# GOVERNMENT AND THE WAR

*BY THE SAME AUTHOR*

THE BRAIN OF AN ARMY
THE GREAT ALTERNATIVE
BRITAIN AT BAY

# GOVERNMENT AND THE WAR

BY

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# TO MY COUNTRYMEN

SURELY by this time, in the fourth year of the conflict, the people of this country must be willing or even

ERRATA.

*Chapter* 10. The British Constitution and the Conduct of the War was first published in "The Nineteenth Century and After" for January, 1918, not 1917 as stated on page 232.

men, of whom the Admiralty has had 400,000 and the War Office the remainder. We have encouraged the Government to spend money without limit. We have given the whole country as a workshop. We have had half the world as Allies. What is the position to-day? We were told that our navy would command the sea, but it does not. The German submarines sink our ships at such a rate that in spite of our efforts in ship-building we have to be put on rations. We were to crush Prussian 'Militarism,' which means, I suppose, to shatter the armies of Germany and her Allies. But

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# TO MY COUNTRYMEN

SURELY by this time, in the fourth year of the conflict, the people of this country must be willing or even anxious to know the truth about the war and about its management. 'Seek and ye shall find'; if you dare not open your eyes you must not expect to see.

In August, 1914, when Germany struck for the mastery, our people responded with no uncertain voice. We accepted the challenge and we would fight it out. We gave the Government full powers and a free hand. Since then we have given the Government 7,500,000 men, of whom the Admiralty has had 400,000 and the War Office the remainder. We have encouraged the Government to spend money without limit. We have given the whole country as a workshop. We have had half the world as Allies. What is the position to-day? We were told that our navy would command the sea, but it does not. The German submarines sink our ships at such a rate that in spite of our efforts in ship-building we have to be put on rations. We were to crush Prussian 'Militarism,' which means, I suppose, to shatter the armies of Germany and her Allies. But

in Eastern Europe those armies have been victorious and they are now collecting their strength for a fresh blow in the West. When we look at the map we follow the line of No Man's Land, which separates the opposing forces from the Channel to the Alps and from the Alps to the Adriatic. In Italy it has been pushed back from the Isonzo to the Piave. In France and Belgium, though it has here and there moved backwards or forwards, the line remains substantially where it was three years ago. This is not victory.

It is true that our troops have taken Baghdad and Jerusalem and are still advancing in those regions, but what effect can Baghdad and Jerusalem produce on the conflict in Europe?

Suppose that the enemy in 1918 should accomplish in the West what he has already achieved in the East. The eyes of those who thought that peace could always be had for the asking must have been opened by what they have seen in Russia. In presence of a victorious enemy peace could be had only by submission. The victor will have his way and the vanquished are at his mercy. Germany expects and intends to have her will, and has clearly enough explained what it is—to make an end of British sea-power, which is the British Empire.

Is it not the truth that we have to destroy the German navy, beginning with the submarines, and to inflict upon the hostile armies defeat so decisive as

to compel the German government to abandon the hope of success? In short, is not the choice between victory and defeat?

The reader who has followed me thus far can see for himself whether I have described the situation as it really is. I know that many people will not face it. It seems to them too awful. They would rather shut their eyes and build castles in the air labelled 'After the War.' That seems to me the unconscious hypocrisy of despair. I have faith in my countrymen. Nay, more, I have faith in the French and I have faith in the Italians. But it is for my own countrymen that I am writing. I am sure that they feel with me and that they want to know the worst and to do the best. All that is required is a lead.

The object of this book is to tell you where to look for a lead. A great many people are asking for your confidence. Many are saying, 'Lo, here' and 'Lo, there,' and you are rightly determined to beware of false prophets. How are you to know whom to trust or what sort of book it is worth your while now to read? The best test of truth, I believe, in the long run is consistency. If you want to find the way you don't look at a weathercock but at a compass. That is the reason why I have no faith in any of the politicians, least of all in any of those who have been or are ministers. No doubt many of them are remarkable men, conspicuous both for ability and for char-

acter. But I cannot convince myself that any one of the whole number is fit to lead the nation in this war, and I will tell you why.

You all know that Germany was preparing for this war for many years before she began it. There was no secrecy about it. Every increase of the German navy and of the armies of Prussia, Bavaria, and Austria was quite well known. Germany's objects were also well known. A host of German writers were discussing them for years. Berlin in peace is only twenty-four hours' journey from London, and the German language is very much easier to learn than Greek or Latin. But which of our politicians told the nation before the war that it would have to fight Germany in a life-and-death struggle? Which of them got us ready for it? Were they not all taken by surprise when it came? I think it was the duty of those to whom the government of the country was entrusted to know enough about Europe to be able to grasp what was going on, to see how it must affect us, and to have made up their minds how they would carry on a war in case a war should be forced upon us. They failed to perform this duty. The result is the situation which I have already described.

Many of the writers in the newspapers have kept on telling you that you were winning. Either they did not know the truth or were not allowed to tell it. In either case you are hardly likely in future to attach much

importance to what those writers and those newspapers may have to say.

Why then do I venture to offer you a book and why should you read it? I have not had to change my mind during the war. Half my book was written long before the war, so that, if I did not tell you, you could hardly find out which part was new and which part is old, except where I discuss some of the actual events of the war itself. I have given my life to trying to get to know what can be known about war and to the endeavour to arouse my countrymen to the realities of their position. For a whole generation I have been telling you that your army was not ready for war, your navy was not ready, your government was not ready. I tried to tell you what war was like, how armies and navies were made ready for it, above all that it must be conducted by a statesman, and that the statesman's first business was to understand it. What I wrote was read and endorsed by the sailors and the soldiers, but the public and the politicians took no interest in it. In 1909 I wrote a book entitled "Britain at Bay," to tell you that you were drifting into a war with Germany, and that if you were to have a chance of winning it you must change the whole spirit of your politics. While that volume was in the press I was chosen to direct the studies of those in Oxford who wished to become acquainted with modern

war and modern warfare. That meant for me a fresh study of the most recent great wars. But it meant also a renewed effort to explain to others what war is and means, how a government must carry it on, and what are the qualifications of the statesman to enable him to direct it. This volume contains the work of nine years in thinking out those problems of war which concern not so much the soldier as the nation and its government. It has been written not for soldiers but for citizens. I have tried to set forth the lines upon which a British government must work if it is to obtain victory, and I believe that, if these main ideas are rejected, defeat is certain. To seek diligently for the truth, and then to express my conclusions so that they may be understood by any reader—that has been my attempt to serve my country.

S. W.

All Souls College,
*March* 3, 1918.

# CONTENTS

# GOVERNMENT AND THE WAR

## I

## THE STUDY OF WAR

### INAUGURAL LECTURE*

MR. VICE-CHANCELLOR,

You and those who under your auspices are assembled here to-day can enter, as no other audience could enter, into the feelings with which, as your first Professor of Military History, I address you for the first time. A man for whom the years spent under the influence of this University were the prelude to the battle of life, and who owes to his Oxford training, however imperfectly received, his way of looking at public affairs, now comes back among you with the duty of contributing to the spiritual and intellectual life of Oxford something of what he has learned in the course of a prolonged effort to explore and understand the currents of national energy. The duty laid upon me is at the same time a privilege, for it gives me the opportunity of endeavouring—I will not say to discharge my filial obligation to our generous mother, for which of us could either wish or hope to repay that

* November 27, 1909.

debt?—but at any rate to prove that I am no thankless child. To you then I can and must speak freely and sincerely, and, sustained by your goodwill, I shall, according to time-honoured tradition, attempt to set forth the scope of the task which I now undertake, and to interpret the purpose of the University in conferring its freedom upon the study of Military History.

Everything, it has been said, depends upon the point of view. The point of view from which I see our University is that of the nation to which we belong. I conceive of the University as a community of workers for England; and of the service which it performs as consisting in the first place in the maintenance and communication of a spiritual or intellectual standard, and in the second place in the common life which we here share, and which we regard as a preparation for citizenship, as the means by which we train not only the mind but the man. The spirit in which our intellectual work is carried on is set forth in the terse but pregnant terms of the Statute defining the duties of Professors. A Professor is 'to give instruction to students, to assist the pursuit of knowledge, and to contribute to the advancement of it,' and he is 'to give assistance to students in their studies by advice, by informal instruction, and otherwise as he may judge to be expedient.' In these clauses, the University recognizes the character of knowledge as something living and growing, rather than as an inorganic, inert, and limited mass; and insists on that vital connexion between the advancement of know-

ledge and its communication which makes it the first qualification of the teacher that he should be himself a learner. It recognizes further that, to use the words of one of Oxford's great men, 'in the higher regions of instruction it is not the substance of what is communicated, but the act of communication between the older and the younger mind, which is the important matter.'

If, in the twofold service which Oxford renders to the nation, I place first the advancement of learning as the means by which the University becomes a source of ideas which are to permeate and inspire the community, it is because this is the function which qualifies her for her other duty—that of education. Here she is a labourer in a specific field. I hardly think you will quarrel with me when I assert that the special education which we have to consider here is the training of servants for the nation, a training for citizenship and for that statesmanship which is but citizenship raised to a higher power. If we are to fulfil that mission, we must cherish in our students the qualities in virtue of which they can render service. Our common life should give them an object, their country, and accustom them to do their work with that object in view. The purpose of our instruction is to communicate to them the power of seeing things as they are, which is synonymous with science or true knowledge. So long as our University can send out her young men thus prepared and inspired for citizenship, so long will she be a faithful servant—or, if you prefer another name, a leader—of this nation.

There has been in this country for some time past a

certain despondency; many people have come to think that England is standing still while other nations are moving on and leaving her behind; and there are some who seem to think that Oxford herself is stationary, if not stagnant. I have to submit to you a more hopeful view, to give you reasons for faith in our country, and for the belief that Oxford still is, and will continue to be, a spring of thought and a source of action.

Forty-four years ago we were told that the business of criticism was 'to know the best that is known and thought in the world, and by in its turn making this known to create a current of true and fresh ideas.' The effort thus described has been carried on not only elsewhere but here also. Men trained in the spirit of that effort have been spread abroad through these islands, and through the British Empire. As a result of their labours, the people of this country have lost the self-complacency that marked the middle of the Victorian age. They have measured themselves, the nation and its institutions, by higher standards. This is the cause of the dissatisfaction which is so widespread and so profound. It is the dissatisfaction not of despair but of the resolve to approximate, as far as is compatible with human imperfection, to the better ideals that have been set up.

In this healthy process of self-criticism, or of the expansion of ideals, Oxford has her part, due not only to her national environment, but also to the continuity of her own labours. It used to be, and I fancy still is, the characteristic feature of Oxford studies that their

main current runs in the humanities. We learn from our Greek teachers to regard the State as the medium of human life, to believe its purpose to be the sustenance of a good life, its fruit and justification the creation of a noble type of character to be impressed upon all its citizens. Our effort to see things as they really are compels us to be ever considering the State in all its varying relations, so that our conception may correspond with the living growth of human society. But life and growth are prior to reflection, and speculative thought necessarily follows after rather than precedes the facts; and thus our political thinking follows after rather than precedes the phenomena of English national life, though we may hope that our attempts at analysis and synthesis may lead to fresh and true ideas, to be afterwards with beneficial effect diffused through the community.

Among the impulses of this national life which have marked the last fifty years is one which has only comparatively recently made itself felt in the region of political consciousness or theory, the renewal of the perception that the State has external relations which may take the form of conflict. Our political thinkers have slowly and reluctantly become aware of a change in their views of the nature of peace, which is at length seen to be insufficiently accounted for by the absence of energy, and suspected to consist rather in an equilibrium than in an absence of forces. The system of states, of which we have long thought as purely European, but which in our own day has revealed itself as world-wide in extent, is seen to owe

the existence of such equipoise as it possesses rather to the constant operation of a multitude of counteracting pressures than to a universal inertia. It is beginning to be felt that a theory of the State which regards it purely from within, as something existing isolated in space with no external relations, must be supplemented and corrected by a theory of the relations between States, and of the place of physical forces in those relations. The people of England have gradually come to see that war is a part of the real world, and that the idea of the State cannot be fully comprehended without a knowledge of the principles of international statics and dynamics.

This perception has followed, not preceded, the spontaneous movement of the national life, of which the first expression was the Volunteer movement in 1859, the second the agitations of 1888 and of 1894 for the expansion of the Navy. Both these movements were followed by an impulse towards the study of war, which was strengthened by the chief events of contemporary history—the great Civil War in the United States, the conflicts between Prussia and Austria, and between United Germany and the Third French Empire. The Volunteer movement made itself felt in Oxford, though it hardly became an integral part of the life of the University. Here and there a student was attracted to inquire into the phenomena of war and into the history of wars; a not very large number of young men received a slight initiation into the military life; a still smaller number associated themselves for tactical exercises in the shape of the Kriegspiel or

War-game. At the time when this took place, about 1875, English military literature of permanent value was represented almost entirely by the work of Sir Edward Hamley. Modern English naval literature had not then come into existence. It was not till 1883 that a Chichele Professor of Modern History published a life of Lord Hawke, which preceded the Treatise on Naval Warfare written by the late Admiral Philip Colomb, himself the disciple of his greater brother, the late Sir John Colomb.

The crisis of the South African War at length brought home to the people of this country the reality of a phenomenon they had too long ignored. This produced an awakening effect upon Oxford, and in particular upon All Souls College, which had some years before specially dedicated itself to the service of the University, with the result which I have already suggested as the natural accompaniment of such dedication. Two Fellows of All Souls independently undertook to write the history of that war; and, soon after the pacification, the University began to take its share in the national effort towards military reorganization. A number of commissions in the Army were thrown open under certain conditions to graduates of the Universities, Oxford admitted the subject of Military History as a special subject for candidates for Honours in the School of Modern History, and in 1905 the University, in consequence of the gift of a private donor, established a Lectureship in that subject. The chosen Lecturer, Sir Foster Cunliffe, set the example, both to his students and successors, of dili-

gent and unwearying research, especially into the great campaigns of Napoleon. It was his endeavour to make military history teach war by the full and accurate ascertainment of the facts from the contemporary documents so far as by industry and perseverance they could be made available. In the course of last Term, All Souls College submitted to the University a proposal that the Lectureship should be transformed into a Professorship, and the sanction of the University enabled that intention to be realized. Thus the University has bestowed its full franchise upon the study of war. The foundation of the Chair then, so far from being a fortuitous event, is the direct outcome of that close contact which has long existed, and which from year to year becomes more intimate, between Oxford and the national life of England.

After the sketch I have given you of the origin of the Chair there is no need to dwell at much length upon its necessity, its logical justification. Yet it may be well to remind ourselves that we can no longer think of the University as capable of doing its duty without having in its scheme of work a place for the study of war.

Our first business is what the Greeks called *θεωρία*, seeing things as they are. We must get our vision of the actual world into accordance with the facts, before we can profitably attempt to dream of a better world.

One of our main occupations here is with the life of mankind, which is realized only in political communi-

ties or states. In our school of Literæ Humaniores we study the idea of the State; in our schools of History the life and growth of states. It is to this part of the University's work that the study of war belongs. For war is one of the modes of human intercourse. It is the form assumed by the conflict between communities of men, the shape assumed by the acuter stages of the struggle between states. A study of the State or of states that should omit to examine war must needs be crippled and defective. It would be like a study of the ship which should take no account of the sea. An ethics or a politics which failed to analyze the nature and meaning of the conflict of wills and of the collision between states would be an ethics and a politics out of touch with the real world in which we live.

We are thus bound to study war if we are to cultivate true ideas or to advance a healthy learning. And, if we are to turn out citizens or statesmen equipped for their functions in the actual State, we are bound to teach the nature of war.

The first and most important of all the facts in regard to war is that in its inception, in its course, and in its conclusion, the control and direction of a war, or of the activity of a state in and in regard to war, is the function primarily of the statesman rather than of the soldier, and that in regard to war the architectonic art is policy or politics, not strategy or generalship, which is not the master but the servant. This is the very first of the principles which constitute what is called the Art of War. If we use the word

policy as a name for the personified intelligence and will of the State, then, says the military historian, it is the business of policy on every occasion to decide whether or not the State shall engage in conflict with another state, and to base that decision upon a true estimate of the nature of the probable conflict, of the risks and exertions to be undertaken, and of the evils which may be incurred either by shrinking from a necessary struggle, or by entering into one which is unnecessary. Evidently, if this choice is to be rightly made, the statesman must be acquainted with war; he need not be a master of the art, he need not himself be able to handle fleets or armies; but he ought to have a true knowledge of what can and what cannot be done by those instruments, and of the way in which their use or misuse will react upon the well-being of the community which puts its trust in him.

This being the case, a University which ignored war could hardly be a good school for those who may become statesmen. By the adoption of democratic forms of government, by the acceptance of the representative system with all its consequences, the British State has been popularized or nationalized. To it therefore applies a saying which I recollect from one of the lectures of my master, William Wallace, whose untimely loss those of you who were his contemporaries here so deeply deplore. After quoting the words of Plato, that, if the State was to be what it ought to be, philosophers must be its rulers, Wallace said: 'The reply of the modern spirit is that the people must and shall become philosophers.'

So much by way of demonstration of the necessity to the University of the study of Military History. Before I can submit to you a view of its aim and scope within the sphere of the University, I must give a brief account of the view of its nature which results from the labours of two or three generations of military historians.

Military History is the effort to understand war, to get to know what war is and what it means. There is no method of getting to know war except the study of wars, and the only wars that can be studied are either wars that have happened and are over, or a war that is taking place. But a war that is taking place cannot be fully known. While it lasts, no one whatever can be fully acquainted with it. Neither of the Commanders-in-Chief know more than a fraction of what his enemy is thinking and doing, and no one except a Commander-in-Chief and those in his intimate confidence is aware of more than a portion of what is passing in the army to which he belongs or with which he is in communication.

Accordingly, if we wish to study a war and to get to know exactly what happened in it, we have to wait until after its close, when the reasons for secrecy have ceased to exist, when both sides have become willing to let the facts be known, and when the principal actors have recorded so much as they are able or willing to divulge of their experience. This time does not come as a rule until long after the events, for neither governments nor individuals are very ready to let the world know all their motives, or to have their

conduct fully laid bare and open to discussion. Reasons of state, considerations of friendship and of regard for the reputation of distinguished men, tend to postpone as long as possible the disclosure of the exact truth, which in some cases never becomes known.

For these reasons, full and trustworthy knowledge of any war is obtainable only as a result of that prolonged and patient research to which we give the name of History.

If we wish to know what war is in itself, what it means for us, for our nation, and for mankind, we must study not one particular war, but as many wars as possible, in order by comparison between them to learn what features and characteristics they have in common, whether the events which composed them happened at random, or whether they happened as they did by reason of some inherent necessity. We cannot but wish to discover whether there is not an order in the infinite variety which they exhibit. But the only basis either for a science or for an art of war is Military History, the record of the facts ascertained by methodical collection, sifting, and classification of the evidence.

The features common to all wars are that they are acts of force or violence with a political aim. They are acts of state. Apart from these common characteristics, wars differ almost infinitely one from another. The mode of action of the Greek City State in forcible conflict with a similar community or with the Persian Empire differs from that of the

Roman Commonwealth, and ancient armies had little resemblance either in respect of weapons or of organization to the levies of the feudal nobles of the Middle Age. The first standing army was the beginning of the collapse of feudalism, yet it was a very different thing from the army maintained by one of the enlightened despots of the eighteenth century. As the State is, so will its army be; and the war of any age is the reflection of the political and social condition of the communities engaged in it. Weapons will embody the progress of the constructive arts and industries. Communications will be such as society has made for itself. The organization will be the expression of the community's conception of itself as a more or less organized body. Thus the determining factor is always the nature and character of the States engaged in the war; and changes in weapons, carrying with them modifications in tactics, are but a portion of the development given to war by the development of political communities.

This cardinal principle is, so to speak, the backbone of our knowledge of the reality of war. Considerations of time compel me to illustrate it in a logical rather than a strictly historical form. The State is the organized attempt of a community to realize its conception of the best life. It will not therefore rationally engage in a war except to overcome some obstacle in the way of its realizing the purpose of its existence. Accordingly, in the ideal the whole sum of its energies will be concentrated in the struggle, and the logical process would be that

so soon as the struggle was determined upon, the whole resources of the State would be mobilized for a sharp and decisive effort, the whole nation would rush to arms and move in a concentrated mass to overthrow in a single battle the equally concentrated force of the adversary, after which the successful power would take possession of the territory and the State of its defeated adversary. The conditions of such rapid and concentrated action, in which the whole energies of the State would be collected into a single blow, are the perfect organization of the nation for the pursuit of its ends and the absolute control of the community thus organized by a Government which fully represented the intelligence and will of all the citizens. This would be the character of the war of an ideal State. The cause would seem just to every citizen, whose faith in the State would inspire him with unlimited devotion to its purposes, so that as a matter of course he would be ready to sacrifice himself to them.

This conception of war was revealed in the wars of the French Revolution and Empire. The people of France regarded themselves as having taken possession of the French State, of which roughly speaking they were in accord with the purposes, and the permanent requisition or *levée en masse* was the enunciation of the idea of the nation in arms. The grandeur of these conceptions led to an enthusiasm till then unprecedented, and to a breadth of design in the military operations which had never before been known. The military history of the nineteenth

century is the history of a persistent endeavour more perfectly to realize this conception of war. First Prussia and then Germany reorganized the State with a view to attaining the utmost development of collective action in conflict with other states; and the pattern thus disclosed was inevitably adopted by the other states one after another, with success which varied according to the stage of national organization to which the several states had attained.

According to the time during which a conflict is prolonged, to the duration of the struggle with the enemy, is the extent to which it is capable of voluntary and intelligent direction during its course. A war that consisted of a long series of battles between comparatively small forces might resemble the series of thrusts and parries of a couple of skilled fencers; but the rush of a whole population into the territories of a hostile state, leading directly to a collision between two concentrated armies, tends rather to resemble some great explosion which, once the train has been laid and the match applied, admits of no further control or guidance. In proportion as war has assumed the character of a conflict between highly organized nations, and in proportion as the military intention has been to crush and destroy the military forces of the adversary, has been the strength of the tendency to put the main work of direction, the chief effort of the guiding military intelligence, into the period of preparation preceding the actual collision. Campaigns have become shorter and more decisive, and the work of generalship has more and more shown its

effectiveness in the previous elaboration of the design. Napoleon, in his great campaigns, collected almost his entire army into a single organized mass, threw it after a few days' march upon a fraction or the whole of the enemy's army, crushed that army in a single decisive battle, and then occupied the enemy's capital and dictated his terms. In the same way, Moltke, within a few days of the outbreak of war, crushed and reduced to impotence in a single battle, or in a short series of battles, the mass of the enemy's organized forces.

Thus the developments of war are the developments of the organization of society, and its increasing intensity, rapidity, and decisiveness are the results of progressive organization which more and more identifies the whole people with the State.

The wars of the French Revolution and Empire manifested an energy and a ruthlessness which had long been unknown. They represented a new type, the conflict between nationalized states. It was the achievement of Clausewitz that he first recognized this new type of war, and its origin in the new type of State which had come into existence. He asked himself whether it was merely the passing phenomenon of a day, or would reappear and persist in the future. He was driven to the conclusion that whenever national states should come into conflict in behalf of interests which the mass of their people could recognize as vital, the war between them would resemble the wars of the French Revolution and Empire both

in the energy which would be devoted to it and in the grandeur of its designs.

The experience of three-quarters of a century has confirmed the view suggested by Clausewitz that whenever a war should be the affair of a whole nation deeply stirred by the cause of quarrel, there would be devoted to it a corresponding proportion of the nation's resources, and the operations would reveal a correspondingly great and comprehensive plan. The conditions which produce the extreme energy of war, what Clausewitz called war in its absolute form, have not always accompanied all the campaigns that have been fought since he wrote. There have been conflicts in which neither side has been a nationalized State, and conflicts in which that quality could not be predicated of both sides; but where the conditions have been fulfilled, the prophecy of Clausewitz has been realized. The notable instances are the Civil War in the United States of America, the war between Prussia and Austria in 1866, and the war between Germany and France in 1870. The last great war in the Far East was a case in which one side (Japan) was a nationalized State in which the motives of the war vibrated in the spirit of every member of the community, while the adversary (Russia) was very far removed from that stage of political development in which the political purpose of the struggle could be reflected in the mind and conscience of every citizen or of every combatant. Our own struggle in South Africa was a case in which two small and uncentralized States of great territorial

extent were inspired by a common determination with which the mass of their citizens were imbued. The whole mass therefore threw itself with great determination into the conflict; but on the British side there were lacking on the part of the statesmen in the first instance that clearness of conception and that lucidity of exposition which might have brought home to the whole body of citizens the necessity and the justice of the cause, so that the national character of the war was by no means fully understood until the crisis was past. Accordingly, the nation was surprised at what happened; and both the nation and its members of all classes, both the soldiers and those who were citizens without being soldiers, received the impression that there was something in the nature of war which they had not thoroughly grasped, and which it might be desirable to understand. Those who made the attempt to penetrate beneath the surface, and to ascertain the bond between cause and effect in the events of that war, were led to believe that citizens and soldiers alike would be benefited by an abandonment of the neglect with which the subject of war had too long been treated. From the searchings of heart of that period have resulted changes in the military organization, changes in the arrangements for military education, as well as an expansion of the studies of more than one University. Thus the movement of which one of the results is our presence here to-day has been of very long and gradual growth spreading over the whole world. It has as yet hardly exercised its full

pressure upon our own country, which, however, will be carried along in the stream of nationalizing and organizing effort until there has been created in one way or another an organization for war by land and sea of all the resources of the nation.

The tendency of war towards concentration of effort, towards the accumulation in a single decisive collision of all the forces which a nation can accumulate, is best seen when the theatre of war is the sea. At sea a fleet can move at twenty times the rate at which an army can walk along the surface of the ground. The ships carry in them all the necessaries of life and action, so that a fleet does not, like an army, trail behind it a lengthening chain of vulnerable communications. There are in the open sea no such geographical features as enable an army to find obstacles which may serve as shelter against the enemy's attacks. At sea, therefore, the difference between attack and defence resolves itself into little more than the difference between confidence and hesitation. Accordingly, naval warfare is apt to be decided in a single battle, in which the bulk of the forces of both sides are engaged, and which, by the almost complete destruction of the force of the defeated side, determines the issues. The nation that aspires in the event of war to assert for itself the command of the sea may, therefore, have to hazard its fate upon a single battle, of which the result will in most cases have been predetermined by the character of the national efforts made during a long preceding period of preparation. The historian sees in

Trafalgar and in Tsusima nothing but the inevitable consequence of the previous lives of the navies concerned.

In the modern world, when a nation—that is, a people organized as a state—goes to war, the energy developed is so great that nothing but a similarly organized body can hope to withstand the shock; and the effort involved on each side is so intense that it must for the time being absorb the whole of the national energies and carry with it a temporary suspension of all other forms of activity. The effect of war upon the State which has been successfully invaded is comparable only to that of some great natural cataclysm. The ravages of war, even when carried on by a highly civilized and thoroughly disciplined army, resemble in their effects those of the flood or of the earthquake.

But it is a mistake to dwell too much upon the physical aspects of war. Far more important is its spiritual character, of which the significance has been increased a hundred-fold by the development of its national quality. A nation cannot be called to arms and mobilized except for the assertion of some cause which appeals to the hearts and the consciences of the mass of its citizens. For a nation, therefore, to go to war, except in behalf of a cause which makes that appeal, is to court defeat. There cannot in such a case be that sudden and tremendous development of energy without which it is idle to hope for victory. The more closely, therefore, a statesman has familiarized himself with the nature of war and the more

deeply he has explored the causes of victory and defeat, the more profoundly will he be convinced that the ultimate secret of success lies in the cause in behalf of which he calls on his people to draw the sword.

But the time when causes must be scrutinized is not when a dispute has begun, when prejudices fill the air, and when passions quicken the pulses. The origin of wars lies in the conflict of policies, in the incompatibility of the purposes of two states; the time to weigh the possibilities of conflict is when the national policy is taking shape. The chief result, therefore, of the study of military history is to force us to ask the question: What is the purpose of national life, and what the specific purpose of our own nation? Oxford is the home of the doctrine that the State arises for the purpose of rendering human life possible, and that the object of its development is to sustain a noble life in which its citizens shall be sharers. A noble life is a life of service to the community, and a great nation is one that serves the other nations of mankind. We have learned each for himself from a great leader of war that England expects every man to do his duty. Let us learn also, when called upon in our capacity as citizens to consider the national policy, to say to ourselves that Englishmen expect England to do her duty.

I have dwelt at perhaps too much length upon the main truths disclosed by military history as to the nature of war, partly because I think that too little

attention has been paid to them, and partly because I derive from them my conception of the scope and method of the University study of war. The Statute prescribes that the Professor shall lecture and give instruction in military history, with special reference to the conditions of modern warfare. In the matter of warfare, the modern epoch begins in 1792 with the first appearance of the nation in the field. The period to which we must devote special attention is from 1792, to the latest date up to which the publication or the accessibility of sufficient evidence enables us to obtain accurate knowledge and to form a trustworthy judgment of the events. The area thus given for our exploration is considerable. It includes a number of wars of the first magnitude, and a number of leaders of considerable power—several of them stars of the first magnitude. I confess that I am specially attracted by the two greatest of them, by Napoleon and Moltke—by Napoleon, because he was the originator of modern methods as well as the greatest master of the art; by Moltke, because he inherited and developed the tradition of the Napoleonic age, transforming and applying to conditions in many respects new the ideas developed in the earlier period. The researches of the last thirty years have thrown a new light upon the revolutionary and Napoleonic wars, and it seems prudent to begin by the attempt to appreciate those wars by the aid of the now available mass of evidence. My own special endeavour has been for some years to trace the genesis of Napoleon's generalship from his early

studies, from the environment in which he grew up, and from the teaching which he inherited, in order to arrive at an historical understanding of the rise of modern strategy; and I hope that some of my students will be able to associate themselves with me in that attempt.

There are three processes involved in the work of the military historian. The first is the kind of criticism which is here taught in the schools of History, the sifting of the evidence with a view to the establishment of the facts. This is, and always must be, the basis of all our work, for without it we shall be dealing not with reality but with dreams. History resembles Antæus, who lost his strength when lifted out of contact with the earth on which he walked—in the case of history the facts as established by evidence.

The second process consists in the application of the military judgment. It is the attempt to arrange the facts in their connexion of cause and effect, and requires us to trace the course of the events with sufficient minuteness to make sure so far as may be that we know the intentions and the motives of the chief actors. It is perhaps not the historian's business to distribute praise and blame, but it may be his function to inquire upon occasion whether the means employed were those most suitable to produce the result desired. This is the third process, of which you may like to have an illustration.

In 1797 Napoleon, who in the previous year had driven the Austrian armies from the north of Italy

and made himself master of the plain from the Alps to the Ticino and of the hills as far north as the Brenner, set out with such forces as he could collect to advance on the line from Verona to Vienna. The Austrian Government saw itself compelled to withdraw for the defence of Vienna the portion of its forces which was facing the French armies in South Germany, and with which, in 1796, the Archduke Charles had brilliantly defeated those armies. The Archduke Charles collected a small army in the north-east of Italy at the foot of the mountains which interposed between the Italian plain and the plain of Austria-Hungary. He put himself as well as he could between Napoleon and his objective. The first critical historian of this war, Jomini, expressed the opinion that the Archduke Charles would have done better if he had collected his army in the Tyrol and thereby compelled Napoleon to turn to his left rather than go straight on. The next great critic, Clausewitz, was unwilling to disapprove of the action of a commander previously so prudent and able as the Archduke Charles. He therefore speculated on the reasons which might have induced the Archduke to follow the course which he actually adopted, and these speculations will always be worth studying because they reveal the breadth and the strength of the judgment of one of the greatest of all critics. Clausewitz had no means of knowing, and was aware that he had no means of knowing, the principal fact, namely, the real ideas and intentions of the Archduke. Many years after the death of Clausewitz

were published the military memoirs of the Archduke, who in them discussed this question. After reviewing the situation at the opening of the campaign, he says: 'To all these unfavourable circumstances were further added the erroneous views of the Archduke Charles, who was recalled from the Rhine and replaced at the head of the troops in Italy, and whose mind was too much dominated by old-fashioned ideas. . . . Accordingly, he took up a quite unsuitable, mistaken position, leaving only a small force in Tyrol, and collecting the greater part on the Tagliamento.'

In this kind of inquiry the military judgment is formed, and it may be found useful for the student from time to time to give it further exercise by attempting in the imagination an independent solution of the problems with which generals in the past have been confronted. For the conclusion that a particular operation was not the most appropriate for the end in view cannot be demonstrated except by an exposition of a more appropriate means, and by the examination of what would have been the probable results of its employment.

I think it would be in accordance with the spirit of the Statute that I should from time to time, as opportunity offers, try to show for the benefit of historical students not directly concerned with military history, the way in which the modern knowledge of war throws light on some of the obscure problems with which historians sometimes deal. I hope, for example, at no very distant date, to discuss in the

light of modern military research the problem, sometimes thought insoluble, of Hannibal's passage across the Alps.

I do not conceive it to be the function of the University to undertake the technical instruction of professional officers, or to give its students practice in the art of leading troops. Yet the University may well be of some use to those who have charge of the management of the army. If our work is rightly carried on, we may throw some light upon aspects of war with which the professional soldier has not always time to occupy himself; and we shall hope to derive help and guidance from the historical and other scientific labours carried on by the general staff at the War Office. The greatest services, however, which the University can render to the army, as to the nation, must consist in the effort which we carry on to obtain and to communicate true ideas of human life and society, and in the inspiration which we may be able to give to our students. If we are able to send out into the working life of England a stream of men of sound intellectual training, with a large outlook on life and a high purpose of service to the nation, it is for the army to attract them to the particular career which it has to offer.

The ultimate outcome of the activity of the military historian is the insight which he gains into the nature of war, and which he may attempt to express in a view or theory of its nature and of its several parts or manifestations. I doubt whether there has been in recent times an English view of war. English

students for the most part have accepted the theory set forth either by Jomini, the head of the French school, or by Clausewitz, the founder after Scharnhorst of the German school. To some, these two views have seemed to be inconsistent with one another, and there have been those who have tried, both in discussion and in action, to defend one theory against the other, very much as those politicians whose thinking is divorced from history imagine the State to be the *corpus vile* upon which experiments may be made concerning the results of particular abstract theories. More than three-quarters of a century have passed since Jomini and Clausewitz gave to the world such insight as they had acquired during a generation of war into its nature and workings. In my view, the subsequent experience reconciles and confirms them both, and I have often thought it possible that the continuance of their labours might well be the work of some English hand. To-day, I cannot but dream of an Oxford School of War developing that which time has confirmed of the ideas of the older writers into a fresh yet true idea adequate to the needs of the present day and of our own people. It would attempt to be a vision and not a dream, and would base itself upon such knowledge as Oxford can supply of the nature of society and of the State.

I may perhaps venture, in illustration of my fancy, to touch upon one point where I suspect that the ideas of the German thinkers are open to discussion. From the evident necessity for harmony between policy

and strategy they deduce the conclusion that it is desirable that the political and the strategical direction of the State should be in a single hand. That doctrine seems to me to lend itself to a possible inversion of the true relations between the two activities. A strategist in supreme authority may easily underrate the magnitude of those ethical laws which manifest themselves in the life of nations. Is there not a contrast to be drawn between Napoleon and Moltke? The more we study the conduct of Napoleon's campaigns, the more we must admire his splendid insight into the laws of force. Yet is it not clear that he was blind to some of the laws of spiritual and national life, and is it not the conflict between his insight and his blindness which invests the story of his catastrophe with something of the awe of tragedy? The work of Moltke may have been less brilliant, but his victories have certainly had more durable results, and his serene end recalls the ancient saying that we must estimate no man's happiness until his career is over. Now Moltke was not, as Napoleon was, the master of his State. His strategical genius was not the dictator, but the obedient servant of his country. Perhaps the deepest secret of his career is to be found in the words inscribed on the little chapel which he erected in the grounds of his Silesian country house as a monument to what was dearest to him—the words 'Love is the fulfilling of the law.'

Permit me now, in conclusion, to collect into a focus the thought which I have been trying to express.

My purpose has been to set before you a true idea of war, that being the end and aim of my presence in the University as Professor of Military History. A true idea is like a living thing that grows from a small seed, and its peculiar quality is that from the beginning to the end of its growth it remains the same, developing from an original kernel to a great and complicated organism. The true idea of war is that it is a social effort, a part of the struggle of a society for self-realization, its peculiar form being that of violent conflict with another society, its rival or enemy. This way of looking at war gives the clue to all the phenomena observed in the history of innumerable wars. It accounts for changes and developments in the organization of combatant forces, in their armament and administration, in their tactics, and in the mechanism of their command and control. From this point of view we are able to understand the relation between the statesman and the naval or military commander, and to grasp the necessity of modifications of military systems in accordance with the metamorphoses which the State itself undergoes.

