that he should be in honour as he had been in sorrow. Our little boys and our little girls know that Notre-Dame de Rheims is the cathedral of France. The Germans too know well these noble traditions of our nation. They are quite capable of wishing to offend us and to make us suffer in a very tender spot in order to satisfy their hatred.

that hatred of which one of them has told us we can have no idea. "The Germans", said Heinrich Heine, "are far more vindictive than the Latin peoples; and that is because they are idealists even in hatred. We Germans hate thoroughly and for a long time, till our last breath".

We asked ourselves, why, and we have answered: to show their strength, for the joy of destruction, through the savagery of old campaigners, through hate. We must add through pride. How could they be moved by the destruction of monuments of the past, these people who are preparing a splendid future for humanity? Monuments? Why they will rebuild as many monuments as may be wanted! They are looking for the architecture of the future. They are experimenting in it by colossal sketches in Berlin and other places and they declare that they will be able to discover it. A young writer, Gundolf, a critic and lyric poet, madder than the rest, expresses the opinion of many of his compatriots in this maxim, which he wrote in the *Frankfurter Zeitung*: "*Wer stark ist zu schaffen, der darf auch zerstören.*" (He who is strong enough to create has the right to destroy) (1).

Corroborative evidence : the Belgian reports.

As was only to be expected, the Germans have challenged all the evidence collected by our Commission of Inquiry. To this challenge we shall oppose the honour of our enquirers, the scrupulous care which they have employed in their task and the reports of the Belgian inquiry. Belgium also entrusted her inquiry to men whose names and offices command respect and confidence, for the most part judges of high position. The Belgian Commission, like the French, proceeded with meticulous fairness. They accepted nothing,

(1) It is quoted by Romain Rolland in the 10th *Cahier Vaudois, Pendant la guerre*, p. 18, note 2.

as M. Pierre Nothomb has said "without enquiry, without cross-examination, without strict investigation". Besides, the facts which they have found are exactly the same in Belgium as they are in France.

The only difference, and this is terrible for unhappy Belgium, is that the Germans there used the method of atrocities on a large scale. Belgium was the first to come in their way. She therefore was the first that had to be terrified. After the first engagement, the Germans on entering Visé shot civilians and obliged the population to gaze at two corpses stretched on a path, an officer crying out "This fate awaits you all, if you remain hostile!". And so the terrible, the unimaginable tale began; everywhere, murders, pillaging, fire, small and large ruins. Then whoever could flee, fled from the villages and towns; crowds, frightened and suffering, fled along the roads towards France. It was in Belgium that the German Army had to mobilise their vanguard, terror(1).

There is another added reason for the atrocities. The Belgian resistance, which was so improbable, was unforeseen, and it upset the time-table prescribed by the Emperor. "We must make haste" the Imperial Chancellor had said. Belgium, by preventing haste from being made, was about to spoil everything. What audacity and what a crime for such a small country! In fact if the pebble hurled by this small David at the forehead of Goliath did not kill him, it marked him for death. The anger of Goliath was fierce.

But the Germans deny their crimes in Belgium as they

(1) The *Journal des Débats* of the 2nd March quotes an article written by M. Walter Blœm in the *Kölnische Zeitung*. This intellectual congratulates himself on the success of the frightfulness (*Abschreckung*) in Belgium. Now, the Germans are quite undisturbed in this country. "Is there a single man anywhere who imagines that the Belgian capital would have withstood us, who walk about to-day in Brussels as in our own country, if this capital had not trembled and did not still tremble to-day through fear of our vengeance? War is not a pastime, it is the threshold of hell. He who puts his finger in burns his hand and loses his life. And so the poor Belgian people, blind and misled, has suffered."

deny their crimes in France, or at least they explain them in such a way that they cast the responsibility on their victims.

We must therefore convince them by their own evidence. And this Joseph Bédier has done in the pamphlet published by our Committee : “ *German atrocities, from German evidence* ”.

German evidence.

Paul Spielmann, a non-commissioned officer, recounts the massacre, after a night alarm, of a village where he declares they were in telephonic communication with the enemy.

“ The inhabitants fled through the village. It was horrible. Blood was plastered on all the houses, and as for the faces of the dead, they were hideous. They were all buried at once, to the number of sixty. Among them many old men and women and one woman about to be delivered.... and three children who had huddled close to one another and had died together.... And this morning, the 2nd September, all the survivors were driven out and I saw four little boys carrying on two poles a cradle in which was a child of five or six months old.... And I also saw a mother with her two little ones, and one had a large wound in the head and had lost an eye. ”

From an unsigned notebook of a German soldier the following lines are extracted :

“ We destroyed eight houses with their inmates. In one of them two men with their wives and a girl of eighteen were bayoneted. The little one almost unnerved me so innocent was her expression. But it was impossible to check the crowd, so excited were they, for in such moments you are no longer men but wild beasts. ”

The reservist Schlauter wrote these lines :

“ Three hundred of the inhabitants were shot, and the survivors were requisitioned as grave diggers. You should have seen the women at this moment ! But you can't do otherwise. ”

In the *Münchener Neueste Nachrichten* Lieut. Eberlein

relates that after entering the town of Saint Dié at the head of a column, he was obliged to barricade himself inside a house until reinforcements came up and he had a good idea.

“ We had arrested three civilians and suddenly a good idea struck me. We placed them on chairs and made them understand that they must go and sit on them in the middle of the street. On one side entreaties, on the other blows from the butt end of a gun. One gets terribly hardened after a while. At last they were seated outside in the street. I do not know how many prayers of anguish they said; but they kept their hands tightly clasped all the time. I pitied them; but the device worked immediately.... ”

In fact the fire directed from the houses lessened immediately; Lieut. Eberlein was able to occupy the house opposite the one in which he was besieged; reinforcements arrived at last and the Germans were masters of Saint Dié. The three civilians had a lucky escape; others were less fortunate. A reserve regiment entered Saint Dié from another side and had the same good idea as Lieut. Eberlein; they made four civilians seat themselves on a chair; they were killed by French bullets. “ I saw them myself ”, said the Lieutenant, “ stretched out in the middle of the street, near the hospital. ”

And here we have pillage and incendiarism :

“ A motor arrives at the Hospital with booty : a piano, two sewing machines, a lot of albums, and all sorts of other things, ”

notes Private Johannes Thode; and then Private Seb. Reishaupt :

“ Parux is the first village we burnt; then the dance began; villages one after the other by field and meadow on bicycle to the ditches by the roadside, there we ate cherries. ”

And here we have one proof among many of the massacre of wounded soldiers. A non-commissioned officer Klemt tells how in an engagement his regiment suffered heavily from the fire of the French, whom they eventually discovered.

