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THE WAR OF IDEAS

BY

SIR WALTER RALEIGH

1917

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# The War of Ideas

AN ADDRESS

TO THE ROYAL COLONIAL INSTITUTE

Delivered Dec. 12 1916

BY

SIR WALTER RALEIGH

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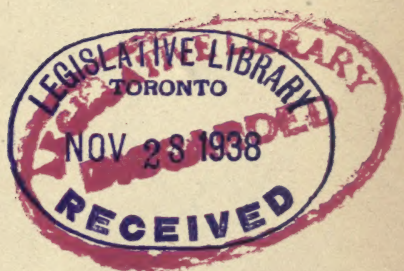
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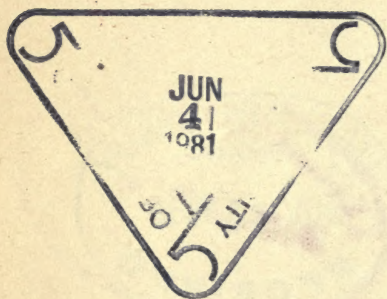
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## THE WAR OF IDEAS

I HOLD, as I daresay you do, that we are at a crisis of our history where there is not much room for talk. The time when this struggle might have been averted or won by talk is long past. During the hundred years before the war we have not talked much, or listened much, to the Germans. For fifty of those years at least the head of waters that has now been let loose in a devastating flood over Europe was steadily accumulating; but we paid little attention to it. People sometimes speak of the negotiations of the twelve days before the war as if the whole secret and cause of the war could be found there; but it is not so. Statesmen, it is true, are the keepers of the lock-gates, but those keepers can only delay, they cannot prevent an inundation that has great natural causes. The world has in it evil enough, and darkness enough. But it is not so bad and so dark that a slip in diplomacy, a careless word, or an impolite gesture, can instantaneously, as if by magic, involve twenty million men in a struggle to the death. It is only clever, conceited men, proud of their neat little minds, who think that because they cannot fathom the causes of the war, it might easily have been prevented. I confess I find it difficult to conceive of the war in terms of simple right and wrong. We must respect the tides, and their huge unintelligible force teaches us to respect them.

It is not a war of race. For all our differences with the Germans, any cool and impartial mind must admit that we have many points of kinship with them. During the years before the war our naval officers in the Mediterranean found, I believe, that it was easier to associate on terms of social friendship with the Austrians than with the officers of any other foreign navy. We have a passionate admiration for France, and a real devotion to her, but that is a love affair, not a family tie. We begin to be experienced in love affairs, for Ireland steadily refuses to be treated on any other footing. In any case, we are much closer to the Germans than they are to the Bulgarians or the Turks. Of these three we like the Turks the best, because they are chivalrous and generous enemies, which the Germans are not.

It is a war of ideas. We are fighting an armed doctrine. Yet Burke's use of those words to describe the military power of Revolutionary France should warn us against fallacious attempts to simplify the issue. When ideas become motives and are filtered into practice, they lose their clearness of outline and are often hard to recognize. They leaven the lump, but the lump is still human clay, with its passions and prejudices, its pride and its hate. I remember seeing in a provincial paper, in the early days of the war, two adjacent columns, both dealing with the war. The first was headed 'A Holy War' and set forth the great principles of nationality, respect for treaties, and protection of the weak, which in our opinion are the main motives of the Allies in this war. The second was headed 'The War on Commerce; Tips to capture

German trade', and set forth those other principles and motives which, in the opinion of the Germans, brought England into this war.

I am not going to defend England against the charge that she entered this war on a cold calculation of mercantile profit. Every one here knows that the charge is utterly untrue. Those who believe the charge could not be shaken in their belief except by being educated all over again, and introduced to some knowledge of human nature. It is enough to remark that this charge is a commonplace between belligerent nations. They all like to believe that their adversaries entertain only base motives, while they themselves act only on the loftiest ideal promptings. If the charge means only that every nation at war is bound to think of its own interests, to conserve its own strength, and to seize on all material gains that are within its reach, the charge is true and harmless. When two angry women quarrel in a back street, they commonly accuse each other of being amorous. They might just as well accuse each other of being human. The charge is true and insignificant. So also with nations; they all cherish themselves and seek to preserve their means of livelihood.