Applying this simple idea to the well-known facts of modern history, we have seen how the transformation of the State which marked the close of the eighteenth century, the transition from the monarchical to the democratic organization, brought with it the possibility of a great expansion of the energies and resources available for conflict. Once that possibility had been revealed in action the several states

found themselves in turn compelled to reckon with it, until the modern State, of which the general character is that of a whole people organized for political purposes; or, as we say in a single word, a nation, has tended to become, for that kind of self-realization which we know as war, a nation in arms. This idea of the nature of war I have put before you as the essence of the teaching of that military history which is identical with the science of war. If it is a true idea it ought to explain all the phenomena, great and small. I have therefore applied it in the explanation of the beginnings of military studies at Oxford; and that inquiry has shown, I trust to your satisfaction, that our University is, in this as in other branches, consciously or unconsciously doing work in the service of our country of which, though the fruits are not yet seen, the character and quality may be divined.

I have suggested that the development of the national organization is bound by the conditions of the world to adapt itself in some measure to the needs of ever-possible conflict, so that our nation must and will find its mode of constituting itself as a fighting power. In that development Oxford will have her part, which I imagine must be, according to the nature of her activities, to cultivate, develop, and diffuse the true idea of the nature of war.

## II

## WHAT IS PEACE?*

NOT for the first time have the thoughts and the hopes of men been turned in our own day towards the ideal of universal or perpetual peace, and towards the possibility of the elimination of wars from among the troubles that beset mankind. For many generations thinkers have devised schemes intended to compass this object; and statesmen have made occasional hesitating attempts to give reality to such portions of them as seemed practicable. A masterly survey of these suggestions and experiments was made so long ago as 1874 in an academical address by the present Master of Peterhouse,† and less comprehensive historical sketch of the same kind was published in 1882 by the German jurist Franz von Holtzendorff.‡ More recently the same ground has been covered, with an eye to what has been accomplished in practice, rather than to theoretical possibilities, by some of the

* June 3, 1911.

† 'The Peace of Europe,' by A. W. Ward (*Essays and Addresses by Professors and Lecturers at the Owens College*, London, 1874).

‡ *Die Idee des ewigen Völkerfriedens*, von Frank von Holtzendorff. Berlin, 1882.

contributors to the last volume of the *Cambridge History*, more particularly by Sir Frederick Pollock.

Of late years a change has come over the spirit in which the subject is approached. For, whereas the men of the generation to which belong the three writers just named have usually thought of peace as a pattern set up in the intellectual world, as a condition of that 'Kingdom of Heaven' which represents the final goal of human perfection, never attainable yet ever to be approached, the new thought of the present day seems to be that this ideal may even now be reached, if only the right way be followed.

The large currents of public sentiment and public opinion are impulsive, instinctive, and emotional rather than rational; they resemble the lower courses of the great rivers, which sometimes turn back upon themselves and press with immense energy in a direction opposite to that which leads towards their ultimate destination. The engineers who have charge of such a river attempt to straighten and simplify its course by here and there cutting across the neck which separates the beginning and end of a great loop and thus maintaining the trend of the stream in one constant direction. Their effort is to systematize its flow and so to render it more useful. The function of the critic in relation to public thought and feeling should perhaps resemble that of the river engineer. A systematic survey of a subject should enable him to trace the general line which must be followed by thought consistent with itself, and in this way to ascertain where the rush of thought is following a direction

which leads away from the ultimate goal, possibly sometimes to detect the nature of the obstacle, spiritual or intellectual, which is causing the diversion of the current. The principal instruments of the intellectual surveyor are the definition of the words employed and the demonstration by argument and evidence of the propositions advanced. Sometimes no greater service can be rendered to truth than to point out that a statement which men readily believe because it accords with their wishes rests neither upon evidence nor upon logical argument.

The attempt will here be made to seek the guidance which may be expected from method and system in regard to a subject of the greatest importance to mankind, and to put in order thoughts which are not new but which, in the luxuriance of disorder, may become fertile of error. I shall attempt in the first place to recall in outline the natural history of peace. The structure of thought thus obtained will then be briefly compared with the actual experience of mankind, which may be gathered from a general glance at the record of history in regard to peace and war. The third branch of the inquiry will be the comparison between the order of thought ascertained from the theory and from history with the thought put forward by those who propose that men should change their way of regarding the subject. In conclusion, some of the proposed alternatives for war may be briefly examined.

## I

The beginning of the subject is the natural history of peace, which will be found to be identical with the natural history of war. The word 'peace' has at least three meanings. It describes, first, a state of the human spirit. The harmony of the soul for which all men long, and of which the ecstatic sense is an accompaniment of the religious life, receives its name by way of metaphor; and from the many metaphorical uses of the word comes a great part of its attraction. With none of these has the present inquiry any concern, though perhaps the associations which they lend to the term contribute not a little towards gaining disciples for the spread of the doctrine that universal peace is at hand. The word 'peace' describes, secondly, the condition of orderly life produced by the State for its citizens; and, thirdly, a special relation between two or more States. We are concerned with the second and the third of these meanings, between which, however, we must distinguish.

Peace in the sense of the second definition being a product of the State, and in that of the third being a relation between States, it is desirable to define the word 'State.' By a State we mean a community of men so organized as to be directed by a single government, and to have such unity as is implied by that direction. It is unnecessary to describe the State at length, but it may be convenient here to say that I accept the Hellenic account of its mission, that its purpose is in its genesis to provide the necessary con-

ditions of life, and in its maturity to render possible a good life. Its function is to secure the freedom to work and to rest, which is the basis of civilization; and this function it performs by the maintenance of order and by the administration of justice. To these ends it exercises supreme authority over its citizens, and over all associations of citizens; and it asserts that authority whenever necessary by the use of force.

The condition of peace within the community is the result of the action of the State in enforcing a law by which the relations between its members are determined; and a modern State prohibits or confines to special and exceptional cases the right and the power of individuals or of associations within it to assert their will by force. The result of the law and order thus asserted by the State is, in theory, though no doubt it is not in practice always fully realized, to create for the citizens the opportunity for that good life which consists in the power to develop and to exercise their best facilities. This condition of peace is normal within the State; being interrupted only by attempts to destroy the State from within, to which is applied the name of civil war.

Even during the existence of foreign war of conflict between the State and another State, the peaceful relation between the citizens of the State remains. The State is the basis of all the social and spiritual activities that make life worth living, the condition of the possibility of men's devotion to the best work of which they are capable and of the possibility of a good use of leisure.

The State regards itself as autonomous and self-sufficient; and these qualities are its peculiar characteristics, not possessed either by the individual or by any association of individuals within it.

Peace in the sense of the third definition requires the existence of two or more States in contact with one another. A single State in isolation cannot, of course, be at war; but it would be a misapplication of language to describe it as being at peace, except in the sense of internal or domestic peace, nor can the condition of peace be correctly said to exist between two States that are not in relation with one another. At the beginning of the eighteenth century, for example, there was a State of Great Britain and there was a State of Japan, but they were for practical purposes as remote from one another as though they had been on different planets; they were not in relation with one another; they were therefore neither at war nor at peace. But, if two States exist side by side as neighbours, there is necessarily intercourse between them; and in that intercourse there are always possibilities of conflict. The relation between them is continuous and may take the shape either of peace or of war. Two autonomies, two independent bodies, placed side by side cannot be thought of as in necessary accord. Their faculty of self-determination or independence implies that they may at any time, in regard to any dealings between them, have different thoughts and different wills, and their co-existence involves the possibility of discord which, in the absence of an authority over both, may at any time be resolved

by force. We cannot think of the State except as sovereign, autonomous, or independent; and we cannot think of two co-existent States in relation with one another without admitting that their relation involves equally the possibility of agreement and of disagreement; nor can we think of necessary agreement between them except as imposed upon both of them by some external authority; in other words, except as the result of the merging of their separate autonomies into a single sovereignty supreme over both.

In the Platonic account of the State the moment the aim of the community is directed to something more than mere physical existence the immediate result is an expansion, of which the consequence is thought of as war.

'I dare say,' says Socrates, 'that even the land which was intended to support the first population will now be insufficient and too small?'

'Yes,' said Glaucon.

'Then if we are to find enough for pasturage and plough-land we must take a slice from our neighbours' territory, and they will want to do the same with ours if they also overpass the bounds of necessity and plunge into reckless pursuit of wealth?'

'Yes, that must happen, Socrates,' he said.

'Then shall we go to war at that point, Glaucon, or what will happen?'

'We shall go to war.'*

It will be observed that this account of the origin of war accords with the modern conception by which

* *The Republic of Plato*, translated into English by A. D. Lindsay, p. 60.

expansion, taking place within the State, leads to aggression and consequent conflict. This expansion and consequent collision with another State is, in the Platonic conception, the foundation of the whole constitution. Here it is that Plato finds the origin of Government. His guardians are at once the rulers and the army; the citizens are the soldiers. Thus to the Greek mind the origin of the conception of duty was in the obligation of fighting in the service of the State, and it seems probable that even in the modern world the conception of the duty of the citizen has had a similar origin. Socrates had faced the enemy before he drank the hemlock.

The relation between two States must be distinguished from the relations between their subjects or citizens. The State to which a man belongs is the source and support of all his rights and to it he looks for their maintenance. But the State exercises direct authority only within its own borders, and when the citizen travels outside the territory of his own State he may find himself without rights and without protection. This difficulty is overcome by agreement between the different States, which undertake each to treat the other's subjects as though they were its own, and to give them the benefit of the protection of its own laws and its own authority. The difference of laws and of customs is apt to lead to disputes which are usually settled by negotiations between the Governments representing the two States. Thus the security of the citizen of one State within the borders of another is produced by the action of his own State,

in making an agreement with the foreign State, and such agreements are so universal that the subject of one State may travel or may reside in the territories of another and enjoy there all, or almost all, the benefits which he would have if he were a subject of the foreign State. The universality and the convenience of these arrangements are so great as to obscure in men's everyday consciousness the fact that these facilities of travel and residence are the result of the activity of their own State and of its agreements with the other. There are at any given time many points of contact between two States, every one of which is a possible occasion either of agreement or of dispute. The more civilized two neighbouring States become and the greater the intercourse between them, the more varied and frequent will be the opportunities of disagreement and of dispute. Accordingly all States, in proportion to the closeness of their relations with their neighbours, devise an elaborate machinery for communication with one another, and for negotiation on matters of possible disagreement. Every State maintains in every other State a number of agents, diplomatic or consular, for the purpose of regulating the intercourse between their citizens, and in every case where a difficulty arises the matter is referred to the two Governments. When the Governments take opposite views an attempt is made to reach a settlement either by compromise, by the mediation of a third Government, or by reference to some arbiter. But when the disagreement becomes a dispute, when it turns upon some matter of great interest, and

especially some right or claim in which men's feelings are concerned, the disagreement may become a quarrel. The Governments may become estranged from one another; one side or the other may attempt to assert its views by violence; and the two Governments may find themselves at war. Disagreement between States evidently varies in intensity, from the friction caused by trifling misunderstandings, to the great explosions of passion and of violence which usually precede and accompany the conflict of arms.

What then is the criterion by which to distinguish between disputes that can be amicably settled and those which from their nature must, by logical necessity, lead to war? The criterion may be deduced from the nature of the State, which can on principle agree to anything except its own destruction. No State can voluntarily abandon its existence or its essential nature, which in the last resort will be found in its autonomy, independence, or sovereignty; nor will a State, as a rule, except under compulsion, part with territory or with anything felt to be necessary to its well-being. Clearly in no case can it consent to its own annihilation. Accordingly it is commonly, and probably rightly, held that a State cannot bind itself to submit to arbitration in a dispute which turns upon an interest or a right vital to it. In other words, since the normal business of a Government is to secure to its subjects that freedom to work and to enjoy leisure which constitutes domestic peace, it cannot conceivably, for the sake of peace in its relations with another State, sacrifice the power of performing that

normal function. Two principles result from this train of thought: first, that so long as there is a plurality of sovereign or independent States the intercourse between them may take the form of disputes; and, secondly, that when a dispute turns upon a matter held to be vital, when some purpose of one State necessary to its welfare is inconsistent with some necessary condition of the existence of another, the conflict of purposes must lead to war.

Let us now examine the way in which, when war has broken out, peace is restored. The act of war is a measuring of forces by collision with one another; it is a process in which the forces are consumed, and the States engaged in it endeavour while it continues to replenish or replace them. This process of measuring by conflict and consumption continues until a palpable result is manifest. Either the forces will reveal themselves as equal, or those of one side will preponderate over those of the other. So soon as one or other of these results have been attained and it is clear that the continuation of the process will not be likely to modify the result, the two Governments will come to an agreement and peace will be made. If the measurement has revealed equality or equilibrium of forces the conditions of peace will correspond in general to the *status quo;* if the measurement has disclosed a decided preponderance of the forces of one side, the other side will make concessions, of which the extent will depend partly on the amount of the excess of force at the disposal of the victor. Once, however, the balance has been upset without the probability of its restora-

tion, it is impossible beforehand to determine what degree of concession may be necessary. In the extreme case the victor may absorb the beaten State; as a rule he will be satisfied with something less, with a province, with an indemnity, or even with an acknowledgment of the disputed right or claim. But there can be no guarantee that, once the balance has been upset, the victor's demands may not far exceed what would have satisfied him before the war began. Until war has actually broken out, peace may usually be had by some specific concession, as indeed it can always be had upon terms; but the terms demanded are liable to increase with victory.

This is in outline the logical analysis of peace and of war. It receives, however, a modification in practice. Not all disputes which should logically lead to war do so in reality, for there is always carried on even during peace a comparison of forces consisting, not in measurement by collison, use, and consumption, but in an estimation attempted by Governments and by public opinion. This speculative measurement or estimation influences the decisions of Governments, which avoid disputes when they perceive, or imagine they perceive, that the comparison of forces is to their own disadvantage. By a speculative estimate of forces policies are constantly determined; so that the framing of policy is usually affected by a consideration of forces not actually employed. This is the influence of strategy upon policy during peace; neglect of and mistakes in this function of speculative estimation or comparison of forces are common causes

of errors of policy during peace and of disasters during war. It is this speculative comparison of forces that sometimes prevents a war which, strictly speaking, would be a logical necessity. A weak State, fully aware of the impossibility of resisting a great State, will sometimes submit to conditions which seem to imply its destruction; in the impossibility of successful resistance men acquiesce in what they see to be inevitable. They hope for some unforeseen issue from misfortune. The two kinds of conditions of peace which result from the actual measuring of forces in war—namely, where, the balance having been upset, the stronger side dictates terms, and where, an equilibrium being revealed, peace results from compromise—have their parallel in the settlements made between States without recourse to war. An estimated equality of forces leads to compromise, and an estimated inequality to concession.

## II

From this sketch of the natural history of peace we may pass to the retrospect of experience. The beginning of European history reveals in the neighbourhood of the Ægean a number of small States in close relation with one another, sometimes at peace and sometimes at war. During the central period of Greek history the attempt was made to maintain equilibrium by the association of States into groups; but at length the rivalry of the groups enabled one State to upset the balance and to absorb the rest, so that what may be called the first chapter of ancient

history ends with the Empire of Alexander, which, while it lasts, extends over a large area the peace provided by a single State. But this empire includes too many types of a nature too diverse for coherence; the reign of peace is brief, and the single State falls asunder. The process is then repeated on a grander scale until the universal Empire of Rome becomes a synonym for the peace of the world. Thus ancient history is a movement towards one of the two kinds of conditions of peace, that produced by preponderance and by the consequent absorption of the plurality of States into a single one.

The single State, however, could not permanently fulfil its purpose; it gave peace at the expense of growth, of originality, of spontaneity, of vitality. Freedom became uniformity. Meantime there was growth and life outside the area of the one great State; and there began a process of 'penetration,' at first peaceful, but in due time warlike, ending in the disruption of the single State and the substitution for it of a multitude of new communities. With the disappearance of the single empire the peace which it represented vanished; though, when the new set of nations had at length begun to take shape, they were influenced by the memory of the one State which had so long meant peace and law. There were efforts for the restoration of the old unity, efforts represented by the mediæval Empire, and attempts to establish a universal arbiter, the Papacy. But these did not prevent the rise and growth of a series of independent States or sovereignties.

In modern times the process of war and the conditions of peace are usually of the second order, that of which the marks are equilibrium and compromise. The escape from war is constantly effected by a mutual recognition of independence, the normal basis of settlement being the conception of a balance of power. This is the significance of the great pacifications, the Peace of Westphalia, the Peace of Utrecht, the Peace of Paris. In each case an equilibrium had been sought from an association of States into groups; when the measuring of the forces in the field had been accomplished the conditions of peace were settled by conference between the groups. During this epoch began the change in the nature of States which constituted the Revolution. The English Revolution, as Bernhardi has pointed out,* first identified the State with the whole people, and set up the welfare of the community as the object of government. The French Revolution carried still further the process of the nationalization of the State. To the dictum of the Grand Monarque, *L'état c'est moi*, the French people retorted *L'état c'est nous!* and, when the national State found its existence endangered, the Republic required every citizen to fight for it, requisitioning without limit both men's persons and their property.

The nationalization of the State, and consequently of the army and the navy, carried out in every European State except the British, has had a transforming

* *Geschichte Russlands und der Europäichen Politik*, ii. 77.

effect upon policy, upon war, and upon peace. It has made wars less frequent but more intense. The danger to any given State caused by the possibility of conflict with a nation in arms has compelled every Government on the Continent to organize its population for war. In this way the forces which could be called into play in a European conflict have been enormously increased, and the dangers to any State that might be overpowered have been proportionately augmented. It follows that the function of correctly estimating during peace the forces which might be employed in war becomes more important than ever for the statesman. For conflicts of policy tend more and more to be settled without war by the easier process of forecasting the probable issue of the struggle which persistence in a given purpose opposed to that of a rival might involve. The hesitation to make the prodigious effort of a war and to face its almost unlimited risks renders all Governments willing to accept modes of settlement other than war in cases of dispute not felt to be vital. Negotiation, compromise, and concession are continuous, and arbitration is frequent, while war is reserved for the supreme moment of conflict upon matters of national existence, and when it cannot be avoided is waged with an energy unparalleled in previous experience.

Another consequence of the development of national organization is a strengthening of the impulse of States to combine their policies and their forces; there is a revival of the attempt to secure that equilibrium or balance of power which has been

shown to be one of the two possible conditions of peace. At the present moment the magnitude of the forces available, as well as of the risks which would be incurred, in a European war makes that event improbable except in case of a vital opposition of policies threatening the existence of some Great Power, or group of Powers, and of an estimate of forces before trial promising a decided preponderance to one side or the other. Should these conditions co-exist, the weaker side would be tempted to concession after concession as preferable to the supreme risk and the supreme effort of a struggle for the mastery, which, if it were undertaken, might end in a transformation of the map of Europe and of the world.

The future of the existing system of States, a system now no longer simply European but world-wide, will be determined in one direction or another according as there is or is not maintained an equilibrium, not indeed between single States, but between groups of Great Powers. If the equilibrium cannot be preserved, the weak States will gravitate towards the stronger group, and there will be a repetition of the phenomenon of ancient history—the gradual absorption by conquest or federation of the multitude of States into unity. In that way a universal or at any rate a widely extended and long-lasting condition of peace may be obtained through a series of great wars. On the other hand, if it be possible to preserve the balance of power between the various groups of States, there may be no occasion for an

actual trial of strength, and peace may be maintained for an indefinite period upon conditions of compromise.

III

War then may be regarded as the form which will be assumed by the intercourse between two States, when they find themselves, in regard to a matter of vital moment to each of them, in direct contradiction to one another; when the one feels bound to do something which must be injurious to the other, and which that other is therefore bound to prevent or to resist. If in thus looking at war we see it as it really is, our view ought to show also the true character of such contiguous objects as arbitration, disarmament, and other possible alternatives for war.

A large space in the foreground is occupied by the doctrines expounded by Mr. Norman Angell in a volume entitled *The Great Illusion*, of which the thesis is repeated but hardly modified in a later work entitled *The Foundations of International Politics*. Are these doctrines substantial, or do they merely constitute a cloud that obscures the landscape? Mr. Norman Angell at one time summed up his conclusions with commendable brevity in a letter published by the *Daily Mail* (June 28th, 1911):

'My whole point is a very simple one, namely: The all but universally accepted axiom of statecraft that great economic and national advantage attaches to military victory has been rendered nugatory by the circumstances of modern development; that certain economic phenomena peculiar to our generation—of

which reacting bourses and a synchronized bank rate the world over are perhaps the most characteristic—have deprived military victory of any advantage which it might once have had; that, could this fact be realized generally by European (notably by German) public opinion, the motives pushing to aggression would be immensely weakened and the risk of war by that much lessened; the moral being, not that self-defence is out of date, but that aggression is, and that when aggression ceases self-defence will be no longer necessary.'

Here Mr. Angell asserts that it is a current maxim of statecraft that 'economic and national advantage attaches to military victory.' He then asserts that 'economic phenomena have deprived military victory of any advantage.' What, according to Mr. Angell, is the precise purport of the current maxim? Is it that some of the advantages attributed to victory are economic and others not economic? In that case economic phenomena might render nugatory the economic advantages of victory while leaving its other advantages untouched. But Mr. Angell asserts that economic phenomena have rendered nugatory *any* advantage of victory. We are therefore bound to interpret him as meaning that, in the view accepted as he says by statesmen, victory brings economic advantages and no others whatever. In other words, Mr. Angell thinks of war merely as a means of acquiring or of retaining wealth. Is it possible to see eye to eye with a writer who thus expresses the gist of his opinions?

'What,' asks Mr. Angell in the synopsis to his

earlier volume, 'are the real motives prompting international rivalry in armaments?' This question he answers as follows:

'Each nation pleads that its armaments are purely for defence, but such plea necessarily implies that other nations have some interest in attack. What is this interest or supposed interest? The supposed interest has its origin in the universally accepted theory that military and political power give a nation commercial and social advantages, that the wealth and prosperity of the defenceless nation are at the mercy of stronger nations, who may be tempted by such defencelessness to commit aggression, so that each nation is compelled to protect itself against the possible cupidity of its neighbours. The author challenges this universal theory, and declares it to be based upon a pure optical illusion. He sets out to prove that military and political power give a nation no commercial advantage; that it is an economic impossibility for one nation to seize or destroy the wealth of another, or for one nation to enrich itself by subjugating another.'

He goes on to say:

'The idea that addition of territory adds to a nation's wealth is an optical illusion of like nature, since the wealth of conquered territory remains in the hands of the population of such territory.'

The argument of this passage appears to be that the purpose of offensive war is to enrich the nation which undertakes it and the purpose of defensive war to prevent the impoverishment of the nation which resists attack. The author contends that a nation can neither be enriched by victory nor im-

poverished by defeat; and that therefore war is useless. He further implies that a nation is not benefited by acquiring additional territory nor injured by the loss of territory, and therefore that war for territorial conquest or for the defence of territory is a useless proceeding. He wishes us to infer that victory and defeat are indifferent, conferring no benefits on the victor and inflicting no injuries on the vanquished. Accordingly all the energies devoted by a nation to preparations for war, and all the expenditure of life and of wealth in carrying on a war, are mere meaningless waste of energy, signifying nothing. The whole conception of war which has hitherto been shared by all mankind is an 'optical illusion.'

The interesting question is not whether the theory thus crudely stated is rational or acceptable, but how, even when half concealed by the way in which it is expressed, it can have commended itself to the author. The answer will be found by an examination of the following passage from his second chapter:

'Is it true that wealth and prosperity and well-being depend on the political power of nations, or, indeed, that the one has anything whatever to do with the other? Is it true that one nation can gain a solid, tangible advantage by the conquest of another? Does the political or military victory of a nation give any advantage to the individuals of that nation which is not still possessed by the individual of the defeated nation? Is it possible for one nation to take by force anything in the way of material

wealth from another? Is it possible for a nation in any real sense to "own" the territory of another—to own it, that is, in any way which can benefit the individual citizens of the owning country? If England could conquer Germany to-morrow, completely conquer her, reduce her nationality to so much dust, would the ordinary British subject be the better for it? If Germany could conquer England, would any ordinary German subject be the better for it? The fact that all these questions have to be answered in the negative, and that a negative answer seems to outrage common sense, shows how much our political axioms are in need of revision.'

In this passage the first sentence denies that well-being goes with the political power of nations—in other words, denies that human welfare is dependent upon the existence of the State. The second sentence denies that a nation can gain advantage by victory in war. These two sentences are explained and justified by the third, in which the author asserts that victory does not give to the individuals of the successful nation any advantage not still possessed by those of the defeated nation. The three sentences taken together reveal exactly what is in their writer's mind. He obliterates the distinction between a nation and the individuals that compose it. He blots the State out of his own mind and wishes to blot it out of the reader's mind. Having got rid of the State he supposes that he has got rid of war. Here he is guided by a sound instinct, because war is in its essence and nature a forcible conflict between two States. His procedure confirms our judgment;

without the State there is no war and no peace, but merely indiscriminate anarchy.

Without the organization of force and the discipline that accompanies it there is no State, no law, no order. The author of *The Great Illusion* professes to be undermining men's ideas on the subject of war; the real object of his attack is the State. A superficial examination of his book might give the impression that he is unaware that this is its real purport; it is therefore desirable to show that his assault on the State is intentional and deliberate. In a chapter entitled 'The State as a Person,' he says:

'Conflict between nations and international pugnacity generally imply a conception of a State as a homogeneous whole, having the same sort of responsibility that we attach to a person who, hitting us, provokes us to hit back. Now only to a very small and rapidly diminishing extent can a State be regarded as such a person.'

Discussing the ideals which are commonly associated with the existence of the State, he says:

'The real divisions of all these ideals cut right across State divisions, disregard them entirely. And yet again it is only the State division which military conflict has in view.'

At the conclusion of his chapter he quotes from Dr. Baty's *International Law*, as follows:

'It is impossible to ignore the significance of International Congresses, not only of Socialism, but of pacificism, of esperantism, of feminism, of every kind of art and science, that so conspicuously set their

seal upon the holiday season. Nationality as a limiting force is breaking down before cosmopolitanism. In directing its forces into an international channel, Socialism will have no difficulty whatever. . . . We are, therefore, confronted with a coming condition of affairs, in which the force of nationality will be distinctly inferior to the force of class-cohesion, and in which classes will be internationally organized so as to wield their force with effect.'

Mr. Angell goes on:

'We have here, at present in merely embryonic form, a group of motives otherwise opposed, but meeting and agreeing upon one point: the organization of society on other than territorial and national divisions.'

No observer will fail to recognize the existence of the phenomenon described in the passage quoted from Dr. Baty. The point with which we are now concerned is that Mr. Angell's conception of the way in which war is to be eliminated from human life is by the abolition of the State and by the substitution for it of a rearrangement of society in layers spread over the territories of many States. The layers are to represent classes and class interests; the conflict between the several classes is in the author's judgment more serious than the possible conflicts between States. The new power is to be that of class-cohesion; and the classes will be so organized as to 'wield their force with effect.' This is a picture, not of peace universal and perpetual, but of social war universal and perpetual. In his attempt to make permanent and universal the peace

which consists in the relation between States, Mr. Angell is ready to destroy the internal peace which is provided by the State itself. The content of Mr. Angell's ideal future is a condition in which States and nations will have given place to a universal antagonism of classes. His doctrines lead not to concord, co-operation, or harmony, but to the abolition of States and of those relations between them which constitute both peace and war.

These deductions from Mr. Angell's account of war are accepted and confirmed by him in various passages:

'In a thousand respects association cuts across State boundaries, which are purely conventional, and renders the biological division of mankind into independent and warring States a scientific ineptitude.' (*The Great Illusion*, p. 138.)

'Just as in the material domain the real biological law, which is association and co-operation between individuals of the same species in the struggle with their environment, has pushed men in their material struggle to conform with that law, so will it do so in the sentimental sphere. We shall come to realize that the real psychic and moral divisions are not as between nations, but as between opposing conceptions of life.' (*The Great Illusion*, p. 139.)

I am unable to persuade myself that the change from the existing state of things to that contemplated by Mr. Angell can be brought about without convulsions at least as painful as those of war. A State in isolation might indeed dissolve into a chaos of classes, out of which a new cosmos might evolve; but

among a number of States in contact with one another, the weakening of one State to such an extent as to render this kind of dissolution conceivable must make it a prey to the expansive energies of the nearest of its neighbours which has not yet lost its unity, cohesion, and strength. Instead of spontaneous dissolution, the fate of the weakening State would be conquest and absorption.

The analogy between the State and a person is, of course, merely metaphorical. The metaphor serves to convey the truth that in spite of the multifarious aspects of modern life and the great territorial extension of modern nations, each State maintains its unity, which, if it did not exist, would have to be created. For only the State can co-ordinate the many organizations and activities in which the energy of a modern population finds its scope. So great is the freedom conferred by the State organization of society that the average man is hardly conscious of the State's existence; he is not aware of the infinite differences by which his life, his habits, his environment, and his thoughts, are distinguished from those of his counterpart, the citizen of the next country across the frontier or across the sea. Not until he changes his residence to another country does the Englishman discover how greatly at every point of his spiritual, moral, and material existence he is differentiated from the Frenchman, the German, or the Italian. Yet to most men the sum of those differences constitutes a cherished inheritance. For this, among other reasons, nationality and all that

belongs to it, as well as the State which maintains it, are likely long to retain their hold upon mankind.

That the evolution of society has made the task of the State more difficult and more complex than ever, is true enough; and Mr. Angell's observation of this evolution in finance, in trade, in the interdependence of nations, and in the relations between rich and poor, is not inaccurate. It is the deduction which he makes from it which must be rejected. His works are full of assertions which are summarized in the statement that 'it has become a physical impossibility to benefit by military conquest.' In every case these statements rest upon the same fallacy. It is absurd to deny that wealth can be destroyed and territory transferred by force. But because conquered territory is not divided between the citizens of the victorious State, Mr. Angell supposes that that State can have no benefit from it. He ignores the economical and other forms of ruin caused by the destruction which takes place in war. It is not necessary to expose in detail the erroneous nature of all these negations. The fundamental error arises from the fact that Mr. Angell's thought ranges for the most part only in the material world. When he has a glimpse of moral forces dominating the material conditions of life he decries them as 'sentimental,' as in the passage quoted from page 139 of *The Great Illusion*. But the truth is that the spiritual forces are always and everywhere supreme, and that there is no 'material domain' which can be parted off as a

branch of life by itself and treated apart from the minds and wills of men.

It is not true that war is usually waged for sordid ends, nor that policy is merely the servant of the pursuit of wealth. It would be hard to discover an economical or mere material motive underlying the wars of the French Republic and Empire, the wars of the revolutionary period of 1848 and of the years immediately following, the Crimean War, the wars of 1859 and 1866.

The error which pervades not only Mr. Angell's work but too much of the pacifist literature of the day, is the neglect of the purpose and function of the State, and of the truth that the political community is the necessary condition of everything that makes life worth living. In the State, and in the State alone, force and right are identified. Everyone is aware of this when he regards the State from within. It is from this identification of two principles, of force and right, amalgamated only in this case, that the political community derives its character as the educator of mankind. But it is doubtful whether the State could retain this character if it ceased to be compelled by the existence of rivals, and the possibility of conflict with them, to maintain its force as the instrument of its self-defence or self-assertion. The purpose of war is resistance to wrong-doing and the assertion of right; and the ultimate justification of the existence of the State is inseparable from the call which it makes upon its citizens to sacrifice themselves as witnesses to the right or

righteousness which it represents. The conflict of States is a competition between ideals, without which the evolution of the race could hardly proceed. The experience of the ancient world suggests that the amalgamation of all existing States into one, which is the only imaginable mode in which the conception of universal peace could be attained, would change into monotony and uniformity the diversity and variety of life, would be accompanied by stagnation, and would end in fresh divisions. The conception that peace can exist only on the basis of law or right, and that right can be established only through contest, has grown unfamiliar to our countrymen. It was expounded many years ago with admirable force and lucidity in Professor Jhering's essay, *Der Kampf ums Recht.*

## IV

The question really is whether a dispute as to right and wrong between two States can be settled by any other means than a trial of strength. The alternative means proposed is arbitration. Let us then assume that two great Powers have bound themselves, in case of any dispute whatever between them, without reserve and without exception, to submit the question at issue to an arbitral tribunal and to accept and abide by the decision of that tribunal. Let us next assume that, this obligation to submit to and accept arbitration subsisting, the two States find themselves at issue upon a question of right and wrong involving consequences vital to each of them. This means that

the Government and the people of one of the two States affirm some principle as to which they believe that, if they acquiesced in its denial, their community could no longer fulfil the purpose of its existence. In such cases, and indeed in all cases of dispute, there is something more than the assent by the intelligence to a proposition; the will is involved; men are determined to maintain their State or their national existence. The Government and the people of the State under consideration are therefore intellectually and morally bound to affirm their proposition, to maintain their will; not to do so is, in their judgment and conviction, the annihilation of their community. It follows that they cannot fulfil the stipulation of the treaty; they will either refuse to submit the matter to arbitration, or, if the decision is adverse, to accept it. The other State may be in precisely the same position. In spite of the treaty there will be war which will take the extreme form of a struggle for existence. There is in the abstract no escape from this analysis, which rests upon the nature of the political community. The State is the only known means of giving reality to the conception of right. In virtue of that function it commands men's allegiance; if, therefore, it fails in fulfilling its mission, the reason for men's allegiance has disappeared, and the dissolution of the State must ensue. The extreme case, which must be assumed for the guidance of our thought, seldom occurs, but in examination reveals a clue to all the actual phenomena. It shows the true significance of victory and of defeat. For the vic-

torious nation is strengthened by the consciousness that it has affirmed and made real the principle to which it was devoted. It has established its case, realized some portion of its ideal. It is, accordingly, uplifted and its energy stimulated. The defeated nation is correspondingly depressed. The faith of the subjects in their State is in the one case increased and in the other diminished.

We should say then that arbitration is admissible between States the conditions of whose existence are compatible with one another. The negotiation of a treaty of general arbitration between two nations is an evidence that the two peoples are unconscious of serious rivalry. The acceptance of such a treaty may therefore be taken as implying a probability that it will be observed unless and until some change of conditions discloses a previously unsuspected antagonism of interests, aims, or ideals.

The disputes which have usually led to wars have, however, seldom been of a nature which admitted of their submission to arbitration. They have arisen in consequence of changes due to the processes of growth and decay, or perhaps it would be more accurate to say, of unequal growth among the members of a system of States. They are almost always questions, not only of right or law, but at the same time of power. In 1866 the purpose of Prussia was to acquire in Germany a scope greater than had been accorded her in the settlement of 1815. No arbitral tribunal could have effected a settlement resembling that which was obtained as the outcome of the war of 1866. Yet

that settlement is now regarded as satisfactory by most of the populations which were concerned, none of whom, except perhaps the inhabitants of Northern Schleswig, would wish it undone. I fail to discover in the case of any of the principal wars of the past hundred years what question could, before the war, have been referred to an arbitral tribunal, or at what moment in the proceedings prior to the war a reference to arbitration could reasonably have been proposed. Moreover, in most of the cases, even if a question could have been formulated suitable for submission to arbitrators, that step would have been rendered impossible by the determination existing on both sides to bring the matter to a trial of strength.

The effect of growth is an expansion and an increase of power. It necessarily affects the environment of the growing organism; it interferes with the *status quo*. Existing rights and interests are disturbed by the fact of growth, which is itself a change. The growing community finds itself hedged in by previously existing and surviving conditions, and fettered by prescriptive rights. There is, therefore, an exertion of force to overcome resistance. No process of law or of arbitration can deal with this phenomenon, because any tribunal administering a system of right or law must base its decision upon the tradition of the past which has become unsuited to the new conditions that have arisen. The growing State is necessarily expansive or aggressive. Its aggression is resisted by its neighbours; its increasing strength counter-balanced by combination be-

tween them. This was the meaning of the European balance of power which aimed at self-preservation by an equilibrium of forces. Growth is a fact that is not amenable to codes or systems; the forces which constitute it are incalculable and immeasurable.