Because the latter had climbed trees, the better to fire, he calls them "treacherous brigands". When our soldiers had been brought down from the trees by rifle fire "like squirrels", they were received with blows of the butt and the bayonet: "they no longer need doctors". Some were able to hide behind some bushes and they were attacked:

"We will give them no quarter!... we reach a little depression in the ground: here the red trousers, dead or wounded, lie in a heap on the ground. We knock down or bayonet the wounded for we know that these scoundrels fire at our backs when we have gone by. There was a Frenchman there, stretched out full length, face down, pretending to be dead. A kick from a strong fusilier soon taught him that we were there. Turning round he asked for quarter.... and he was nailed to the ground. Close to me I heard odd cracking sounds.... they were blows from a gun on the bald head of a Frenchman, which a private of the 154th was dealing out vigorously; he was wisely using a French gun so as not to break his own. Tender hearted souls are so kind to the French wounded that they finish them with a bullet; but others give them as many thrusts and blows as they can."

And the non-commissioned officer, who is a witty fellow, finished his account of this massacre thus:

"But whether wounded slightly or severely, the brave fusiliers spare their country the cost of caring for many enemies."

When the non-commissioned officer Klemt had written these infamous pages he communicated them to the officer commanding his company and the latter wrote at the bottom "Certified to be exact, de Niem, Lieutenant and Company Commander." And Klemt sends his prose accompanied by some verses to a newspaper of his birth place, the *Jauersches Tageblatt*, with this title: "A day of honour for our Regiment (*Ein Tag der Ehre für unser Regiment*) 24th September 1914".

And so in the 40 pages of his pamphlet in which he has collected extracts from newspapers in facsimile and extracts in facsimile of about 40 German note books, M. Bédier

has given irrefutable proof of every species of odious acts proved by the inquiries of the Belgian and French Commissions (1).

(1) The Germans have been impressed by the effect produced by M. Bédier's pamphlet. Then have tried to contest its value. The author has successfully replied by an article in the *Revue de Paris* of April the 1st, which has been republished as a pamphlet by our Committee under the title : " J. Bédier, *How Germany seeks to justify her atrocities.* "

II

THE GERMAN THEORY OF WAR

War and humanity.

There is a last proof indirect but completely confirming the French and Belgian reports. The German practice in war as set forth by generals Clausewitz, Hartmann, Blume and Bernhardt is justified and recommended by the German theory of war. These are no mean authorities.

Karl von Clausewitz, born in 1780, died in 1831, is the greatest military writer of Germany. He went through all the Prussian Campaigns from 1806-1815. His great work *vom Kriege* — On War — has been the manual of all German generals (1). General von Schlieffen, ex-chief of the General Staff, speaking in 1905 on the doctrine of Clausewitz said " From this doctrine many precepts have passed into our rules. Whoever teaches war amongst us still borrows today from Clausewitz. " General von Hartmann (1817-1878), a distinguished officer of the General Staff, commanded a division of cavalry in 1870-1871 (2). General von Blume, born in 1855, passed his life on the General Staff to which he was attached as captain in 1870-1871, and in an important position in the Prussian ministry for war. He commanded the 15th German Army Corps at Strassburg (5). — General

(1) Published in 1852; the last edition is in the *Hinterlassene Schriften* (1867) vols. I-III.

(2) Von Hartmann wrote *Militärische Nothwendigkeit und Humanität* (Military necessity and humanity) in the *Deutsche Rundschau*, 1877-1878, vols. XIII and XIV.

(5) Von Blume, besides several monographs on the wars of the revolution and the war of 1870-1871, wrote an important volume *Strategy* (second edition 1886) which epitomises the philosophy of Field Marshal v. Moltke's General Staff.

von Bernhardi, born in 1849, a brilliant cavalry officer, was chief of staff of the 16th Army Corps at Karlsruhe and then departmental chief in the Head quarters staff (1). The official publication edited by the General Staff, *Kriegsbrauch im Landkriege* (*The usages of war by land*) (2), is permeated with the ideas and notions of these generals.

The essential part of the doctrine is contained in the following passages from Clausewitz :

“ Whoever uses force, *without any consideration* and without sparing blood, has sooner or later the advantage if the enemy does not proceed in the same way. *One cannot introduce a principle of moderation into the philosophy of war without committing an absurdity.*

“ It is a vain and erroneous tendency to wish to neglect the element of brutality in war merely because we dislike it.... It would be a fallacy to reduce the war of civilised nations entirely to an intelligent act on the part of the Government and to imagine it as continually freeing itself more and more from all feeling of passion.... If we find that civilised nations do not put their prisoners to death or do not devastate towns and countries, we must realise that intelligence exercises greater influence on their mode of carrying on war and that this intelligence has taught them more effectual means of applying force than these rude acts of mere instinct ” (5).

Thus speaks the master. Half a century afterwards the pupil von Hartmann annotates his teaching for the benefit of our contemporaries :

“ It would be giving ourselves up light-heartedly to a chimaera not to realise that war in the present day will have to be

(1) Von Bernhardi, after having collaborated in the great work on the military art of Frederick II, published in the *Einzelschriften* of the German Staff vol. VI (1902), published well known studies of pan-German policy and strategy under the title of *Unsere Zukunft* (Our future), 1911; *Vom heutigen Kriege*, (On war of to-day) 1912; *Deutschland und der nächste Krieg* (Germany and the next war), 1912.

(2) Published in 1902; translated into French by D. Carpentier under the title *Lois et coutumes de la guerre continentale*, 1904.

An English translation, by Professor J. H. Morgan has recently been published by Mr. John Murray under the title “ *The German war book.* ”

(5) CLAUSEWITZ, *Vom Kriege*, vol. I, p. 4 and 5.

conducted *more recklessly, less scrupulously*, more violently, more ruthlessly, than ever in the past.... Modern warfare makes use of personal and material means too colossal, submits the national well-being to too violent a trial and lays too hard a hand on the whole economy of states not to demand imperiously as a necessary consequence the *unrestricted* use of the whole armed power that it puts into line " (1):

This " philosophy of war " is naturally alarmed by the protests of contemporary humanitarians. The official *Kriegsbrauch* has taken its precautions against the latter :

" But since the tendency of thought of the last century was dominated essentially by humanitarian considerations which not infrequently degenerated into sentimentality and flabby emotion (*Sentimentalität und weichlicher Gefühlschwärmerei*) there have not been wanting attempts to influence the development of the usages of war in a way which was in fundamental contradiction with the nature of war and its object. Attempts of this kind will also not be wanting in the future, the more so as these agitations have found a kind of moral recognition in some provisions of the Geneva Convention and the Brussels and Hague Conferences.