If this were their sole concern, there would be few wars; certainly this war, which is desolating and impoverishing Europe, would be impossible. No one, surely, can look at the war and say that nations are moved only by their material interests. It would be more plausible to say that they are too little moved by those interests. Bacon, in his essay *Of Death*, remarks that the fear of death does not much affect mankind. 'There is no passion in the mind of man so weak, but



it mates and masters the fear of death ; and therefore death is no such terrible enemy when a man hath so many attendants about him that can win the combat of him. Revenge triumphs over death ; love slights it ; honour aspireth to it ; grief flieth to it, fear pre-occupateth it ; nay, we read, after Otho the Emperor had slain himself, pity (which is the tenderest of affections) provoked many to die out of mere compassion to their sovereign, and as the truest sort of followers.' If this is true of the fear of death, how much truer it is of the love of material gain. Any whim, or point of pride, or fixed idea, or old habit, is enough to make a man or a nation forgo the hope of profit and fight for a creed.

The German creed is by this time well known. Before the war we took little notice of it. We sometimes saw it stated in print, but it seemed to us too monstrous and inhuman to be the creed of a whole people. We were wrong ; it was the creed of a whole people. By the mesmerism of State education, by the discipline of universal military service, by the pride of the German people in their past victories, and by the fears natural to a nation that finds enemies on all its fronts, an absolute belief in the State, in war as the highest activity of the State, and in the right of the State to enslave all its subjects, body and soul, to its purposes, had become the creed of all those diverse peoples that are united under the Prussian Monarchy. Most of them are not naturally warlike peoples. They have been lured, and frightened, and drilled, and bribed into war, but it is true to say that, on the whole, they enjoy fighting less than we do. One of the truest remarks ever made on the war was that famous remark

of a British private soldier who was telling how his company took a trench from the enemy. Fearing that his account of the affair might sound boastful, he added, 'You see, Sir, they're not a military people, like we are.' Only the word was wrong, the meaning was right. They are, as every one knows, an enormously military people, and, if they want to fight at all, they have to be a military people, for the vast majority of them are not a warlike people. A first-class army could never have been fashioned in Germany out of volunteer civilians, like our army on the Somme. That army has a little shaken the faith of the Germans in their creed. Again I must quote one of our soldiers: 'I don't say', he remarked, 'that our average can run rings round their best; what I say is that our average is better than their average, and our best is better than their best.' The Germans already are uneasy about their creed and their system, but there is no escape for them; they have sacrificed everything to it; they have impoverished the mind and drilled the imagination of every German citizen, so that Germany appears before the world with the body of a giant and the mind of a dwarf; they have sacrificed themselves in millions that their creed may prevail, and with their creed they must stand or fall. The State, organized as absolute power, responsible to no one, with no duties to its neighbour, and with only nominal duties to a strictly subordinate God, has challenged the soul of man in its dearest possessions. We cannot predict the course of military operations; but if we were not sure of the ultimate issue of this great struggle, we should have no sufficient motive for continuing to breathe. The State has

challenged the soul of man before now, and has always been defeated. A miserable remnant of men and women, tied to stakes or starved in dungeons, have before now shattered what seemed an omnipotent tyranny, because they stood for the soul and were not prompted by vanity or self-regard. They had great allies—

‘Their friends were exultations, agonies,  
And love, and man’s unconquerable mind.’