English statesmen and English thinkers ought to be the first to recognize that this is the case. In a brief span of historical time this nation has sent out swarms of its people, who have spread themselves over the choicest parts of three continents. Are Englishmen to shut their eyes to the force of growth in others or to imagine that even their own growth is at an end? Every social change carries with it new possibilities of life, sometimes in the shape of an increase of population, sometimes in the development of higher qualities and higher powers. How was the strength of France developed by her Revolution, and how has that of Great Britain been increased by the development that has taken place during the last two reigns?

It may be well to take a concrete illustration of the fact that vital questions do not admit of submission to any tribunal. Has Great Britain a right to the command of the sea? No conceivable tribunal could affirm it, for what does that expression mean? It is a synonym for decisive naval victory and its consequences. As the ability to gain decisive victory at sea is the best defence of an island State, so the best instrument of any British policy must be a navy capable of such victory. How then can Great Britain become a party to an international agreement for the

limitation of armaments? No rival Power could conceivably consent to an agreement such as would leave England supreme, or even superior in strength, at sea. Nor will any State consent to such conditions as would restrict its own strength, for every State must wish to be as strong as possible, or must renounce its purpose of asserting in competition the ideals which it represents.

It will be observed, as a consequence of the view which has been set forth of the nature of peace and war, that peace cannot rationally be the object of policy. The function of a State or nation is to maintain domestic peace by the agency of law, and in its intercourse with other States or nations to affirm its conception of a good life, of justice or righteousness. Its great aim may be said to be its own efficiency, and if, by the action of another State, that is threatened, the danger must be averted. When that can be effected peaceably, there is no real opposition of purposes; when it cannot, peace is to be had only by humiliation. Thus the condition of human life, for the State as for the individual, involves the perpetual possibility of a choice between the sacrifice of life and the sacrifice of what makes life worth living.

## III

## WHAT IS WAR?*

THE ideal of universal peace has in all ages been cherished, and from time to time men have been moved to suggest methods by which they have hoped to prepare the way for its realization. Does it represent an attainable goal, or is the conception inconsistent with the realities of life? In a former lecture I tried to give an account of the nature and conditions of peace, and to show how the existence of a plurality of States is inseparable from the possibility of wars between them. I was led to the conclusion that the intercourse between two States must assume the form of war if they should find themselves, in regard to a matter of vital moment to each of them, in direct contradiction to one another; if the one should feel bound to do something which must be injurious to the other, and which that other, therefore, would be bound to prevent or to resist. To-day I propose to inquire what light is thrown upon the subject by the nature and conditions of wars, and in particular by the modern development of wars and of their theory.

The warlike activities of modern times fall into

* June 19, 1914.

three periods, those of Frederick the Great, of Napoleon, and of Moltke, marked off, like so many geological epochs, by certain specific changes in the conditions. The first break or moment of decisive change was the French Revolution, which brought into warfare the new energy of a popular movement. The second was marked by the appropriation to the purposes of war of the results of mechanical invention and of the industrial revolution. The results of advances in mechanism were first seen in the American Civil War, and first generally appreciated after the Austro-Prussian War of 1866. Men always take a long time to perceive the full significance of changes like these; the growth of theory lags behind that of the activities with which it deals. Thus, the last theoretical analysis and synthesis of war was made by the contemporaries of Napoleon, and has not yet been superseded. Napoleon himself did not formulate a theory nor communicate a systematic account of the nature of the business of which he was the master. The first clear and correct analysis of the methods of war of that period was made by Jomini, a Swiss officer in the French service, whose exposition satisfied French and English students during the greater part of the nineteenth century. Of Napoleon's antagonists, the Archduke Charles, after his retirement in 1809, gave himself up to the history of the campaigns of his time and to an exposition of his principles. But he hardly went beyond Jomini. Wellington was as little disposed to explore the theory of war as to encourage historical inquiry.

Scharnhorst, whose mind was a spring of clear and true thoughts about war, was struck down in 1813, and left his doctrine to be developed by his friend and pupil Clausewitz, who had the advantage of the previous labours of Jomini and the Archduke Charles. After the peace of 1815, Clausewitz gave the rest of his life to the theory of war. He was free from serious anxiety, domestic or economic, and from heavy administrative responsibilities. He possessed the supreme qualification for seeing the truth, the single eye, and, as he wrote only for posterity, his work could not be marred by the vanity that assails the man who writes for a contemporary public. His account of war is the most trustworthy and the most adequate which we possess, and forms the starting-point of every fresh inquiry.

According to Clausewitz, war is an act of force having for its purpose to compel the enemy to submit to our will. The way to compel him to submit is to make it impossible for him to resist—that is, to disarm him and overpower him, which we shall be able to do if we defeat and destroy his armies and take possession of his territories; for then, even if his will is recalcitrant, we shall at any rate have our own way, and he cannot prevent us. It follows that if two States go to war, each of them should try to outbid the other in force and energy, because each side must see that if it does not overpower the enemy, it will probably be itself overpowered. Logically, therefore, a State going to war would transmute all its resources into military force, and would concen

trate its energies upon the prosecution of the war until the enemy was struck down and its own purpose fully accomplished. The State's purpose in war will be to have its own way concerning the matter in dispute. But the army's object should always be the same—to destroy the enemy's army, it being evident that whatever it is you wish to compel the enemy to do, the means of compelling him are always the same; they will always consist in making him powerless to resist you.

Clausewitz observed that this kind of war, logically deduced from its definition, was seldom seen, and he asked himself why the practice should fall short of the logic. Would not every State going to war see that it must outbid its opponent in force and energy? That there was the risk, if it did not crush the enemy, that it might itself be crushed? Why was it that States did not always, when they went to war, do it with all their might? First of all because the people of any State usually have, or think they have, other things to attend to besides the war. Look at the memoirs of any Englishman or Frenchman not a statesman or a soldier during the years between 1756 and 1763; look at the books written and read in those years. You will probably not be aware in reading the memoirs or the books that England was at war with France, and France with Prussia. You will find most people, in both countries, living their ordinary lives, as though the armies and navies had no existence or were merely engaged in manœuvres at a distance.

During the last South African War the usual business of Parliament was carried on as though Great Britain had been at peace, and the war regarded as merely a disagreeable interruption; indeed, during the course of the war there was a General Election in which the management of the war was only one of a number of topics discussed by the candidates. It is quite possible that if, from the moment when the war was seen to be probable, current legislation and other business had, as far as possible, been laid aside, and the attention of the country concentrated on the prosecution of the war, the conflict might have been ended sooner.

A second explanation of the departure of States from logic in war is that a war is not over in an instant, but usually lasts for a certain time. An army is not quite like a bullet shot forth, or a mine exploded, taking instantaneous effect and striking down the enemy at once, so that the victorious Government can immediately dictate terms. It makes a continuous effort, or a series of successive pulsations of effort, admitting of constant control by a directing intelligence. Accordingly, States frequently go to war without employing in the first instance the maximum forces which they might have put into the field. They expect to have time to make further preparation and to increase their exertions during the course of the conflict. This postponement of effort is usually associated with failure. In 1805 the Emperor of Austria picked a quarrel with Napoleon, although the Archduke Charles had warned him that the Austrian

army was not strong enough to meet the French army, and must be beaten before the Russian army, on the assistance of which the Emperor Francis relied, could possibly be at hand to assist him. The Archduke proved right, for the Austrian and Russian armies were crushed by Napoleon separately, in succession. In 1859 the Emperor Francis Joseph found himself involved in a quarrel with Victor Emmanuel and his ally Napoleon III. At the beginning of the war he sent half his army into Italy, and when that had been defeated took there the other half, which was also defeated in its turn. In 1885 King Milan of Serbia, about to attack Bulgaria, put half his army into the field, and was well beaten before it was possible to call out the other half. It will be fresh in your recollection that, when the Emperor of Russia forced a war on Japan, half of his fleet was in the theatre of war and the other half in European waters, and that the first half was destroyed long before the second half could arrive upon the scene of action. A third explanation of the abandonment of logic is that the end of the war will not be the end of history, so that the people of a State are apt to hope that even if defeated now they may renew the conflict hereafter, and then be victorious.

Logically, a Government would set out to crush the antagonist's forces, and would continue the effort until the adversary was prostrate and cried, 'Hold! enough!' But in practice, so soon as the State begins to feel the burden of a conflict, men revert to the question of what they are fighting for, and ask

themselves whether it is worth while to continue their sacrifices. Thus a war is apt to be a less desperate affair than pure logic would make it. Its energy is further diminished, as a rule, by loss of time.

We have seen that the energy of a nation in war is apt to be diminished by the procrastination of the State, which is prone to put off till too late the exertions which it would rationally make in anticipation of the conflict. A somewhat different kind of procrastination affects the action of commanders in the field. The only logical reason why either side should make a pause in the conflict is to wait for a more favourable moment for its next action. This ought not rationally to create a pause, because, if the present moment is unfavourable for one side, it will for that very reason be favourable for the other; why, then, should time pass in inaction? Because of the difference between attack and defence. Much more energy is required to deliver a blow than to receive it; in the warfare of armies the assailant must move, while the defendant need not, and the ground affords protection to the side that remains stationary and takes advantage of it. A Blue and a Red army are facing each other, each having a strong position at its disposal. The Red army expects a reinforcement next week, while the Blue army expects none. The interest of the Blue commander is evidently to win his battle before the Red can be reinforced, but he does not feel strong enough to attack Red's position, though he is confident of beating Red if Red should attack his position, even though Red should first

have been reinforced. Red's interest is evidently to put off the battle until his reinforcement arrives. Blue's interest is, if possible, to bring about the trial of strength before his enemy is reinforced. But, since he does not feel strong enough to give up the advantages of defence, he prefers to wait till next week to be attacked rather than to attack now. Accordingly, both sides wait for a week. Thus a pause in the action is caused by the difference between attack and defence, and this loss of time is one of the elements which dilutes the energy with which war is carried on. The pause is sometimes occasioned, not by a real difference of strength between the armies, but by an imaginary one, for one of the difficulties which confronts every commander is to appreciate correctly the strength, the doings, and the situation of his opponent, which frequently appear more formidable than they really are. In the illustration just given it makes little difference to Blue whether he knows or does not know that Red is expecting reinforcements.

Not only ignorance, but chance, plays a large part in war, so that every commander in some respects resembles a gambler. Moreover, all the operations take place in the medium of danger, and therefore the action is affected by the spiritual quality of courage, which is incalculable.

Thus it comes about that wars may be of all shades of intensity. Yet they are all actions of the State for ends of its own, and therefore the function of the statesman in regard to them is to make sure that

the means are appropriate to the end. The first, the greatest, and the most decisive act of judgment which the statesman or the commander has to perform is correctly to estimate the intensity of effort which will be involved in a war in which he is about to engage.

When the motives of war are so strong as to affect the whole life of the peoples concerned, and to produce a violent tension of feeling, the war will approach its logical character; the efforts will be directed to striking down the enemy, and the purpose of the State will express itself in the army's aim of crushing the foe. Such a strong, high purpose of the State, appealing powerfully to its people, will lead not only to an effort to strike down the enemy but also to a well-thought-out plan of operations. Accordingly, Clausewitz says to the statesman: before you go to war you must consider whether the object you have in view is so important to the nation which you are leading as to justify the employment of all its resources, and so enable you to aim at striking down the enemy and dictating your terms. If you see your way to that, well and good. But if you see that to be impracticable, if you have not the forces required to disarm the enemy, and if the cause for which you propose to fight will not induce your nation to provide these forces, your army must evidently aim at something less than the destruction of the enemy. In that case you may set it to conquer a province, and to hold on against the enemy's counter-attacks until he is willing to make peace, and either leave the province to you or make some concessions

in exchange for its recovery. But before you go to war for a limited object of this kind, you must well consider how the other State will regard it, for it may be that the other State will not so limit either its object or its effort. It may feel able to attempt to destroy your army, to invade your territory, and, when you are helpless, to dictate terms involving sacrifices far greater than you ever contemplated.

In other words, a nation that goes to war makes a great mistake in supposing that it can limit its liabilities. That depends on the enemy. The only safe assumption for a statesman or a nation in beginning a war is that it will be fought to a finish. There can be no guarantee that the stake which is risked will be anything less than the existence of the State and the independence of the nation.

This is the theory set forth by Clausewitz in that first chapter of his work which alone seemed to him satisfactory. Its remarkable feature is the dualism of view which pervades it. After carefully explaining how a war ought to be waged, and setting up both for statesmen and for generals an ideal of effective warfare, he hastens to warn us that the ideal is seldom realized in practice, and to seek in human weakness and inconsistency for an explanation of the manner in which warfare usually falls short of what correct thinking would make it.

The origin of this dualism is to be found in a later volume, which gives the account of the plan of a war when the military purpose is to crush the enemy's forces. The essence of a plan of this kind is con-

centration of the action in time and space. You must, as far as possible, discover your enemy's centre of gravity. You must crystallize your blow against that centre of gravity into one principal action, and make all the subordinate actions as subordinate as possible.

This account of a plan of campaign was a generalization from the practice of Napoleon. But when Clausewitz came to study the history of earlier wars he found a very different practice. The eighteenth-century absolute monarch seemed to him to have been apt to make war for personal or dynastic ends, and to wage it with a standing army, composed of only a fraction of the population and incapable of great increase during the course of the struggle. If the army was beaten, the monarch, having no other resources and being anxious to preserve what was left of his army, was ready to make terms. There was a limit to the exertions he could undertake, as there was to those of his opponent. Risks and gains were alike limited. Clausewitz felt that the contrast between the Napoleonic wars and those that had preceded them was too great to admit of a theory abstracted from the case of Napoleon being applied to all cases of war. The Napoleonic practice he called that of absolute war, and he contrasted it with that of most other wars which had actually taken place.

What are we to make of this dualism in the doctrine of Clausewitz?

We must remember that he left his work unfinished,

and intended to recast it and to write it again. When he sealed up his papers in 1830 to go off to the expected campaign in Poland, he left a note in which he described it as a collection of fragments that needed to be rewritten. He had come to the conclusion that there were two kinds of wars: those in which one side aimed at the overthrow of the other, either at his political destruction or at rendering him defenceless, so that he could be compelled to accept any terms of peace that the victor might dictate; and those in which the purpose was merely to make a few conquests beyond the border, in order either to keep them or to have something in hand with which to bargain in the discussion of terms. It had cost him a long effort to find a common element in these two kinds of wars, yet he felt sure that they belong to the same genus, that the definition of war must be so framed as to include them both, and that only such a definition would embrace its essential characteristics. The common element was this, that every war is nothing but a continuance of the policy of a State by other means. He felt satisfied that with this explanation he had found the clue to the understanding of war and of its phenomena; but he felt that his work as he left it was insufficiently permeated by this idea, and he intended, if he lived, to go through his manuscript again, in the hope of bringing his view to greater unity and greater clearness.

I have never seen the question raised concerning the form which Clausewitz would have given his theory if he had lived to complete his work and to

think out to perfect clearness that relation between war and the State which he saw to be the essence of the subject. But since Clausewitz sealed up his manuscript in 1830 there has been a considerable further experience of wars, and those of our own time have revealed a great variety of kinds. We have seen two great Republics fighting in the United States until one of them was destroyed; we have seen monarchies of every size and kind at war with each other in Europe. We have seen the conflict between the vast Russian Empire and the comparatively tiny nation of Japan. We have seen the small principalities of the Balkans more than once at war with each other and with the Sultan of Turkey. The doctrine of Clausewitz has been applied to each of these wars, before they began, during their course and after their conclusion. The result is that the thinkers of to-day are agreed in the opinion that the type of war which Clausewitz called absolute, logical, or ideal, must be considered as normal, and that the type which he thought of as weaker but nearer to reality must be considered as exceptional. The war that aims at striking down the enemy by the destruction of his forces is that of the successful State; the war that tries to limit its aims, and therefore its exertions, is that of the defeated.

The explanation of this development is given by Clausewitz himself. 'Since Bonaparte,' he says, 'war, by becoming, first on one side and then the other, an affair of the whole people, has acquired a different nature, or rather has approached its true nature, its

absolute perfection. . . . Whether this will always be the case, whether all future wars in Europe will be waged with the whole weight of the States, and consequently only for great interests closely touching the peoples, or whether there will again be a separation between Government and people, it would be presumptuous to decide. But we may say that limitations that consisted in not being aware of what was possible, when they have once been broken down cannot be easily set up again, and that, at any rate whenever great interests are in question, the mutual hostility will discharge itself in the same way as it has done in our time.'

Here Clausewitz touched the heart of the matter. The energy with which a State carries on a war depends on the accord between the Government and the people, and on the degree to which the motive of the war affects and stirs the population. In other words, the transformation of the idea of the State, of which the first trace is seen in the seventeenth century, in the Revolution of 1689, and which was more fully carried out in the French Revolution, has had as its consequence a transformation of the character of wars.

Bernhardi, in the sketch of the history of Europe which is prefaced to the second volume of his *History of Russia since* 1815, expressed the opinion that the 'English Revolution of 1689 had restored the conception of the State and given it reality. England was henceforth, in spite of the old forms which she retained, no longer a mediæval feudal monarchy, the

property of her King, with estates whose mission was to defend privileges and class interests against the dynastic interests of the lord of the land; England was a community, governed by King and Parliament in combination, and the interests of the Government were from that time on regarded as the interests of the totality.'

The attempt to identify the State with the whole people, which Bernhardi attributes to the English in 1689, was made in earnest during the French Revolution, when the nation was substituted for the King as the possessor of sovereignty and the object of allegiance. To-day every European State thinks of itself as a community, and regards its Government as the representative or exponent of general interests, those of the whole body of the people, of the nation. The distinguishing character of modern wars is thus that they are conflicts between national States, of which the mark is that the Government represents and is at one with the people. Modern wars, therefore, will approach the absolute type in which, whatever the cause of the quarrel, the military aim of either side will be to strike down and disarm the adversary and then to dictate terms. The condition on which warfare of that kind is possible is that the motive of the war must appeal strongly, not only to the Government, but to the whole people. An appeal of that kind leads first of all to a large outlook and a comprehensive plan on the part of the exponents of the nation's cause—I use the word 'nation' to mean the combination of Government and people, the organ-

ized State in which they are fused into one. It leads, secondly, to the effort to devote the whole resources of the nation to the prosecution of the war, to the supplementing of a regular army by a militia and by a volunteer army, and to the amalgamation of both in a permanent requisition or conscription of all able-bodied men and of all property and wealth that can be transmuted into force; and, lastly, it leads to the effort to employ the utmost possible force at the outset of the war.

These three efforts are the chief foundations of success. They are forms of concentration of purpose, applications to the nation of the maxim, 'Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might.'

You remember that I enumerated a series of wars in which half an army or half a navy was sent out to be beaten, and then the other half sent after it to suffer the same fate—Austria in 1859, Serbia in 1885, Turkey in the last war, and even France in 1870, for it was not till her regular army had been captured at Sedan and Metz that she raised a new army of citizens. In all these cases, except that of France in 1870, the war was the Governments', but not the peoples', and in France the distinction between Government and people was such that the people did not enter into the struggle until the Government had been defeated, when it was too late.

That is, in my judgment, the theory of modern war, its nature as it presents itself to the vision of those whose lives have been given to the effort to know what can be known about it. The truth was

well summed up by Moltke when he wrote: 'The wars of the present day call the whole peoples to arms; hardly a family which is not involved. The whole financial resources of the State are engaged, and no change of seasons puts a stop to the unresting action. As long as nations lead their several lives there will be disputes that can only be settled by arms, but it is to be hoped, in the interests of humanity, that as they have become more terrible wars will become less frequent.' How is that hope to be fulfilled? Has it any justification in the view of war that I have put before you? I think it has.

We have seen that wars to-day are of the national type, in which the development and concentration of energy are pushed to extremes, and which are fought to a finish.

The conditions of effectual effort in such a case are that the whole resources of the State should be thrown into the conflict at the very outset, that they should be employed without interruption upon a comprehensive plan, and that this involves the utmost concentration of the powers of the State, first in thought or planning, then in organization, and lastly in execution. That these are in fact the conditions and are recognized as such is shown by the action of modern States, which have created general staffs as organs of thought about possible wars and have arranged to call out their whole manhood as combatants the moment a war is seen to be inevitable. It is evident that efforts of this magnitude will not be made except under the pressure of some all-compelling motive

influencing both Government and people. What motive has such a character? What is a vital cause for which a nation will fight to the last extremity?

I think it must be sought in the nature of the community. The people gives itself a Government and organizes itself as a State in order to secure for its members a good life. If to create the conditions of a good life is the function of the State or political community, the State ceases to be of use if and when it is rendered incapable of securing that good life. If, then, the action of another State would interfere with that function or render it impossible, the State so assailed in its essence will resist the interference. The energy and unity of the citizens in resistance will be proportionate to their sense of the utility of their common life. If they feel that what makes life worth living is their membership of the State, they will be ready to die for that State. If they have not that conviction there may be a limit to the sacrifices they will be ready to make. In other words, the patriotism of a population will be proportionate to the extent to which their nation represents a common good in which they are conscious partners. It will be a consequence of the efficiency or excellence of the national organization. The healthy society in which everyone has his work suited to his powers will prove stronger than the community which less perfectly realizes that condition.

We shall probably be right in saying that a conflict of policy between two national States will not neces-

sarily lead to a war unless the purpose of each challenged by the other presents itself to Government and people as essential to their efficiency. Whenever that is the case a war will be inevitable, and should logically result in the destruction of the weaker State. For if either State could compromise the matter in dispute, if it could see its way to continued efficiency or even to unimpaired existence after conceding the point, that point would thereby be proved not to have been vital to it.

Suppose two nations to quarrel and to fight each under the impression that the point at issue was vital to itself. They set out each to crush the forces of the other. The effort will be supreme on each side, and, as the struggle goes on, the people of each State will again and again consider the sacrifices required from them in relation to the cause they are asserting. If the effort is thought disproportionate to the end, there will be a relaxation of energy; the end will be seen to be less important than was supposed, and peace will be sought at the price of some concession. No Government can long exact from its people sacrifices and exertions which they feel to be excessive for the purpose in hand, and therefore no Government, without endangering, to an extent that cannot be estimated beforehand, the prosperity and possibly the independence of its State, can safely enter a quarrel not imposed upon it by the conditions of its existence. I doubt whether even the perfect military organization of modern European States can modify this fundamental condition. Professional

soldiers may fight in obedience to orders regardless of the cause. But citizens will not offer themselves to be killed unless they know the reason why. They will look for a cause that seems to them righteous and necessary. If men's ideals are challenged, they may be ready to bear witness to them with their blood. You cannot have citizen soldiers, whether you call them volunteers or trained recruits, except upon the terms of martyrdom.

It follows that in a war between national States the fundamental condition of success is a vital cause; it must be a question of the State's power to carry on its necessary work. A national State, therefore, may hope for victory in a vital cause, but in any other must accept defeat, with all the dread consequences of lying prostrate under the heel of a conqueror.

Who is to be the judge of what is vital to a nation? Only the nation itself. Who is the judge of the conduct of an individual? To a certain extent, no doubt, the jury or the court of law. But in the last resort we all recognize that each man must decide his conduct for himself. Conscience may bid him defy the law and take the consequences. Is not the dominant principle of human life that a man must risk himself in obeying his own soul, even, if need be, to the sacrifice of property, of career, and of life itself? That is the ultimately real aspect of life which is portrayed by tragedy, and to which we give the name of moral responsibility.

The nation, like the individual, has to stake itself

upon its conduct, which in its case we call policy, and must be true to itself even at the risk of destruction.

The conclusion with regard to the probability of wars becoming less frequent, to which I am led by the train of thought which I have tried to unfold, is that in proportion as States become efficiently organized as communities, providing for their members the conditions of a good life, they will refrain from unnecessary wars and from quarrels that do not vitally concern them. The true pacifism, then, consists in the effort of each nation to perfect its own organization. The pacifism which seeks short cuts to universal peace appears to me to arise from a lack of faith in the State, even in the national State, and its spread is, in my view, a symptom of the failure of the States in which it is rife to fulfil their ideal mission of providing the conditions of a good life for the whole population.

The fundamental question of the whole subject is, What is a necessary war? and I have sought for the answer by saying that a State must fight when its power to do its proper work is challenged.

But I am not satisfied with the definition I have offered, that the State's function is to create the conditions of a good life for all its people. Of course the State has that function. But it is one with which another State seldom directly interferes. The constitution and inner working of the State is its own affair, and disturbances of it usually produce civil war, which is not quite the same thing as the conflict

of States with one another, though the process of fighting is the same in both cases.

The mission of the State goes beyond its own constitution. Every community evolves a rule or type of life, expressed in customs, institutions, and laws, and covered by the general name 'civilization,' a word which denotes that which it is the purpose of the State to produce. The State no sooner has created its civilization than it sets out to spread it. Every State demands that the world shall recognize its civilization. It requires other States to treat its subjects in a certain way, and in regions where there is no ordered Government it secures them due scope for this work by setting about to protect them if it can. That is the origin of most of the colonial settlements and protectorates in the modern world. Many of the British expeditions to Africa have had no other motive than to secure for British subjects such treatment as a civilized State would give them.

I suspect that when a community has developed its own type of common life or of civilization it, consciously or unconsciously, sets out to impose that type upon the world, or to govern as much of the world as it can in accordance with the conceptions of right, righteousness, or justice which its people have formed. The conflict of States may arise from an opposition between two different conceptions of a good life, or between two inconsistent applications of it to a given subject. It may arise also from the rivalry of two States in the effort to exert an influence over or to govern territory in which they both have

an interest. Take the case of Germany in 1866. Austria and Prussia were both members of its governing body. But they were rivals who could not work well together. Each tried to increase its own influence and to diminish the other's over the government of Germany. Prussia asserted that her share in the government was vital to her. Austria made the like assertion, and the result of a trial of strength was that Austria found that she could quite well exist after her influence had been shut out from Germany altogether. Prussian historians assert that the war was necessary for Prussia, and Austrian historians do not deny that it was inevitable. To-day all the States that were parties to the quarrel seem to be satisfied with the settlement that was reached. But no one suggests that that settlement could have been reached by any other means than a trial of strength. A nation, then, must be regarded not merely from within as a community or association of citizens. It is a body or corporation committed to certain tasks, in the course of which it enforces a conception of what ought to be. England, for instance, has undertaken the government of India and of various regions of Africa. She might exist even if those tasks were interrupted or could not be carried on. But she could not and would not abandon any of them in obedience to a demand from another State or Power. The demand would be resented as an affront to the national personality. Suppose such a demand to be made and resisted so that a war arose out of it. Would the war be neces-

sary or not? Most men would say that England could not decline the challenge. I give this hypothetical case to show that the question whether a war is necessary or not cannot always be answered offhand. At any rate it plunges deep into the nature of the State and into the conditions of its growth, which are complex and various. Yet such a challenge as I have imagined would probably furnish a motive which would stimulate to great exertions not only the British Government and the people of the United Kingdom, but also those of the other parts of the British Empire.

Perhaps, then, we must add to our description of the true pacifism that a nation must not only organize itself, but also must mind its own business, the responsibility for knowing what is and what is not its business being that a mistake on the subject will very probably lead through needless conflict to defeat.

There is an analogy which suggests that the character of States and nations is the essential element in the diminution of the evils of wars. The purpose of the State being to secure a good life, the outcome of a good type of character, every State is compelled to forbid its subjects even in war to employ forms of violence which would cause needless suffering. That is the nature of the Geneva Convention and other arrangements which introduce an element of humanity into warfare. A civilized State cannot afford to let its citizens become barbarians, and therefore the States compare notes and embody cer-

tain restrictions in formulæ which each of them can recognize. The obligations they impose upon themselves have no commanding sanction other than their own self-respect.

The argument I have given you has necessarily been abstract in its nature. The theory of war from which I set out is that of Continental thinkers, and is based upon Continental conditions. It requires to be supplemented by a glance at the conditions of an insular State like our own. The fundamental principle was that modern war, being national, knows no limitation either of the means employed or of the liabilities incurred. Does that condition of unlimited liability and consequent unlimited responsibility apply to the island State?

Mr. Julian Corbett, in his essay on *Some Principles of Naval Strategy*, seems to express the opinion that British wars have been and will be limited wars, in which there could be on neither side the purpose of striking down the enemy. I am compelled to dissent from that opinion. Naval war is always swifter, more decisive, and more conclusive than land war. I have discussed this character of naval war in so many essays that I will not now labour the point. But I would suggest for your consideration that, since there is at sea no such difference between attack and defence as is peculiar to land warfare, there is in naval warfare nothing corresponding to the pause in operations caused by that distinction. The aim of a navy is always to destroy the enemy's navy, and, after that, to exert a

command of the sea, which against the beaten enemy is more absolute than anything known in land warfare. Every enemy of the island State must therefore aim at the destruction of the insular navy and at the command of the sea. If that were obtained the conquest of the island would probably be easier than that of a Continental State, because the approaches by sea, for the Power that commands the sea, are more advantageous for purposes of invasion than the crossings of a land frontier, and in the case of an island, enable the invader to strike from any point in its whole periphery. The limitations of English wars have hitherto been due to the fact that the insular navy commanded the sea, that nothing could be done by the enemy against the island State, which itself had not the military force to strike decisive blows, unaided by allies, upon land. The responsibility of the island State to refrain from unnecessary war and not to shrink from necessary war is therefore not less, but greater, than that of a Continental State, for the island State in every serious war—and, as we have seen, national wars are always infinitely serious—must stake her very independence and all that goes with it upon her chances of victory at sea. The nature of modern war, then, lays upon every State the obligation to keep the peace except in the defence of its own existence, material or spiritual, and the penalty of failure to obey this law is defeat, of which the consequences cannot be measured in advance.

There may conceivably be cases of war necessary

to both parties, but they will certainly be rare. In such cases, however, the overthrow of one side or the other is as inevitable as the war. It will be a question which of the two States is the fitter to survive. That is a question upon which no human court can arbitrate, for what possible test is there of fitness to survive except the fact of survival?

I conclude, then, that it is the possibility of war which constrains nations to make themselves efficient. National efficiency lies partly in the good organization of the State itself, but partly also in the right choice of external aims and in the due regulation of relations with the other States. These relations are not only statical, but dynamical. They may be those of peace or war according as they tend to co-operation or to opposition. The statesman ought to be familiar with them in both forms, and any science of the State which neglects this dynamical aspect is imperfect—a science that is not a science. For, after all, in regard to national policy, the statesman has no more important function to discharge than that of correctly estimating the bearings of any course which he may set before himself, with respect to the degree to which his nation's welfare is involved in it, and therefore to the probability that in case of opposition he may be able to carry out his purpose. He may not always be able to follow the path of peace. But if he must leave it, he ought to know which way leads to defeat and which to victory.

## IV

## ENGLAND AND GERMANY *

### I

My purpose is to ascertain what light is thrown by the theory of war upon the problem of British policy to-day.

By policy I mean that sort of deliberate guidance which would be given by an ideal statesman or by a perfectly efficient Government to the whole of the nation's affairs.

We are accustomed to distinguish between domestic and foreign policy, between internal and external affairs. But it will, I hope, appear from our inquiry that the two branches are closely interdependent; that the domestic welfare of the State cannot be secured without right action in the external field, and that such action is impracticable unless the resources of the State are so organized as to be available for the protection of its work.

I assume in Oxford, the home of the study of the State, that you all recognize in the State or national community the most important of all the associations

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in which men are united, and the one which sustains and renders possible all the others, and that you admit its mission to be to render possible to all its members that good life which consists in the development and use of men's best powers, or in doing the best work of which they are capable. The political community to which we belong is the medium of our education and of our industrial activity, and under its shelter are rendered possible the development of the social, intellectual, and spiritual activities which constitute a good life, and make life worth living. To facilitate these developments is the object of domestic policy; to protect them against disturbance from without that of external policy.

Why should there be disturbances from without? Because the State never exists in isolation, but as one of a number of States in contact with one another.

Each State has its own independence or autonomy, analogous to the personality of an individual, and between a number of independent bodies in relation with one another conflicts or collisions are always possible.

In my lecture of last summer term on the subject of the nature and conditions of peace, I discussed the question whether there was a case in which a conflict of purposes or interests between two States admitted of no settlement by negotiation, compromise, or arbitration, but only by a trial of strength. The answer which imposed itself was that a community can compromise or concede anything not vital to its function, but that any action or demand threatening

its power to realize the good life as conceived by its members must necessarily be resisted. The absolute case of inevitable war is when each of two States regards as thus indispensable to its own welfare action diametrically opposed to that similarly regarded as necessary by the other.

To this case negotiation, compromise, and arbitration, are all inapplicable. There must be a war in which each State will believe itself to be fighting for its existence. If the opposition is real, if the function or mission of one State is incompatible with that of the other, one or both of them will be destroyed. For no nation will submit to its own extinction by diplomacy; if its citizens have any love for it they will face the world in arms rather than submit to its extinction by judicial decree.

But if the opposition is fictitious or imaginary, if either State can well exist though it does not have its will, the truth will be realized in the course of the struggle, and the side which exaggerated its interest in the matter in dispute will obtain peace upon such terms as can be had.

I have brought you as quickly as I could to the typical case of conflict of policies leading to war.

Before going further may I interrupt myself with comments by the way?

1. It is the fashion just now to denounce war as wicked. But in this case which side is wicked?

2. If either of the States is healthy, if it has the faith and love of its people, they will cheerfully fight for it. The life worth living is felt to be worth sacrifices;

indeed, it can hardly be had without the idea of sacrifice. To die for one's community is not inconsistent with the best life; nor is the best life possible to a set of men unwilling to give their lives for their nation, or, as we say, for their country. The more fully the State fulfils its purpose, the greater the devotion of its people. I remember a short speech of Lord Kitchener's when unveiling a statue of General Gordon. He said nothing but these words: 'A man who lived a blameless life, who put duty before himself, and died happily for his country.'

3. This trial of strength seems to be the means of selection among nations. The question is not whether it is moral—we do not ask whether the earthquake, the flood, or the lightning are moral—but whether the statesman must take this possibility into account.

I believe that the statesman has no more important duty, and that it involves—

(1) A thorough consideration of the needs and aims of his own nation.
(2) A constant scrutiny of the policy of other nations.
(3) A calculus of forces, those of his own and other States.

For a wise policy will avoid needless quarrels, while steadfastly pursuing the great aims of the nation; it will not interfere with other nations' work, but will carry on its own. But a nation's aims must be commensurate with its powers, and therefore the basis of a good policy must be a true strategy—that is, a true

estimate of forces and of what can be done with them. For policy is not the expression of a pious wish, but of a will. It is action for a purpose.

If, then, we may describe a statesman as the exponent and therefore the director of a nation's policy, we must infer that, in case of a possible conflict between the aims of his own and of another nation, his first duty must be to form in advance a true estimate of the nature of the war which, if the conflict comes to a head, it will involve. He must measure the moral and physical forces by which each of the contending aims will be supported.

This estimate is the statesman's work, because his business is with the aims of his nation, and, if he is to attain them, he must know also the aims of the other nations with which his own has dealings. As regards the possible forces concerned, he must, of course, consult the strategist, whose business is with the use of forces in action, and who therefore can form a sound judgment of their quantity, quality, and probable effects. The main point to be determined is the character of a possible struggle. If our own nation is challenged in regard to a vital matter, a matter of life and death, it will fight to the last. Its maxim will be death or victory. But if the point in dispute is not really vital, there will be a limit to the sacrifices we should be willing to make to gain it; if we find the adversary stronger than we expected, we shall prefer to make a compromise or concede the point to him rather than exhaust ourselves by continuing the fight. In the one case we shall limit our liabilities,

in the other we cannot; for if to concede the point is to give up our national existence, we shall prefer to die fighting.

Within the memory of us all England has had friction with several Great Powers, with France, with Russia, and with Germany. The difficulties with France and Russia have been settled, and no conflict now exists with either of these Powers. The friction with Germany remains. What does it portend?

In answering that question we shall do well to bear in mind the views of German statesmen and strategists, the views expounded more than eighty years ago by Clausewitz and adopted by his countrymen.

According to him the political aim, the original motive of a war, gives the nature of the goal to be reached in the fighting, and the measure of the exertions required to attain that goal. But the aim must be considered in its effect on the people that cherishes it, the appeal which it makes to them, and the response which it evokes from them. If we are strong enough we shall choose the highest goal, which is the entire destruction of the adversary's forces, for, that accomplished, we can dictate our own terms of peace.

In order, then, to appreciate correctly the tension between Germany and England, we must try to discover the political end set up for itself by the German nation or by its statesmen, and to ascertain the kind of appeal it makes to the German people and the response which it calls out from them.