" Moreover the officer is a child of his time. He is subject to the intellectual tendencies which influence his own nation; the more educated he is the more will this be the case. The danger that, in this way, he will arrive at false views about the essential character of war must not be lost sight of. The danger can only be met by a thorough study of war itself. By steeping himself in military history an officer will be able to guard himself against excessive humanitarian notions, it will teach him that certain severities are indispensable to war, nay more, that the only true humanity very often lies in a ruthless application of them " (2).

Thus the German Government sends its delegates to Brussels and The Hague; these delegates of the King and Emperor sign documents which together constitute a sort of law of war; and, at the same time, the Great General Staff warns German officers against these " humanitarian consid-

(1) Article quoted, *Deutsche Rundschau*, volume XIV, p. 76-77, 94-95.

(2) *The German war book* (Professor Morgan's translation), p. 54-55.

rations which not infrequently degenerated into sentimentality and flabby emotion"; it deplures that they have found recognition "in some provisions of the Geneva Convention and the Brussels and Hague Conferences". That which we believed to be the progress of humanity, the hope for a better future, is, so far as the chiefs of the German army are concerned, mere useless babble.

It is true that these thinkers on war would indeed recognise the existence of what is called humanity and even accord it some rights, and von Blume (1) admits that the employment of violent means ought to be limited "by the generally recognised considerations of morality, humanity and by the law of nations". But so much the worse for humanity and for the law of nations if they find themselves in conflict with that which von Hartmann calls *military realism* :

"Military realism" this General writes "absolutely requires, in its own exclusive interest, to be given precedence over all the requirements for which scientifically constituted international law would desire to secure predominance,... Every restriction on acts of war, once military operations have begun, tends to weaken the co-ordinated action of the belligerent.... *The law of nations must beware of paralysing military action by placing fetters upon it....*

"War, of its own nature, is the negation of the principles on which rest civilisation, culture, and the laws which control their development. It puts in their place a state of things which legalises force and individual might. If one understands by civilisation the equilibrium of rights and duties which sustains the social structure of nations and which their institutions guarantee, *the term "civilised war" as employed by Bluntschli seems hardly intelligible.... It leads to an irreducible contradiction....*" (2).

"Distress and damage to the enemy are the conditions neces-

(1) In his treatise on *Strategy*, p. 5 : "Among civilised nations an unanimous sentiment with regard to law has gradually been formed, which causes them to reject certain violent methods of war", and he instances, "actions against enemy soldiers in excess of those necessary to disarm them", acts of aggression against life and health of non-combatants, etc.

(2) *Von Kriege*, vol. I p. 4.

sary to bend and break his will. The efficacy of these methods constitutes their undeniable justification, since by them one can attain with certainty an exactly defined military aim" (1).

Moreover von Hartmann proclaims in eloquent terms the rights of the "passion necessary to the soldiers":

"The combatant has need of passion.... All military effort is, above all, personal. It presupposes the entire affirmation of the individual character. It requires that the combatant who makes this effort *shall be entirely freed from the shackles of a constraining legality which is in all respects oppressive.... Violence and passion are the two principal levers of every warlike act, and let us say it without fear, of all warlike greatness.*" (2).

This is just what the great General Staff means when it declares:

"Every means of war without which the object of the war cannot be obtained is permissible.... *It follows from these universally valid principles that wide limits are set to the subjective freedom and arbitrary judgment of the Commanding Officer*" (3).

Thus only very slight value can be given to the restrictions set by the Grand General Staff to the employment of force.

The following are forbidden: The use of poisons, for example the poisoning of wells; putting a price on the head of an enemy; the employment of weapons which cause unnecessary suffering; the murder of wounded incapable of fighting, and of prisoners; the employment of prisoners for work which would amount to co-operation in the war; the employment of neutral territory for warlike operations. The history of this war, which the Germans have made so cruel, shows what has become of the majority of these prohibitions. Besides all are invalidated by the statements which we have just read.

It reflects honour on us as Frenchmen to compare the German military doctrine with that of our army. The latter

(1) VON HARTMANN, *Militärische Notwendigkeit und Humanität*, in the *Deutsche Rundschau*, vol. XIII, p. 119-125.

(2) *Ibidem*, p. 122.

(3) *The German War Book* (Prof. Morgan's translation), p. 64.

is contained in the Hague Conventions : the Convention of 29th July, 1899, which our Minister of War notified to the army on the 16th July, 1901 ; and the Convention of the 18th October, 1907, which is inserted in one section of our instructions for active service. And our General Staff does not, as has that of Berlin, warn officers against the " humanitarian considerations " which have prevailed in the Convention of Geneva and in the Conferences of Brussels and the Hague. None of our military writers has taught the German theory of the cruelty of war.

The methods of war. — The cry of distress.

Given this theory of war, what will be the methods of war?

The seizure of enemy territory is a matter of course " not always ", Clausewitz says, " with the intention of keeping it, but to levy war contributions upon it, *merely in order to lay it waste* ". It is necessary that a cry of distress should arise from invaded countries :

" Distress, the deep misery of war " adds Julius von Hartmann : " must not be spared to the enemy State. The burden must be and must remain crushing. The necessity of imposing it follows from the very idea of national war....

" That individuals may be severely affected when one makes an example of them intended to serve as a deterrent, is truly deplorable for them. But for the people as a whole, this severity exercised against individuals is a salutary blessing. When national war has broken out, *terrorism* becomes a principle which is necessary from a military standpoint " (1).

One realises that no consideration whatever of religion, of morality or of law could put a check on " principles necessary from a military standpoint ", that there must be no limits to terrorism, and that " passion emancipated from all restraint "

(1) VON HARTMANN, *ibid.* Vol. XIV, p. 117.

has free rein. It is true that if a soldier adopts massacre and incendiarism as a habit, discipline is endangered. Therefore, he must not proceed by individual action, or be led by personal caprice. The commander will give the order to burn : to fulfil the order, soldiers are furnished with fire-lighters for use in war, which figure in the list of munitions. Massacres will be carried out by order by platoons detached for the purpose and pillaging by the " regular service for capture in war " (1), which carries away the captured booty by motor-car or by railway and with all the studied precautions of a veritable concentration in the rear.

Thus disciplined violence will prevent indiscipline, and fear of disorder arising from the application of terrorism is destroyed. Terrorism may also be limited by the fear of reprisals, and the Great General Staff refers to this; but these reprisals presume that Germany is conquered and this hypothesis is inadmissible in the eyes of the German militarists.

Requisitions.

How then are the property and persons of non-combatants treated? The property has to bear requisitions and contributions.