If we are defeated we shall be defeated not by German strength but by our own weakness. The worst enemy of the martyr is doubt and the divided mind, which suggests the question, ‘Is it, after all, worth while?’ We must know what we have believed. What do we stand for in this war? It is only the immovable conviction that we stand for something ultimate and essential that can help us and carry us through. No war of this kind and on this scale is good enough to fight unless it is good enough to fail in. ‘The calculation of profit’, said Burke, ‘in all such wars is false. On balancing the account of such wars, ten thousand hogsheads of sugar are purchased at ten thousand times their price. The blood of man should never be shed but to redeem the blood of man. It is well shed for our family, for our friends, for our God, for our country, for our kind. The rest is vanity; the rest is crime.’

The question I have asked is a difficult question to answer, or, rather, the answer is not easy to formulate briefly and clearly. Most of the men at the front know quite well what they are fighting for; they know that it is for their country, but that it is also for their kind—for certain ideals of humanity. We at home know



that we are at war for liberty and humanity. But these words are invoked by different nations in different senses ; the Germans, or at least most of them, have as much liberty as they desire, and believe that the highest good of humanity is to be found in the prevalence of their own ideas and of their own type of government and society. No abstract demonstration can help us. Liberty is a highly comparative notion ; no one asks for it complete. Humanity is a highly variable notion ; it is interpreted in different senses by different societies. What we are confronted by is two types of character, two sets of aims, two ideals for society. There can be no harm in trying to understand both.

The Germans can never be understood by those who neglect their history. They are a solid, brave, and earnest people, who, till quite recent times, have been denied their share in the government of Europe. In the sixteenth century they were deeply stirred by questions of religion, and were rent asunder by the Reformation. Compromise proved futile ; the small German states were ranked on this side or on that at the will of their rulers and princes ; men of the same race were ranged in mortal opposition on the question of religious belief, and there was no solution but war. For thirty years in the seventeenth century the war raged. It was conducted with a fierceness and inhumanity that even the present war has not equalled. The civilian population suffered hideously. Whole provinces were desolated and whole states were bereaved of their men. When, from mere exhaustion, the war came to an end, Germany lay prostrate, and the chief gains of the war fell to the rising monarchy of France, which had

intervened in the middle of the struggle. By the Treaty of Westphalia in 1648 Alsace and Lorraine went to France, and the rule of the great monarch, Louis XIV, had nothing to fear from the German peoples. The ambitions of Germany, for long after this, were mainly cosmopolitan and intellectual. But political ambitions, though they seemed almost dead, were revived by the hardy state of Prussia, and the rest of Germany's history, down to our own time, is the history of the welding of the Germanic peoples into a single state by Prussian monarchs and statesmen.

This history explains many things. If a people has a corporate memory, if it can learn from its own sufferings, Germany has reason enough to cherish with a passionate devotion her late achieved unity. And German brutality, which is not the less brutality because Germans regard it as quite natural and right, has its origin in German history. The Prussian is a Spartan, a natural brute, but brutal to himself as well as to others, capable of extremes of self-denial and self-discipline. From the Prussians the softer and more emotional German peoples of the South received the gift of national unity, and they repaid the debt by extravagant admiration for Prussian prowess and hardihood, which had been so serviceable to their cause. The Southern Germans, the Bavarians especially, have developed a sort of sentimentalism of brutality, expressed in the hysterical Hymn of Hate (which hails from Munich), expressed also in those monstrous excesses and cruelties, surpassing anything that mere insensibility can produce, which have given the Bavarian troops their foul reputation in the present war.

The last half century of German history must also be remembered. Three assaults on neighbouring states were rewarded by a great increase of territory and of strength. From Denmark, in 1864, Prussia took Schleswig-Holstein. The defeat of Austria in 1866 brought Hanover and Bavaria under the Prussian leadership; Alsace and Lorraine were regained from France in 1870. The Prussian mind, which is not remarkable for subtlety, found a justification in these three wars for its favourite doctrine of frightfulness. That doctrine, put briefly, is that people can always be frightened into submission, and that it is cheaper to frighten them than to fight them to the bitter end. Denmark was a small nation, and moreover was left utterly unsupported by the European powers who had guaranteed her integrity. Bavaria was frightened, and will be frightened again when her hot fit gives way to her cold fit. France was divided and half-hearted under a tinsel emperor. It is Germany's misfortune that on these three special cases she based a general doctrine of war. A very little knowledge of human nature—a knowledge so alien to her that she calls it psychology and assigns it to specialists—would have taught her that, for the most part, human beings when they are fighting for their homes and their faith cannot be frightened, and must be killed or conciliated. The practice of frightfulness has not worked very well in this war. It has steeled the heart of Germany's enemies. It has produced in her victims a temper of hate that will outlive this generation, and will make the small peoples whom she has kicked and trampled on impossible subjects of the German Empire. Worst of all,