Germany's political end or purpose may seem at first sight obscure, though it evidently consists in

national self-assertion. But we can trace first the growth of an anti-British policy and of a popular feeling directed against England, and secondly, the choice of a goal for warlike action, of a military objective. The German belief that England stands in the way of Germany's growth is of gradual formation. Its first stage was seen in 1883 in the beginnings of German colonial enterprises, when England was represented by Bismarck as putting hindrances in Germany's path and as opposing her acquisition of Cameroons, of Angra Pequena, and New Guinea. I have written the history of these enterprises, and shown how Bismarck contrived to give them an air of hostility to England not justified by British policy, and so to arouse in Germany the beginnings of a hatred that has ever since been fomented by his successors. This kind of propaganda was renewed over the negotiations concerning Samoa, and was maintained even after the acquisition of Heligoland, which was regarded as a masterstroke of German policy. The same spirit accompanied the Emperor's famous saying, 'Germany's future is on the water,' and his telegram to President Kruger, which was accompanied at Berlin by the careful consideration of plans of campaign against England.

The South African War was the occasion of the German Navy Act, of which the preamble is: 'Germany must have a fighting fleet so strong that a war with the adversary strongest at sea would be so dangerous to that adversary as to imperil his position as a Power.' Next came the Anglo-French agreement

concerning Morocco and Egypt, followed by altercations between Germany and France, in the course of which the British Government more than once gave that of Germany to understand that an attack upon France would find England ranged on her side. In the crisis of 1911 the speech made at a Bankers' dinner at the Mansion House by Mr. Lloyd George to the effect that in case of a new European war England would not allow herself to be treated as a negligible quantity was everywhere understood to be a warning to Germany not to attack France. It was deeply resented in Germany, where a Press campaign against England was conducted by the Admiralty, and the statement repeatedly made that the British Government had contemplated and prepared a surprise attack on the German Navy. This was followed by a new Army and Navy Act.

Thus, the present feeling in Germany is that England is the enemy. We may infer that the situation is one of those in which the German strategist* said that 'a small occasion would produce a great explosion.'

So far we have sought in vain for a British political aim or end which would justify the German anti-British feeling. Nor is more light to be had from our examination of the motives of past disputes. In the early eighties the Germans were taught to look round the world for colonies of settlement. That was at the time of the annexations in Africa and the Pacific, which

* Clausewitz, *Vom Kriege*, bk. i., § 11.

however, did not admit of European settlement, as they were not in the temperate zone. But that cry has been given up, for the emigration from Germany has long ceased to be large enough to be worth considering. Next was urged the need for Germany to have colonies to produce materials for her manufacturing industries, and for markets for her goods. But the British Colonies supply such materials and offer such markets without restriction. They are as open to German traders as to English. There can be no cause for a great war in either of these cries for colonies.

More recently, however, has been set up the doctrine that England is geographically in Germany's way; that the insular State lies across the sea-routes by which Germany has access to the ocean, and that this situation of a maritime Power is a fetter upon Germany's activity.

This is the view that has supplied the German Government with its military objective—the British navy. For the preamble to the German Navy Act of 1912, already quoted, means that the purpose for which the German navy exists is to overthrow the British navy and the British State. I have given you the purpose for which the German navy has been created in the words of the German law. That law has been expounded by German naval writers, by none more forcibly than Admiral von Maltzahn, who wrote in the *Deutsche Revue* in 1908:

'Germany's endeavour must be to possess a fleet strong enough to make a blockade of our coasts impossible even to the strongest naval Power, which suffices

also to avert the danger of a landing and of a disturbance of the coast towns. . . . *This does not mean that our sea-power must rival that of England, which is neither necessary nor possible.* Our forces must be strong enough for their work. That work *absolutely requires a forcible offensive.* Nothing but an energetic conduct of the war, in which all considerations are laid aside [*rücksichtslos*], in which all permitted means are used, and which makes the assailant feel in their whole weight the consequences of his conduct, can lead to the goal in a war that would be forced upon us, and which has for its purpose the economical ruin of our country and the misery of our people.'

Observe the contradiction. You hear that the German fleet is for defence, and does not want to rival that of England. But the defender aims at *victory*, and the Admiral wants victory by the *offensive.*

No one has better put this German view than Captain Mahan in his volume entitled *The Interest of America in International Conditions*, published in 1910. With what eagerness the doctrine that England is the enemy has been accepted in Germany those of you who have any acquaintance with the current literature of Germany and with the German newspapers and magazines need not be told. The fact is that the whole German nation, with its sixty millions of people, is bent upon being able to break the naval power of England, and has been taught for years that this action is vital to Germany's welfare.

That is one side of the picture. It ought not to leave a British statesman in doubt as to the objective of German policy, nor as to the degree to which

that policy is supported by the mass of the German people.

Turning to the other side of the problem, we must see what estimate the German statesman will make of the way in which England will regard German policy. He can read in Mahan's volume to which I have referred you that, 'for reasons absolutely vital, Great Britain cannot afford to surrender the supremacy at sea.' That is beyond doubt the belief of our countrymen. The mere statement suffices to show that between German and British policy there is a direct, contradictory opposition. The one asserts that Great Britain must have, the other that she shall not have, the Command of the Sea. So far, then, we seem to have the typical case of an inevitable war, a direct opposition of wills upon a matter held on each side to be vital. This is a case of a war sufficiently probable to make it desirable for the statesman to consult the strategist.

Let us hear what the German strategist says about such consultation. In his classical treatise on war the German analyst distinguishes between several degrees or grades of war corresponding to the exertions that the State is able and willing to make. First comes defence, the attitude of a Power that is unready or the weaker of two antagonists. The purpose of defence is to gain time either for reinforcements or for assistance to come into the struggle. Next comes attack, aiming at something short of the overthrow of the adversary; and, lastly, attack which aims at nothing less than his overthrow.

By overthrowing the adversary is meant—

(1) Crushing his army, if his power is in his army.
(2) Taking his capital.
(3) Striking an effective blow against his chief ally, if the ally is stronger than he.

The Power that contemplates action of this kind must be strong enough—

(1) To gain a decisive victory over the enemy's force;
(2) To carry on the effort to the point at which a restoration of the equilibrium is not to be thought of;

and must not by its victory stir up fresh enemies who will compel it to let the first alone.

If these conditions can be fulfilled, the principles that should govern the direction of the war are—

(1) To act with as much concentration as possible.
(2) To act as quickly as possible.

*Concentration.*—You must analyze the enemy's power till you have found its centre of gravity, if possible its *one* centre of gravity; you must limit your blow against this one centre of gravity to as few main actions as possible—if you can, to *one*.

The determination of the centre of gravity depends—

(1) On the political conditions. Is there a single enemy or is there an alliance? If an alliance, what

is the common purpose and what the strength of the interests or of the will that holds the allies together? The maxim that applies against allies is *divide et impera;* strike at the common interest.

(2) On the theatre of war. The German strategists, so far as we know, began their serious study of a war against England at the time of the Emperor's message to President Kruger, when a plan of campaign against England was considered by the naval and military authorities at Berlin. In order to determine the centre of gravity of England's strength, they would take the English analyses accessible to them. These consisted in the English writings on naval strategy and on national defence published during the latter half of the nineteenth century. The more important of them were Sir John Colomb's *Defence of Great and Greater Britain*, Admiral Colomb's *Naval Warfare*, and the writings of Captain Mahan. The doctrine of these writers were summed up in 1892 in an essay on Imperial Defence, for which Sir Charles Dilke and I shared the responsibility. 'The British Empire,' we wrote, 'is the possession of the sea,' and that possession we explained as the consequence of the success of the navy in a series of wars in each of which it had been able to assert the command of the sea. We defined the command of the sea as the possession of a fleet which has gained so decisive a victory as to render hopeless the renewal of the struggle against it. On one point Sir Charles Dilke and I agreed to differ. He was opposed to any British policy of alliance with

other Powers. I came to the conclusion, after long consideration, not that Great Britain should bind her policy by pledges or promises, but that her command of the sea had in fact been gained by co-operation with other European Powers; that her policy had been and must be to try to maintain the balance of power in Europe; and that her navy had been and must be the fly-wheel or balance-weight in the European system, which is an association of independent States for the purpose of resisting the domination of any one Great Power. All these ideas were beyond doubt considered by the German strategists and statesmen, and we may be sure that German policy aims—

(1) At severing the link between Great Britain and the Continental Powers.
(2) At the defeat of the British navy.
(3) At rendering England's recovery of the command of the sea impossible.

The defeat of the British navy would carry with it—

(1) The loss of British independence, for Great Britain, shorn of her navy, can always be coerced.
(2) The disruption of the Empire, of which the navy is the connecting-link.

Germany's present policy, embodied in her quite recent legislation, is in fact—

(1) To increase her navy to the standard laid down in the navy law.

(2) To increase her army to a strength more than equal to the French army together with the British expeditionary force.

What must be the British policy in reply to this action of Germany?

First of all, Great Britain must do, what she ought in any case to do, make suitable preparations for victory in a naval war. The most important matters are to have a naval strategist as a member of the Government, and to cherish and cultivate tactical skill in her admirals. Next she must do all she can to insure that in case of a German attack she will have the co-operation of other Powers. For this there are two methods—

(1) She must show that her national life serves a purpose valuable to the rest of the world.

(2) She must show herself able to help the Powers on whose co-operation she counts.

This means, as regards the co-operation of France, that Great Britain, in addition to a navy well prepared for victory, must have an army able to play its part in a joint struggle with Germany, and strong enough, in co-operation with the French army, to make France secure. If the navy and the army are to reach the standards thus defined, England must devote some of her best minds to the business of war, and must find means of training her population to arms.

(3) British statesmen, in their dealings with other Powers, must follow the maxim, 'Do right and fear not.'

The co-operation with other Powers is a matter of British aims and British strength rather than of negotiating agreements. If two Powers have a common aim they will co-operate for its realization, whether bound by treaty or not, and if they are not in substantial accord any treaty they may make will be an embarrassment rather than a help.

Meantime, Germany on her part is developing her plans and taking pains to obtain the co-operation of other Powers. Of Austria-Hungary she feels secure,* of the co-operation of Italy she could not be sure, owing to the discord between Italy and Austria-Hungary. Of Turkey, Germany is making every effort to secure the assistance.

Thus far I have based my exposition on German views of German policy and strategy and of British policy. It points to a war both inevitable and of extreme violence—*à outrance*. That being the case, at any rate in the German view, it behoves Great Britain to make herself ready and to have a policy of her own. But if she does that there need be no war. For the object of a war is acceptable conditions of peace. To England the *status quo* is satisfactory; she will begin no war to change it; she will therefore not attack Germany, and German statements to the effect that she contemplates such attack are false. What can Germany desire that is worth a war?

* When I was at Vienna in 1907, Count Aehrenthal told me in very strong terms that, in case she should be at war with Germany, England would certainly find Austria-Hungary acting side by side with Germany.

Colonies she may wish for, but, now that she has no emigrants, can hardly be supposed to think them a necessity. Markets she requires. But to British markets she has the same access as have Englishmen, though no doubt the adoption by Great Britain of the policy of protective tariffs for the Empire would alter that condition, and give Germany a plausible case for quarrel.

I conclude that if Germany should take the initiative in a war against England she would not do so under the pressure of any vital necessity; she is not driven to fight for her existence. She would therefore not have the supreme reason for fighting to the last gasp, and would be ready to make peace before that limit were reached. That being the case, I doubt whether, in case of real preparation on England's part and a clear, decided policy expounded by her statesmen, the statesmen of Germany would undertake an enterprise which ought to be fraught with great danger. But pray observe that the condition on which in my judgment war can be avoided is not the passive indifference of our own country to the affairs of Europe, which I think so closely concern her, but her decided choice of a policy in Europe, and a vigorous, determined effort to set her forces in order for the assertion of that policy.

# V

# ENGLAND AND GERMANY*

## II

In my last lecture I attempted a general reconnaissance of the nature of the conflict between British and German policies. I endeavoured to give you a glimpse into the German way of considering both the problem of policy and the problem of strategy, a glimpse which I am well aware could neither be satisfactory nor conclusive, but without which it might have been thought that I was lightly and rashly approaching a subject the gravity of which it is impossible to exaggerate. The preliminary conclusion which we reached was that while a British command of the sea is regarded as the *sine qua non* of any British policy whatever, the modern German conception is that a British command of the sea is inconsistent with the well-being and the necessary development of the German Empire. Accordingly, the English and German conceptions of policy are directly contradictory. If they are both true, a war between the two nations is inevitable, and the Ger-

* June 15, 1912.

man conception of that war is that it must of necessity have for its object the military overthrow of the adversary.

To-day I shall, in the first place, attempt a more exact statement of the essentials of British policy in its dynamical and its spiritual aspects, which together constitute the framework of the British nation. I shall then recapitulate the means by which Germany thinks she must attack the foundations of that structure, and the means by which that attack must be repelled. And in conclusion I shall attempt to show that in boldly accepting the challenge lies the best hope of averting the collision and of reconciling the welfare of the two nations.

The characteristic of a nation, of a people organized as a single State, is independence or sovereignty. It submits to no constraint or dictation from outside, and the first condition of national existence is therefore the power of resistance to such constraint, the power of self-defence. The self-defence of an island is mainly a matter of naval warfare, of which the principles are consequences of the nature of the sea. The combatants cannot move about on the water as they can upon the land, and must make use of vessels, all of which are governed by the law of displacement, that any ship, with all that it contains, weighs exactly the equivalent of the quantity of water which she displaces. For this reason there is in all ages of developed warfare a difference between the merchant ship and the ship of war. The merchant ship is made as light as is consistent with flotation

and protection from the waves; the ship of war is made of great strength in order to protect her from the blows of the enemy. The ship of war is, therefore, unsuited for trade, and the merchant ship unsuited for fighting. The merchant ship, by reason of the lightness of its structure and smallness of its crew, is unfit for an encounter with the strongly built and fully manned ship of war. Ships of war, being costly, and being of little use for purposes of trade, are never very numerous, and accordingly in naval war the first object of either side is to destroy the enemy's ships of war. The side which can do that, and which, having done it, still has a fleet of warships of its own, is said to have the command of the sea, because the enemy has nothing with which he can resist the surviving fleet, which itself can move to any point of the maritime theatre of war and there deliver its blow. Suppose the island State to have gained this advantage, the adversary cannot attempt to conquer it by military force, for he would have to embark his army in ships, which by hypothesis must be merchant ships, and to land them on the island coast. The experiment will evidently be in the highest degree risky, because if the fleet of transports be found by the island fleet of warships, the transports will be defenceless, and will be either taken or sunk. Thus, the effective defence of an island State consists in victory at sea and in the destruction of the hostile navy. Suppose the result of the naval war to be unfavourable to the island State, so that the adversary has gained the com-

mand of the sea, there are then two weapons which can be used against the island State. The first is to move an army by sea, and to land it on the island for its conquest. The insular State has lost the power of preventing the transport; the army, therefore, can be landed with safety. The disembarkation of an army can hardly be prevented by an army on land, because the transports can move so quickly from point to point that an army on land cannot keep pace with them, and the army from the sea can almost always begin its landing at some undefended point. Military history abounds with instances of armies successfully landed. I find it difficult to recall the case of a serious attempt at landing which was not successful. The insular State, therefore, as against a Power which has gained the command of the sea, can hardly prevent invasion, though if it has the stronger army it may defeat the invader. It is powerless, also, to interfere with the sea communications of the invading army. The enemy victorious at sea will proceed to capture or destroy the merchant ships of the island State, and in this way to prevent that State from having any communications with the rest of the world and from carrying on exports and imports. The island State will be like a besieged city, and if it is dependent on supplies from without may be reduced by starvation. These are the reasons why the defence of an insular State consists in victory at sea carried to the point at which the command of the sea is obtained. The foundation of any and every British policy is the

natural principle that an island State cannot permanently maintain its independence except by naval victory, which, to be effective, must be carried to the point at which it becomes the command of the sea. This principle I would call the law of insularity.

There is no need to offer illustrations of a principle which is the staple of the modern history of England, as well as of the recent history of Japan.

The power which is given by complete victory at sea is peculiar and has no analogies. The victorious fleet prevents the defeated enemy from making any use of the sea at all, while retaining it as an open road for itself and its own people, and this power extends as far as the radius of action of a fleet. As against the defeated enemy, it hardly has limits. When the British navy in the last great war had defeated the navies of its Continental enemies, a British man-of-war could sail to any part of the world with little risk of meeting any Continental adversary. It could convoy merchant ships or transports to any point. Behind the British squadrons watching the French fleets in the fortified harbours of the Mediterranean and Atlantic coasts, the British Mercantile Marine was busy on every sea, carrying on trade with every coast and every port of Asia, Africa, and America. And British troops were engaged in local conflicts in each of those Continents. It is upon the success in war of the British navy, and upon the potential command of the sea which it has enjoyed during long periods of peace,

that what we call the British Empire was founded and is based.

The law of insularity would apply to any inhabited world made up of land and sea, and it will probably in the future be applicable, with modifications, to the conditions of aerial warfare. Victory in the air will give the command of the air to the side that wins it. We are concerned with our own globe and with actual conditions, and on this globe the islands are small and the continents great; the more important islands are very near to one or other of the great continents, being, in fact, fragments of them. How, then, can a State composed of a small island like Great Britain, separated from a great Continent like Europe by a shallow arm of the sea, retain an independence which has to rest, first, upon victory at sea; secondly, upon treaties of peace in which its enemies acquiesce in that independence and in the potential command of the sea which it implies, as well as in the existence of the Empire which it involves? Two answers are given to this question. The first is given in the history of England and of Europe; the second by the ambition of Germany. The history of modern Europe is that of the growth, side by side, of a number of independent States or sovereignties. In this process there have been a series of attempts by one or another of the sovereign Powers to make itself, to use a feudal expression, lord paramount over the others. The Papacy, the Holy Roman Empire and its Austrian heirs, the Spanish Monarchy, the French Monarchy and the

French Empire, have each of them in turn made this effort. In every case it has been shipwrecked upon the determination of the other nations concerned to maintain their own freedom, their own independence, their own sovereignty. The interests of England and of Great Britain have always been closely interwoven with those of the various European States. Her people have been concerned in the questions of principle and her Government in the questions of power which have divided the Continent. And, accordingly, in the great conflicts she has taken her part, usually as one of a group of allies united to resist some growing ascendancy and to assert an independence equally vital to them all. Her weapons have been a navy, usually in the end victorious, and an army, the co-operation of which has repeatedly been an important contributory factor in the result.

The principle here concerned is that of the balance of power, which is the phrase in which, for several centuries, the European spirit has expressed the idea of freedom, conceived in the shape of the independence of States or nations. In the economy of Europe the British navy, supplemented by a British army that could be moved to any theatre of war, have performed the function of a flywheel, or regulator of the balance, and by this means, in the European debates, England has had the casting vote.

I doubt whether any Continental historian, however biassed by national prejudice, fails to recognize that this is the function that England has performed

in and for the European system, or hesitates to admit that it has been a service to the whole community. And the correlative to this service rendered to Europe has been that England has been able or been compelled to undertake that further function which consists in the government of countries like India and Egypt, and in the establishment of those colonies which are now known as the King's Dominions Beyond the Seas.

To the question, then, how a small insular State like Great Britain has been permitted to have the command of the sea and the Empire which goes with it, I submit, as the answer of history, that in fighting for her own independence she has been fighting for the freedom of Europe, and that the service thus rendered to Europe and to mankind has carried with it the possibility of that larger service to which we give the name of Empire.

I wish I knew how to impress upon you the profound conviction with which I am possessed that service is the law of our national being. Our island home is so placed that our independence, the possibility of our governing ourselves, of maintaining our free institution and our conception of a good life (which, again, is the service of the individual to the community), entirely depends on our being able to defeat our enemies at sea. Our power to do that within the conditions of Europe depends on our policy being just and right in a sense that appeals to our neighbours in Europe, so that we may be regarded, as we have been in the past, as the

defenders of the weak and the opposers of the strong. In virtue of services that none but an insular Power could render, England has been permitted to extend her responsibilities in a fashion which, had she not been insular, would have been a danger to the liberties of Europe. If she should lose her sea-power or become weaker in that form of strength than a rival, she must cease to be independent. If she should fail to use her sea-power to resist an overlordship of the Continent, she must expect to have to defend herself against Europe led by an overlord; and if she should misuse it by employing it in a wrong cause, she must expect a European combination to transfer to other hands so potent an instrument. That is in brief outline a statement of the British position, dynamical in so far as it rests upon power at sea, and spiritual in so far as it rests upon service to other nations.

The view which I have given you of the structure of our nation is not new, not popular, not taught in our class-rooms. But it is the truth. You cannot upset it, and the question is whether Germany can.

Not if our people are true to their history and their calling. But there have been strange lapses. When I first set forth this account of England and her relations to Europe and the Empire, I quoted from an old song a couplet in which Thompson in his 'Alfred' expressed the power given by naval victory:

> 'All thine shall be the subject main,
> And every shore it circles thine.'

The *Daily News* reviled me for coining fictitious extracts from spurious ballads. Its editor had never read 'Rule, Britannia.'

The Empire, as I have shown, rests upon service to Europe and victories won in conjunction with half of Europe. Yet in our day one of the great parties in the State has so far forgotten the foundations of that Empire as to propose to turn it into an estate for exclusive British exploitation by means of a ring fence of tariffs. The British Empire is a trust for humanity, and to convert it into a monopoly would be a breach of trust.

The German writers do not, so far as I can gather, deny the historical truth of this account. They do not deny the services rendered by England in the past; they admit that the modern growth of German oversea trade and the possibility of Germany having acquired such so-called colonies as she possesses are due to the fact that for a hundred years the British navy has been the policeman of every sea in the world. But they assert that times have changed. I will not now consider the extreme ideas preached, for example, by General von Bernhardi, who boldly advocates a war of conquest as needful for Germany's welfare. But I will take the opinions of a naval strategist of great breadth of judgment, Admiral Freiherr von Maltzahn, who for some time had charge of the subject of naval warfare at the Marine Academy at Kiel, and who in 1905 published an admirable historical sketch of naval warfare. Admiral von Maltzahn declares that 'the maritime interests of all States all over the world are

so interwoven with one another as to have created a solidarity of interests which would no longer endure such a supremacy at sea of one State as resulted from the Napoleonic wars.'

'The England of 1810 was nearly bled to death by the closing of the Continent, though she was not beaten in war, and the British Empire of to-day would hardly be able to endure a general conflagration (*Weltbrand*) in spite of the strength of her fleet, least of all with the gap which would be caused in her armour by her fighting down a strong opponent.'

This is vague language which I do not perfectly understand. It reveals a hope that the British Empire may be upset, and that Germany looks forward to taking a hand in the war which is to produce that result.

In another passage the Admiral describes the present time as one of 'a community of the maritime Powers' (*Staatengemeinschaft der Seestaaten*), and gives as a synonym for that phrase the words 'an *armed peace* at sea.'

I am afraid these expressions will help you little. The close connection of the interests of the maritime Powers means no more than that in a European war, now as of old, they would all sooner or later be compelled to take sides; that one side or the other would be victorious, so that in the end the fleets of the Powers taking the other side would all be destroyed, and the victors would command the sea. The great question for the maritime and other Powers is whether they wish Germany to destroy the other fleets, and

then, with her combined army and navy, to annex and govern or protect all Europe, or whether they prefer that naval victory should fall, as it did before, to England.

But the Admiral goes on to explain an '*armed peace*':

'War has for its aim to compel peace upon our conditions. *Armed peace* aims at preparing the means for war in such strength and in such a state of readiness that the enemy, the State with whose interests our interests conflict, will remain at peace under our conditions.' According to this fully qualified exponent, the dynamical purpose of German policy is to be so strong as to compel other States, and England in particular, to remain at peace under such conditions as Germany may dictate. We usually think of utter defeat as the case in which the beaten side has to allow the victor to dictate his terms of peace; but it appears that the German conception at the present time is that Germany, without actual fighting, by the mere preparation and display of force, is to obtain all the results of decisive victory.

This is the policy of a perpetual standing ultimatum. Germany is represented by one of her most serious thinkers as saying to her neighbours, more especially to England, 'You can have peace so long as we have our way; if you will not let us have our way, you shall have war in which we shall aim at your overthrow.' You may perhaps be a little startled by this, the mildest expression which I have been able to find of modern German policy. Do not let it arouse

your patriotic indignation, which would be out of place. Let us, above all things, be fair; let us recognize that the German writer from whom I have quoted is, after all, only copying from English models. No less a statesman than the Earl of Rosebery, in the preface which he contributed now many years ago to a popular account of the British Empire by our friend Mr. George Parkin, described the British ideal as 'peace secured by preponderance,' which is only an epigrammatic way of putting the thought expressed by Admiral von Maltzahn.

I have now sufficiently set before you the nature of the opposition between British and German policies. You will see that it is not peace but preponderance that is in each case the real object. The truth cannot be too often repeated, that peace is never the object of policy; you cannot define peace except by reference to war, which is a means and never an end.

Let us turn now to England's defence, and consider first briefly its material aspect. Evidently the fundamental thing is victory in the naval war. The ideal would be to assert from the beginning and maintain throughout the command of the sea. For that purpose only one plan of campaign is known. You must from the outset observe the enemy's ports, stationing near to each of them a fleet able to fight, with fair chance of success, any hostile fleet that may come out. You must also tell off one or more cruisers to watch each of the enemy's cruisers in any part of the world. This is the system known, as regards the battle fleets, as 'masking,' while, as regards the cruisers, I suggested

many years ago for this method the term 'shadowing.' In 1888, when the necessity of the masking policy was universally recognized by British Admirals, a committee of Admirals reported that for the masking policy the battleships available should be in the proportion of at least five to three of the enemy's vessels in harbour, while the cruisers so employed should be not less than two to one of those of the enemy's force to be observed. The cruisers required for shadowing are, of course, extra beyond this calculation. A glance at the Dilke return issued last week gives the following figures as regards battleships:

| Foreign Navy. | Needed for Masking. | British Navy. |
|---|---|---|
| Germany (built), 33 | 55 | Built, 55 |
| Germany (building), 9 | 15 | Building, 10 |
| Austria (built), 12 | 20 | — |
| Italy (built), 8 | 14 or 15 | — |
| Austria (building), 4 | — | — |
| Italy (building), 6 | — | — |
| France (built), 21 | — | — |
| France (building), 7 | — | — |

According to these figures, the British navy is just strong enough at this moment to carry out the masking policy, the policy associated with the name of Lord St. Vincent, against the German navy alone, though for that operation a reserve is essential, and the reserve would have to be drawn from ships not appearing in the Dilke return, and therefore of doubtful fighting value. When the ships building in both countries are ready, the St. Vincent policy cannot be carried out even against Germany alone. The Admiralty, there-

fore, must be assumed to have abandoned the St. Vincent policy, the only one by which the command of the sea can be assumed at the outset. Any other policy starts with a doubtful command of the sea, and leaves the issue to be settled by battle, in which the decisive factors are spiritual and intellectual rather than material. The moment that other Powers come in on the German side, the British command of the sea becomes more doubtful. When the ships building are completed, the total for Germany and Austria-Hungary becomes fifty-eight against the British sixty-five. The British fleet would be operating in two widely distant theatres of war, and could have a decided superiority in one only by reducing her fleet in the other to equality with the local adversary there. A defeat in the area of equality would probably upset the balance of the whole.

It looks as though the assumption were that another navy or navies could be relied upon for co-operation with the British, and that may be the case with the French navy. In that event, of course, the French army would have to fight against the German army, which its Government could hardly be expected to call upon it to do unless there were a fair prospect of success. But the growth of Germany's population, which is now half as large again as that of France, and the additions just made to the German army, give Germany the numerical preponderance. It seems, therefore, natural to suppose that the naval co-operation of France with Great Britain must depend upon the value of the military co-operation of Great Britain

with France. The military question, therefore, is, With what kind of an army is England prepared to take part in a European war? Is she prepared, in the age of nations in arms, to play again the part which she played in the age of standing armies, and to throw into the scale a Marlborough or a Wellington with an army proportionate to those of the other belligerents? (Forces in 1815: Allies together, 600,000; French altogether, 350,000. In the Netherlands: French, 130,000; Blücher, 120,000; Wellington, 100,000.)

In 1815 England, after carrying on by her own resources the whole of the maritime war, took a serious share in the land war. Wellington's army, however raised, was comparable in strength with those of Blücher and of Napoleon.

To-day England's naval effort is by no means proportionately equal to that which she made in the war that ended at Trafalgar, while her military effort is out of all proportion smaller.

Germany in 1888 made arrangements in case of a war on two frontiers to place a million men on each frontier, and to have a third million in reserve. To-day she can put still larger forces in the field.

France makes, in proportion to her population, a still greater military effort.

But the British expeditionary force at its best will put on to the battlefield only some 160,000 men, a number smaller than that of Wellington and Blücher in 1815, though it will be far better provided with artillery.

These figures prove that hitherto our statesmen and

our people have not taken seriously the challenge thrown down by Germany to their national existence. To suppose that England can do no more is, of course, absurd. She can do as much as other nations if she exerts herself as they do. The answer to the question of method is that where there is a will there is a way, and little progress will be made by controversies about means until our statesmen and our citizens have agreed in a common recognition of the end. On the subject of military means, therefore, I will confine myself to the briefest possible statement of the essentials of an army, as a help to your judgment concerning the value for war of schemes that may be propounded. The things that are vital for an army are the confidence of the men in their leaders—that is, in the officers of all ranks, especially of the highest rank—and skill in the use of weapons, of which the most important is the bullet. Skill in arms is a matter of practice; confidence in the leaders depends on the leaders themselves. Thus, the problem of making an army is the problem of the education of officers; it is insoluble except as a part of a national education and a national organization, for the education of officers will always be based on that of the class from which they are taken, and upon the conception of war cherished by the statesmen and generals likely to be charged with its conduct. The question of material means is subordinate, because the real question is whether England will accept or shirk the challenge thrown down to her, whether she has faith in herself and her cause. I will put before you a single consideration that shows what the answer must be.

There is a third party to the conflict of policies which I have described. Germany offers to take England's place, to command the sea, to govern Europe as England has never tried to do, and to Teutonize the lands beyond the seas. The other nations may have a word to say to that claim. They may have a choice between Germany and England; they may have a preference. But if there is no division they cannot give their votes. They, not England nor Germany, are the judges of which is the better cause, but they cannot give judgment for England if England abandons herself. The answer, therefore, cannot be doubtful, though we are as a nation far from realizing what it means. In 1792, when the last great conflict was about to begin, Arthur Young wrote these words: 'England holds to-day the balance of the world; she has but to speak and it is secure.' These words are recalled by the events of last summer. You saw war threatening. You heard the word spoken, and perceived that the threat was abandoned and disavowed. That word was a programme. It has to be made good by an effort of this nation to fit her people, rich and poor alike, to serve her in peace or war by living and by dying for her.

Let the effort be made and the war-cloud may disappear. For England aroused to the sense of her calling will be stronger than ever before, and so soon as that is seen to be the case, so soon as she shows the will to stand up for herself in earnest, she will have, I would not say followers, but comrades. Peace will then indeed be secured by preponderance, and Germans

may come to realize that Germany's future on the water is not imperilled by that British navy which played so decisive a part in what the Germans recognize as their war of freedom.

Let us, then, try to awaken our country to the real situation of the world to-day, and to the meaning of Germany's rivalry. If we can do that, England will soon enough have her navy equal to its tasks and her citizens learning their duty as defenders of the nation and of the work which it has to do in the world. The conflict of policies will then become a competition in national education, and the war for which England will be prepared may be postponed to a remote future and to a different quarrel. But unless we make that effort and succeed in it the conflict will take the grim shape of war, which will come upon us like a thief in the night, and we shall have to learn in the presence of death, perhaps too late, that a good life for an Englishman is a life for England. The true significance of war is as the test of nations. It is a more than athletic contest in which the nation of nobler spirit and better-knit frame attains to victory, and the nation that has lost its heart is liable to lose its life also.

Let us, then, bear no grudge against our German kinsmen who put to us the question whether we of England are doing in the world services commensurate with the wonderful position which has been given us by Nature and which our fathers made good.

The situation which I have tried to put before you is that Germany, made strong by three generations of patient effort and by her new-found nationhood,

challenges at once England's maritime power, her influence in the European commonwealth, her Empire, and her very independence. That challenge is in the first place an invitation to us all to examine our own hearts and our country's mission. The examination, so far as I can carry it, tells me that nations, like men, stand and fall by their work; that England's work as the island State is to keep her freedom by fighting for it; that if she fulfils that first duty she will also fulfil a second, the preservation of the liberties of Europe, and a third, the accomplishment of her responsibilities to the Dominions, to India, and to Egypt. For it is the fate of the island nation to be either the first among the nations—not the master, but the first among equals—or to be the last.

For Englishmen there cannot be a doubt whether or no the challenge is to be taken up. To evade it would be to surrender all that makes an Englishman's life worth living. The practical question for all Englishmen, and first for each of us here, is whether England is fit to win, whether she is capable of leading Europe. There can be only one answer. She must make herself fit, and every one of us must make himself or herself fit to be a citizen of the country that has such a work laid upon her.

If England is to be equal to her task, her people must change their way of looking at things and their notion of good living. They must set England—not merely the land we live in, but the tasks for which our country is set apart—in the innermost shrine of their hearts; must open their eyes to see that to do one's work

properly is better than to become a millionaire, and to make one's character noble a grander thing than to be made a peer. If we have England in our hearts we shall see clearly, and get rid of some of the perversions that beset us. It may illuminate our social problems. For in truth it is the master's function, not the workman's, to raise the standard of wages, and the workman's, not the master's, to raise the standard of workmanship.

The idea of living, not for ourselves, but for England, must uplift our political life. You have heard it said that the function of an opposition is to oppose. I say that this maxim is a maxim of treason; that the adversary is not the other party, but the foreign State whose rulers have taught their people, rightly or wrongly, the cry of, 'Down with England'! To that cry only one reply can be given in the hall of this college, dedicated by its founder to the memory of all the faithful departed of Oxford and anew under the auspices of its present warden to the service of our University and of our country. That reply and our watchword is 'England for Ever'!

## VI

## THOUGHTS ON THE WAR*

IT has been well said that the secret of success in war is to be found in the harmony between policy and strategy, and that the possibility of this harmony depends upon the statesman and the strategist seeing things as they really are, upon the truth of their vision. The coming of a war is always a time of strong feeling from which neither the statesman nor the strategist can escape. Most men are carried away by it. How then are they to see clearly and to preserve, amid the hopes and fears by which they and everyone else are possessed, the even balance of the mind?

In times of trial a true man falls back upon the resolves deliberately made during the meditations of quiet hours. He abides by the principles which he has previously sought and found. Those of us who during many years of peace have tried to clear our minds about the nature and conditions of war probably do well now to trust rather to such insight as they may have gained in those past efforts than to any of the impulses or new thoughts of the moment.

Our statesmen and the public men who have written about the war have been occupied chiefly with the

* January, 1915.

statement of the British case. They have been finding arguments to justify the nation's course in going to war. I think this is really an effort made rather late in the day to bring their own consciences into harmony with that of the nation which knew quite well as soon as the crisis began where its duty lay. I have met no one who had any serious doubt on that subject. There is a deeper question which should have been asked and answered before. An ideally perfect government would not make war unless and until it saw clearly not only the purpose to accomplish which it chose the method of a fight, but also how by fighting it could attain to the fulfilment of that purpose. Perhaps no government is ideally perfect. The German government, which is steeped in the theory of war, knew very well, and has let all the world know, what it wanted to get by the war. It thought it knew how it could get it; yet there may have been an error in its vision, for it certainly did not see England as its inevitable antagonist. That is probably the explanation of its rage against this country.

There is only one theory of war—that which is set forth, with some differences of expression and of detail, by Clausewitz, by Jomini, by Mahan. It distinguishes between two sorts of wars. In the one class are small wars, the expeditions to which British governments have been accustomed, and in the other class is 'absolute war,' 'great war,' 'national war,' the struggle of nations for existence, or, what is much the same thing, for the mastery. Everyone knows which

kind we are now waging. The theory describes the lineaments, the large features of 'great war.' It is the war in which you aim at crushing the adversary, striking him down, disarming him, and dictating your terms. It is the kind of war made by Napoleon, the kind of war made by Moltke in 1866 with Bismarck to restrain him, and in 1870 with Bismarck to urge him on. It is the kind of war which in July Austria declared against Serbia, though she mistook it for an expedition, and which in August Germany declared against Russia and France, and of which in Belgium she has manifested the ruthlessness, perhaps the recklessness.