Clausewitz has constructed a complete theory of the law of requisitions. He has shown the hardship of it for the population; but this rigour does not disturb him : " *The law of requisitions* " he says, " *has no other limits than the exhaust-*

(1) *Le Temps* of the 5th January publishes the following extract from the *Frankfurter Zeitung* : " The goods of different sorts seized in the enemies' territories are in such large quantities that the difficulty of knowing where to put them increases day by day. At the request of the Prussian Minister of War & Chambers of Commerce have been asked to give all possible information with regard to storehouses, sheds, etc., which could be used temporarily to warehouse the spoil. It is proposed to divide the goods among all parts of the Empire except the provinces of East Prussia and Posen, and the districts of which Breslau, Oppeln, Düsseldorf, Cologne, Trèves and Aix-la-Chapelle are the central towns, and Alsace and Lorraine.

tion, impoverishment, and destruction of the country ” (1). Von Hartmann completes and defines this :

“ The system of requisitions goes indefinitely beyond the simple right to collect provisions in the country where war is carried on. It implies the full exploitation of that country *in all respects* and whatever the assistance which one is able to promise oneself from it for the army operating there, whether to facilitate and advance its actions, or whether to promote its endurance and ensure its safety.

“ This implies, be it noted, *that military necessities must not establish any distinction between public and private property* and that the army claims the right to take what it requires everywhere and in such manner as it can appropriate it ” (2).

It is true that the great General Staff does not accept this definition of von Hartmann, nor the refusal to distinguish between private and public property, of which the consequences may be so terrible if one considers that the belligerent proposes to exhaust, impoverish and destroy the country of the enemy. It says in strong enough terms that “ the principle that war is conducted only against States, and not against private persons, is uncontested; ” that “ the conqueror is in particular not justified in recouping himself for the cost of the war by inroads upon the property of private persons, even though the war was forced upon him ” (5).

It says too :

“ These levies originated as so-called “ Brandschätzungen ” i. e. as a ransom from plundering and devastation ” “ the law of nations to-day no longer recognises any right to plundering and devastation ” “ levies which can be characterized as simply booty making or plundering... are not permitted by modern opinion. ” Apart from levies imposed “ as a substitute for the supplies to be furnished [as requisitions by the population], “ war levies are therefore only allowed ” (a) “ as a substitute for taxes ”; (b) “ as punishments ”.

But when the financial history of this war has been written,

(1) *Vom Kriege*, vol. II, p. 85.

(2) VON HARTMANN, *ibid.*, vol. XIII, p. 450, 451 et 458.

(5) *The German War Book* (Prof. Morgan's translation) p. 155-156.

when the requisitions, contributions and extortions have been added up, the goods and merchandise stolen from individuals counted, one will see what has become of the distinction between the two kinds of property. One will see, on the other hand, whether the war contributions have saved the population from the incendiaryism, the pillaging and devastation for which they were formerly a ransom.

Prisoners and non-combatants.

Among the persons most deserving of consideration are combatants who can fight no more, prisoners and wounded. Those into whose hands these men have fallen owe them assistance and maintenance. On this the great General Staff and von Hartmann agree : " Ill-treatment of unarmed men is a crime ", says von Hartmann. But the Great General Staff makes a reservation : " only the most extreme necessity of personal preservation and the security of the State could justify the killing of prisoners ". This reservation is disquieting.

With regard to non-combatant civilians, von Hartmann puts a peculiar question; after having stated that in 1870 France had called to the colours 6,5 per cent of her population, he asks: " after this how thus was it possible to recognise the rest of the population as peaceful? "

When 6,5 per cent of the population are in the firing line, there remain 93,5 per cent of civilians, women and children, unfamiliar with the business of arms; and it is a number large enough to notice. And the greater has been the number enlisted for the fighting forces, the more probable it is that only men unfit for service, invalids, those who are too old and those who are too young will remain at home. It does not matter! von Hartmann cannot see the non-combatants, and so the German generals are set at ease with regard to certain delicate questions, such as the following :

Is it permissible of set purpose to open fire on the civil population ?

Yes, if a fortified place is being bombarded :

“ In a fortress war also, the attack is directed mainly against the moral strength of the opponent. The object is to break down the will power of the commander.... The attack persists until the losses of material and of men, which will be let loose with all the violence of a natural deluge, the sudden dissolution of all restraining bonds, and the mental disturbance of all the defenders make it clear to demonstration that the position is untenable, and until, overborne by all those moral and material disturbances, the commander is driven to capitulate ” (1).

It is often of importance that the attack on a fortified position shall be made by a sudden surprise; and, as a secret plan of operation must not be disclosed, the investing force is under no obligation to give notice of the intended bombardment :

“ A preliminary notification of bombardment ” declares the German staff in its brochure, “ is just as little to be required as in the case of a sudden assault. The claims to the contrary put forward by some jurists are completely inconsistent with war and must be repudiated by soldiers; the cases in which a notification has been voluntarily given do not prove its necessity. The besieger will have to consider for himself the question whether the very absence of notification may not be itself a factor of success, by means of surprise, and indeed whether notification will not mean a loss of precious time » (2).

Hostages.

It is a recognised practice to select hostages from amongst the population of invaded countries. They answer for the peaceful conduct of the population; but is it legitimate to use this measure, which may properly be taken to assure the safety of a German stationary garrison, to guarantee

(1) VON HARTMANN, *loco citato*, vol. XIII, p. 470.

(2) *Lois de la guerre continentale*, p. 45. — *The German war book* (Prof. Morgan's translation), p. 78.

also the safety of a body of men on the march? In 1870, the Germans used to place French hostages on the engines of trains, which were carrying troops to the front, or bringing them back.

“ A measure harsh and cruel ”, says the German staff, “ and one which exposed to grave danger the lives of peaceful inhabitants without any fault on their part. Every writer outside Germany has stigmatized this measure as contrary to the law of nations.... As against this unfavourable criticism it must be pointed out that this measure, in the particular circumstance, was the only method which promised to be effective.... *It is justified by the fact that it has secured complete success* ” (1)....

One could go far in the justification of “ harsh and cruel ” measures of war, if the fact that they secure “ a complete success is enough to justify them ”. Just as they protected military trains, they would like to protect columns on the march. A screen of enemy civilians which the columns push before them will guarantee “ with complete success ” their own fusillades. Thus that action, one of the most atrocious with which Germany has been charged, is defended, as all the others, *without exception*, can be defended, by the German theory of war (2).

(1) *Ibidem*, pages 115-114. *Ibidem*, pages 119-120.