it has suggested to onlookers that the people who have so plenary a belief in frightfulness are not themselves strangers to fear. There is an old English proverb, hackneyed and stale three hundred years ago, but now freshened again by disuse, that the goodwife would never have looked for her daughter in the oven unless she had been there herself.

How shall I describe the English temper, which the Germans, high and low, learned and ignorant, have so profoundly mistaken? You can get no description of it from the Englishman pure and simple; he has no theory of himself, and it bores him to hear himself described. Yet it is this temper which has given England her great place in the world and which has cemented the British Empire. It is to be found not in England alone, but wherever there is a strain of English blood or an acceptance of English institutions. You can find it in Australia, in Canada, in America; it infects Scotland, and impresses Wales. It is everywhere in our trenches to-day. It is not clannish, or even national, it is essentially the lonely temper of a man independent to the verge of melancholy. An admirable French writer of to-day has said that the best handbook and guide to the English temper is Defoe's romance of *Robinson Crusoe*. Crusoe is practical, but is conscious of the over-shadowing presence of the things that are greater than man. He makes his own clothing, teaches his goats to dance, and wrestles in thought with the problems suggested by his Bible. Another example of the same temper may be seen in Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, and yet another in Wordsworth's *Prelude*. There is no danger that

English thought will ever underestimate the value and meaning of the individual soul. The greatest English literature, it might almost be said, from Shakespeare's *Hamlet* to Browning's *The Ring and the Book*, is concerned with no other subject. The age-long satire against the English is that in England every man claims the right to go to heaven his own way. English institutions, instead of subduing men to a single pattern, are devised chiefly with the object of saving the rights of the subject and the liberty of the individual. 'Every man in his humour' is an English proverb, and might almost be a statement of English constitutional doctrine. But this extreme individualism is the right of all, and does not favour self-exaltation. The English temper has an almost morbid dislike of all that is showy or dramatic in expression. I remember how a Winchester boy, when he was reproached with the fact that Winchester has produced hardly any great men, replied, 'No, indeed, I should think not. We would pretty soon have knocked that out of them.' And the epigrams of the English temper usually take the form of understatement. 'Give Dayrolles a chair' were the last dying words of Lord Chesterfield, spoken of the friend who had come to see him. When the French troops go over the parapet to make an advance, their battle cry shouts the praises of their country. The British troops prefer to celebrate the advance in a more trivial fashion, 'This way to the early door, sixpence extra.'

I might go on interminably with this dissertation, but I have said enough for my purpose. The history of England has had much to do with moulding the English temper. We have been protected from direct

exposure to the storms that have swept the Continent. Our wars on land have been adventures undertaken by expeditionary forces. At sea, while the power of England was growing, we have been explorers, pirates, buccaneers. Now that we are involved in a great European war on land, our methods have been changed. The artillery and infantry of a modern army cannot act effectively on their own impulse. We hold the sea, and the pirates' work for the present has passed into other hands. But our spirit and temper is the same as of old. It has found a new world in the air. War in the air, under the conditions of to-day, demands all the old gallantry and initiative. The airman depends on his own brain and nerve; he cannot fall back on orders from his superiors. Our airmen of to-day are the true inheritors of Drake; they have the same inspired recklessness, the same coolness, and the same chivalry to a vanquished enemy.