There are certain truths about 'great war' which can be deduced from its nature as a struggle between States for the mastery, and can also be gleaned from the experience of all the great wars of the past. The first is that if 'great war' is made against you, you can meet it only by 'great war.' The fundamental characteristic of 'great war' is that the whole nation throws itself into the fight. That is possible only when every man and woman realizes that defeat means ruin to him and to her, and that there is no escape from it except by victory. When that happens a nation makes war with all its might; everyone contributes what he has—his money, his energy, his intelligence, his body if it is fit, his life if he has the chance. Then the nation is in earnest, and a nation in earnest will probably sooner or later evolve a plan grand enough for the occasion. It will perhaps not start with a grand plan. There have been nations which

have been unexpectedly plunged into wars, even 'great wars.' In such cases the men at the head of affairs have not always thought out in advance the purpose of the war and the scope of the operations. They may have had quite other ends in view than victory in an international struggle. And if that end has not been constantly present to their minds they will not have been occupied beforehand with the means by which it is to be obtained. But a nation that means to have victory will find the right leaders, whether it starts with them or not, because when it is once awake it ceases to consider persons and reputations. It goes back to the elementary principle by which men must ultimately be judged: 'By their fruits ye shall know them,' the difficulty being that time is needed to reveal the strength or weakness of leaders, and that in 'great war' time is infinitely precious.

The ruling principle of 'great war' is the concentration of effort in time and space. 'Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might.' The aim in a war of this kind is to disarm the adversary, to crush his fighting forces, so that he is helpless and has no choice but to accept your terms. If that result is to be produced your forces must be so strong that they can shatter those of the enemy in a great battle or series of battles, and then go on to overrun his territory and occupy his capital. At sea you must destroy his fleet and coop up its relics in the ports in which they take refuge. Napoleon destroys an army at Ulm, seizes Vienna, and disperses a second army at Austerlitz. Then he dictates peace. He shatters an army at Jena,

occupies Berlin, and then defeats the Russian armies that have come to the rescue. After that he does as he likes with Prussia. Moltke defeats one army at Gravelotte, captures another at Sedan, and then besieges Paris and defeats all the armies that try to relieve it. Then he expounds his terms. Nelson destroys a French fleet at the Battle of the Nile; after that the Mediterranean is his. He destroys a Franco-Spanish fleet at Trafalgar; Great Britain could thenceforth treat all the ocean as her private property until in the third generation the Germans built a navy to remind her that the command of the sea is a matter not of right but of might.

It is popularly supposed that you can buy victory with blood, but history shows that you may shed blood in plenty and shed it in vain. For defeat you pay with bloodshed; for victory more is required. Victory as a rule is the result of forethought. To most of our people forethought has long seemed a trifle or an accident or a happy inspiration. But in truth the power of thought which wins battles is something that has to be acquired. It is a costly acquisition; a man gets it only by giving his life to it. That is the history of Alexander, of Hannibal, of Cæsar, of Gustavus, of Frederick, of Napoleon, of Wellington, and of Moltke. At any rate, a man cannot possibly direct the operations of war successfully unless he has worked hard to master it, and that is a wrestle which requires his whole strength. Cromwell's letters reveal Cromwell at white heat, his whole soul thrown into his war. They do not reveal his labour in mastering the

methods of Gustavus, but we know that he had mastered them.

Mr. Asquith has told us that the war must go on until Prussian militarism has been destroyed. I do not know whether by force you can destroy an -ism, for an -ism is something spiritual. You can destroy the Prussian army and the German navy provided you go the right way about it. But I am sure that you cannot do it by Prussian methods, for a copy is not likely to be as good as the original. Prussia is a military despotism of the first order. Any attempt to imitate it in England would be an admission that Prussia is right. It would be an acceptance of the very thing which the Prime Minister says must be destroyed.

The conditions of victory in this war, in order of importance, though not necessarily of time, are first that the German navy must be shattered in battle. It must be beaten in a Trafalgar or a Quiberon Bay or a Port Arthur. Secondly, the German army must be crushed in a Sedan, a Jena, or a Waterloo, or in a series of such battles. And, thirdly, the allied armies, victorious, must march to Berlin, to Munich, to Hanover. There might indeed be peace without these prerequisites, but it would be only a truce. Unless she is well beaten Germany will begin it all over again.

The German navy, I say, must be destroyed. That is no light matter. There are German admirals who have paid the price of knowledge, having given their lives to nothing else. We shall have to pay dearly for

victory over them. The price may be our own navy. We must not grudge it. The purpose of our navy's existence is to destroy the enemy's navy. If it succeeds it will have repeated Nelson's achievement and given England all the sea; no price is too high for that.

I hear men saying that it will be hard work to push the German army back to the Rhine. There is harder work than that to be done. The German army should never be allowed to go back across the Rhine. Nothing but its broken remnants ought to escape across that stream. The passage of the Rhine by the allied armies ought to be the beginning of the end.

So much and no more as to the scope of the war, in regard to which I merely wish to assert that we should think about it, to suggest the right way of looking at it, and to hint at the kind of thoughts which our admirals and generals must now be thinking, in order that we at home may adequately support them by our sympathy. To say more would be to trespass on their province, which is far from my intention.

The only question which occupies us all just now is not what our admirals or our generals ought to do, not even in the first place what they are doing; we are giving them and shall give them our full trust, knowing that they are doing and will do their best. The question is, What is the best that the nation can do to back them? What can any of us do to contribute towards victory? This is the joint affair of the government and the people, which together make up

the nation. To begin with, let us recognize that the government, too, has done its best, and that its best has been very good. When the crisis came the Cabinet felt that it must beware of entrance to a quarrel and paused before crossing the Rubicon. We can all understand that, although many of us were ashamed that there should be doubts of England's duty and shuddered at the consequences of delay. But once the plunge had been taken the government showed that it had large views. Wise measures were taken to prevent a commercial panic and they were rewarded with success. The prompt mobilization of the navy, followed soon after by that of all the military forces, and the vote for half a million men taken on the 5th of August, were an awakening call to which the people responded.

But then came a series of measures by which a great many people were puzzled and which were accompanied by vague impressions among a part of the public which created a certain uneasiness. There was an impression that the Territorial troops were not appreciated at their full value, that an exaggerated importance was attached to the word regular—to the word rather than to what it really means—that perhaps the calls for recruits were made a little in advance of the organization for dealing with them, and that rifles were a long time in coming. At the same time it was felt that all concerned must be loyally and heartily doing their best; that those who received the impressions I have described were necessarily unacquainted with the tremendous difficulties that inevit-

ably beset the work of improvising armies, and that it would be impracticable for those charged with the military administration to give public explanations of all that they were doing, as such explanations might be useful to the enemy. People rightly felt that in a great war the government must be supported, that it was no time for fault-finding, and that even the best of human efforts are full of imperfection. This is the right spirit and we are all possessed with it. We are all contributing to the success of the country's efforts by sinking our pet theories and our fads, by remembering that *le mieux est l'ennemi du bien* and by throwing our whole energies into accomplishing the tasks given us, even when their meaning is shrouded in obscurity. At the same time one of our strongest natural instincts is that which, if we were to express it, would perhaps take the form of the cry for more light.

I cannot but think that the light for which men are longing would be given by setting before them the idea or design which is to guide the effort which the nation is now making. I mean, of course, not the design of the naval and military operations. That could in no case be divulged; it would be worth millions to the enemy, and all the precautions of the censorship aim at nothing but preventing his discovering it. I mean the design for the making of armies, for solving the very special problem, of quickly, we might almost say suddenly, transforming a nation of citizens into a fighting organism. Here it is the large principles that are essential, and those prin-

ciples all men are free to think about, free because thought is always free.

It may be well first to define two familiar words which, I think, denote two opposite perversions of thought—pacifism and militarism. Pacifism is the wrong thinking which mistakes peace, which is a means, for the end. Militarism is the wrong thinking which mistakes war, which is a means, for the end. As wrong thought always does, militarism carries with it further errors. For while right thinking sets up as the immediate object of the act of fighting, to gain the victory, to destroy the enemy's forces, and accepts every means consistent with self-respect which will conduce to that end, militarism, mistaking the means for the end, regards as vital the forms which at some time or other in past circumstances have been adopted as conducive to victory. Right thinking about war, like all right thinking, values forms only in relation to their meaning, to their use as means to an end.

The war has been sprung upon us in conditions which guard us for the moment against the error of pacifism. How are we to guard against the opposite error of militarism? I think by attempting to see as a whole the piece of work that is laid upon us. The Prime Minister's view implies that the forces of the Allies are to crush in a military sense the forces of the German and Austro-Hungarian Empires. That is a task of tremendous difficulty. In August last, Germany, besides her navy, upon the arming and training of which the German government has for many years

brought to bear its best thought and spent very large sums of money, had, as far as I can ascertain, about five million trained soldiers, for whom the arms and the military organization were ready. She had also, I think, a further two million men capable of being trained and put into the field, and she had ready the plan and the means of training them. Her plan was to throw the bulk of her forces against France, while Russia was to be resisted by the Austrian army assisted by so much of the German army as could be spared from the great attack upon France. The British navy was to be paralyzed by the German navy's keeping itself within an area in which coast and harbour defences, mines, torpedoes, and submarines might protect it against attack and destruction, and therefore, postpone indefinitely the acquisition by Great Britain of the absolute command of the sea. It is a sound plan to which, I think, Germany will adhere. We must expect the German attacks in the western theatre of war to be renewed again and again always with very large forces, or, if the pressure exerted by Russia should seriously diminish the German strength in the west, we must count upon an obstinate German defence of some such line as she now holds covering not only her Rhine provinces but also Belgium. She holds in support of this line the great fortresses of Metz, Namur, Liège, and Antwerp. Behind it she has the line of the Rhine, with the great fortresses of Strasburg, Mainz, Coblenz, Cologne, and Wesel. If the Allies are to fulfil Mr. Asquith's programme and dictate terms of peace to Germany, the enormous Ger-

man army in this carefully prepared theatre of war will have to be attacked and decisively beaten. It is doubtful whether France alone, even with an extreme effort, can put into the field forces so superior to those of Germany as to suffice for the crushing blow required. The balance needed to produce this superiority must be provided by British forces. You cannot count on a crushing victory without greatly superior numbers, especially where you have to deal with an enemy whose troops are remarkably well trained, organized, and led. The greatest of all writers on strategy, discussing between 1820 and 1830 a plan of campaign to be undertaken in case of need by the Allies against France, assumed that they would put into the field altogether 725,000 men, knowing that Napoleon at his best had never had a French army larger than 450,000. If three million Germans are to be crushed in the region which I have roughly defined, the Allies would do well to attack them with six millions, and if France provides four millions England ought to provide two. The difficulty lies not in finding the number of men but in arming and training them so that they may be fit to cope on terms of equality, regiment for regiment, with the troops of the German army. That is the problem which Great Britain has to solve.

Germany's immense number of trained men is the result of a military system which is a Prussian invention and which it is important that we should understand, as it has been adopted by all the Great Powers of Europe except Great Britain. In the United Kingdom every child born must be registered, but after its

birth the State takes no means of following its life's history. In Germany the registration continues, so that the State can follow the career of every person. Every year there is a muster of all the males that were born twenty years before, and of these the larger part, a little more than half, those who are the strongest and most active, are sent for two years to be soldiers in the army. During those two years they are given a thorough military training, according to a carefully prepared programme drawn up with a view to the exigencies of war. They are then turned out of the army, though they remain soldiers, and are liable to be called back to the ranks in case of war. When, at the end of July, the army was put on a war footing twenty annual classes were called to the ranks; all the young men who had been born in each of the twenty successive years and had served their two years in the army. Afterwards were called out men of the same classes who had been excused from training, and men of some classes born before or after the twenty years which had been covered by the first call. This system makes the standing army—the various regiments of infantry, cavalry, artillery, of the army service corps, and of the railway corps—a war school in which all the able-bodied young men are educated. At the end of twenty years it produces the result that the better part of the male population, rather more than half of it, between the ages of twenty and thirty-nine, are ready for the field, either immediately or after a very short course for recapitulating the lessons they have learned. The system enables the

nation that has adopted it, provided that it has been in force for twenty years, to begin a war with a very large army indeed. No one, as far as I know, has ever proposed that it should be adopted in the United Kingdom. The National Service League indeed advocated a scheme by which every young man should be compelled to receive a few months' military training. The League, if I remember right, at first proposed two months, then four, and ultimately six, and there was to be no liability to fight England's battles except upon British soil. Six years ago, in an essay entitled 'Britain at Bay,' I tried to show how the Prussian system might be adapted to the peculiar case of Great Britain, and what its costs and results would be on the basis either of a one year's or a two years' course; I held that Great Britain's needs would not be met by the possession of any force the employment of which was to be limited to fighting in the United Kingdom, and that a British army, if it was to be useful, must be ready to go and win its country's battles in any theatre of war in which England required victory. The point which it appeared to me needed to be cleared up was one of educational psychology. What is the shortest period of training which will suffice to produce habits? I think it is largely a matter of the spirit and method with which the training is conducted.

At the present moment the discussion of the Continental or Prussian method is a waste of time. Its whole value lies in its continuous application for many years, in its taking the young men in annual classes

year after year, so that everything can be done without hurry in a leisurely and orderly manner. It is applicable for making an army which you may have to use twenty years hence or ten years hence, for its essence consists in its taking the young men in a manageable body composed of those of twenty and those of twenty-one. It is of no use whatever when you have to improvise a large army in a short time.

Some people seem to think that you can make an army quickly by compulsion. I doubt it. If you had a well-trained regiment you could increase its numbers a little by putting into it a few pressed men, because after a time most of them would catch the spirit of their comrades, though a few of them would always cause trouble. It could be done in old days for the navy, because a few pressed men on a ship were actually in a prison from which there was no escape, and found it more convenient to do as they were told than to resist. But, again, it seems to me idle to talk of compelling men to come in at a time when the authorities have already many thousand more recruits than they are able either to arm, train, or equip. On the 1st of January, 1914, the Regular Army numbered 156,000 and the Army Reserve and Special Reserve 200,000. In August and September supplementary estimates for a further million were voted, and in the middle of November, when a second million were voted, Parliament was informed that the first million had, roughly speaking, been raised, and that recruits were presenting themselves at the rate of 30,000 a week. These figures did not include the Territorial

force, which numbered in January 250,000, was recruited early in August up to its full establishment of 315,000, and has since then been duplicated by the creation of reserve units. Thus the United Kingdom alone began the War with 350,000 trained men of the Regular Army and its Reserves, with 250,000 more or less trained Territorial troops, and has now nearly a million and a half of further recruits undergoing training. All the evidence points to a continuance of the influx of recruits in proportion to the popular grasp of the need for them, and to the strength of the conviction that the school to which they are sent is a good and successful school.

It is quite evident that the business of turning one or two million recruits into soldiers fit for the field in a few months is a very different thing from that by which standing armies in the course of two or three years transform a limited number of recruits into trained soldiers. The standing armies are not content with the mere drill and instruction of their new men. The British army, for example, has for many years past been in the habit of giving its recruits a four months' course, in which the lessons occupy a few hours a day. But it has never thought that recruits so trained would be ready for war, because it has never passed men into the reserve until they have completed three years in the ranks, and it very much dislikes letting them off with so short a course as three years. The French and German armies have for many years insisted upon a two years' course as normal. England's necessities now require her to

turn citizens into good soldiers in something like six months. If this is to be possible it is evident that the school ought to be provided with the very best teachers and with the very best appliances. But the best officers have all been sent to the front, and I know not how many battalions are still waiting for the rifles, without which their training for war cannot begin. These are the difficulties which have to be overcome and which ought to be thoroughly realized by anyone who should attempt at the present time to criticize the military administration.

I cannot but think that the work has been to some extent embarrassed and impeded by the survival of some traditions which are not those of war but of the militarism of peace. Everyone appreciates the great value of the thoroughly trained and seasoned soldier, and as in our own regular army the training is longer than in any other, while the relations between officers and men are better than in any other, the small British regular army, which since the South African war has so much improved, was probably when it mobilized at the beginning of August the best military force in the world. No wonder that those who know war set a high value on the quality of our regular troops. They cannot be replaced, nor can troops of the same character possibly be produced in the time that is given us for preparation. Behind them were their own reserves, which have been fused with them, and then the Territorial troops, which used to be known by the better name of Volunteers. These Territorials had their own officers, full of zeal and

intelligence, most of whom well understood their duty and lacked only a period of continuous practice to make them fully competent for the field, while the men had mastered the elements and also needed but a few months of hard training, especially of musketry practice, to make them very good troops. The bulk of them volunteered for the front; a minority held to the terms of their engagement, which do not require them to serve out of the United Kingdom. Those who have volunteered for service abroad are, as regards the military law under which they serve and the pay which they receive, in precisely the same position as the soldiers of the regular army. When it was decided largely to increase the forces available and calls were made for further men, the extra recruits asked for were described as new 'regulars.' It was like asking for new 'old china.' The special quality of our regulars comes from their long period of training and their long association with a complete staff of professional officers. To call the new recruits regulars was to misuse the term regulars; to try to transfer the qualities which it implied to troops which cannot possibly have those qualities. It was a piece of wrong thinking and carried with it a second piece of wrong thinking, for it implied that the new regulars would be better troops than the old Territorials. This was impossible, unless the new regulars were given opportunities such as were to be denied the old Territorials, which would have been an injustice and would involve a loss of time and energy. Yet I find it hard to resist the conviction that this mistake has been

made and that there has survived from the militarism of peace a prejudice against the Territorial troops which has been detrimental to the nation's effort to arm itself. I am familiar with the prejudices which in 1792 and 1793 impeded the development of the resources of the French Republic for war. There were then three classes of troops—Regulars, Volunteers, and Conscripts—and the attempt to maintain the distinctions between them greatly embarrassed the generals who were fighting in the field. Not until after two and a half years of war was it decided to abolish those distinctions and to treat all classes of French soldiers on the same footing as citizens fighting for their country. England would do well now to imitate that example.

The training of troops should be ruled by what they have to do in war, and in war the soldier must always be ready and able to march and to use his weapons. He must also be accustomed to follow the direction of his leaders, which implies that mutual understanding between leaders and followers which is called discipline. Discipline comes of itself when officers and men live together, provided that the officers have the qualities that make good leaders. To march is a matter of training and organization; to use weapons a matter of skill, which comes only from practice. These are the fundamental requisites of an army, and there are no others. The time it will take to acquire them depends upon the spirit of those immediately concerned. The finest army ever made was composed of Cromwell's Ironsides, and Cromwell rightly judged

that to make a good army he must get men of the right spirit. Since the 4th of August there has been only one spirit animating the people of this country, and it has given us men of the right stamp by the million. If you took a thousand such Englishmen determined to make themselves into soldiers, and gave them fifty men of the character, intelligence, and education that qualify them to be leaders, they would make themselves into soldiers without wasting time, even if there were not a trained officer among them. They can read, there are plenty of good textbooks which they can master, and, provided they have the tools—that is the rifles and cartridges—they would not be very long in learning how to handle them. If you could give to each thousand one first-rate officer, they would pick his brains in an incredibly short space of time. The ante-Boer-War type of officer could not help them, for he was brought up in ignorance of war and filled with the dead traditions of peace militarism, which in war are encumbrances to be got rid of. You cannot improvise an army by means of voluminous regulations; it is a question of the selection of first-rate men to educate, to lead, and to command their fellows.

There is only one thing that the typical hypothetical thousand men with its leaders cannot do for themselves. They cannot supply themselves with arms and ammunition. The quickest way to get the new troops ready is for the central administration to concentrate its energies upon the supply of weapons, to leave the supervision of the training of the troops to

local officers, who should be the best that the army can find, even if they have to be withdrawn from the front or promoted from the Territorial force, and to entrust the movement of troops that are ready for the field, at home or abroad, to the General Staff. To centralize everything and to decentralize everything lead equally to chaos. The art of organization consists in doing at the centre only what can be done nowhere else, and doing in the localities everything that can possibly be done away from the centre.

## VII

## THE THEORY OF WAR*

TO-DAY I shall try to exhibit to you the science and art of war and to point out the nature of the service that can be rendered to our nation by the theory which produces them.

Let me remind you to begin with of the meaning of the word theory. It was the Greek name for the rapt attention of the spectators at the Olympic Games, and denotes an excitement of the soul producing an intense effort of observation. The same word came to be applied to that tension of a man's whole being which marks his effort to see things as they really are and to think them out. The best example of this form of activity is furnished by the lives of the great astronomers, the long and painful striving after insight which we associate with the names of men like Copernicus, Galileo, Kepler, and Newton.

In this sense the Greek word theory exactly translates the Latin word study, which was defined by a great Roman writer as 'the persistent and impetuous effort of the mind to take possession of the subject, an effort requiring the driving power of a strong will.' In its third and more usual sense theory describes the result of this study, that which the

* February 26, 1916.

observer sees with the mind's eye, the vision to which he has attained. The Romans called it science, knowledge. The type of such vision is again supplied by the astronomers, whose work has given us our knowledge of the visible universe and has brought with it, as it has grown, the methods of the mathematicians and those general principles which we call metaphorically laws of nature, of which the hypothesis of gravitation is the most universal, and of which the whole series constitutes the science of dynamics, the orderly account of the mode of the operation of forces. It is perhaps worth noting that the most perfect vision of the universe which has resulted from the exertions of the human spirit, continued during all the centuries of which we have record, sees it in the guise of forces, operating according to their own energy.

The science of war is the dynamics of nations. It is the insight into the nature of war which has been obtained by the devotion of many lives to the effort to know what war really is. The name of that effort is military history, the inquiry into wars. The military historian is a naturalist. He collects wars as specimens, he dissects them, he compares and classifies them. His laboratory is a collection of documents and maps. He examines the correspondence of governments, to discover the aims with which they made war, the records of armies and navies to find out how they were constituted, the secret dispatches of commanders to understand their motives, the reports they received about the enemy

and the orders they issued, which enable him to put himself in their place, to see with their eyes, and to think their thoughts. This kind of inquiry lays bare the secret springs of action. For a great decisive event, the plan of which seems to have arisen in the commander's mind in an instant, in the twinkling of an eye, usually proves to have been the outcome of his brooding upon the modes in which forces can be employed, so that his mind's eye is prepared to recognize, when it comes, the opportunity for a decisive stroke.

Nelson was for years pondering on the means by which he could attack a part of an enemy's fleet with the whole of his own. In August, 1796, he wrote from the Mediterranean, in a private letter: 'This country is the most favourable possible for skill with an inferior fleet; for the winds are so variable, that at some one time in twenty-four hours you must be able to attack a part of a large fleet, and the other will be becalmed, or have a contrary wind.' Two years later, on the 1st of August, 1798, Nelson destroyed a French fleet at the Battle of the Nile. Writing afterwards to Lord Howe, he said: 'By attacking the enemy's van and centre, the wind blowing directly along the line, I was enabled to throw what force I pleased on a few ships.' There you have an example of the idea of a decisive battle cherished years before the opportunity for its realization; and I need hardly remind you how the same idea led to the crowning victory of Trafalgar. Nothing to the uninitiated seems a finer effort of

extemporization than Cromwell's at Dunbar, when he exclaimed as he saw his chance of a great blow: 'Let God arise and let His enemies be scattered.' The historian knows that Cromwell's attack was the application of the methods he had acquired by an arduous effort of long previous thought.

In his classification of wars the historian finds that they are of very various degrees of energy. There are the expeditions sent by a civilized State to free itself from the annoyance occasioned by some barbarous or half-civilized tribe on its borders. These involve no great effort and hardly affect the welfare of the nations which undertake them. There have also been many wars between civilized States in which the forces engaged seem hardly to have been employed in earnest, and which were accompanied by a more or less polite discussion between the governments engaged in them. There have also been wars in which the employment of force was checked by no considerations, struggles for existence between great nations, leading to decisive battles which have changed the face of the world. It is in these great wars, in which the relations between nations are those of force, and force alone, that the workings of forces can best be studied. It is upon them that the military historian concentrates his attention. It is from the examination of the phenomena which characterize them that he derives his view of the nature of war, his science or insight into its workings.

The science of war has of course innumerable

branches. It treats of the creation, the organization and the equipment of fleets and armies, of the modes of employing them in battle; it presses into its service a multitude of other sciences and arts, those of the educator, of the engineer, of the manufacturer. It deals with the arts of the general and the admiral and also with the art of government itself. Indeed, at its highest level the science of war is the science of government. And it is for that reason that the inquiry into war or military history forms a part of the study of history or the inquiry into the nature and working of governments. This is what gives its importance to the distinction between the science and art of strategy and the subordinate sciences and arts. For strategy, another word which we inherit from the Greeks, means the science and art of the general management of war, the science and art of victory as between nation and nation.

No one has more perfectly appreciated and expressed the identity between the history of wars and the theory of war than Napoleon, who drew with perfect clearness the distinction between the master art and its branches. 'Tactics,' he said, 'evolutions, the science of the engineer and of the gunner can be learned from treatises pretty much like geometry, but the knowledge of the high parts of war can be obtained only by the study of the wars and the battles of the great captains and by experience'; and again, 'The principles of the art of war are those which directed the great captains whose high achievements have been handed down to us by

history—Alexander, Hannibal, Cæsar,' and the rest. I need not go through the list.

What, then, is the use of the history or theory of the high part of war? The best way to answer that question is to put the theory itself before you in outline. For the very first phenomenon which meets us is that the management of a war or rather of a nation's action in war is a function of government. Only a government can declare or begin a war or conclude a treaty of peace. Only a government can decide where to send fleets and armies and how to distribute them in different theatres of war. Only a government can select their commanders and define the missions which they are to fulfil. Only a government can turn the nation's resources in men and money into fleets and armies. Only a government can prepare for a war. Whoever exercises these functions is in fact the government of the country. I think it will be quite evident that none of the functions I have enumerated can be well exercised without a knowledge of what Napoleon called the high part of war, and that a government must in some way be permeated with that knowledge. It must be endowed with a sound judgment about the working of forces. It must be guaranteed against any violation of the principles, against any attempt to employ forces in a manner inconsistent with their inherent nature. Moreover, its judgment in these matters must be automatic. In short, a government in order to conduct a war rightly must be endowed with what I would venture to call a

strategical conscience. I have sometimes thought that the use of strategy to a government resembled that of a clock—a contrivance to tell the time. But there is nothing to insure that when a man is making an important decision he will look at the clock; he may forget to think about the time. A man's conscience is always with him, speaks to him unasked and makes a spontaneous effort to prevent him going wrong. That is the service which the theory, the history, or the science of war, seated in its right place in the council chamber of government, can render to a nation.

Let us return to the science, and look at the view which history gives us of the nature of war.

Consider a typical war, a war fought to a finish. In 1861, certain States of the Federation known as the United States withdrew from that Federation and founded a new Confederacy. The Government of the United States regarded this as an injury to the Federation, and the existence of the Confederacy as a menace to its own existence, or at least to its own good working. A conflict began in which the United States navy blockaded the coasts of the Confederacy (which, roughly speaking, had no navy, and, therefore, could not oppose the fleets of the United States), while the two sets of armies fought for four years, until in 1865, the last Confederate armies, defeated and surrounded, laid down their arms. The Confederacy, thus disarmed, had to submit to the Government of the United States, and thereupon ceased to exist.

Another case of a war fought to a finish is that between Rome and Carthage. It had three stages. The first was the destruction of the Carthaginian fleet by a Roman fleet created for that purpose. That gave Rome the command of the Mediterranean. The second was Hannibal's great invasion, in which he destroyed one Roman army at the Trebia, a second at Lake Trasimene, and a third at Cannæ. The third stage was the destruction of the last Carthaginian army at Zama, which decided the struggle. The fight for supremacy was ended; what followed was but an epilogue.

These types reveal war as a struggle for the mastery, in which the forces strike at one another until those of one belligerent have destroyed those of the other, after which the victorious State imposes its will upon the vanquished. To the victor's will there is no limit. He may and will, if he wishes, destroy the conquered State and govern its people. There is nothing except his will to prevent his making them tributary, enslaving or even killing them. He might be prevented by the interference of some third State able to destroy him in turn, but I cannot recall an instance of such successful interference after a war fought to a finish between Great Powers.

Take a modern case. In 1806 there was a breach between Napoleon and the King of Prussia. Hostilities began on the 7th of October. On the 14th, the Prussian army was crushed and shattered in the two great battles of Jena and Auerstedt. Napoleon, after marching to Berlin, and overwhelming the

remaining fragments of the Prussian army, found himself confronted by the army of the Russian Emperor, the King of Prussia's ally. A fresh campaign was necessary, in which that army was defeated. The Russian Emperor, seeing he could not help Prussia, abandoned her to her fate, and she was left prostrate under Napoleon's heel.

If we take from these examples of wars fought to a finish the elements that are common to them all, and describe those elements in general terms, we get a theory or view of what war is. A war is a conflict or collision of the forces of States, proceeding by the effort of those forces at mutual destruction, and ending either in the overthrow of one or more of the States concerned, or in a treaty of peace between those that survive. The forces employed are fleets and armies. They require for their creation the time needed to get together the men, to train and discipline them, to build the ships and to construct the weapons. Their quality is limited by the time available, and by the knowledge in possession of the government for its guidance in their creation. Their size is limited by the resources of the nation in population and wealth.

It follows from the nature of the forces that they can be opposed only by similar forces. Nothing can oppose a fleet at sea but another fleet. Nothing can oppose an army on land but another army. Must we not add that nothing can oppose a fleet in the air but another fleet in the air?

Armies and navies, then, act by destruction, which

is a mutual process, and the opinion is therefore sometimes expressed that a war is a process of mutual attrition or exhaustion. But this opinion misses the essence of the whole matter. In every collision each side loses men, weapons and stores and in a naval battle usually ships also, and the effort to destroy the enemy's forces is accompanied by a complementary effort to preserve one's own. The purpose of a commander is to destroy the enemy's fleet or army so as to remove it altogether from the board while preserving his own fleet or army for further use. So long as the loss of force on both sides proceeds proportionately there is no decision, and while that condition lasts the war is a process of mutual exhaustion. The decision comes when one antagonist has destroyed the fleets or armies of the other and when they can no longer be replaced. You will recognize that this is the reasonable mode of using forces. If an admiral has destroyed the enemy's navy there can be nothing on the sea to resist him. He has the command of the sea and can do what he likes. If a general has destroyed his enemy's army he can march his own army where he pleases in the theatre of war, of which he has obtained the control. The analogy of land and sea, where the method is to aim first at the destruction of the enemy's forces and so to obtain the command of the theatre of war, must probably, as I have suggested, be applied to warfare in the air. An aerial fleet that meets with no resistance in the air can go where it pleases and do what it likes

within the range of a voyage out and home. The obvious mode of preventing air raids is to seek out and destroy the enemy's aerial fleets, for forces on the ground can as well expect to destroy forces in the air as to destroy fleets at sea. In the last resort there is no security from an enemy's attacks on land, by sea, or in the air, except that which results from the destruction of his forces. That is the common sense or logic of war, for war is force set free to act according to its nature.

So much then for the science of war, the view of its nature given to us by history or theory. Upon this view is based the art of conducting war. Take the typical case of a war to a finish; the case when a State is fighting for its existence, when the object must be to overthrow the adversary and dictate to him the conditions of peace. Upon what principles will the leader frame his plan of campaign? What will he do by way of observing Napoleon's precept of making war in accordance with the examples of the great commanders? He will endeavour as far as possible to concentrate his action in time and space. He will try to discover the direction in which a great blow will upset the enemy, and he will deliver that blow with the greatest force that he can possibly collect for it. That will be his main action, and, if any subordinate actions are indispensable, he will devote to them the least possible force, so as to keep as much as he can for his main action. And he will do all that he does as quickly as possible.

In 1805 Napoleon was disturbed, during his duel with Nelson, by the discovery of a new coalition against him. He found that Austria was getting her armies ready in haste and that Russian armies were moving to co-operate with them, while Prussia with her great forces was undecided between the two parties. The coalition was dangerous. It was moving not less than 380,000 men, 100,000 more than Napoleon could put into the field. What was he to do? Was he to wait on the defensive and trust to impregnable lines of defence and to a war of attrition? Not Napoleon. He, like Nelson, had brooded on the means of attacking a part with the whole. The armies of the coalition were spread out across Europe; one was to move through Pomerania to invade Hanover, a Russian army was moving to force Prussia to join the coalition, a second Russian army was on its march to join the first Austrian army which was to move through Bavaria; a second Austrian army was gathering in the Tyrol, and a third, the greatest of all, in Northern Italy to invade Napoleon's kingdom of Italy, where the forces available for defence were not more than half its strength. Napoleon's armies too were spread out. He had one corps at Hanover, a second in Holland, four in Flanders and a seventh in Brittany, too far off for immediate use. He left Italy to the forces that were there; it was a secondary matter; he abandoned Hanover for the time, and marched the six corps that he had in Hanover, Holland and Flanders, by the shortest routes, to the Danube. Thus he col-

lected 200,000 men and united them into an army behind the Austrians, assembled in their chosen position along the Iller, where they were getting ready to be attacked in front and waiting to be joined by the Russian army that was on its march through Austria. Napoleon crossed the Danube, sent two corps to keep off the Russians, and with the rest of his army put a girdle round the Austrians, whose scattered bodies were crushed, one after another, until, within two months from the departure of the first troops from Boulogne, all that was left of the first Austrian army surrendered at Trochtelfingen and at Ulm. Napoleon then marched swiftly to Vienna, the Russian army escaping just in time across the Danube to join the next Russian army in Moravia. He followed it beyond Brünn and there halted. The young Emperor of Russia, who ought to have waited for the Austrian army from Italy and for Prussia to join the allies, let himself be persuaded to move forward and attack Napoleon, who crushed his army at Austerlitz. The coalition was thus broken in pieces, not by forces superior in numbers, but by Napoleon's use of time and of the forces at his disposal.

The commander who knows his mind, and has a plan, almost always attacks his enemy. A commander without a plan invariably awaits events, and excuses his inaction by supposing it to be defence. This is a dangerous attitude, for an army that is waiting must expect to be attacked, yet cannot foresee where the blow will fall. It must station

troops at all the points where attack, if successful, would be dangerous. Thus its troops are spread out in positions. The assailant, when he sets out to attack, can set his troops in motion from several points towards the one chosen for the assault. But the defending commander cannot be sure where the blow will fall until it is delivered. Then he must send orders to his distant troops to come and reinforce those that are holding the point attacked. Time is needed for these orders to reach the troops, and more time for their march to the spot. The chances are that they will come up too late. In short, the great advantage of the attack is surprise, and the worst sin of a commander inaction or passive defence. It is a waste of time, which is always on the side of the commander who knows how to use it.

I shall not to-day enter into tactical problems, for I must confine myself to the master art. To avoid possible misunderstanding I will merely remind you how vital to success is the quality of an army, the fighting skill of its every part, and how this quality depends on the knowledge and judgment with which the training is inspired, above all the training of the officers. Here you have a sidelight on the utility of the theory.

One more principle and I shall have completed my sketch of the science of war, the view of what it really is.

I have touched on the classification of wars, according to their intensity, and reminded you that

some wars are little more than discussions accompanied by fighting, half war and half diplomatic considerations, while in others the flood-gates of force are thrown open and the conflict is fought to a finish. What constitutes the difference? It is a case of the dynamical principle that the momentum of a body represents the product of its mass and of its velocity. The extreme energy of war is developed when a whole people rushes to arms. That is not possible except when the mass of the people is deeply stirred by the motives which produce the conflict. If and when that happens the forces set in motion will be immense; those brought into play by the adversary may be expected to be of the same kind, and there will be no conventional limits to the mode of their employment. Thus a very great development of force implies a purpose that appeals to a whole community, and such a purpose, sooner or later, brings about a corresponding grandeur in the ideas which inspire the plans of operation. It is when a whole nation throws itself into a war that the conception of overthrowing the enemy by the destruction of his forces must be expected to assert itself.

The importance to a government of this principle is that it makes possible the foresight and the forethought without which there can be no preparation suitable for a coming war. You can imagine for yourselves the case of a government which, being prepared for a small expedition, or for one of the half-and-half wars that can be settled by compromise

after a short period of experimental hostilities, should suddenly find itself plunged into the tremendous adventure of a war to a finish against one of the Great Powers of the world.

If a statesman could so far forget himself as to think only of his nation's well-being, he would never be the victim of a surprise of this kind. Such a man would make it his business to face realities, and would see that the well-being of a nation depends on its fulfilment of its purpose in the world. What is England's purpose in the interplay of forces that forms the framework in which all the activities of mankind are set? What is the inherent nature of the force which preserves her existence and makes her a nation? We think of England as the home of freedom, of which the first condition is her own independence. The force that maintains her independence is her navy, which acts by destroying the navies of her antagonists, and has given her in one war after another the command of the sea. How is it possible for a small island State, surrounded by the open road of the sea, the easiest of all avenues of attack, to have again and again destroyed the navies of Europe? Because Europe has always been divided against herself by that very principle of the independence of nations which is England's breath of life. The strength of England's navy has been thrown into the scale in behalf of this independence, her own and that of Continental allies, against each succeeding effort of some one Power to turn the commonwealth of Europe into a single Empire. It

is evident, therefore, that England's well-being, her very life, depends upon the frustration of any such ambition on the part of a Continental State, that upon the appearance of such a design England must be prepared to fight for existence. It is equally evident that so long as freedom is dear to mankind, so long as the nations cherish their independence, England is not likely to stand alone in fighting for it.