(2) General von Hartmann has found the way of reconciling the conflict between humanity and cruelty :

“ Severity and harshness ”, says he, “ change into their contraries, when they have been able to instil into the opponent the resolve to ask for peace ”. And to this statement Field Marshal von Hindenburg subscribes in a recent interview : “ The country is suffering. Lodz is stricken with famine. That is deplorable, but it is good. One does not carry on war upon sentimental principles. The more pitilessly war is carried on, the more humane it is at bottom; for so much the sooner will it be finished. The methods of war, which bring about peace with the greatest speed, are and remain *the most humane methods*. ”

To this a reply readily offers itself :

Whosoever remains insensible to the actions of war carried on with savagery, or if he experiences any feeling, banishes it as inconvenient and contrary to the objects of war (just as the soldier does, who for a moment is agitated by the glance of some poor little child before he slaughters her), cannot claim the right to make himself believe that he is acting according to the law of humanity, for the quality of humanity is not in him.

III

IDEAS INSPIRING THE THEORY

War is a necessity for Germany

This inhuman theory of war is more or less consciously inspired in the Germans by three ideas, of which the first is that Germany cannot continue to exist in the narrow frame in which she is set. Her soil being mostly poor produces insufficient support for her people; and that people increases and multiplies indefinitely; from being mainly agricultural, it has become mainly a manufacturing people; the science of its laboratories directing and fructifying the work of its trades. This overpopulated country is today an overproductive country. It must, at whatever cost, find a place for its surplus of men, and markets for its surplus of merchandise: "The Empire today is no longer a body politic hemmed in by territorial boundaries", writes Karl Lamprecht, a signatory of the manifesto of the intellectuals, and the most widely known historian of Germany since the death of Treitschke.

Lamprecht adds that in France we call Paris the city of tentacles, because actually "that city, like a polypus, embraces with its grasping arms and suckers the whole country.... and drains it to exhaustion; it is not in that sense, but in a good sense, that we can call the German Empire the tentacular German State". *Tentacular state* is a correct definition; one of those tentacles of Germany for a moment held Agadir; another, for longer Kiao-Châu; a third is enfolding Antwerp. There is not a point of the globe which is not threatened; whatever happens in the world, whatever anyone or anything lights upon, one of those tentacles is always on the look out, always boring through, getting ready

to grip on to it. German commerce has all the fascinations of a war; its triumphant statistics are bulletins of victory : it is the confederate and companion of the military forces. " The economic forces must be put in motion like the army and the fleet, which are one with them ", again says Karl Lamprecht (1).

" War desired by God and by nature "

The second idea is that war is desired by God and by nature.

Desired by God, thinks Marshal von Moltke, who in thanking the Jurisconsult Bluntschli for having sent him a handbook of the laws of belligerents, pronounced that war is an element in the order of things established by God, that universal peace is a dream, and not even a beautiful dream, that war gives the greatest stimulus to the most noble virtues; without it the world would stagnate in materialism. This also is the opinion of the historian Treitschke; he teaches that universal peace is the most dangerous of utopias; he warns us that the commandment " Thou shalt not kill " must no more be taken literally than the apostolic direction to give one's goods to the poor, and he applauds in the Old Testament the lyric note in which is celebrated the splendour of just and holy wars. Again this is the opinion of Bernhardt; that general invokes the authority of Luther : the reformer bade us, at the same time that we were thinking of the scourges of war, to bear in mind also the still greater scourges from which war keeps us free; children, said he, dare not look again upon the surgeon who has cut off one of their legs, not understanding that by the operation he has saved the whole of the rest of the body; let us not be children : let us in a manly way understand the part to be played by the

(1) These quotation from Lamprecht are to be found in the *Essay on the formation of the German public spirit*, by Jacques Flach, member of the Institute.

sword; that part comes from God; war is as necessary to man as food and drink (1).

Desired by nature : that the strong should contend against the weak, and get the better of him, says Treitschke, is " the inevitable law of life " ; " especially in the life of nature " , writes Bernhardi (2), " struggle is the law of existence. " ; in the same way a perpetual struggle for possession, power, and domination controls the relations of peoples to each other, and, more often, right is only respected if it is in accord with self-interest.

This sinister idea of war, based upon God and upon nature, seems to be contradicted by no one in Germany. Well, it is true that peace, especially prosperous and rich peace, is dangerous to our imperfectly organised communities, and that war heightens beautiful thoughts, and masculine virtues ; but is it necessary to believe that for the purification of human blots and stains God desires no other agents but the sword and fire ? Is it inevitably necessary that, from time to time, people should take one another by the throat, and cause so many horrors to follow in dreadful sequence : millions of corpses, the torture and groans of the wounded, so much bloodshed, so many broken hearts, so many tears and all so bitter ? And those who seek in the Old Testament arguments to support their theory of despair, by what right do they disregard the New Testament, and by what words of Christ can they justify themselves ? Is it by : " Blessed are the peacemakers " or forsooth by : " For all they that take the sword shall perish by the sword " ? On the other hand, it is certain that political history has still far too close an analogy to natural history ; but we must desire that the analogy should gradually become less and less close. To pretend that the struggle for existence must control

(1) As to « the religion of might and war in Germany » see *L'expansion de l'Allemagne* by Captain H. ANDRILLON, pages 25-40.

(2) *Unsere Zukunft (Our Future)*, p. 57; and pp. 106-7 of an English translation of this book, which is published by Messrs. Wm. Dawson et Sons Ltd. under the title : *Britain as Germany's vassal*.

humanity, as in nature, is a monstrous perversion of the great Darwinian theory, for humanity has over nature this superiority, namely, that she sets before herself a moral end. It is by moral and social effort that man after so many centuries has reached the point of "enjoying a life a little better than that of the savage in a state of nature", as a disciple of Darwin has said — I mean Huxley — who sets up the moral law in opposition to "the gladiatorial law of existence".

Germany must govern the world.

The third idea (a very old idea) is that the mission of Germany is to rule the world for the greater good of humanity. The German Emperor-King of the middle ages fancied himself to be the successor of Caesar, and of Augustus. In the fourteenth century Charles IV in his Golden Bull gives out as a matter of certainty that his function is "to rule the universe", "to distribute amongst Christian peoples the benefits of peace and tranquillity", "by his good providence to support the tottering world". So "the soul of His Sublimity", said he "is continually disturbed by the innumerable cares, which public affairs, and the government of nationalities, diverse in customs, mode of life and language, impose upon him". To aid him in that task he nominated amongst the great officers of his crown, an arch-chancellor of Italy, and an arch-chancellor of the Gauls.