I am a very bad example of the English temper; for the English temper grumbles at all this, to the great relief of our enemies, who believe that what a man admits against his own nation must be true. Our pessimists, by indulging their natural vein, serve us, without reward, quite as well as Germany is served by her wireless press. They deceive the enemy.

Modern Germany has organized and regimented her people like an ant-hill or a beehive. The people themselves, including many who belong to the upper class, are often simple villagers in temper, full of kindness and anger, much subject to envy and jealousy, not magnanimous, docile and obedient to a fault. If they claimed, as individuals, to represent the highest reach



of European civilization, the claim would be merely absurd. So they shift their ground, and pretend that society is greater than man, and that by their painstaking organization their society has been raised to the pinnacle of human greatness. They make this claim so insistently, and in such obvious good faith, that some few weak tempers and foolish minds in England have been impressed by it. These panic-stricken counsellors advise us, without delay, to reform our institutions and organize them upon the German model. Only thus, they tell us, can we hold our own against so huge a power. But if we were to take their advice, we should have nothing of our own left to hold. It is reasonable and good to co-operate and organize in order to attain an agreed object, but German organization goes far beyond this. The German nation is a carefully built, smooth-running machine, with powerful engines. It has only one fault--that any fool can drive it; and seeing that the governing class in Germany is obstinate and unimaginative, there is no lack of drivers to pilot it to disaster. The best ability of Germany is seen in her military organization. Napoleon is her worshipped model, and, like many admirers of Napoleon, she thinks only of his great campaigns; she forgets that he died in St. Helena, and that his schemes for the reorganization of Europe failed.

I know that many people in England are not daunted but depressed by the military successes of the enemy. Our soldiers in the field are not depressed. But we who are kept at home suffer from the miasma of the back-parlour. We read the headlines of newspapers—a form of literature that is exciting enough, but does

not merit the praise given to Sophocles, who saw life steadily and saw it whole. We keep our ears to the telephone, and we forget that the great causes which are always at work, and which will shape the issues of this war, are not recorded upon the telephone. There are things truer and more important than the latest dispatches. Here is one of them. The organization of the second-rate can never produce anything first-rate. We do not understand a people who, when it comes to the last push of man against man, throw up their hands and utter the pathetic cry of 'Kamerad'. To surrender is a weakness that no one who has not been under modern artillery fire has any right to condemn; to profess a sudden affection for the advancing enemy is not weakness but baseness. Or rather, it would be baseness in a voluntary soldier; in the Germans it means only that the war is not their own war; that they are fighting as slaves, not as free men. The idea that we could ever live under the rule of these people is merely comic. To do them justice, they do not now entertain the idea, though they have dallied with it in the past.

No harm can be done, I think, by preaching to the English people the necessity for organization and discipline. We shall still be ourselves, and there is no danger that we shall overdo discipline or make organization a thing to be worshipped for its own sake. The danger is all the other way. We have learnt much from the war, and the work that we shall have to do when it ends is almost more important than the terms of peace, or concessions made this way and that. If the treacherous assault of the Germans on the liberties

and peace of Europe is rewarded by any solid gain to the German Empire, then history may forgive them, but this people of the British Empire will not forgive them. Nothing will be as it was before; and our cause, which will not be lost in the war, will still have to be won in the so-called peace. I know that some say, 'Let us have war when we are at war, and peace when we are at peace'. It sounds plausible and magnanimous, but it is Utopian. You must reckon with your own people. They know that when we last had peace, the sunshine of that peace was used by the Germans to hatch the spawn of malice and treason. If the Germans are defeated in the war, we shall, I suppose, forgive them, for the very English reason that it is a bore not to forgive your enemies. But if they escape without decisive defeat in battle, their harder trial is yet to come.