The war in which we are now engaged could therefore be foreseen in its broad outline from the moment, now many years ago, when the ambition of Germany to be mistress of Europe was first revealed, and more especially from two steps taken by the German Government and proclaimed to all the world. The first, the creation of a navy which could have no other intelligible purpose, as the theory of naval war makes plain, than the destruction of any possibly hostile navy and the ultimate command of the sea; the second the creation of a fleet of airships which could have no other object than to gain the command of the air.

Is it needful to give further proof that a government cannot expect to be able to secure a nation's well-being unless it has eyes to look closely at war and unless it has grasped the laws which regulate the workings of force? Where is it to look for this kind of knowledge? Where is such knowledge necessarily cultivated?

To answer that question let us watch a commander in the field. We may take Wellington at his head-

quarters at Brussels in 1815. His chief preoccupation was, of course, with the enemy, with what Napoleon would do, and how he himself would direct the British army when the time came. But he had a hundred other businesses to look after. He had to correspond with the Government at home, to keep it informed and to obtain from it the troops and supplies that he wanted. He had to keep in touch with the Allied Governments; with their representatives, civil and military, and above all, with his Prussian colleague Blücher. He had to see that his troops were comfortably quartered and fed. His correspondence of 1815 is, for the most part, concerned with everything imaginable except the movements of the troops against the enemy, which scarcely form the subject of more letters than will fill half a dozen pages. A man who is as busy as that must have his confidential secretaries, among whom he divides the business. One of them attends to the orders to the troops, that part of the business which consists in directing the army against the enemy, the highest part of war. In 1815 this particular secretary was Sir William de Lancey, the Quartermaster-General, and as he was killed in the battle and his papers lost, there is some difficulty in tracing with entire accuracy the working of Wellington's mind in the four critical days of the campaign. The Quartermaster-General was the one person who was likely to be initiated into all the secrets. Napoleon had the assistance of Marshal Berthier, whose title was *Ministre de la Guerre, Major-Général, expédiant les ordres de l'Empereur*, the officer whose mission it

was to transmit the Emperor's orders. If anybody could follow Napoleon's inmost thoughts as to his operations it must have been Berthier. Every Commander has an officer in a position like that of de Lancey or of Berthier. The eighteenth-century title of the office was Quartermaster-General. It has been, during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the high school of war. On this point let me marshal the evidence.

In 1734 General de Puységur, who had served twenty-three years as Quartermaster-General to French armies in the field, recorded his opinion that the office was the only one in which a large knowledge of war could be gained; that it was the only post suited to prepare a man for command, for the ordinary general officers had no share in the high matters with which the Quartermaster-General had to occupy himself. The two writers from whom Napoleon derived his first inspirations, Guibert and Bourcet, were products of the same office, for Guibert ascribed his ideas to the teachings of his father, a famous Quartermaster-General, and Bourcet, one of the greatest of them all, wrote: 'A Quartermaster-General is the soul of an army. . . . He ought to have acquired, by his experience and his application, a knowledge of the most sublime parts of war, for it is necessary that he should make combinations, that he should examine and foresee events, and that, with a good judgment to make the best of the circumstances in which he may find himself, his mind may be able to supply him with ideas or projects of operations.' And again, 'The ideas and

projects of operations which the Quartermaster-General or his assistants are able to form, require to be thought out and discussed. The discussion brings out the advantages and disadvantages of the various means of operating. For this purpose it takes into consideration the enemy's situation, the obstacles which it may present to us, all the various hypotheses which can be made concerning the enemy's possible action, his general officers and staff being always assumed to be as well instructed and daring as possible. Accordingly the Quartermaster-General should assemble his assistants, presumed to be officers possessed of principles and of experience, and should propound to them his said ideas. Their discussion cannot but be beneficial both for the assistants and the chief, as the projects will thereby be confirmed or criticized, and will often lead to changes in the necessary arrangements for the execution of the plan. Thus it is in these private conversations that the best officers can form themselves.'

Scharnhorst, the real organizer of victory for Prussia in the 'war of liberation,' did his chief work as Quartermaster-General, and his great disciple Clausewitz served in the same capacity though in a less exalted sphere of action.

The French, after the Revolution, changed the title of the office to *Chef de l'État Major*, which the Prussians translated by Chief of the General Staff. In this office his experience was gained by Jomini, the first great exponent of the theory of war. Moltke was, during almost all his military life, engaged in the same functions.

The names I have given you are those of all the great students to whom is due such knowledge of war as we possess. In the British army the last of our victorious generals, the last who planned and executed successful campaigns and won battles in the field, were Lord Wolseley, who gained his first experience of the high parts of war as Quartermaster-General to Sir Hope Grant in the Oudh campaign of 1858-9, and Lord Roberts, who served in the Quartermaster-General's department from 1856 until in 1878 he left it as Quartermaster-General, and who used to say that to his employment in this capacity he owed his insight into military operations.

I have called this great cloud of witnesses because I want to convince you beyond the possibility of doubt that a government in search of a man likely to see war as it is and likely to be able to direct it well would look for one who had been trained in the particular business which has produced almost all the men who for two centuries have made their mark as directors of armies in the field, and almost all the men whose writings have thrown light on the art of command. For there is an art of command, which is something more than science or insight into the nature of war, and consists of the application of the science or insight to the infinite variety of situations that arise in the field. This application is best learned in the office which prepares plans of operations. In order that you may grasp the importance of this practical application of the theory I must propound to you the

paradox of strategy and clear up its apparent contradiction.

The first and last word of Napoleon was 'Principles.' In 1794, during the brief campaign of Oneglia, he wrote a letter to Masséna telling that general that 'according to all the principles of war' he ought never to have left one of his columns with no communication with the rest of the army. I have already reminded you how in his notes dictated at St. Helena he dwells on the 'principles' that guided the great commanders. But in the very next sentence he says: 'There are no precise definite rules; everything depends upon . . . a thousand circumstances which are never in two cases alike.'

Few generals have more profoundly studied the theory of war than the victor of Königgrätz and Sedan. In his brief paper on strategy Moltke says:

'If in war, from the beginning of the operations, everything is uncertain except such will and energy as the commander carries in himself, there cannot possibly be practical value for strategy in general principles, rules derived from them and systems built up upon the rules. . . . Strategy is a system of expedients. It is more than science, it is the translation of science into practical life, the development of an original leading thought in accordance with the ever-changing circumstances.'

What is the explanation of this seeming contradiction, of the stress laid on the mastery of principles and at the same time the emphatic statement that principles, rules, and systems are not sufficient guides?

It is that the value of the theory of war lies in the insight which it gives into war's true nature, the knowledge to which it leads of the strong and weak points of armies, of what can be done with them and what cannot, of all the problems offered by a campaign, and of the various solutions possible for each of them. Above all, the effort to look at war and to think of war in the right way becomes in time a habit of right thinking so that to the trained strategist we may apply a Roman's ideal of the man whom 'habit has brought to a point at which he will not only act rightly, but is incapable of acting except rightly.' In short, the value of the study of war lies in the last analysis in the judgment which it confers upon its devotees. It produces men fit to direct a war.

I have given you a bird's-eye view of the science and art of war, and have shown you what a great war is and how it must be directed. I have done my best to make myself the mouthpiece of the theory or of history, and any imperfection of the message has been due to the defects of the transmitting instrument. In the attempt, which I shall now make, to apply the theory to a concrete case, there is, of course, an element of personal judgment, which can never be eliminated, though I shall not leave you without the means of estimating the probable margin of error.

What is the question that millions of Englishmen, in five continents, are now asking themselves? Is it not how are we to be led to victory? I have tried to make the answer to that question self-evident. We shall remember, of course, that victory does not depend

upon ourselves alone, or upon ourselves and our allies. Combatants, I need not remind you, are not umpires. But we can and must make sure that the resources of England and the Empire, their intelligence, their men and their money shall be employed in accordance with the inherent nature of forces, with the laws which determine the results of their collision, with the principles of the science and art of war. To that end they must be directed by a mind formed in the theory of war, that is in a life of attention to its sublime parts.

That does not mean that we are to look for a great man. A man is recognized as great after he has done his work, not before. What is wanted is simply a man who has learned the craft of a strategist and is competent in it. When he has been found what use is to be made of him? Evidently his insight and skill must be employed to give the general direction to the armies. But that, we have seen, is the function of the Government. Are we then to take a competent strategist and make him Prime Minister? No doubt we should be tempted to do so if a victorious general revealed himself. Yet it would be a mistake, because after victory comes peace, and then strategy ceases to be the dominant business of government.

How, then, are we to insert a strategist as the inner spring into the government machine? Consider the machine. In the British system, the King's executive power is wielded by the Cabinet, a committee of members of Parliament chosen by the Prime Minister, who assigns to each one of them the headship of a Department. The Prime Minister is the head of the

Government, the chairman of the committee. As long as there is a Prime Minister, he will be the director of England's action in the war. Our view of war shows us that the only way to get the most out of the nation's forces is to arrange that the director shall see war just as it is, and shall be inspired by the theory. Common sense suggests, therefore, that the strategist should be brought into direct personal contact with the Prime Minister. The object is that the Prime Minister should see with the strategist's eye, think his thoughts, and make his resolves his own. If the Prime Minister must communicate with the chosen strategist through any other person, that third person will necessarily be a non-conducting medium, and the purpose will not be fulfilled. The arrangement proposed, the only one possible except a military dictatorship, which would be madness before victory has revealed a great man, involves a slight change in the composition of the Cabinet. The Secretary of State for War would become a minister for the administration of the army and the Prime Minister would undertake the general management of the war, directing the navy through a naval strategist and the army through a military strategist. What the two strategists should be called matters nothing. They would perhaps be best secured from disturbance if they were simply the Prime Minister's private secretaries; it is not certain that their influence would be greater if they were members of the Cabinet, the executive committee of the nation. The real function of the members of the Cabinet is to explain the actions of the Government

to the House of Commons, and so to keep the nation content with its rulers. But the nation will be content with them if it sees itself on the road to victory. During the conflict the less talking the better, and explanations are as needless after victory as they are useless after defeat.

The theory has told you that in proportion as a nation throws its whole being into a war the conduct of its war rises to the grandeur of design required—in short, that where there is a will there is a way. Now, see how true the theory is. When I planned this lecture, my one purpose was to tell my countrymen: If you want to have a chance to win, you must have strategy inside the Government, must get a true view of war into the Prime Minister's mind. The theory has shown you how that must be done, you must bring into touch with the Prime Minister an officer trained in what Wellington would have called the Quarter-master-General's department, and what is now called the Imperial General Staff. While I have been preparing my address, the Government has begun to move in the direction in which the theory points. The Prime Minister has looked for a strategist in the right place, among the officers trained in the General Staff or plan of campaign office, and has decided that he shall be the officer issuing the orders of the Government concerning the military operations. You will find the decision in the Order in Council of January 27, which states that: 'The Chief of the Imperial General Staff shall be responsible for issuing the orders of the Government in regard to military operations.' Thus the

person has been rightly chosen according to the theory. But he is not by the Order in Council brought into direct contact with the Prime Minister. Reference is made in the Order in Council to one of earlier date, which makes the Chief of the Imperial General Staff the subordinate of the Secretary of State for War, who still remains the Parliamentary exponent of the strategical decisions of the Government. Thus, there is still, contrary, as I cannot but think, to the indications of the theory, an intermediary between the representative of strategy and the head of the Government.

The theory of war and the practice of other nations point to further changes that must be made if the object is victory. The Chief of the Imperial General Staff must be relieved from the administrative duties which hinder the concentration of his energies on the direction of the military operations. For that purpose it is necessary to separate the General Staff from the office which administers the army and to set over the administrative departments an officer chosen for his insight into the machinery of modern armies, for his intimacy with the inner working of the British system and for his knowledge of the people of Great Britain who fill all ranks of the army. This division of the present War Office into two, the General Staff and the office for the Administration, will leave two officers—the minister of operations and the minister of army administration—in direct communication with the Prime Minister, who will, with and through them, himself take charge of the general direction of the war,

from which no system and no device can possibly relieve him.

This distribution of business was adopted by Napoleon in 1805 when he undertook his first great war as Emperor. For side by side with Berthier, Minister for War, who was the channel of his orders, was a Minister of the Administration of War. It has since been adopted by every one of the European Powers in turn and was the system of the Indian army in the days of its best commander-in-chief, Lord Roberts, and of its best administrators, Sir George Chesney and Sir Henry Brackenbury.

These changes cannot produce their full effect unless they are accompanied by a decentralization which would transfer from the central administration to the Generals commanding Army Corps the care for the spiritual and material needs of the troops, both of officers and men. Every commander of an Army Corps should have authority over all its business and the duty of training his own officers and troops. He should have as little to do with the War Office as possible and the War Office should not be allowed to meddle with the details of his work. Time forbids me to enlarge on matters of military administration. I must be content with having pointed out the first steps indicated by the theory as indispensable for the management of war. You may be tempted to think that the Prime Minister ought to attend to other things and leave the management of the war to one or more of his colleagues. But the war while it lasts is the chief thing, and until victory has been

obtained the other things matter nothing except in so far as they may be helpful towards victory. It is the other things that the Prime Minister must leave to his colleagues.

We have looked closely at a particular function of government, and for that particular work we have found our Government a little shortsighted. We have examined its eyes and ascertained the precise nature of the lens which will correct its vision. Has not our search incidentally revealed to us the general nature of the malady from which our nation is suffering and does not the diagnosis broadly indicate the remedy? Is there any department in our Government in which the minister, through whom the King's authority is exercised, can look at the business of which he has charge with the clear vision given by full knowledge? Have we not as a people been so much absorbed in what we thought the necessary business of getting our living or of getting on that we have had no time for what was after all of far greater moment, the effort to see the world as it is?

I have put before you to-day a specimen of that effort, the theory of war. Shall I be wrong in concluding that the theory of a subject means obedience to the first word of command, 'Attention,' and that its spirit is expressed in the words: 'If thine eye be single thy whole body shall be full of light'?

## VIII

## THE DARDANELLES COMMISSION*

THERE have been of late discussions on the subject of the proper use to be made of the Fleet, discussions which reveal uncertainty about the aim and scope of naval warfare. The report of the Dardanelles Commission disclosed uncertainty of this kind among those who, during the term of the late Government, had authority over the conduct of the war. That the functions of the fleet should be a matter of doubt, especially in high quarters, is nothing less than a national danger, for a mistaken employment of this powerful and costly force might lead to defeat and even to the collapse of the cause of the Allies and of the British Empire.

The objective of a navy is the enemy's navy. This fundamental principle was laid down independently of each other by the two clearest thinkers who have written systematically about naval warfare, by Admiral Philip Colomb in his *Naval Warfare*, and by Captain Mahan in his *Influence of Sea Power upon History*. In the judgment of these two writers, so long as a hostile navy exists, no objective other than that navy can be pursued, except at a hazard which ought not to be run. What does a man mean when, speaking of war, he refers to risks that ought

* September, 1917.

not to be run? Is not war made up of danger, of risk, of hazard? How are we to know what risks are to be taken, and what not? That there is a line to be drawn is shown by the opinion of the masters of the business. 'Do not imagine,' wrote Nelson, on the 2nd of July, 1804, 'I am one of those hot-brained people who fight at an immense disadvantage without an adequate object.' 'Battles ought not to be given,' wrote Napoleon on the 21st of August, 1809, 'unless one can reckon in one's favour seventy chances of success out of a hundred.' In other words, the general or the admiral who of his own accord engages in battle without a reasonable certainty of success does not know his business. An attack of ships upon forts is an operation which naval writers regard as tabooed. It is an improper use of tools. It is employing ships for a purpose for which they are not suited. A ship is like an eggshell full of men and machinery; a comparatively small number of hits by great projectiles will sink it, a sufficient number of explosions of smaller projectiles will cripple the machinery and disable the greater part of the crew. A ship offers a large, visible and vulnerable target. Fortifications on land are made to stand a great deal of pounding, even by heavy projectiles. A land battery offers a target only a few feet high, difficult to distinguish and very hard to hit. It may be hit a great many times without damage to the guns, which will probably be invisible and almost impossible to locate. Accordingly, the damage which may be inflicted on the fort is quite incom-

mensurate with the loss which will probably be suffered by the ships. Common sense, therefore, suggests that the experiment should not be undertaken. Its most probable result is that a number of ships and men will be lost for nothing, and the consequence is likely to be not only defeat in the engagement but the loss of forces which might, had they been preserved, have turned the balance in some sea fight upon which the issue of the war possibly depends. The risk which ought not to be run is that of losing not only the battle but the war.

The attack by ships upon forts being forbidden by common sense, it seems incredible that any Government should order such an operation. Yet this tabooed experiment was three times undertaken by the late Government. The result of these and of subsequent operations was so disastrous that Parliament took the extraordinary step of passing an Act which ordered a Commission to inquire into the origin, inception and conduct of the operations in and about the Dardanelles, and which enjoined the publication of the Commission's report. The first instalment of the report had the effect of emphasizing the doubt in the public mind concerning the fitness of the organization of the Government for the conduct of the War. But it did not relieve the doubt by the suggestion of a better system, so that the problem was not solved. The Commissioners began their report by pointing out that they would exceed the scope of their functions if they were to examine the measures necessary to remedy the administrative

defects revealed by their inquiry. They ended it by the suggestion that any member of the public who might read the report should draw his own conclu sions. This was probably the right course for a Commission, which has neither the machinery of judicial procedure, inasmuch as those whose conduct is the subject of the inquiry are not represented by advocates, nor the peculiar kind of skill which is the qualification for scientific investigation. Moreover, the Commission is still at work, and its report is far from complete. Yet what the nation needed and desired was to discover the defects in its system of government for the purpose of carrying on the war, and the remedy for those defects. I venture then to ask the reader to accompany me in accepting the Commission's invitation to use the materials supplied in its report in an attempt to find out how the mistake came to be made, and how such mistakes can be prevented.

'In every war all the important decisions are made by the supreme executive authority, which is responsible to the nation for them. It stands or falls by success or failure in war, naturally enough, for the nation stands or falls by the issue of a war, an issue for which it always holds its Government responsible. Everyone else simply obeys the Government. In our Constitution the executive power, vested in the King, is exercised according to the advice of the Cabinet, and for that advice, which means for every act of each member and of all his subordinates, the Cabinet is responsible to Parliament. There are thus only two responsibilities, that of the Cabinet to

Parliament, and of every official, including every single Minister, to the Cabinet. The decisions that fix the size of the army and navy, that determine how much of the army or navy shall be used in each theatre of war, who shall command each portion, and what mission he is to fulfil, are decisions of the Cabinet as a body. But these decisions, taken together, constitute the conduct of the war. None of them is ever taken except with the sanction of the Cabinet, and if any of them were challenged in the House of Commons and condemned by that body the Cabinet would fall.

'How, then, can a Cabinet rightly decide such technical questions as the number of battleships, or of divisions, to be kept, the choice of theatres of war, of objectives and of commanders, and the force to be placed under the orders of each of them? Just in the same way as a man decides his own affairs when they involve professional skill. He chooses a doctor, a surgeon, or a lawyer; listens to what the professional man proposes, and then decides to the best of his common sense whether he will take the medicine, consent to the operation on his child, or proceed with the action in chancery. The Cabinet in the same way considers the suggestions made by its generals or admirals, and decides to adopt, to reject, or to modify them. The members of the Cabinet have to make up their minds as best they can as to the skill of their naval and military officers, and to back their judgment about them and their ideas by staking the national existence on the issue.'*

The usual practice of a large committee is to have any important branch of its work prepared by a special sub-committee. When war broke out in

* *Westminster Gazette*, May 28, 1915.

August, 1914, the pre-existing arrangements had been thrown out of gear, partly by troubles arising out of Irish affairs, and partly because the principal military officers were told off to the Expeditionary Force which was sent to France. But new arrangements were quickly improvised, by which business connected with the conduct of the war was entrusted to two sub-committees. One of these, called the War Council, consisted of twelve members, of whom seven were members of the Cabinet, and the others were Mr. Balfour; the First Sea Lord, Lord Fisher; Admiral Sir Arthur Wilson; the Chief of the Imperial General Staff, Sir James Wolfe Murray; and the Secretary, Lieutenant-Colonel Sir Maurice Hankey. This War Council is perhaps not quite accurately described as a sub-committee of the Cabinet, because a minority of its members were not Cabinet Ministers. But for practical purposes the distinction does not matter. For the War Council the business was prepared by a small sub-committee, a triumvirate, composed of the Prime Minister, Mr. Asquith; the Secretary of State for War, Lord Kitchener; and the First Lord of the Admiralty, Mr. Churchill.

This triumvirate was a close approximation to the ideal arrangement for the management of a war. In 1892 Sir Charles Dilke and I in an essay which represented the results of our joint study of Imperial Defence reached the conclusions that.

'the first requirement of a sound system is a general who can be entrusted with the duty of advising the Cabinet upon the conduct of war, and with the actual

management of campaigns. To have such an officer is indispensable, for it is an elementary truth that war can never be well conducted by a committee. . . . Any satisfactory Admiralty system will provide a competent naval adviser for the Cabinet. . . . We attach the highest importance to the common action of the military and of the naval authorities in the consideration of Imperial defence. We doubt, however, whether it will be possible to secure unity of design in defence so long as the War Office and the Admiralty are separately represented in the Cabinet.* The difficulty would be overcome if it became the practice for one Minister to hold both offices.'

Our great object was, if possible, to put before those who had charge of the national affairs a conception of defence which embodied views as to which there was full agreement between those who had devoted special attention to the subject. The passages just quoted proved to fulfil this condition, and in February, 1894, a memorandum was sent to the leading statesmen of all parties bearing the signatures, not only of the authors of *Imperial Defence*, but also of General Sir George Chesney and Mr. Arnold-Forster, at that time the most eminent representatives in Parliament of the effort to induce the nation to make reasonable preparation for possible conflict. The substance of that memorandum was the following passage:

'In order to secure the special consideration by the Cabinet of national defence as distinct from and

* This refers not to the professional advisers, but to the political heads of the two existing offices.

superior to the administration either of the Navy or of the Army we would suggest the appointment of one and the same Minister to the two offices of Secretary of State for War and First Lord of the Admiralty, or the amalgamation, with the consent of Parliament, of these two offices.

'We would further suggest that the Cabinet should select for each Service an officer whose professional judgment commands its confidence, to be at once the responsible adviser of the Cabinet upon all questions regarding the conduct of war so far as his own Service is concerned, and the principal executive officer of that Service.

'We understand by a responsible adviser one who stands or falls by the advice which he gives. He would, of course, have at his disposal, in the formation of his views, the best assistance which the professional staff of the navy or of the army could supply. But the opinion which, after mature consideration, he would submit to the Cabinet and formally record, would be his own, and would be given in his own name.'*

The objects proposed by the authors of this paper were, first, that the Prime Minister himself should attend to the national business of the preparation and conduct of war and, secondly, to find some means of securing that the principles of war should be constantly kept before him.† He was to have

* *Imperial Defence.* Second edition. Appendix II.

† I use the phrase 'principles of war' because it was a favourite expression of Napoleon's throughout his career. Sometimes he spoke of the 'high' or 'sublime parts of war,' and sometimes of 'my system.' Of all these terms the modern name is the theory of war.

the best professional advice, of which the only possible meaning is that his advisers should be exponents of the principles or theory of war. Everything depended, of course, upon the distinctness with which each of these advisers should realize that his function was to be the representative of the theory, or, in other words, of the knowledge and experience of which the General Staff, in the one case of the Admiralty, and in the other of the War Office, must needs be the repository.

As a fact, the War Office and the Admiralty were in full possession of the theory and of its application to the problem of the Dardanelles, which was indeed familiar to all persons who had paid any special attention to the subject. The Dardanelles, the Bosphorus, and the Gallipoli Peninsula are among the famous places of the world, familiar to readers of history and travels. In 1807 a British fleet made its way through the Dardanelles, passed the forts, and reached Constantinople. There the Admiral found himself unable to do anything against the city, and reluctantly made his way back through the Dardanelles, with heavy loss. In 1836 the Dardanelles were surveyed for the Sultan by a Prussian captain, von Moltke, who expressed the opinion that, if the forts were properly armed, no fleet could ever pass them, and that to land an army and take the forts in rear would be far from easy. This opinion was well known, for its author was afterwards the greatest general of the nineteenth century, and his account of the Dardanelles was published in a popular and

widely read volume. In 1896 professional opinion on the subject was summed up as follows:

'It would not be difficult for a civilized power so to fortify the Dardanelles that their passage by a hostile fleet would be impracticable, and that the works covering them would form a first-class fortress not to be taken, except after a protracted siege.'*

In 1914 there was every probability that these fortifications had been put in order during one of the periods when the late Field-Marshal von der Goltz was a pasha supervising the Turkish army. At the end of 1914 there was a further probability that the attention of the Turkish Government had been specially directed to these forts by the brief bombardment of the outer forts carried out on the 3rd of November under orders from the Admiralty given without the knowledge of the War Council.

In quite recent times the War Office and the Admiralty had more than once caused the problem of forcing the passage of the Dardanelles to be carefully studied. In 1904 Lord Fisher satisfied himself 'that even with military co-operation the operation was mightily hazardous.' In 1906 the General Staff at the War Office reported that 'military opinion, looking at the question from the point of view of coast defence, will be in entire agreement with the naval view that unaided action by the Fleet, bearing in mind the risks involved, is much

* *National Review*, November, 1896.

to be deprecated.' In September, 1914, Mr. Churchill, as First Lord of the Admiralty, ordered, with Lord Kitchener, that two naval and two military officers should work out a plan for seizing the Gallipoli Peninsula (with a Greek army) in order to admit a British Fleet into the Sea of Marmora. A day or two later he received a military memorandum saying, 'An attack upon the Gallipoli Peninsula from the sea side (outside the Straits) is likely to prove an extremely difficult operation.'

Thus, the two offices concerned had fulfilled their function of applying the theory of war to the particular problem with which we are concerned. The War Council appears to have been not quite so happy. In December, 1914, its Secretary circulated to the members of the War Council a memorandum, in which it was suggested that there was a deadlock in the Western theatre of war, and that Germany could best be struck by a blow directed in the first instance against Turkey. The report of the Commission tells us that at this time the members of the War Council, apparently the professional members, were divided into two schools, one of which held that all efforts should be concentrated in the Western theatre of war, at any rate until it was proved beyond doubt that there was there no possibility of success, while the other held that a fresh campaign should be opened against Turkey and Austria. There can hardly be a doubt as to which of these two schools was inspired by the theory of war. Napoleon, writing at St. Helena about the campaign of 1800, said:

'A plan of campaign ought to have foreseen all that the enemy can do and contain the means of frustrating it. In this campaign the frontier of Germany was the predominant frontier; the frontier of the Riviera of Genoa was the secondary frontier. The events which might happen in Italy would have no direct, immediate, and necessary action upon the affairs of the Rhine, while the events that might happen in Germany would have a necessary and immediate action upon Italy. Consequently, the First Consul united all the forces of the Republic on the predominant frontier.'

In January, 1915, not only was the Western Front the predominant frontier, but it was the only frontier upon which all the forces of France and England could be united. The proposal for operations on a large scale through Turkey, attributed by Lord Fisher to Sir Maurice Hankey, and, apparently, favoured by Lord Fisher himself, violated the first principle of war, which is to concentrate all efforts both in time and place.

At the beginning of 1915 the German assaults in the West had been checked. Their great attacks on Ypres had failed. But the new armies which were forming in England had not yet taken the field. In the East the Russians had the better of the Austrians, but were not doing well on the Asiatic frontier of Turkey. Bulgaria was neutral, and there was reasonable uneasiness about her possible attitude.

The bombardment of the forts of the Dardanelles was begun on the 19th of February. It was authorized by the Cabinet on the 17th or 18th of February,

when 'the Prime Minister conveyed to the Cabinet the unanimous decision of the War Council. It was accepted by them without question, criticism, or discussion of any kind.' The decision of the War Council which the Cabinet thus endorsed without question was formed at two meetings. The first was held on the 13th of January. On this occasion

'Mr. Churchill said that he had exchanged telegrams with Vice-Admiral Carden, the Commander-in-Chief in the Mediterranean, in regard to the possibilities of a naval attack on the Dardanelles. The sense of Admiral Carden's reply was that it was impossible to rush the Dardanelles, but that in his opinion it might be possible to demolish the forts one by one. His proposal was first to concentrate his fire on the entrance forts. After they were demolished he would proceed to deal with the inner forts, then attack from the Straits and from the sea side of the Gallipoli Peninsula. The plan was based on the fact that the Dardanelles forts are armed mainly with old guns of only 35 calibre. These would be outranged by the guns of the ships, which would effect their object without going into range.'

Mr. Churchill gave details of the force to be employed, and went on:

'The Admiralty were studying the question, and believed that a plan could be made for systematically reducing all the forts within a few weeks. Once the forts were reduced the minefields would be cleared, and the fleet would proceed up to Constantinople and destroy the *Goeben*.

'Lord Kitchener thought the plan was worth trying. We could leave off the bombardment if it did not prove effective.'

There was, apparently, no other speech. Lord Fisher, Sir Arthur Wilson, and Sir James Murray remained silent, and the decision was taken in the following terms: 'The Admiralty should prepare for a naval expedition in February to bombard and take the Gallipoli Peninsula, with Constantinople as its objective.'

The second meeting of the War Council was held on the 28th of January. The decision taken was identical with that adopted at the first meeting. So far as can be gathered from Sir Maurice Hankey's note, of which one version appears in the Commission's report, and further details in that of Mr. Roch, Mr. Churchill advocated and Lord Kitchener supported the measure proposed. The arguments used are recorded as follows:

'Among the advantages claimed for it were that

'(1) It would cut the Turkish army in two.

'(2) It would put Constantinople under our control.

'(3) It would finally settle the attitude of Bulgaria and the whole of the Balkans. (This appears to have been said by Lord Grey.)

'(4) It would give us the advantage of having the Russian wheat, enabling Russia to resume exports (this would restore Russian exchanges, which were falling owing to her inability to export, and causing great embarrassment).

'(5) It would open a passage to the Danube.

'(6) If successful, its effect would be equivalent to that of a successful campaign fought with the new armies.

'(7) One merit of the scheme was that if satisfactory progress was not made the attack could be broken off.'

Mr. Balfour, in dwelling upon the advantages which would accrue from a successful attack on the Dardanelles, concluded by saying that 'it was difficult to imagine a more helpful operation.' Mr. Churchill then said that the naval Commander-in-Chief in the Mediterranean had expressed his belief that it could be done. He required from three weeks to a month to accomplish it. The necessary ships were already on their way to the Dardanelles. The real difficulties would begin when the outer forts had been silenced, and it became necessary to attack the Narrows. . . . He explained the plan of attack on a map.

Nothing more was said relevant to the operation. The project was not criticized, and all the naval officers were silent.

It is quite intelligible that those members of the Council who had had no training in the science and art of war should be impressed with what was said at these meetings. Mr. Churchill's speech on the 13th giving the views of Vice-Admiral Carden must have seemed, in the silence of the Admirals present, to represent the professional opinion of the Navy. There was no one to tell the Council that the notion

of the naval guns demolishing the forts while out of range of them was in flat contradiction to the views of coast defence officers, which seem to have been represented in the War Office paper of 1906. The silence of the Admirals was taken to imply approval, and rightly so, for all the non-professional members had been members of the Committee of Imperial Defence, where it was well understood that the silence of a naval or military officer implied concurrence with the view expressed by his political chief. The political members might perhaps discount Mr. Churchill as one of their own class. But he appeared to be speaking for the Admiralty and to represent the naval judgment; above all he was warmly supported by Lord Kitchener, whose force of character and great reputation lent immense weight to whatever he said. Thus the plan was carried without criticism and no one seems to have noticed that of the seven advantages claimed the seventh was not very promising, and the other six were chickens that could hardly be hatched before the taking of Constantinople, a feat that no one can have thought likely to be accomplished without an army. The naval officers who were present have subsequently been examined by the Commission and have excused their silence on the ground that it was not their duty to express disagreement with the First Lord of the Admiralty. But in that case what was the use of their presence? What was its object if not to insure that the theory of naval war in its application to the plan proposed should be brought home to the political

members? What escape have they from the dilemma that either they had not mastered the subject, or if they had, had sat silent while a wrong decision was made?

The moral to be drawn from these two meetings is that the direction of the naval and military forces of the Crown cannot safely be left to a committee of political leaders, however distinguished, without an adequate guarantee that before they make a decision they will have had before them an analysis based upon a sound theory of war, naval or military.

It remains to examine the working of the triumvirate, in which the Prime Minister's function was to keep his mind open to the military and the naval judgment of which the Secretary of State for War and the First Lord of the Admiralty were the official exponents. The cases of these two officers were not identical. Mr. Churchill, not being a naval officer, could have no judgment of his own on naval matters entitling him to a voice in the Council. His proper function was to be the mouthpiece of the Admiralty. The organization of the Admiralty had since 1894 been modified for the purpose of securing sound strategical advice to the Government, and the Order in Council regulating its business had added to the other duties of the First Sea Lord the function of strategical adviser to the Government. He had subsequently been provided with a special Staff to assist him in the performance of this function. These arrangements imply a specific and formal mode of procedure. If they meant anything it was that naval

opinion should be ascertained, formulated and transmitted to the First Lord by the First Sea Lord and by no one else. He might ask for or receive help from his subordinates and call upon them for information or opinions. But every paper would pass through his hands, and if forwarded by him to the First Lord would bear his endorsement. For the purpose of the War the Board of Admiralty was superseded by a 'War Staff group' of which the First Sea Lord was the professional head. Indeed, Lord Fisher's authority at the Admiralty was so strong as to amount to a dictatorship against which a protest was afterwards made by the other Sea Lords.

Yet the Commission's report reveals Mr. Churchill directly obtaining opinions from a number of Lord Fisher's subordinates and taking just so much of them as suited his own views. No one who reads the Commission's report can doubt that, so far from trying to ascertain what the best naval opinion was, Mr. Churchill exerted himself to obtain opinions favourable to his plan and to make the most of them. Sir Henry Jackson, for example, agreed with the proposal for an experimental bombardment of the outer forts, but did not wish to go further until the results of this attempt were seen. He deprecated any attack on Constantinople by the Fleet. His was one of the judgments considered by Mr. Churchill as favourable to the project, but it certainly did not justify an operation 'with Constantinople for its objective.'

It is well within the mark to say that Mr. Churchill was not a channel through which the naval judgment could reach the Prime Minister undistorted.

The official position of the Secretary of State for War had long been that of a channel between the military judgment of the War Office and the Cabinet. For many decades the Secretary of State had been a purely political personage, and the War Office was reorganized in 1904 in order to provide him with a strategical adviser, the Chief of the Imperial General Staff, assisted by a special subordinate, the Director of Operations. But the appointment of Lord Kitchener made an end of this system. Lord Kitchener had the rare distinction of 'being himself, alone.' The opinions he expressed were his own; they were not representative. During an active career he had been occupied chiefly in administration, for the most part in the East, so that he was unfamiliar with British institutions at home, with the modern organization of the War Office and the Army and with the Territorial Force, which he mistakenly treated as inferior to levies which were raised under the name of 'new regulars,' so that the unique opportunity of embodying all the forces into a homogeneous army was lost. He had never been a great student of war, and his experience in the field was confined to the African campaigns in which he made his name. His views were those of a shrewd good sense little tinged by science, theory or system. The Commission was told that he 'acted as his own Chief of Staff'; in other words, he ignored the War Office except as the instru-

ment of his wishes. Thus he was the last man to convey to the Prime Minister the information or the military opinions that had during ten years of devoted work been accumulated by the General Staff at the War Office. Sir James Wolfe Murray, in January, 1915, Chief of the General Staff, had held that office for only a few months and could not be in a position to express opinions independently of such a Secretary of State as Lord Kitchener. Lord Kitchener's share in the purely naval attack on the Dardanelles can be briefly told. On the 2nd of January, 1915, a telegram was received from Petrograd asking for a demonstration to draw off the Turks from the Caucasus. Lord Kitchener saw Mr. Churchill and sent him a note saying:

'I do not see that we can do anything that will seriously help the Russians in the Caucasus. . . . We have no troops to land anywhere. . . . The only place that a demonstration might have some effect . . . would be the Dardanelles.'