The Kings of the rising nations, France and England, become restless under the pretensions of Caesar, and it is curious, and even amusing, to see what precautions they took against that mystic prototype of the pangermanism of to-day. One day the Emperor Charles IV came to Paris to visit our King Charles V. The latter, being a very prudent man, was apprehensive that his guest would wish to play the emperor in the country of the "fleurs de lys"; so, as he knew that His Sublimity was accustomed to make his entry into the impe-

rial cities mounted on a white charger, for his entry into Paris he sent him black horses, and he himself preceded the emperor on a big white palfrey, richly caparisoned with the arms of France. Some years afterwards, the emperor Sigismund, going to visit the King of England, was received on disembarking by the Duke of Gloucester, who drove his horse right into the water, and, pointing his sword towards his august breast, called upon the German to swear that he would undertake nothing against the sovereignty of the King of England.

We must not exclaim in reference to these incidents " Old tales ". Nothing is old for the tenacious memory of Germany. The Germans believe that the history of mankind is divided into three periods : Hellenism, Romanism, and Germanism, and that *Römertum* has for its only and immediate successor *Germanentum*. The mind of the Emperor William, that mind which prances over the whole domain of time and space, readily transports itself to the memory of Roman greatness. On the 4th October 1900, when he had laid the foundation stone of the Roman museum at the Saalburg, he struck it three blows with his silver hammer, and, in striking the second blow, he uttered these words, " I dedicate this stone to the youth of Germany, to the rising generations who will be able to learn in the new museum the meaning of an universal Empire ". At the third blow he added, " I dedicate this stone to the future of our German Fatherland. May it in the time to come, by the united action of its princes and its peoples, their armies and their citizens, become as powerful, as strongly united, as unique, as the universal Roman Empire, so that one may say in the future : " I am a German citizen " as one used to say in olden times : " *Civis Romanus sum* " (1). And the same emperor has displayed in a Roman camp restored by him, this inscription : " *Trajano, imperatori Romanorum, Wilhelmus II imperator Germa-*

(1) See ANDRILLON, *L'Expansion...*, p. 406.

norum, " which may be correctly interpreted to be the homage to a predecessor by his successor in the government of the world.

But if Germany succeeds Rome, it is with the intent of doing more and better than Rome. She has revised the ancient civilisations, but always keeping intact the specific genius of her race, a race that is superior to all others. She is the necessary instructress of the humanity of to-day and of the humanity to come (1).

(1) There is a complete contemporary literature in Germany in glorification of the German race. The scholars Woltmann and Wilser are conspicuous in it. Woltmann teaches that the cultural standard of a people is measured by the amount of Germanism which it contains. That principle serves as a guiding thread throughout the whole course of history. He knows why the Roman civilisation perished; it is because that civilisation lost in the wars of Marius and Sulla its fair men, and because the enfranchisement of the slaves — Syrians and others — led to the predominance of the dark people, who were inferior in intelligence. He forbids us to believe that the Renaissance of art and letters in Italy was due to an awakening of the spirit of antiquity: " The post-Roman culture in Italy is the special work of the German immigrants " into the Peninsula. " Extraordinarily small is the share of the Mediterranean elements in the creation of genius, although they are the base of the Italian population ". In the same way, all that is good and great in France comes from Germany. All the great Frenchmen had the German skull, complexion, and characteristics. Montaigne had a fresh colour, fair hair, blue eyes; Voltaire was tall, with fair hair and blue eyes; Lafayette was also tall, with fair hair and blue eyes; Mirabeau and Danton were of athletic frame, and had blue eyes. Victor Hugo was fair and ruddy. Woltmann tries to prove moreover that the names of those great personages are of German origin. Naturally Woltmann gives the injunction " to exalt amongst the Germans the sentiment of race, which glories in its ascendancy, and despises the enemy ". He firmly believes that " the German race is called to embrace the earth within its sovereignty, to exploit the treasures of nature, and the forces of labour "; the other races he calls *die passiven Rassen* (the passive races). These words are taken from a book, the title of which is significant: *Politische Anthropologie*. Renan prophesied of the conquerors of 1870 that they would finish by making war a matter of race. They have in reality reached that point, and how can wars of that kind, racial wars based on the evolution of natural history, fail to be horrible in character?

As for Wilser, in his *Herkunft und Urgeschichte der Arier* (*Prehistoric origin of the Aryans*); he teaches as something which is a matter of course, *selbstverständlich*, that the Germans have acquired without contest the inheritance of the Romans: those " warriors of the North, by the mere rattle of their arms, have won the parapets of the Capitol ". And those Germans " have created all artistic civilisation since

“ The races still to come implore you, the stranger in far distant lands implores you, these and all the ages of humanity to come have faith in you, and implore you to guard jealously against the possibility that, in the great confederation of a new humanity, that member should disappear which for the existence of the rest, is the most important of all..... It is you of all the modern nations that have in special measure received into your safe keeping the seeds of human perfection, and to whom the leading part in their development has been entrusted. If you succumb, humanity succumbs with you, without any hope of a future renovation ” (1).

Thus spoke Fichte at the commencement of the last century, on the eve of the day when Germany rose up against Napoleon. Since then, that magnificent and mystic declaration of haughty pride has been repeated a hundred times.

It is, for example, Heinrich Heine, the emancipated Prussian as he calls himself, who, after having announced to the Germans that they would take back from France Alsace and Lorraine, added “ Not only Alsace and Lorraine, but the whole of France and Europe, and the world itself will find salvation and become ours. Yes, the whole world shall be German. I have often dreamed of that mission of the universal domination of Germany when I was walking in my reveries under the evergreen pines of my fatherland..... ” It is Giesebrecht, the historian of the Holy Empire, who, vaunting the glory of the German name in the period of the Empire, claims for Germany “ the right of domination ” because she is a nation of the elect, a noble race, and that the middle ages up to our own period ”! That is what he sets out to prove in the *Zeitschrift für deutsche Kunst und Decoration*, vol. II (1899).

It is possible that the writings of those two men, of Woltmann especially, have produced amongst the Germans some shrugging of the shoulders; but shrugging the shoulders at displays of patriotic pride is rare in Germany. Moreover, Woltmann and Wilser are in complete philosophic agreement with the men of importance whose names and evidence will be given later.

(1) This translation is made from the French translation by HOVELAQUE, in the *Revue de Paris*, 5th April, 1915, p. 550.

consequently it is proper for her to control her neighbours, as it is the right and duty of every man, who is endowed with more spirit and force, to control the less well endowed persons who are about him. There are of course many other champions : historians, philosophers, philologists, ethnographers, poets, prose writers; there are, too, large and solid histories, elementary handbooks, lively pamphlets, monographs, journals, speeches, there is the whole teaching of Richard Wagner.