In some ways we are stronger than we have been in all our long history. We have found ourselves, and we have found our friends. Our dead have taught the children of to-day more and better than any living teachers can teach them. No one in this country will ever forget how the people of the Dominions, at the first note of war, sprang to arms like one man. We must not thank or praise them; like the Navy, they regard our thanks and praise as something of an impertinence. They are not fighting, they say, for us. But that is how we discovered them. They are doing much better than fighting for us, they are fighting with us, because, without a word of explanation or appeal, their ideas and ours are the same. We never have discussed with them, and we never shall discuss, what is decent



and clean and honourable in human behaviour. A philosopher who is interested in this question can find plenty of intellectual exercise by discussing it with the Germans. Where an Englishman, a Canadian, and an Australian are met, there is no material for such a debate.

It would be extravagant to suppose that a discovery like this can leave our future relations untouched. We now know that we are profoundly united in a union much stronger and deeper than any mechanism can produce. I know how difficult a problem it is to hit on the best device for giving political expression to this union between States separated from one another by the whole world's diameter, differing in their circumstances, their needs, and their outlook. I do not dare to prescribe; but I should like to make a few remarks, and to call attention to a few points which are perhaps more present to the mind of the ordinary citizen than they are in the discussions of constitutional experts.

We must arrange for co-operation and mutual support. If the arrangement is complicated and lengthy, we must not wait for it; we must meet and discuss our common affairs. Ministers from the Dominions have already sat with the British Cabinet. We can never go back on that; it is a landmark in our history. Our Ministers must travel; if their supporters are impatient of their absence on the affairs of the Empire, they must find some less parochial set of supporters. We have begun in the right way; the right way is not to pass laws determining what you are to do; but to do what is needful, and do it at once,—do a lot of things, and regularize your successes by later legislation. Now is the time, while the Empire is white-hot.

Our first need is not lawyers, but men who, feeling friendly, know how to behave as friends do. They will not be impeached if they go beyond the letter of the law. One act of faith is worth a hundred arguments. This is a family affair; the habits of an affectionate and united family are the only good model.

As for the Crown Colonies and India, the Dominions must share our burden. It is objected, both here and in India, that life in the Dominions is a very inadequate education for the sympathetic handling of alien races and customs. So is life in many parts of this island. The fact is that the process of learning to govern these alien peoples is the best education in the world. The Indian Civil Service is a great College, and it governs India. I can speak to this point, for I have lived there and seen it at work. If India were really governed by the ideas of the young novices who go out there fresh from their examinations, she would be a distressful country. But the novice is taken in hand at once by the older members of the service; he works under the eye of the Collector and the Assistant Collector; they shoulder him and instruct him as tame elephants shoulder and instruct the wild; they are kind to him, and he lives in their company while his prejudices and follies peel off him; so that within a few years he becomes a tolerant, wise, and devoted civil servant, who speaks the language of the College and is proud to belong to it. The success of the Government of India is not to be credited to the classes from which the Civil Service is recruited, but to the discipline of the Service itself, a Service so high

in tradition and so free from corruption that advancement in it is to be gained only by intelligence and sympathy. What I am saying is that I can imagine no finer raw material for the political discipline of the Indian Civil Service than some of the generous and clean-run spirits who have come from the Dominions to help in this war. They could be introduced to a share of our responsibilities without impeding or retarding the movement to give to selected natives of India a larger share in the government of their country.

But the war is not over, so I return to the main issue—the conflict between the English idea and the German idea of world government. It is not an accident, as Baron von Hügel remarks in his book on *The German Soul*, that the chief colonizing nation of the world should be a nation without a national army. We have depended enormously in the past on the initiative and virtue of the individual adventurer; if our adventurers were to fail us, which is not likely, or if the State were to supersede them, and attempt to do their work, which is not conceivable, our political power and influence would vanish with them. The world might perhaps be well ordered, but there would be no freedom, and no fun. The beauty of the adventurer is that he is practically invincible. He does not wait for orders. Under the most perfect police system that Germany could devise, he would be up and at it again. We are not so numerous as the Germans, but there are enough and to spare of us to make German government impossible in any place where we pitch our tents. We are practised hands at upsetting



governments. Our political system is a training school for rebels. This is what makes our very existence an offence to the moral instincts of the German people. They are quite right to want to kill us; the only way to abolish fun and freedom is to abolish life. But I must not be unjust to them; their forethought provides for everything, and no doubt they would prescribe authorized forms of fun for half an hour a week, and would gather together their subjects in public assembly, under municipal regulations, to perform approved exercises in freedom.