Next day Lord Kitchener telegraphed through the Foreign Office a reply to Petrograd promising that a demonstration would be made. Lord Kitchener's attitude at the War Council has been described and it is evident that his opinion favourable to the plan made a strong impression on the Prime Minister. But light is thrown upon his position by a paper which he read to the War Council in May, 1915:

'When the Admiralty proposed to force the passage of the Dardanelles by means of the Fleet alone,

I doubted whether the attempt would succeed, but was led to believe it possible by the First Lord's statements of the power of the *Queen Elizabeth* and the Admiralty Staff papers showing how the operation was to be conducted. . . . I regret that I was led to agree to the enterprise by the statements made, particularly as to the powers of the *Queen Elizabeth*, of which I had no means of judging.'

But the Secretary of State for War had every means of judging whether the *Queen Elizabeth's* or any other ship's guns could alter the conditions of naval attack on forts especially in the narrow channel of the Dardanelles. The papers existing in the War Office, to which reference has already been made, gave him all the means needed.

My endeavour has been to find out the exact nature of a failure in the work of a government. That has involved an examination of the action of distinguished men. But it is not hostile criticism. Each of us is trying to serve his country to the best of his powers. The difficulty is that the ablest men are the most overworked. While Lord Kitchener and Mr. Churchill were advising the Prime Minister about the operations of the War, each of them was also general manager of one of the largest business concerns in the world, which was expanding at an unprecedented rate. Besides that, each of them was a member of Parliament and of the Cabinet. Neither could give more than a fraction of his time to the close study of the operations of the War. Lord Fisher, as First Sea Lord, had a responsibility for a

large part of the business of the Admiralty. The first condition of a clear strategical judgment is that a man must concentrate himself upon the direction of the operations to the exclusion of everything else. He must be free from other cares. Before we censure the men who have had to take the responsibility for ordering campaigns and battles by sea or land, let each of us try to imagine himself in their place. War cannot be conducted except by men of strong will, nor without mistakes, and it has been well said that those who are afraid of the mistakes they may make never do anything. In the same way, however, those who are afraid of criticizing when the object is to find the truth may be diverted from their path. So I return to my inquiry.

I have said that the attack of ships upon forts is contrary to common sense. This statement perhaps requires modification. What common sense tells us is that the Government in directing the naval and military operations must conform to, and not violate, the principles of war. But common sense unaided does not tell us what those principles are. When a portion of the Fleet was ordered to bombard the forts of the Dardanelles, Mr. Asquith did not know, and Mr. Balfour did not know, that a principle was being violated. No voice was raised in the War Council to say, 'What you propose to do runs counter to all the experience of wars, and everyone who knows thoroughly what can be done with ships, guns and earthworks, will tell you that ships are not made to fight earthworks, and that you are making an

experiment which is morally certain to end in disaster.' The defect in the system was that, in the various bodies which one after another discussed this plan until it was finally adopted, there was no one who possessed such a knowledge of what ships, guns, earthworks and men can and cannot do, under given conditions, and of the experience of past wars, as to be able to say, 'This operation is a wrong use of forces, and the whole history of modern war is a warning against it,' and who combined with his knowledge and the judgment resulting from it, the official and unmistakable duty of pressing that judgment upon the committee of which he was a member. If the country is to have any security that the best use will be made of the forces which, at so much sacrifice, have been placed at the disposal of the Government, if it is to have a guarantee that its men, its money, and its ships will not again be thrown away in vain, either in parts or entirely, means must be taken to insure that, before the Government issues instructions either to the Army or the Navy, the orders proposed shall have been submitted to the scrutiny and shall have obtained the approval of someone who is master of the principles of war.

The remedial measure by which the required guarantee can be secured is not far to seek. It has been set forth in the course of my argument and consists in adopting the principles about which there was agreement in 1894 between those who had then long examined this problem as the vital part of any national organization for war. Sir Charles Dilke,

Sir George Chesney and Mr. Arnold-Forster have long been dead, as have most of those eminent naval and military officers, such as Admiral Hornby, Lord Wolseley, Lord Roberts, Colonel Charles Brackenbury, General Sir Henry Brackenbury, and General Sir Frederick Maurice, with whom we repeatedly discussed these subjects, and who, we believed, were in substantial agreement with us regarding the matters now in question, though we did not think that it accorded with the best traditions of the discipline of the Services that we should seek the signature to our manifesto of any officers on the active list. It seems to me a duty not only to those who are now fighting for the country, but also especially to those with whom for many years I was closely associated in the effort to induce our statesmen to set in order the machinery of government for the conduct of war, to recall and to apply to that momentous business principles which we were agreed in recognizing as sound, and which, so far as I am aware, have never been questioned by those whose knowledge and experience gave weight to their opinion. Many years ago I endeavoured to work out with as much exactitude as possible the application of these principles, first to the Army, and afterwards to the Navy.*

More than one step since then taken by successive Governments was in the right direction. The creation at the War Office of a General Staff, whose chief was to be the strategical adviser of the Government,

* *The Brain of an Army*, 1890; *The Brain of the Navy*, 1894.

and the modification of the Order in Council regulating the duties of the Board of Admiralty, by which the First Sea Lord was given the duty of naval strategical adviser, were approximations towards a sound method. But in each case a serious error was committed, of which it is indispensable to point out the nature. The essence of great achievement in all the higher branches of action, especially of intellectual action, is division of labour, with a view to concentration of effort. This is the basis of all good organization, both of knowledge or thought, and of action. The theory, art or science of the general direction of armies or navies in war, the science or art which is called strategy, is in its practical application one of the most difficult in the world. To master it is a life's effort, to apply it an all-absorbing occupation, requiring a mind as far as possible freed from other preoccupations. The man who undertakes it must be wholly devoted to it, so as to have leisure to throw his whole soul into it. He must be free from the distracting influence of irrelevant interruptions. Strategy must be his profession, for it is not a mere abstract science, it involves the application of the practical judgment, of faculties of which the full development requires action. For the fundamental impulse of the strategist is to design operations and to direct them. His mission is not administrative but executive, and in order that his execution may be as perfect as possible, he must be free from the absorbing and distracting cares of administration. The military and naval life of ninety-nine officers out of

a hundred gives them neither the opportunity of practising strategy nor the leisure to study it. The man who gives words of command to a battalion or to the officers of a ship is not practising strategy, and as a rule has nothing to do with it. It is the constant experience of military historians and of governments that an officer who is a brilliant leader of a brigade or of a division may prove utterly incapable of the responsibility of command-in-chief, and of the two greatest generals of modern times, Napoleon and Moltke, it is almost literally true to say that neither of them ever gave a word of command in his life. When the office of Chief of the General Staff was created, its holder was made First Military Member of the Army Council, and was thus the professional head of the board which administers the army. In this way he was placed at the same time at the head of two distinct professions, that of the strategist and that of the military administrator. But no man can serve two masters, and there is no escape from the dilemma that the Chief of the General Staff may be either a first-rate administrator or a first-rate strategist, but that it is hardly possible that he can be both at once.

When the duty of strategical advice was given to the First Sea Lord, that officer was the professional head of the whole naval administration. He was the senior member of the Board of Admiralty, and all important questions arising in the departments of his colleagues were submitted to him. Upon this more than sufficient mass of business was superimposed the

function of the strategist. The dilemma in which the Chief of the General Staff is fixed is imposed also upon the First Sea Lord. Moreover, the fact that in each case two activities of a totally distinct nature are required from a single officer makes it difficult rightly to select an officer for the post. Is he to be chosen for administrative gifts or for strategic judgment? In the one case, naval or military administration, in the other the direction of the army or navy in war will suffer. In peace, every Government regards the administration as of primary importance, because the first care of a Government in peace is apt to be to satisfy the House of Commons that there is no extravagance in expenditure. But in war, a nation's first need is victory, and both the design of victory and the supervision of the execution of that design are functions not of the administrator but of the strategist.

What is required is the selection for each Service of an officer whose duties would be, subject to the higher authority of the Prime Minister, to draft and to issue the orders of the Government to all the generals or to all the admirals entrusted with the command of fleets or armies. His duty would be to submit his plans to the Prime Minister, and through him to the Cabinet, to translate them into orders and to issue those orders. His title matters little. I think the simplest would be that of Director-General of Military or of Naval Operations. He would be chosen for his strategical judgment, his mastery of the theory and practice of naval or of military operations. His

occupation would be with those operations and nothing else; with the naval or military administration he would have no direct concern. He should have his own office, into which he should remove those branches of the existing War Office or Admiralty which, under the name of General Staff, have to do with the operations of the navy or of the army. He should be subject to no First Lord of the Admiralty or Minister of War but should be in direct relation with the Prime Minister and the Cabinet. The administration of the two Services would be left to the Admiralty and the War Office, each of them under an administrative officer or board, and if need be under a Cabinet Minister, as at present. The two Directors-General should have their offices near to one another, so that they could readily communicate with each other.

There should be no intermediary between them and the Prime Minister. The secretariat of the Committee of Imperial Defence was instituted in 1904, with the idea that the Secretary should consider all questions of defence and furnish advice. That is the attempt to create a hybrid, a strategist who shall be at the same time a master of land and sea warfare. It is a dangerous and doubtful experiment, of which the result can only be a new dilemma. The Secretary will either be a mere clerk, or he will dominate both the Services, conducting the war and governing the country. In the second case it would be better that he should at once be appointed Prime Minister.

I am well aware that the objection will be raised

that it is difficult to find men of the character and qualifications required for the direction of the naval and military operations. If that were true, the British Empire would be in a bad way. My answer to it is: 'Seek and ye shall find,' and that if in the past mistakes in the choice of men have been made, the explanation may be that those with whom the choice lay were not quite clear as to the exact nature of the qualifications needed.

The question as to the precise relations of the directors of naval and military operations to the supreme political authority of the Cabinet is perhaps delicate. On that point I am not acquainted with any discussion in the English literature of war. My own view that the military strategist should himself be a member of the Government was expressed in December, 1899, on the eve of those disasters in South Africa which so startled the nation as to gain for the period when they happened the name of the Black Week. On the 14th of December I wrote:*

'A nation that is liable to war requires men of war in its Government; and, in the case of Great Britain, the place for them is in the Cabinet. The traditional practice of having a civilian Minister inside the Cabinet with all the authority, and a soldier with all the knowledge outside the Cabinet, was devised for electioneering purposes, and not for war. The plan has answered its object very well for many years, having secured Cabinets against any intrusion of military wisdom upon their domestic party felicity. But now that the times have changed, and that the

* *Lessons of the War* (Constable, 1900), p. 93.

chief business of a Cabinet is to manage a war, it seems unwise to keep the military judgment locked out. Party felicity was valuable some years ago when there was a demand for it; but the fashions have changed. To-day the article in demand is not eloquence nor the infallibility of "our side," whichever that may be; the article in demand to-day is the organization of victory. That is not to be had at all the shops. Those who can supply it are very special men, who must be found and their price paid. The nation has given bail for the production of this particular article, and if it is not forthcoming in time the forfeit must be paid. The bail is the British Empire.'

## IX

## NEGLECTED ASPECTS OF THE WAR*

NOTHING brings men together like a common purpose. It is a stronger tie than most, and it abides. While I have been trying to order my thoughts that I might put them before you to-day, I seem to have been in the company of those with whom in the course of forty years I have been associated in the study of war and in the attempt to persuade our countrymen to attend, while there was time, to the conditions of national strength and security.

Those who thus visit me are my friends of the first days of the Oxford Kriegsspiel Club, before 1877, one of whom was Arthur Napier, whom you afterwards knew as Professor of English; my old regimental comrades, seven of whom in 1881 formed with me the Manchester Tactical Society (the three survivors are still members); General Sir William Gordon Cameron, the best instructor the Volunteers ever had, a great tactician; Colonel Charles Brackenbury, one of the first artillery officers of his day; Colonel Cooper King, the teacher of a generation of staff officers; Sir Frederick Maurice, the brilliant writer and advocate of the navy as well as of the army;

* October 27, 1917.

Lord Roberts, whose companionship was an education; Sir Charles Dilke, the statesman of imperial defence, had he but had his opportunity; Sir George Chesney, the most clear-sighted and large-minded of military administrators—all these passed away when their work was done. One companion of later years, Sir Foster Cunliffe, seems to have gone too soon, and his death has left me lonely. Many years ago it was my good fortune to be able in slight measure to help and encourage his early study of war; in after years I had the delight of seeing his extraordinary growth in power and in command of his subject. From the day I came to All Souls College his judgment was my stay, his friendship my support. I have recently been permitted to read the manuscript of the lectures which he gave in the University; lectures in which, if it should prove possible to publish them, you will find a breadth of view, a grasp of the nature of war, and an insight into the mainsprings of action, unsurpassed—perhaps unequalled—in English military literature. By natural gifts and educational opportunities Cunliffe was on a higher intellectual plane than all but a very few officers of the army. His study of modern war was unusually wide and deep. He seemed marked out by his qualifications for counsel and command. Yet he fell in the discharge of his duty as a regimental officer. On June 2 I stood by his grave in a little roadside cemetery in front of Albert. Surely, I felt,

> 'This is the happy Warrior; this is He
> That every man in arms should wish to be.'

Will you not to-day for a time make yourselves the companions of these men and of the purpose by which they were inspired? Their inspiration was England, their purpose Victory.

You may rightly say that Victory is the object of our admirals and sailors, of our generals and soldiers. But they require to be sustained by the courage and faith of those of us who are at home. And from the Government at home, which depends upon our support, must come their guidance and direction. The 'advisèd head' at home is as necessary as 'the armèd hand' abroad, and we must do all that we can to support the Government in its duty of thinking out the War, of seeing it steadfastly as a whole, and of standing in good and bad times by the resolves it has made. There is no finer quality of a leader than steadfastness, the strength to abide by his idea. That is a nation's quality also. But to be able to abide by our idea we must have a true idea to start with.

In war there is always a danger from untrue ideas. A war is like a great upheaval of nature, a tremendous disturbance, and the awe of great events not only stirs us to the depth of our being, but renders us liable to be carried away by impulses, rumours, opinions, and guesses. Especially men's finer feelings often lead them astray. A great deal has been said about the cause for which we are fighting. A good cause is something to fight for, but it is not the cause that can give us the victory; on the contrary, it is we who must fight to gain victory for the cause.

I have heard men, considered to be wise, declare that this is a war for democracy—for a form of government. I think it nearer the truth to say that war is a test of government, and that this war is the test of democratic governments, a trial of their efficiency. Meanwhile the first effect of the war in England has hardly been to make our mode of government more democratic, for we have set up a Long Parliament, a Committee of Public Safety, and something very like a dictatorship, and all these things men gladly accept because we hope they will give us leadership and strength for the fight.

Again, it has been said that we have no quarrel with the German people, but only with the Emperor and the military caste. But the German people is heart and soul in this war along with the Emperor and the military caste. It is a war of nations, and nations that are to win must have governments that understand the conditions of victory.

So much by way of protest against misleading words and phrases.

Now let me put before you the picture of this war as it was sketched nearly a century ago by the critical effort made to understand the last great European War. A war, said these thinkers, is a conflict of purposes between two States or groups of States, taking the shape of a clash of forces that work by mutual destruction until one side has overthrown the other, or until in the exhaustion of both a compromise is reached and the issue postponed. Yet there was a contrast between the older wars and the great war

they had passed through. What accounted for the difference? Why was the play of force in the earlier wars so capricious, so little like the conflicts of the elements of nature, and why had it been so terrific in the later age?

Because in the earlier wars the State had been the affair of a class; the mass of the people were little interested in it or in them. The danger was limited, the issues were small, and kings and governments could venture to play with the fire. A command might be given to a great lady's favourite, to a popular pet, to a politician who had a fancy for adventure. An army might be ordered to move for reasons of domestic policy. There was no supreme risk incurred; no one thought of overthrowing States. It was only a half-serious business. But the French Revolution nationalized the State, and the nation made war in earnest. The other States were compelled to follow suit, and the collision of forces ceased to be governed by whims; the forces were directed according to the laws of force.

The inference was that when the issue should appeal to the mass of a people, should come home to every man as something nearly touching himself, a nation would turn its men into soldiers and its wealth into weapons and would fight with all its might, reckless of suffering endured or inflicted. This energy of one side would arouse a similar energy on the other, and the war would become a terrific explosion of contending forces. Each side would aim at the overthrow of its adversary, and the triumph of

one would be the ruin of the other. In such a war the play of chance would be small; the connexion between cause and effect would be close and consistent, and the governing laws would be those of dynamics, of which the first is the concentration of effort in time and space. In such a war it would be wise not to take the first step without having weighed all the possible consequences.

In this account you will recognize a true forecast of the war of to-day. At first sight it may not seem encouraging. For our statesmen and those of our Allies hardly foresaw this war and were not ready for it; they allowed themselves to be surprised. We were suffering from some of the weakness inherent in the democratic form of government.

You remember Plato's picture of the ship of State, in which the crew, the politicians, were quarrelling over the right to steer the ship, although none of them had learned navigation or believed that the art could be acquired; each gang of them was trying to persuade the easy-going owner, the people, that no trained helmsman was necessary, that anyone could steer a ship, and that their own particular set had the best claim to the tiller. Well, England was not quite in as bad a condition as that, for her political leaders were sincerely devoted to her. So soon as the storm came the crew let drop their squabbles and worked manfully together. But there was still a mistrust of knowledge, a belief that it was not required for guiding the helm of State. None of the men who had mastered the higher parts of war were taken into the

counsels of the Government. An army was, as we now know, thrown away, without regard to the carefully prepared and competent adverse opinions which were on record at the War Office, but were ignored.

That is the dark side of the picture. But there is a bright side. The thinkers whom I have already quoted held that when a nation at war is in earnest, when the motives appeal to the mass of the people, not only will the national resources be freely thrown into the war, but sooner or later leadership adequate for the occasion will be evolved and means will be found for bringing the design and conduct of the operations into accord with the needs. The grandeur and scope of the plans will be equal to the magnitude of the crisis.

This is precisely what has been happening.

Early last year I ventured to tell you that while a war is always conducted by the Government, a government requires to be provided with a strategical conscience, a representative of the history, the theory, or the science of war, seated in its council chamber, and to point out that an arrangement had just been made which promised to meet that need. It was on January 27, 1916, that the Order in Council was issued by which the Chief of the Imperial General Staff was made responsible for the issue of the orders of the Government in regard to the military operations.

You will have observed that from that time on the operations of the army have had a new character. Its objectives have been systematically chosen and every

objective aimed at has been attained. Every witness tells us that the improvement of the army in every respect has been little short of wonderful. That was the impression left upon my own mind by the visit in which in the spring I had the honour of being a guest of the Headquarters Staff in France.

But it is not only in the military direction and management that the nation is showing itself in earnest. The mistrust of the competent man, the man who is the master of his branch of work, is giving way: we are beginning to have faith in knowledge and think of putting the right man in the right place. Whereas the orthodox doctrine of the politicians for a whole century has been that any member of Parliament was fit to become the head of any department of Government without any previous training or any acquaintance with the business done in the department, we have lately seen the appointment of two ministers on grounds that were thought absurd and impossible by the statesmen of twenty years ago. One man has been made Minister of Agriculture because he was believed to understand agriculture; another, for whose case there is some precedent, was made Minister of Education because he was believed to understand education. A few more appointments like that and we shall be on the high road to efficiency, which is the way to victory.

In view of the principles which I have cited as to the nature and conditions of national war, and the improvements in our methods, of which I have given instances, may we not infer that the teaching of the

history and of the theory of war accords with that of common sense to the effect that in war where there is a will there is a way? Perhaps if we turn to the naval war we shall find the strongest reasons for determination to win and abundant scope for the resolve to put knowledge in power. The object of naval warfare is to obtain what is called the Command of the Sea. That is strictly a technical term. It describes the state of things that would exist in a war between two Powers, of which one had a navy and the other had none. In that case the Power with a navy could do what it pleased at sea; its merchant ships and transports would be unhindered: while the Power without a navy would at sea be helpless; the sea would be closed for it.

In a war between two Powers, each of which has a navy, the object of either navy is to destroy the other in order to have the command of the sea. In such a war until there has been a decisive battle—a battle in which one of the two navies is crippled—there is no command of the sea, and though the stronger navy may act as though it had command, it does so subject to the probability that the enemy may at any moment challenge that position and offer decisive battle.

A small island forming an independent State can best defend itself in war by the destruction of the enemy's navy, for then no form of attack upon it is possible. But an insular State unable in war to gain command of the sea, or at any rate such a State in case an adversary should gain that command,

would be unable to maintain its independence, unless it were entirely self-supporting. It could at any time be reduced by invasion or by blockade or by both together.

These considerations led me many years ago to some conclusions about British policy, which I submit to you because, as it happens, they had an influence on the policy of Germany. With your indulgence I will read passages from an essay which was published in 1894:

'The first consequence of the oneness of the sea is to give to the victor in naval warfare a power of universal extent without territorial limits. In other words, there is only one command of the sea. This power Great Britain by her insular nature and her proximity to Europe has been compelled to acquire. Without it she would always be liable to invasion by the army of whichever of her neighbours possessed it. She is so much smaller in area and population than the neighbouring European Powers that she would, in the absence of the command of the sea, be unable to secure her independence; for her army is limited in numbers, and a small country without great physical obstacles offers comparatively little help by which an inferior force can resist or delay its conquest. . . .

'England's command of the sea is not the result of her own unaided exertions nor of victories won by her in opposition to Europe. It is the outcome of a partnership between England on the one side and a combination of continental Powers, in which the membership has been changed from time to time, but of which the objects have always been the same—the maintenance of the independence of States against some attempt at dominion. This seems to me the

true interpretation of the balance of power, which in this sense is the most European of all European causes.

'There must be a command of the sea; and it is a prize that every nation covets. But every nation in Europe prefers that it should be held by England, rather than by any other Power except herself. For England is hardly a great military Power; she is unlikely alone to possess armies that would endanger the existence of her neighbours; whilst if any continental Power acquired the command of the sea the others would be obliged to combine to wrest it from hands in which it could not but be a danger to each one of them.

'Thus in a general view England's command of the sea serves two purposes which are inseparable from and complementary to one another: it means at once the independence of England, and that independence among continental nations which has been called the balance of power. . . .

'The purpose of national life, the scope of national policy, cannot be deduced merely from the circumstances of the moment. It must flow of necessity from the nation's position in the world.

'The mark of a nation is independence, the power to determine its own fate within the bounds of nature. A great nation must be able, upon occasion, if need be, to face the world in arms. This means for England that her national existence is bound up with the mastery of the sea.

'What, then, are the conditions upon which England can command the sea?

'It is evident that she must maintain and cherish the elements of a great naval force, a school of great sea captains, a hardy breed of sailors, and the ships and weapons of a powerful fleet. But what is to be the measure of this force? Must it be the equal of

all other navies together, or of a combination of some of them? Is there a limit to the naval force that may be required, or does the national policy involve the maintenance of an Invincible Armada?

'In past times it has been sufficient to keep a fleet superior to any other in the quality of its leaders and in the skill of its crews, but not so overwhelmingly strong in numbers as to exceed all other navies.

'For the same conditions that compel England to assert the command of the sea make her a member of the European community, which is a combination of independencies. The self-defence of England has almost always helped the self-defence of some other Power or Powers. The British navy has been at the same time the guardian of England's independence and the preserver of the equipoise between the States of Europe or between the groups into which they have been ranged. This dual character of England's action is founded in her geographical situation. The command of the sea exerted by England and the balance of power in Europe are two names for the same thing, two aspects of one activity, like the two faces of a coin.

'Upon the command of the sea, of which the maintenance of the balance of power is the condition, rests the British Empire, the action of England in countries beyond the pale of European law and life, where an indigenous civilization has never developed, or has fallen into decay. In all such regions, wherever they border the sea, British influence during the greater part of the nineteenth century has been supreme. To some places English settlers have gone in such numbers as to create new colonies. Where there has been the need for defence against attacks by land, as in India and at the Cape, the British Government has been forced to extend its borders. But the possession of territory has not been sought.

The British sea power has been used as the servant of mankind. The slave trade has been destroyed; piracy has been cleared off the sea; order has been kept on every shore, and the traders of all nations have enjoyed the equal protection of the British flag. Englishmen have had no monopoly, no special privilege. Where the British Government has been established, the native has been an object of as much solicitude as the European. . . .

'The two functions of the navy, to command the sea and to maintain the equilibrium of Europe, are the two pillars of an arch, of which the crown is the imperial task of bringing into the community of civilization races that have hitherto been strangers to its laws. Each part of this threefold mission is vital, and the bond between them cannot be severed.'*

For our present purpose, the passages I have read to you have this importance. They attracted the attention of the great General Staff of the Prussian army. A member of that staff, an officer of high rank and attainments, reviewed my essay in the organ which was read by the army. He called attention to my theory and said—in substance, his exact words are not at this moment accessible—'This is the policy of England; this is the policy with which her friends and her enemies must reckon.'

I followed up my essay with another, of which the outcome was the Navy League, with a programme having as its first item to make the command of the sea the prime object of British policy and its second to insist upon the appointment of a naval strategist as First Sea Lord.

* *The Great Alternative*, pp. 146, 148, 149, 297-300.

The Germans replied with a Navy League under Government auspices, which very soon counted its members by the hundred thousand.

Now let me read to you the language in which the German Government, through an inspired press, is appealing to its people for money to prosecute the war. Here is a translation of an article by Herr Lehmann of Bremen, published three weeks ago (October 5, 1917) in the *Hamburgischer Korrespondent*:

'Until the outbreak of war the German was unconscious of the strength which was latent in the united German Empire. He was like Parzival. Our enemies, especially England, perceived this dormant power sooner than Germany. England expected, by driving into the war the continental Powers which were Germany's neighbours, to break the economic strength of Germany and her Allies, and at the same time to weaken Russia and France sufficiently so that then, as *Tertius Gaudens*, she might draw the usual benefit from this struggle as she has always done since the Middle Ages, when she was fighting her next strongest rival. England as an island State has always held in her hand the balance of power in Europe, thanks to the folly of the continental Powers.

'Since the Middle Ages, England's fleet, after overthrowing those of Spain, Holland, and France, and after stealing the Danish fleet in the middle of peace, controls the sea, and these ages stand under the sign of "Britannia rules the waves."

'The appearance of the submarine, the weapon beneath the waves, has doomed the sea power on the surface of the water to inactivity, and England's maritime intercourse with her Allies is more and more

straitened from day to day. February 1, 1917, on which at last the unlimited submarine war was declared against England by way of reply to her hunger war against women and children, is a landmark in history and will be written down as such for all eternity. This has not yet been grasped in its full extent by our contemporaries. Since the birth of Christ, three great events have been the decisive points of the world's history. The first age embraces the period of the Roman Empire, ending with the destruction of the Roman Empire by the Germans. The second reached its turning-point with the discovery of America and the beginning of the English command of the sea, so to say, the opening up of the whole world. The third age lasted till February 1, 1917, the day when England's command of the sea lost its power through the new technical means of the submarine.

'We Germans must keep this before our eyes, and make clear to ourselves what an important task is laid upon our people to-day in the shape of the world's history. That task is to remove the evil which for four hundred years has conjured up all the wars in Europe, namely, England's command from her island of continental Europe and her playing off one continental Power against the other. It is to overthrow the power of England and then to devise ways and means of reconciling the peoples of the Continent and removing their jealousy of one another.

'Conditions like that before the war, in which England coolly played with the weal and woe of the peoples of Europe, must cease. The sea power and the pressure upon all nations, great and small, exercised by this cold-hearted, selfish English Government must be broken. Until then there can be no peace! Only the cessation of this lying, hypocritical, though seemingly democratic, but thoroughly imperialistic, English domination can guarantee permanent

peace on the Continent. Let every man realize that February 1, 1917, is a turning-point in history. The duty of Germany and her Allies to themselves and the whole world is shown in the brazen letters of the world's history. It is to hold out and win, so that the unendurable English hegemony of the last hundred years and the unendurable English oppression of all nations may be broken.

'But to gain the victory over England it is necessary that in the Seventh War Loan every German should do his duty.'

Observe the lies which Bremen and Hamburg utter. The German Government in 1914 perfectly understood the true rôle of England in Europe, and that if England played her part its plan for the conquest of Europe would be difficult of execution. But it believed that the British Government did not know its part and would not play it. That was, perhaps, not so very far from the truth But the nation knew its part by instinct and meant that it should be played. Thereupon the German Government grew angry and lashed to fury the hatred of this country which it had been stirring up in its people ever since 1884.

England is represented not only as having conjured up and begun the War, but also as having used her navy as an instrument of oppression, especially to Germany.

There was a time, however, before 1884, when Bremen and Hamburg told the truth.

When, in 1883, the German Government asked the Senates of Bremen and Hamburg to lay before it any complaints or desires in regard to the trade of these towns with West Africa, the Hamburg Senate reported

that England, in all the treaties which she had made with the native chiefs for the suppression of the slave trade, had stipulated for free and unhindered trade; that this stipulation had never been framed for the exclusive benefit of Englishmen, and that most of the treaties expressly bargained that the privileges granted should be given to the 'subjects of the Queen of England and all European Powers friendly to her.' 'The German firms,' the report goes on to say, 'especially those established at Cameroons, gratefully recognize the ready goodwill with which the English consuls and English ships of war have often protected their interests with the same energy that they would have employed in the case of English firms. This was especially the case quite recently in regard to conflicts with the chiefs at Cameroons.'*

I trust you will forgive me for these quotations. They give the real clash of purposes between Germany and England. You see that Germany aims at the destruction of England's navy and of her maritime power, and thereby at the end of Great Britain as an independent State. If she were to succeed she would be mistress of Europe and of the world—she aims at nothing less.

You will judge for yourselves whether any other course was or is open to us but to resist her at whatever cost, and whether there can be any security or safety for this country until Germany has been overpowered and disarmed.

Perhaps I need labour that point no farther; but

* *The Great Alternative*, p. 206.

from the opposition of purposes I should like to draw an inference. For us the war is a matter of life or death. For Germany defeat means disappointment, perhaps for a time an economical collapse, but it would not mean ruin, nor destruction. Germany can exist very well without becoming mistress of Europe. But for England the victory of Germany would be the end of her existence as an independent Great Power and the end of her Empire. The position of France is analogous to our own. The victory of Germany means the end of the independent States of Europe. Are not these good reasons why our will should be stronger than Germany's? I believe that it is.

A second inference that you will draw is that any man who talks of peace without victory is not the friend but the enemy of England. The idea is possible only to a man who believes that we cannot win, who despairs of his country. The suggestion comes from the Pope, from Austria, and perhaps from some of those in England whose political thought comes from the Vatican. Let us beware of them, and, above all, take care that they shall not be found in the entourage of the British Government. Men who despair of their country are not the best qualified to serve her.

The navy, it seems to me, offers the best field for the further development of the principle, on which efficiency depends, of knowledge in power. Its task is of immeasurable importance; the fate not only of England but of the world hangs upon its accomplishment. Yet it is of infinite difficulty, for to-day the sea is not commanded by vessels running only on its surface; the

depths too must be controlled, and probably the air also.

In my judgment the War should be conducted as a whole by a single minister, either the Prime Minister or a minister acting under his immediate supervision, chosen for his grasp of the nature and principles of war. He should co-ordinate the operations by sea or land and in the air. But the action of each service should be directed by its own strategist. For the army the strategist is the Chief of the Imperial General Staff. For the navy the proper director would be the First Sea Lord, who should be the best strategist the navy can find, and should be not the subordinate but the colleague of the naval administrator. I see no reason for having a First Lord except as the administrative head, and every reason for not giving him authority over the strategist. He should work to the strategist's requirements, and there should be no intermediary between the strategist and the head of the Government or general director of the war. With regard to the direction of the armies I expressed my view, and that I believe of all the strategists, when I addressed you last year, and the principles, of which I then gave a full account, apply equally to the management of the navy. I believe that along these general lines, as the nation's purpose grows, the process of organization for the fight will go forward.

Much has been accomplished. Nothing could be finer than the courage, the endurance, and the skill of the officers and men of the navy. But our admiration of them must not blind us to the skill and perseverance

of the enemy. His use of the submarine has been a surprise, of which the advantage has been gained not by skill but by ruthlessness, for the Germans did not invent the submarine; their discovery is only that they can use it against non-combatants. By so doing they throw down to us a twofold challenge: to our wits to devise means of fighting these craft, and to our souls, for we have to decide whether we will in return attack their non-combatants. They proclaim that their Germany is above all else, above even the ideal of a common humanity. They say that their attack on women and children constitutes reprisals for our blockade, which threatens to starve their women and children. These are questions which we have to answer. They have come to me, as to you, as a surprise.

For myself I can only say in reply, that I despair neither of our beating the submarines nor of England's will to stand for the manliness of mankind. Do the Germans by killing women and children of ours strike terror into us? They simply steel our hearts to fight them. But if they destroyed our navy or our army we should be helpless against them. We have but to turn these propositions round to know what is the more effectual form of warfare. We should so aim our blows that if well delivered they will bring the adversary to his knees.

I have suggested that the path to victory lies in the unremitting effort to perfect our organization; to see that our State develops hands for acting, eyes for seeing, ears for hearing, and a brain for thinking—that is exactly what is taking place. For victory is not won

by army or navy alone; it must be the work of the whole nation. What we are doing in this way is precisely what the historical theory asserts that a nation in earnest in a war will do. Yet in one respect I think we might change our attitude with advantage. We talk of reconstruction after the war; I think we should be wiser to talk and to think of reconstruction during the war for the purpose of victory. Now is the time. Unless we win there will be nothing for us to reconstruct, and how can we count on success unless we set our house in order for the effort?

Should we not be wiser to assume a long-lasting war and to work patiently, than to act hastily in the belief that victory is near at hand?

I have been content to-day to fall back upon some of the lessons of the past. From what other source can we learn? You have no doubt heard the opinion, especially from regimental officers home from the front, that this war is like no other war, and that nothing is to be learned from earlier experience. There is an element of truth in that view, for what may be called the mechanical part of war is ever changing. With new weapons fresh tactics are required, and with better means of communication generalship has to modify the application of its principles. But, if the tools change, the men who handle them and are hurt by them do not, and the fight is a conflict not only of weapons but of spirits. It is with men and their qualities that the higher part of war has to deal; the moral and intellectual elements are those that most concern the statesman and the nation which he must lead. A war

is a clash of wills and purposes before a bullet is fired.

This distinction between the two aspects of war was drawn by Napoleon, whose words cannot be too often repeated:

'Tactics, evolutions, the science of the engineer and of artillery can be learned from treatises pretty much as geometry.'

That is the changing part, of which the history has only an antiquarian and technical interest.

'But,' he went on, 'a knowledge of the high parts of war can be acquired only from the study of the history of the wars and battles of the great captains and from experience.'

That is the part with which the University is concerned, because the study belongs to the study of human life.

I have tried to put before you a glimpse of some of what Napoleon called the 'higher part' of war. I have thought that it would help and strengthen you to be reminded that the highest theory of war and the largest experience know of no motive power so strong as a nation's will to win or to perish. Before the war England was told, and half believed, that she was degenerate. The war has shown her that she is, as of old, the mother of heroes. Will she not prove worthy of them?

# X

## THE BRITISH CONSTITUTION AND THE CONDUCT OF WAR*

ON the 30th of January, 1900, when the people of England were still feeling the depression caused by the three defeats of Magersfontein, Stormberg, and Colenso, the Prime Minister (the late Marquis of Salisbury), speaking in the House of Lords, made a remarkable speech.

'If you will look back over the present century, he said [the nineteenth century] you will see there have been four occasions on which the British Government has engaged in war. On each occasion the opening of these wars was not prosperous. These were the Walcheren Expedition, the Peninsular War, the Crimean Expedition, and now the South African War. In all these cases at first—in the case of Walcheren not only at first—there were lamentable losses. . . . We cannot have been so unlucky as to have fought four times and to have lighted upon the most incompetent and worthless ministers that the world has ever produced. It is evident that there is something in your machinery that is wrong. . . . I do not think that the British Constitution as at present worked is a good fighting machine. . . . It is unequalled for producing happiness, prosperity and

* January, 1917.

liberty in time of peace; but now in time of war, when Great Powers with enormous forces are looking at us with no gentle or kindly eye, it becomes us to think whether we must not in some degree modify our arrangements in order to enable ourselves to meet the dangers that at any moment may arise.'

I propose to consider the question raised in 1900 by Lord Salisbury as to the fitness of the British system of government for the conduct of war. The inquiry may perhaps throw a reflected light on some other problems with which we are all just now much concerned—those that are expected to need solution after the war.