In the deep emotions of the present moment, Germany more loudly than ever proclaims her self-confidence. " We have entered into the war ", writes the historian Lamprecht, " with hearts high and pure, permeated with the aspirations of our national future. That future we will fill with the blossoms of our culture; *it is assured to us by the desire that inspires and unites all Germans to raise the world to full nobleness and perfection.....* " (1). The hour of German victory in fact will be that of the salvation of humanity. " Then ", writes O. Gierke, " the blind shall see, the deaf shall hear, all the peoples, whether they wish it or not, shall understand that the German culture is the truest, the most deeply rooted..... the most necessary member, *das unentbehrlichste Glied*, of universal culture " (2). And the poet Wolfskehl, rejecting the hand outstretched by the mistaken attitude of Romain Rolland, declares : " Today the question is that of the life or death of European culture. Your accomplices sin against the Holy Ghost of Europe. We make this war for all the humanity of Europe. This war comes from God. The divine element in humanity is at stake " (3).

God reappears here; for just as He wills war for the good of humanity, so again for the good of humanity, for the sal-

(1) This translation is made from the French translation by CHEVRIILLON in the *Revue de Paris*, 15th April 1914, p. 724.

(2) This translation is made from the French translation by CHEVRIILLON, in the *Revue de Paris*, 15th March 1915, p. 266.

(3) In the *Frankfurter Zeitung* of the 12th December 1914. See Hovelacque, *loco citato*, p. 554.

vation of men, He wills the victory of Germany. This intimacy, this close bond between God and Germany, has many times been vaunted by the Emperor William : " The good God would never have given Himself so much concern for our German fatherland, if He were not reserving a great destiny for us ; we are the salt of the earth ; God has called us to civilize the world, " said he in 1905, at the moment of his setting out to perform at Tangiers one of those feats that he destines for history. At Münster, in September 1907, he affirmed again the collaboration of God and Germany : " Let all the old and new subjects of this Empire, the citizens, the peasants, the working men, unite in one and the same sentiment of love and fidelity towards the fatherland, and the German people will be the block of granite, upon which our Lord God will be able to raise and perfect the civilization of the world ; it is then that the saying of the poet will be made good : " The world some day will owe its salvation to Germanism, *Am deutschem Wesen wird einmal noch die Welt genesen.* " These words of the Emperor, that quotation from the poet, impressed the historian Lamprecht, who repeated them in the lectures given by him at Leipzig, in September, 1914, where he calls them " prophetic words " (1).

Now the day foretold by the Emperor seems to have arrived. In the month of March in this year the Privy Councillor of the Consistory, Professor Mahling, speaking in Berlin before an audience in which the Empress was represented by certain ladies of the household, announced that the hour of the world-wide mission of Germany had struck : *Die Stunde der Weltmission des deutschen Volkes hat geschlagen*, and he asked : " Are we prepared for it ? *Do we desire to be the hammer which God wields ?* " And, calling to witness the conduct which " their inward life " inspires in the soldiers of Germany during this war : " In them, we can say

(1) These lectures have been published under the title : *Krieg und Kultur* (War and Culture).

boldly, God is working with us, *bei denen ist, das können wir kühnlich sagen, Gott am Werke*" (1).

This is the language of the religious world, no doubt, but after their sort the free-thinkers subscribe to it. It is not long since the emancipated *Berliner Tageblatt* was obliged to confess : " We have not reached our aim; it is even possible that we may have yet to go through some distressing times "; but it was not troubled : " The German victory is not a matter of chance, it is a metaphysical certainty. If it is true that the circumstances which control the history of peoples depend on a *superior will which can exercise discernment*, we can and ought to believe that Providence has reserved us for mighty tasks " (2). See then God summoned to give victory to Germany, under penalty of being declared to be without discernment, or even non-existent.

Combined effect of these three ideas.

Of these three inspiring ideas, the first — the necessity that Germany should enlarge her place in the world — is a cause of war, which by itself to her is all sufficient.

Germany does not disguise the vastness of her claims : annexations of territory, pure and simple, the subjection of other countries to her economic principles and to her culture. In truth, from time to time, she protests her pacific intentions; she would like to gain an universal acceptance for the establishment of her empire. On one occasion, speaking at Bremen, the Emperor William denied that he had ever had the design of imposing on the world a domination like that of Alexander and Napoleon : " If later ", added he, " men are to speak in the course of

(1) Quoted from the *Allgemeine Zeitung* of the 15th March last, by the *Journal des Débats* of the 30th March 1915.

(2) Quoted in *Le Temps* of the 17th April 1915. — The same day *Le Temps* quotes an article from the *Franckfort Gazette* : the author no longer believes in the victory of Germany; we have to defend our existence, says he, and he laments the failure " of the hope that between to-day and to-morrow the German spirit can *heal* the world ".

history of a universal dominion of the Hohenzollerns, that dominion must be established not upon military conquests, but upon the confidence of the nations, who all pursue the same ideal ". But never has he been able seriously to hope for that *confidence* of the peoples, and against that pacific declaration can be set many others, which he has fulminated forth with a resounding voice, declarations breathing arrogance and menace. Very openly others have spoken, and none more openly than General Bernhardt : " It is impossible ", says he, in his *War of to-day* (1), " to change the partition of the earth, as it now exists, in our favour by diplomatic artifices. If we wish to gain the position in the world that is due to us, we must rely on our sword. "

And the same General in his book, *Our Future*, proclaimed three years ago the approach of the day of the sword : " Notwithstanding the smooth words of statesmen and the Utopian speeches of the peace apostles, and notwithstanding the paper chains with which European policy has endeavoured to shackle the tremendous latent forces of the nation, ' does one hear God's steps tearing them like spider webs " (2).

Now, with this first idea of war being necessary for the existence of Germany, the two other ideas are combined : and here is the result : war is not only a proceeding necessary to maintain national individuality : it is ennobled, it is sanctified. The warriors of Germany, when they take up their arms, in the first place are obeying a law natural and divine, which condemns humanity to war ; secondly, they are supporting the design of Providence, which has in view, through a German victory, the salvation of the world. The warriors of Germany are the soldiers of God.

It is necessary, in order fully to understand the German practice and theory of war, to go back to these three leading ideas, which for Germany constitute a system of philosophy.

(1) *Vom heutigen Kriege*, p. 15 ; and p. XIII of an English translation of this book, which is published by Messrs. Hodder and Stoughton under the title : " *How Germany makes war.* "

(2) *Unsere Zukunft*, p. 5 ; *Britain as Germany's vassal*, pp. 17-18.