Mankind lives by ideas; and if an irreconcilable difference in ideas makes a good war, then this is a good war. The contrast between the two ideas is profound and far-reaching. My business lies in a University. For a good many years before the war certain selected German students, who had had a University education in their own country, came as Rhodes scholars to Oxford. The intention of Mr. Rhodes was benevolent; he thought that if German students were to reside for four years at Oxford and to associate there, at an impressionable time of life, with young Englishmen, understanding and fellowship would be encouraged between the two peoples. But the German government took care to defeat Mr. Rhodes's intention. Instead of sending a small number of students for the full period, as Mr. Rhodes had provided, Germany asked and (by whose mistake I do not know) obtained leave to send a larger number for a shorter stay. The students selected were intended for the political and diplomatic service, and were older than the usual run of Oxford freshmen. Their behaviour had a certain

ambassadorial flavour about it. They did not mix much in the many undergraduate societies which flourish in a college, but met together in clubs of their own to drink patriotic toasts. They were nothing if not superior. I remember a conversation I had with one of them who came to consult me. He wished, he said, to do some definite piece of research work in English literature. I asked him what problems or questions in English literature most interested him, and he replied that he would do anything that I advised. We had a talk of some length, wholly at cross-purposes. At last I tried to make my point of view clear by reminding him that research means finding the answer to a question, and that if his reading of English literature, which had been fairly extensive, had suggested no questions to his mind, he was not in the happiest possible position to begin research. This touched his national pride, and he gave me something not unlike a lecture. In Germany, he said, the professor tells you what you are to do; he gives you a subject for investigation, he names the books you are to read, and advises you on what you are to write; you follow his advice, and produce a thesis, which gains you the degree of Doctor of Letters. I have seen a good many of these theses, and I am sure this account is correct. With very rare exceptions they are as dead as mutton, and much less nourishing. The upshot of our conversation was that he thought me an incompetent professor, and I thought him an unprofitable student.

There are many people in England to-day who praise the thoroughness of the Germans, and their devotion

to systematic thought. Has any one ever taken the trouble to trace the development of the thesis habit, and its influence on their national life? They theorize everything, and they believe in their theories. They have solemn theories of the English character, of the French character, of the nature of war, of the history of the world. No breath of scepticism dims their complacency, although events steadily prove their theories wrong. They have courage, and when they are seeking truth by the process of reasoning, they accept the conclusions attained by the process, however monstrous these conclusions may be. They not only accept them, they act upon them, and, as every one knows, their behaviour in Belgium was dictated to them by their philosophy.

Thought of this kind is the enemy of the human race. It intoxicates sluggish minds, to whom thought is not natural. It suppresses all the gentler instincts of the heart and supplies a basis of orthodoxy for all the cruelty and treachery in the world. I do not know, none of us knows, when or how this war will end. But I know that it is worth fighting to the end, whatever it may cost to all and each of us. We may have peace with the Germans, the peace of exhaustion or the peace that is only a breathing space in a long struggle. We can never have peace with the German idea. It was not the idea of the older German thinkers — of Kant, or of Goethe, who were good Europeans. Kant said that there is nothing good in the world except the good will. The modern German doctrine is that there is nothing good in the world except what tends to the power and glory of the State. The in-