Who would dare to deny a free course to war so understood? Who forsooth would fall into the ridiculous position of setting the claim of pity and humanity against the all-powerful might of the soldier? As well would it avail to contest against Nature her right to let loose her cataclysms, or to blame God for having turned the floods of heaven upon His faithless people, and hurled his thunder against the cities of sin.

*Points at which the German philosophy of war
concerns all nations.*

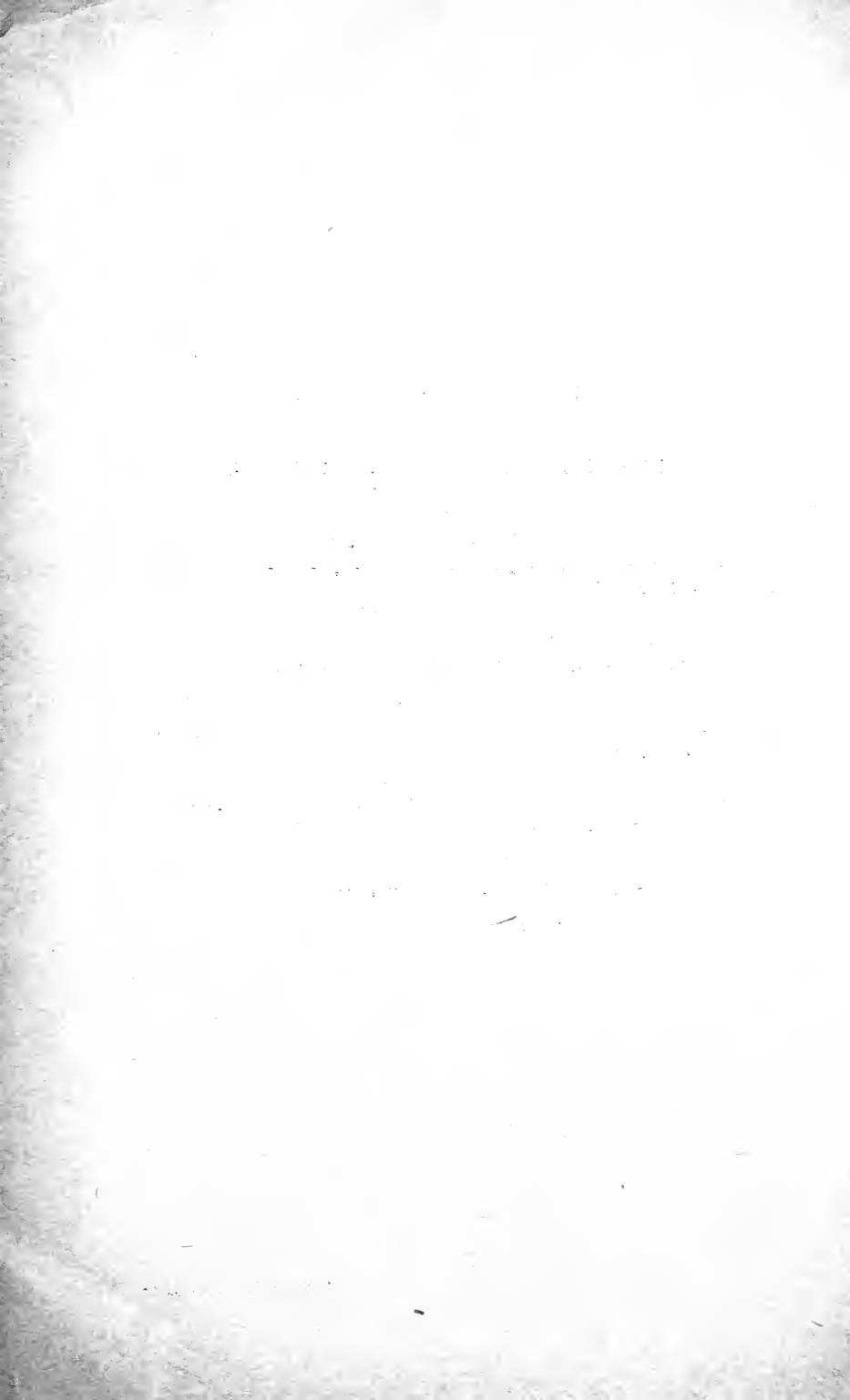
But we cannot finish this examination without pointing out that from this German philosophy of war there comes out another lesson which appeals to all nations.

Under the hegemony of Prussia, a State created by war, Germany, raised to the rank of a great nation, has become the greatest military power of the time in which we live. She has prepared for war each day, as though war were bound to break out next morning. At the same time, inherent energies long confined were giving themselves scope. A new era was commencing, the era of the conquest of the world by the workshops, the countinghouses, and the banks of Germany, and Germany was putting into that struggle her enthusiasm, her vigour, and her method. Her appetite for material success was abnormally sharpened; she was caught by the hunger and thirst of wealth. In pursuit of the conquest of gold she pushed boldness beyond the limit of rash folly. Her industry, her commerce, her banks, were working at such pressure that she was going, beyond recall, towards one or other of these alternatives: either an immense victory or a colossal bankruptcy. Therefore the economic force needed the support of the military force. That they might make it their business to create new openings, to acquire new territory, and with a high hand control the great international highways, of set purpose they rattled the sabre. Again at the same time the German intellect gave

itself up to the worship of material force and transformed it into moral force, as the fountain of right; it declared itself outright the handmaid of militarism. Finally, at the same time the universities, colleges, schools, the clergy, the press, the arts, were teaching this philosophy of war, and were causing to penetrate into the inmost soul of the German people the idea of its superiority over all peoples, both of the past and of the present; all these agencies were giving into the charge of this chosen race the future of humanity, and were revealing to it the secret purpose of God in sanctifying the pride of Germany.

This is why we who are fighting in this war, have the right to say to the peoples who are the spectators of it: — the Germans have the audacity to assert that they have not desired the war, and that they have been driven to it by us. We, I repeat, hold it to be proved with absolute certainty that, in the month of August last, they were the responsible authors of it. But let us leave on one side the immediate and active cause of the war. Only ask yourselves if ever there was a people, in like degree as the German people, set straight upon war, prepared for war as an essential and natural function of their national life; consider how many active and formidable motives were heaped one upon another: material interests, the thirst for gold, a natural and brutal barbarity of character, patriotism morbidly stimulated by folly of arrogance, a complex and powerful mysticism, all these elements were fused for one and the same object, which is to exalt “Germany above all” and to make subject to the people privileged by Providence all the other nations of the earth.

Reflect and you will be convinced that we are fighting, we and our Allies, for the liberty of the world, and that no nation, whether the greatest or the least, is assured of living honourably in a state of peace, until the militarism of Germany shall have been destroyed root and branch.



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