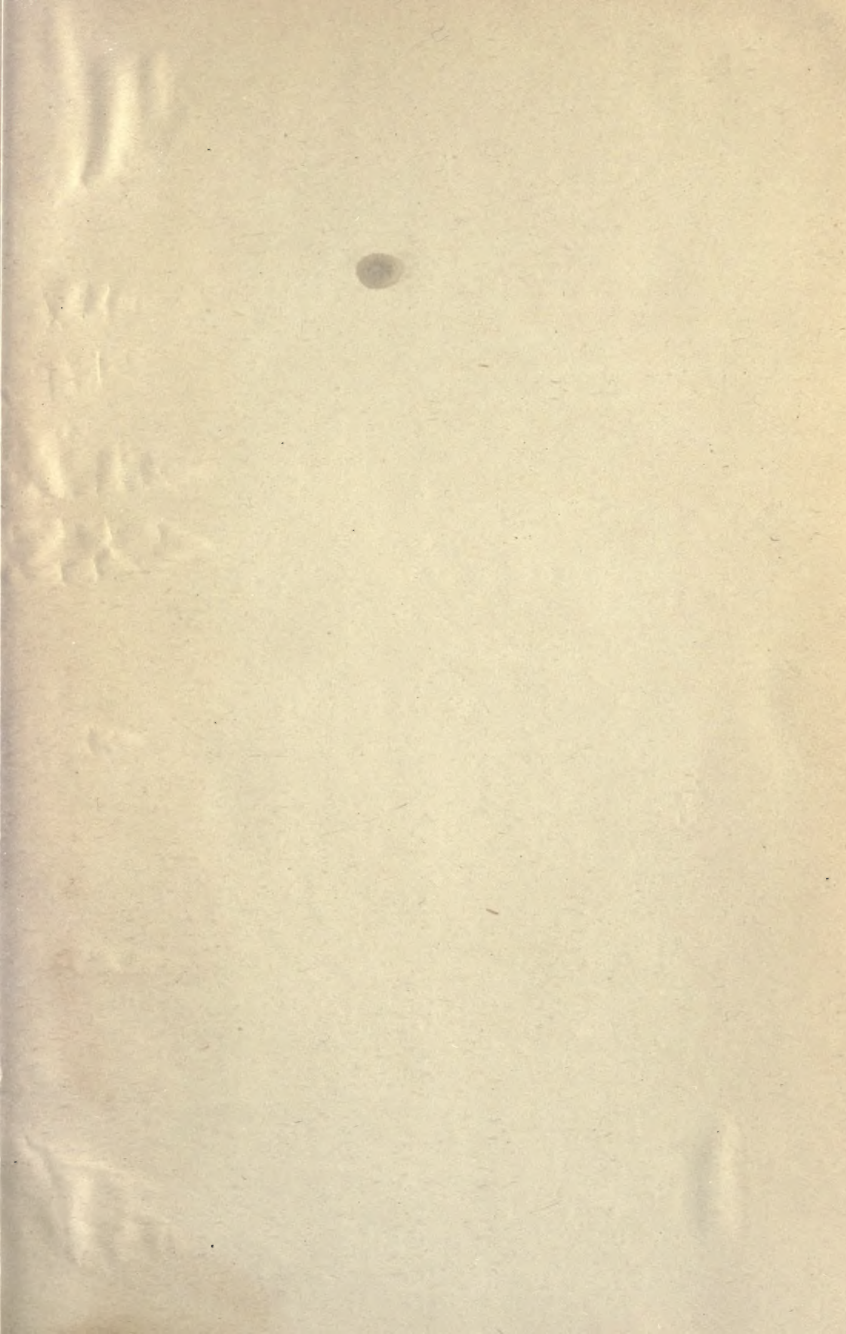


ventor of this doctrine, it may be remembered, was the Devil, who offered to the Son of Man the glory of all the kingdoms of the world, if only He would fall down and worship him. The Germans, exposed to a like temptation, have accepted the offer and have fulfilled the condition. They can have no assurance that faith will be kept with them. On the other hand, we can have no assurance that they will suffer any signal or dramatic reverse. Human history does not usually observe the laws of melodrama. But we know that their newly purchased doctrine can be fought, in war and in peace, and we know that in the end it will not prevail.









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