The earliest form of government is one man, a king; and one of its later developments is also one man, an emperor. The primitive king does all the work of government himself, being at one time administrator, at another time judge and again at another time director of war. He performs these several functions by throwing himself for the time wholly into that one which at the moment is most urgent. You find Napoleon for part of his day wholly absorbed in the movements of his armies; at another entirely immersed in diplomacy, and next morning fully concentrated upon the business of legislation. Whatever he is doing, all of him is plunged into it.

At an early stage, however, the king found that his time and attention were more than absorbed by his work and he had to seek the assistance of his servants (called in the Latin of the Middle Ages ministers), chosen presumably each for his skill and knowledge

in the branch assigned to him. On special occasions the king would assemble his ministers, the heads of the great branches of State business, and hold a council or committee meeting, at which he would preside and at which important matters transcending any single department would be considered.

In practice every Government consists of such a committee; of which the chairman is a Monarch, a President, or a Prime Minister, and the other members the chief executive officers or heads of the great government offices or departments. The only difference between various systems seems to be that in some cases the whole committee meets to consider every important decision, while in others the chairman usually confers only with the head of the department concerned.

Broadly speaking this form of a chairman and committee is common to all Governments, whether monarchical, aristocratic, or democratic. These three types are distinguished not by the mode in which the business of government is transacted but by the way in which the chairman of the committee is appointed. As a rule in a monarchy the position belongs to the King and is hereditary; in the United States the President is elected by a popular vote; in Great Britain the system is for the king to appoint the leader of the party which has a majority in the House of Commons. Democratic systems give the power of selecting the head of the ministry, the chairman of the governing committee, to the popular vote, either directly or indirectly through an elected chamber.

The efficiency of a Government composed of a set of ministers and a chairman will depend upon several factors, of which the first is the knowledge and skill of each minister in the branch of business carried on by his department; the second a sound distribution of business between the offices; and the third the power of the chairman to secure co-ordination between them.

The question is, What parts in a government so constituted are indispensable for the conduct of war? In all matters a wise government will unload from its own shoulders all that can safely be delegated to subordinate or local authorities. It will decentralize wherever possible in order to make its own central action more effectual. Only a government can declare a war, make an alliance, or conclude a treaty of peace. Only a government can raise and maintain an army and a navy. Only a government can select and appoint the commanders of its fleets and armies and give them their instructions. These are the three indispensable functions in regard to war, and there are no others. Between them they cover the whole of the preparation for and conduct of a war. What ministers or offices are required for them? The relations with foreign Powers are always conducted through a minister of foreign affairs. Every government in every country has a minister charged with raising and maintaining an army; and every maritime Power has also a minister charged with raising and maintaining a navy. These functions of maintenance are performed in peace as in war. They involve large expenditure, and the minister who dis-

charges them usually has the duty of explaining his estimates to the representative chamber. So far there is no doubt or difficulty. But with regard to the third set of functions—the choice and appointment of the commanders of fleets and armies and the issue of instructions to them—there has been and perhaps still is some obscurity. In order to clear it up it may be a good plan to examine the actual business of war. In it the all-important work is that of the Commander of the Fleet or the Army. So well is this understood that in ordinary language a victory is always associated with the General or the Admiral who commanded on the winning side; and his army or fleet is hardly thought of. We talk of Hannibal defeating the Romans at Cannæ and of Scipio defeating Hannibal at Zama. The historians speak of Cæsar, of Frederick, of Napoleon and Wellington as though the armies they commanded were of comparatively small importance and acquired their powers from the leader. In discussing naval wars we think of Blake and Hawke, of Suffren and of Nelson, and beside these personalities, the whole apparatus of the fleets which they handled sinks into insignificance. The usage of everyday speech is a rough expression of the truth, for in reality victory is the work of the commander, whose forces are merely his instrument. He is the artist, and among all the activities of war his is the master-art. But it has little to do with raising and maintaining the army or the navy. During war this cannot be the work of the naval or military commander, who will probably be at the headquarters of the army or on board the

flagship. Thus the work of the Minister of War or of Marine, as the provider of the army or the navy, is distinct in character and separated in place from that of the commander of either. The one has to make an army or a navy; the others to handle it against an enemy. Scarcely any great commander, except Cromwell, raised his own army.

A Government will hardly enter into a war if it can help it, unless it sees a prospect of success. The end of a war is usually a treaty of peace. If the committee entrusted with the nation's welfare is considering whether or no it will take part in a war, it must examine the terms of the treaty of peace by which it hopes or expects that the war will be concluded. Evidently if the adversary were willing to accept those terms there would be no war. The necessity for a war arises from the fact that the adversary's will is contrary to our own; he wants a treaty which we are quite unable to accept. How then is he to be persuaded to agree to our terms? By force. We must beat his army and his navy, and put him into such a position that he can no longer resist our forces; he then will have the prospect—if he still rejects our terms—of the destruction of his forces, the occupation of his territory and possibly the overthrow of his whole system. To prevent that he will accept terms which, while he thought he was stronger than we, he regarded as out of the question. Accordingly before we (the members of the committee) decide to appeal to force, we shall do well to ask ourselves what kind of blow would bring our adversary to his knees; and whether, with the forces we

have or can produce, we are justified in expecting to be able to strike such a blow.

The committee, then, when considering a possible declaration of war will wish to hear certain of its members. The Foreign Secretary will explain what the foreign Government, whose action has caused us to meet, is preparing to do and why we cannot agree to this and must resist it. Next, the two Ministers of War and Marine, who keep up our naval and military forces, will set before us tables of our fleets and armies and of those of the prospective enemy, and will explain what further forces we and the enemy can expect to raise. But that is not enough. We want to know what probability there is that, with such forces as we have or can raise in time, we shall be able to beat the enemy's forces and so obtain the treaty we should like. This is evidently a question of supreme moment to which we need a trustworthy answer. We must therefore have among us some man who knows all about war, whose business in life is to understand the use of force. He who can answer this question will be the type of man upon whose judgment we should rely for planning our action in case we decide to go to war, and for supervising the execution of those plans if that becomes necessary.

It might be thought enough for the committee to consult a man of this type at the moment when they are contemplating a war or are confronted with the necessity of resisting an attack. But the possibility of a dispute with another nation is contained in almost every decision taken by a government in regard to its

external action, and the time to consider the possibilities of conflict is the time when the possibility of conflict arises—*i.e.*, when a new step is taken in the relations with other Powers. A thinker-out of wars is therefore always required in order to explain to the members of the government, at every stage of their external action, what that action would involve if it had to be translated into terms of force.

The most important member of the whole government in relation to war is the designer of victory, the exponent of the general's art, of which success in war is the object. In many governments no such office is found among the ministers because the task is reserved for himself by the head of the government, the king or emperor. Of some governments a Commander-in-Chief is a member, and in the United States the command of the forces is by the constitution vested in the President.

Some representative of the art of war is always necessary, for every question of policy is in the last resort one of force, and the key, both to the avoidance of war and to success in it when it becomes inevitable, lies in the due co-ordination of policy and strategy. The mode in which that co-ordination must be sought is a conference between the Chairman of the Committee, the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the strategist, on each occasion when any new departure is taken in external policy. At such a conference the Foreign Minister would explain the course he had to propose, the strategist would then say what it might involve in case of conflict.

Suppose the action contemplated involved a conflict with another Power, a prudent chairman or committee, on being convinced that it was right and just, would, if it implied for its success an addition to the forces, insist on that addition being made as a condition of the adoption of the policy.

Throughout the course of a war the strategist is required by the government; for once the appeal has been made to force, by force the issue is decided. Yet nothing is so common in war as for persons of great influence to urge a government to scatter its forces for purposes not directly conducive to victory though thought in themselves desirable. Especially is this the case when the possession of particular places seems advantageous or likely to influence opinion at home or abroad. Few but trained strategists understand that in war everything can be had by victory but nothing without it; and that victory requires the concentration of all possible forces to strike a blow at some one point in order to destroy the enemy's fleet or his army. There seems to be no limit to the errors in the direction of fleets and armies that can be committed by governments in the deliberations of which the voice of strategy is silent, divided or overruled.

The strategist is even more essential to a government than the minister who maintains the naval or military forces, for that minister must base his arrangements on the requirements of the fighting, of which the strategist alone can judge. The minister's presence in the governing committee is needed mainly in order that his financial proposals may be presented to

the representative chamber with all the authority of government.

In the case of a maritime State and especially of an insular Power there must of course be two strategists: one for the navy and one for the army, for the mastery of both sea and land warfare is rarely combined by one man. If the two men are really masters of their work they will not disagree, for the main principles of the art are the same, whatever the element in which they are applied.

The voice which is to be heard by a government in council on the question of peace or war must carry the weight of a master of his craft. He who can see in advance the features of a coming war and can design operations giving promise of success will be the proper person to direct those operations. Upon him therefore the government will be wise to rely for the distribution of its forces in the several theatres of war, for the choice of their leaders and for the instructions to be given them. To him therefore should be given authority in peace to regulate the training of the forces, especially of the admirals or generals who will lead them, and to watch over the discipline which it is the purpose of military education to produce. He should be the organ through which the army or navy, supplied as regards men and equipment by the Minister of War, is controlled in its action by the government. Custom gives the name Minister of War to the member of the government who supplies an army with men, weapons and stores. It gives to the minister who controls the army's action the title of Commander-in-Chief. The

essence of his office is that in controlling the action of the army he acts with the authority of the government. It is vital to the success of the government that he should have the mastery of the form of action with which he deals and should be completely obeyed by his subordinates.

It has been said that government started as kingship. There seems in the history of most nations to be a time when kingship breaks down, either because the king fails to obtain victory in war—his chief business, the purpose for which men needed a king—or because he mistakes his kingdom and people for a private property which is to serve his pleasure or to carry out purposes which his people do not share. That is resented and a change takes place. The truth is then proclaimed that a king is the servant or minister of his people, and the idea dawns that the population of the country is a community with a common life and a common welfare. The State is held to be not the king's possession but a Commonwealth; and government is regarded as the management of the nation's affairs carried on in trust for the whole people.

The British government of modern times is the result of the assertion of this view. Little by little during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the power of the kingship was put into commission, and entrusted to a committee called the Cabinet, which reached its full development during the reign of Queen Victoria. It is worth while examining the system as it was worked during the half-century previous to the War now going on. Its essential part was authorita-

tively described in 1889 by Mr. (now Viscount) Morley in his *Life of Walpole*. The Cabinet is a committee of which the members are chosen by the Prime Minister, who assigns to each of them the headship of one of the great offices or departments of government. Each minister so long as he has the Prime Minister's support has full authority over his own department; whenever the matter to be decided is of great importance he confers with the Prime Minister, who, if need be, consults the Cabinet. If the minister is overruled by the Prime Minister or by the Cabinet, he is expected to resign. Thus the several ministers are the organs of the Cabinet for managing the various departments of government, and the Prime Minister secures the co-ordination of the work of them all.

The Cabinet is responsible to the House of Commons; that is to say, a vote of censure of the House of Commons upon any action of government in any department leads to the resignation of the whole Cabinet. There is no other responsibility. There is no such thing in practice as the responsibility of an individual minister to Parliament. If he is censured the whole government falls, and so long as the government does not offend the House of Commons no single minister can be upset except by his colleagues. The first mark of the Cabinet, says Lord Morley, is collective, united, and indivisible responsibility.

This was, in form, at any rate, an admirable machine for the work of government. For each great branch of business it had a special organ—a minister, one of its own body, the head of a great office with a large

staff. It had a co-ordinating organ—the Prime Minister. So long as it had the confidence of the House of Commons, it had the full and absolute authority required.

For the management of a war it seemed satisfactory. There was the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs to watch the world and to give warning of coming danger; there were the Secretary of State for War to raise and maintain the Army; the First Lord of the Admiralty to raise and maintain the Navy; and the Prime Minister to take care that they worked in harmony. Under the Secretary of State for War was a Commander-in-Chief of the Army, with his several great assistants—Quartermaster-General, Adjutant-General, and the rest, and by his side a colleague, the Surveyor-General of the Ordnance, charged with the supply of munitions.

But the effectiveness of a form of government depends (as Lord Salisbury in the speech which I quoted at the outset plainly hinted) upon the manner in which it is worked. The machinery of 1870-1888 produced results so unsatisfactory that long before it was subjected to the strain of war it had to be reconstructed. The cause of the failure lay in the choice of the persons upon whom the working of the system depended, the Secretary of State for War and the Commander-in-Chief.

The system had, indeed, one defect in form. The Commander-in-Chief was not a member of the Cabinet or governing committee. He could of course be consulted by the Secretary of State for War as regards the proper use of the army in case of action; he would

certainly not be present at the meetings when questions of policy were discussed, so that he would have no opportunity for pointing out at the inception of a new policy what that new policy might involve by way of preparation for possible conflict. The Secretary of State for War had the duty of raising and maintaining the Army and supplying it with all necessaries; and along with it what was thought perhaps the still more important duty of presenting the army accounts to Parliament and there defending them. He was the link between the Cabinet, the Treasury and the House of Commons; he was also the only link between the Cabinet and the Commander-in-Chief.

Under this system fit preparation for a war and right conduct of the operations could be secured only if the Secretary of State were himself a master of war; or if, not having that qualification, he made himself in all that regarded war the mouthpiece of the Commander-in-Chief. This would have involved of course a Commander-in-Chief chosen for his mastery of war.

The practice of the Constitution did not lead to the selection of a Cabinet Minister for mastery of the art or business carried on by the office over which he was to preside. The Cabinet had grown up as the instrument for obtaining possession of the supreme executive power by one party in the State. Its one and indivisible unity was necessary to enable it to present a single front either to the King or to Parliament. Accordingly the sole criterion for the choice of a minister was fidelity to the party, coupled of course

with the qualities or advantages that make a man useful to his party, oratorical power, the popularity which it brings, and the influence of wealth or of a title.

Membership of a party is at the best a matter of opinion, a very different thing from knowledge. A man's opinion is his view in regard to a subject on which there is no means of determining the truth, for in matters of opinion two men, both of them well educated and each of them of good sense, ability, and honour, may hold opposite views. That is certainly not the case in regard to some of the most important things in life. The use of force, for instance, is subject to the laws of dynamics, and as to what they are a difference of opinion does not exist among those who are acquainted with the science. As regards the policy of a foreign State a difference of opinion between two observers would show merely that one at least of the two had not observed with accuracy.

The Secretaries of State for War and First Lords of the Admiralty, chosen as devotees of their party, knew nothing of war and therefore could not devote themselves to preparation for it, so that both Services ceased to be organized or trained for the one function for which they exist.

The Commander-in-Chief was not a master of war. He was a royal Prince appointed on no ground of military qualification. The cause of his selection is to be found in Sir Theodore Martin's *Life of the Prince Consort.* In 1850 the Duke of Wellington expressed his wish that he should be succeeded as Commander-in-Chief by the Prince Consort. He thought that with the

daily growth of the democratic power the government grew weaker and weaker, and that it was of the utmost importance to the stability of the throne and constitution that the command of the army should remain in the hands of the Sovereign, and not fall into those of the House of Commons. The Prince Consort declined the position and the Duke of Wellington was succeeded by a competent soldier—Lord Hardinge. On Lord Hardinge's death, however, in 1856 the Duke of Wellington's theory prevailed, though instead of the Prince Consort, another Prince—the Duke of Cambridge, the Queen's cousin—was appointed Commander-in-Chief.* The motive of the selection was not any supposed fitness of the person appointed to win victories in case of war, but a relationship to the Queen which seemed to guarantee that, in case of attempted revolution, the army would be used in defence of the throne and not in obedience to the wishes of the House of Commons.

The weakness of the machinery was not due to the influence of the representative system. On the contrary, the efforts at improvement were caused by that public opinion or national will to which the representative system aims at giving effect. The Crimean War had revealed the lack of any effective arrangements for war, and the historian Kinglake, in his seventh volume, published in 1880, described the symptoms and their cause. He answered Lord Salisbury's subsequent question as to the cause of failure in the Walcheren Expedition.

* *Life of the Prince Consort*, vol. ii., p. 255 ; vol. iii., p. 501.

'The three more immediate causes [he wrote] which thus brought grave misfortune to England were:

'(1) Her want of apt knowledge.

'(2) Her choice of an inefficient commander.

'(3) Her want of power to keep a momentous war secret.'

These were the symptoms. The malady lay in divided authority. The Crown had still clung to its direct authority over the army, while in regard to the navy and all other national business its authority was exercised through and by the Cabinet. The inquiries that followed the Crimean War had led to the establishment of the machinery existing between 1870 and 1888 already described, as well as to many improvements within the army, especially the reforms of Lord Cardwell, entirely due to the pressure of public opinion.

At the close of this period began the attempt to put life and vigour into the machine which had ceased to do its work. The impulse came not from the Cabinet but from the people—a sure sign that the leadership had failed. The remarkable achievements of the Prussian army in 1866 and 1870 had been perceived and the demand was made that the Government should bring the army and the navy to a condition of efficiency. As a result of this popular observation, and of various breakdowns during the expeditions to Egypt and the Soudan, changes were made in the Army system, all of which I pass over, except those which concern the machinery of government for the general management of the Services and for the preparation and conduct of war.

The first results of the popular demand or agitation for improvement were two Royal Commissions, known by the names of their chairmen, as that of Sir James Stephen and that of the Marquis of Hartington.

Sir James Stephen's Commission made criticisms and sound proposals. The criticisms were to the effect that the Secretary of State could not possibly do his work because he did not understand his business—war; and that the minister charged with supply, the Surveyor-General of the Ordnance, was in a similar position. The system, moreover, had no definite object. The proposals were that a Commission of competent persons ought to be formed to lay down a standard of what was necessary; and that a competent head of the supply services, a soldier of the highest eminence, should be appointed. This report was treated as waste-paper.

The Hartington Commission concerned itself in the first place with repudiating the idea of the Duke of Wellington that the Sovereign should exercise some direct control over the army. The Commission laid down that the authority of the Sovereign over the Army could be exercised only in the same way as any other power of the Crown, through a responsible minister. The leading idea was, therefore, to strengthen the position of the Secretary of State for War. The first principle laid down was 'the recognition of the responsibility to Parliament which rests on the Secretary of State.' The account which I have given of the Cabinet will, I trust, have satisfied my readers that the responsibility of any single minister to Parliament

is a myth. What the Commission aimed at was to assert the authority of the Cabinet over the army. This was quite right, because no army and no branch of government can be effectively controlled or can be made efficient so long as there is a doubt as to who is its master. In the early years of Queen Victoria's reign the Duke of Wellington had thought that there might be a quarrel between the Queen and the government; he had tried to secure that the army should be on the Queen's side. But after she had reigned fifty years the possibility of such a division had ceased to be worth thinking of. The power of the Sovereign was exercised without question through the Cabinet. The position of the Commander-in-Chief had become a false one on account of the wrong principle which had governed the appointment made in 1856. The obvious remedy was to make a new appointment and to choose a general for his mastery of war. But the Hartington Commission was not thinking of war; the only reference to war in its report was to point out that, when the country was at war, the practice was to appoint a Commander-in-Chief in the field, and to ignore the nominal Commander-in-Chief of the army. In other words, the Commander-in-Chief devoid of generalship was well understood to be a mere figure-head. But instead of proposing to make the office a reality, the Hartington Commission proposed to abolish it; and the report alleged as the reason for wishing to do so that the Commander-in-Chief was, on military matters, the sole adviser of the Secretary of State—in other words, that he held the precise position which

alone in case of war would give a prospect of success, assuming that the holder of the office was competent to perform its duties.

In 1895 the Duke of Cambridge resigned the office of Commander-in-Chief; thereupon the government of the day appointed Lord Wolseley to succeed him; but in making the appointment the Government changed the nature of the office. All the principal assistants of the Commander-in-Chief—the Quartermaster-General, the Adjutant-General, the Directors of Fortifications and of Artillery—were withdrawn from his authority and made the direct subordinates of the Secretary of State. In this way, at the moment when the government had chosen a qualified general to be Commander-in-Chief, and when they gave him that title, they at the same time transferred the powers which that name denotes from the officer so called to the Secretary of State for War, who was not a soldier at all. This change was defended by Mr. Balfour, basing his view upon the Report of the Hartington Commission.

'If the Secretary of State [said Mr. Balfour] is to take official advice from the Commander-in-Chief alone, it is absolutely impossible that he should be really responsible; in this House he will be no more than the mouthpiece of the Commander-in-Chief.'

But, as we have seen, the responsibility of any single Cabinet Minister is a mere fiction. And it is difficult to see how a Secretary of State for War, not himself acquainted with that difficult business, and also completely sane, could wish to be anything else than the mouthpiece of a soldier the master of his trade. Noth-

ing could more conclusively prove that in 1895 the Cabinet and the House of Commons did not regard war as a serious matter with a view to which the arrangements made in time of peace ought to be framed.

If it were true that the Secretary of State and the Commander-in-Chief were duplicates of one another, no doubt one of them should have been abolished, but the solution proper for war was to establish the true distinction between them as concerned the one with supply and the other with command, and to make the Commander-in-Chief a member of the Cabinet.

Be that as it may, the results of the system adopted were unfortunate, for in 1899, when the South African War was impending, the Secretary of State and the Cabinet failed to listen to the sound advice of the Commander-in-Chief, with disastrous consequences. When the war was over Lord Wolseley was succeeded as Commander-in-Chief by Lord Roberts, with the same restrictions on his scope as had been imposed upon Lord Wolseley. The system gave satisfaction neither to the Cabinet nor to Lord Roberts, and in 1904 a fresh change was made.

The office of Commander-in-Chief was abolished and its authority and functions were transferred to the Secretary of State. The various high officers at the War Office who had been the assistants of the Commander-in-Chief became the assistants of the Secretary of State, the political officer unacquainted with war. They were at the same time formed into a council (the Army Council), of which the Secretary of State was

chairman, with one of the officers, called the First Military Member of Council, as his deputy. The Order in Council authorized the Secretary of State to reserve for his own decision any matter which he thought fit—in other words, to overrule any or all of the military members of his council. The opportunity of the change was utilized to make an improvement in the arrangements of the War Office. The business of the design of operations and all that belongs to it, as well as of military education, was concentrated in the hands of the First Military Member of the Council, entitled Chief of the General Staff of the Army. At the same time was created the post of Inspector-General of the Forces, with the duty of reporting to the Army Council on the condition of the troops, their training and fitness for war. The Inspector-General had no authority over the generals commanding the troops or over the Chief of the General Staff.

The essential point in these changes was the constitution of a General Staff and the establishment of its Chief in a position of primacy among the military officers who formed the Army Council. This was a reconstitution of an organ which every army requires; every commander divides up the multifarious business which he has to transact into a number of departments, each of which is managed for him by an officer who has his confidence. The most important of them is that in which his orders for the movement of his troops are drafted, and in which also the reports he receives about the enemy are collected and sorted by a Scoutmaster. The head of the whole department used to

be called in the eighteenth century the Quartermaster-General. He was the confidential assistant of the commander in his work of generalship—in the use of his army as a weapon for striking blows against the enemy. The other departments were the commander's agencies for the maintenance of discipline, for the distribution of the supplies received from home or collected in the country, and for the rest of the many cares which beset a commander in his work of moving a mass of men as large as the population of a great city from one end of a foreign country to the other. No commander can dispense with a Quartermaster-General and a Scoutmaster; and those who hold these posts must be thoroughly instructed in all that concerns the possibilities of the enemy's action—the nature of the country through which the army moves, the methods by which the various parts of an army can most advantageously march, encamp, and fight. In a word, they must be adepts at generalship. Accordingly the constitution of a General Staff combining these functions was bound to give a fresh stimulus to the military thought of the army, to set a number of officers thinking about the reality of war and to give them the impulse to bring its training and organization into line with its mission, which is, after all, to fight. So important is the work of a Chief of the General Staff that his office has been called in the eighteenth century the soul, and in the nineteenth the brain, of an army.* But these metaphors are not to be taken too

* See the author's essay entitled *The Brain of an Army*, pp. 192-198.

literally. The Chief of the Staff is the commander's principal private secretary, and the commander who has to rely on him for his thought and for his inspiration is hardly the man for his post. In any case a brain without a will does not make a satisfactory man, for it is the will that is the real man, and it is the commander who is the soul of an army. His function is to see the war as a whole with his mind's eye, to grasp all the theatres of war in one comprehensive view and to embrace in his vision the whole of the operations from the first breach of the peace to the treaty which is to restore peace. To realize this vision, to make actual the potentialities which he divines, is the commander's calling. It involves not only knowledge but authority, and a commander must unite both in his own person.

The Government which in 1904 reconstructed the War Office made two mistakes: in forming a General Staff it forgot that a General Staff is an organ for a particular purpose—operations; and that, if an organ is to perform one function well, it must have no other. By making the Chief of the General Staff the First Military Member of the Army Council, the government threw upon him the responsibility of supervising the work of his colleagues, the heads of the other military departments. It thus saddled him with the cares of administration, and thereby prevented him from devoting his whole time and attention to the pure generalship which is his special business. Accordingly it obliged him to depute his own work to a subordinate—the Director of Operations. Moreover,

it cut the directorate of operations into two parts—one for operations in the United Kingdom, and another for operations abroad. Thus the art of generalship was not in reality given that first place in the whole system which properly belongs to it.

But a far greater mistake was the abolition of the Commander-in-Chief, and the consequent divorce between knowledge and power. All power was given to the Secretary of State, who so long as he was a political personage could have no knowledge of war, and all the knowledge of war was left to the General Staff, which had no authority of its own.

In 1914 the outbreak of war with Germany illuminated the situation like a flash of lightning, and the first act of the government was to abandon the civilian Minister of War and give the office of Secretary of State for War to Lord Kitchener, who thereby became, in fact though not in name, Commander-in-Chief. The members of the Government thus showed an appreciation of the needs of war, by making the soldier upon whom they relied for the conduct of the war a member of the Cabinet; so that he could himself direct the whole of the military operations with the entire authority of the supreme executive.

Every man has the defects of his qualities; Lord Kitchener's commanding talents were accompanied by an inability to appreciate the division of labour. He took the whole work into his own hands, not only that of command or general direction but also that of supply, and instead of relying upon the heads of departments—the Chief of the General Staff, the

Adjutant-General, and the rest of them—he attempted to go into every matter himself and settle it without the aid of the department that existed to deal with it. Where before there had been a Staff without a Commander there was now a Commander without a Staff. The Report of the Dardanelles Commission proves Lord Kitchener to have been unaware that the problem of an attempt to force the Straits had been studied by the General Staff, and the conclusion reached and recorded that the operation was hardly practicable. Moreover, Lord Kitchener's almost lifelong absence from England had left him no opportunity of making himself acquainted with the modern conditions of the army. I am assured that when he undertook to raise a new army he did not know the character of the Territorial Force, and thereby failed to make the most of its excellent organization for recruiting and other purposes.

That brought with it an unfortunate consequence. The war had not been going on many months before there were fighting side by side troops and officers of three categories: the original Regulars, who were serving before the War; the Volunteers or Territorials; and the so-called New Regulars. The French Revolutionary Army of 1793 had had all these categories. The French amalgamated them and abolished all distinctions between them; and in that way formed the wonderful homogeneous army with which Napoleon conquered the greater part of Europe. This amalgamation brought with it, as nothing else could have done, *la carrière ouverte aux talents;* and

the rise of that galaxy of generals which surrounded Napoleon. In our own case we know that since the war began all the best minds of the country, all the best spirits, have become officers of the army. Those who joined in 1914 have by this time had an experience, especially of the actual fighting, which surpasses that of the oldest veterans before 1914. Yet I am told that it is still regarded as an advantage in selection and promotion that a man should have been before the war a professional officer. The only advantage that ought to exist is superior knowledge of the work to be done and greater skill and devotion in its performance. If and when an officer who was formerly professional has acquired these advantages, the army ought to have the benefit of them. But where all alike are offering their lives for their country, no other consideration ought to exist than the fitness of the man for the work he is to do. I am sure that those officers to whom the search for victory is the ruling motive entirely agree with me in the view that it must not be regarded as the monopoly of a caste. Nothing is worse for a national army than professional trade-unionism, the real militarism.

Lord Kitchener's brave effort to do too much had one good result. It led to the formation of the Ministry of Munitions, a first recognition of the wisdom of distinguishing between supply and command.

When the country was startled and shocked by the loss of Lord Kitchener, the Government fell back upon the machinery of the Army Council and the Chief of the General Staff, which had been at work

from 1904 to 1914, with the sound addition, made by an Order in Council of January, 1916, that the orders of the government to the commanders in the field should emanate from the Chief of the General Staff.

The most recent change of ministries brought with it a further modification. A Secretary of State for War was appointed without becoming a member of the supreme executive—the War Cabinet—and apparently from that time on the Chief of the General Staff has communicated directly with the Cabinet.

I cannot help thinking that the completion of the development would be reached if the Chief of the General Staff became, under whatever title, a member of the supreme executive committee. The General Staff would then in all probability become an independent office for military direction or command, while the maintenance and supply of the Army would become the work of a minister of military administration and supply, with which the Ministry of Munitions would be closely associated. In that way the two functions—command and supply—would each have the place indicated by experience and the theory of war.

I have made no mention of the Cabinet Committee of Imperial Defence, of which from time to time much has been heard and said. It is probably an excellent institution for keeping the representatives of the Dominions in touch with the ideas of the Imperial Government and for enabling them to explain their own ideas. But I am too much a disciple of those whom I may venture to call the Old Masters to put

faith in mixed bodies of this kind for the direction of operations.

The opinions on this subject of the two greatest of strategical critics were clear and strong. Nothing is so bad, in the judgment of Jomini, as a council of war either at the headquarters of an army or at the seat of a government. The only function that can be assigned to such a body is that of adopting the bases of a plan of campaign. This is in any case a necessity, for every government must consider the outlines of its plan of campaign. But even here a certain unity of military judgment is required.

On this subject the most weighty judgment ever expressed is that of the author of the classical treatise *On War*, who writes:

"None of the main plans which are necessary for a war can be made without insight into the political relations; and people say something quite different from what they really mean when they talk of the harmful influence of policy on the conduct of a war. It is not the influence but the policy which they should blame. If the policy is sound—that is, if it hits the mark—it can affect the war only in its own sense, and only advantageously; and where this influence diverts the war from its purpose the source must be sought in a mistaken policy. . . . To ensure that a war shall answer fully to the intentions of policy, and that the policy shall be suited to the means available for the war, there is, where soldier and statesman are not one and the same person, only one good means—namely, to make the Commander-in-Chief a member of the Cabinet, so that at the critical moments he may take part in its deliberations and decisions. . . . Extremely

dangerous is the influence in a Cabinet of any military officer other than the Commander-in-Chief. It can seldom lead to vigorous commonsense action.'*

Not less instructive are the words of Marlborough, which I quote from his letter of the 2nd of August, 1705:

*To the Pensioner of Holland*

'MELDERT,
'*August* 2, 1705.

'SIR,

'I am very uneasy in my own mind to see how everything here is like to go, notwithstanding the superiority and goodness of our troops, which ought to make us not doubt of success. However, it is certain, that if affairs continue on the same footing they now are, it will be impossible to attempt anything considerable with advantage, since councils of war must be called on every occasion, which entirely destroys the secrecy and dispatch upon which all great undertakings depend; and has unavoidably another very unhappy effect, for the private animosities between so many persons as have to be assembled being so great, and their inclinations and interests so different, as always to make one party oppose what the other advises, they consequently never agree.

'I do not say this because I have the honour of being at the head of the army, but it is absolutely necessary that such power be lodged with the general as may enable him to act as he thinks proper, according to the best of his judgment, without being obliged ever to communicate what he intends further than he thinks convenient. The success of the last campaign, with the blessing of God, was owing to that power

* Clausewitz, *Von Kriege*, Book VIII., ch. vi. B.

which I wish you would now give, for the good of the public, and that of the States in particular. And if you think anybody can execute it better than myself, I shall be willing to stay in any of the towns here, having a very good pretext, for I am really sick.

'I know this is a very nice point, but it is of the last importance, for without it no general can act offensively or to advantage, or discharge with honour the trust that to the world seems to be reposed in him.'

A review of the arrangements for the direction of the navy in war can be compressed into a very few words. During the last great war, in the epoch of Nelson and Napoleon, the action of the navy was directed by a board which represented the Lord High Admiral in Commission. Another board was entrusted with the duty of supplying the ships and stores which formed the material portion of the fleet. But before the beginning of the reign of Queen Victoria, these two bodies were amalgamated into one, which combined the functions of command and supply. The Chairman of this Board of Admiralty was the First Lord, the Cabinet Minister, a political personage unacquainted with war. Its other members were four Sea Lords, one or more Civil Lords and a Secretary. The political chief, the First Lord, had power, with the concurrence of one other member of the Board, to act in the name of the whole committee. In 1895 I ventured to criticize this arrangement by pointing out that it failed to provide the navy with a Commander-in-Chief for war, and suggested that the First Sea Lord should be made Commander-in-Chief and be given authority in peace and war to issue all orders

for the distribution and movement of ships and fleets; that his should be the office in which should be prepared all orders to the admirals commanding squadrons or fleets, and that he should be selected on the sole ground of his strategical and tactical qualifications for this duty. These criticisms and this proposal were supported, for a few weeks only, by the Navy League, with the net result that the First Sea Lord was formally recognized by the government as its naval strategical adviser. But there was no consistent attempt to select a First Sea Lord on the ground of mastery of naval operations, and no attempt whatever to relieve him of the many administrative duties to which it was impossible he could properly attend if he really devoted himself to strategical problems and to the study of the operations of a future naval war. Mr. Churchill, indeed, on becoming First Lord of the Admiralty in 1911, created at the Admiralty an office akin to that of the Chief of a General Staff of an army, but the head of this office was not made a member of the Admiralty Board, and occupied a comparatively subordinate position.

During the course of the war there has been some slight development. The Chief of the Admiralty Staff has been brought into closer relation with the First Sea Lord, whose function as strategical director of the navy has been emphasized, though he still seems to be more deeply immersed in general administrative business than is consistent with complete concentration on the business of strategical direction, which ought always, in my judgment, to be insepar-

able from his position. Authority without strategical insight must be expected to fail in war; for without the judgment produced by a life's study of the operations of war, no man can hope to solve happily the problems which war presents. But no insight will avail unless it is coupled with authority. A strategist who has not the power to have his solution carried out and put into execution is not a commander.

The words of the late Captain Mahan, written nearly thirty years ago, cannot be too often recalled:

'While a Government is responsible for its choice of the chief naval commander, it must depend upon him for the enforcement of discipline and for the choice of measures at once practicable and adequate to compass the ends of the war. Upon him more than upon any other must fall the responsibility of failure; for he knows or should know better than the Government, what the fleet can be made to do, what the state of discipline really is, and what his own capacity to carry out the one and support the other. Only through him can the Government act. When it disregards or overrides without displacing him mischief ensues; but the correlative of the generous, confident, and hearty support it owes him is on his part unceasing intense effort, or resignation.'

The Government has lately appointed a most distinguished administrator to be First Lord of the Admiralty. It is beyond doubt a wise move to appoint an administrator to be the head of the administrative business of the Navy. And this, according to my reading of the lessons of history, would be best accomplished by reviving the distinc-

tion between supply and command. Command should be the function of the First Sea Lord; his should be the voice to explain in the Cabinet his design for the conduct of the Naval War; his the voice communicating that design to the naval officers afloat. If the administrator must also be a First Lord, it might conduce to a better understanding of his functions if he were to be called the 'First Shore Lord.'*

There are two delicate points which I have hitherto passed over. The first is the place, in a geographical sense, of the Commander-in-Chief of either Service. Should he be at the headquarters of the principal army or of the main fleet, or should he remain at the seat of government? I suggest that this should be left entirely to him. The modern facilities for movement from place to place and for the transmission of documents—even of considerable length—make it easy for a commander to communicate his views from one place to another.

The great difficulty consists in the selection of men qualified for supreme command. To produce leaders is the chief function of national education; to discover them and to put power into their hands is perhaps the highest and the hardest function of the statesman. For there is no selection without rejection. The task is, however, less difficult in war than in peace because

* Since this was written the business of the direction of operations has been separated from that of supply, and the First Sea Lord has become Chief of the Naval Staff—in accord with the view expressed in the text.

in war everyone understands the application of the precept 'by their fruits ye shall know them.'

The general answer to the question raised by the title I have chosen is that the Cabinet system of the late nineteenth and the early twentieth century is a machine suitable for the conduct of war, provided the Cabinet is a council of heads of the great departments—under the presidency of the Prime Minister—and provided also that each minister is a master of the subject with which his department is concerned. Its efficiency is diminished in proportion as the members lack the necessary command of their subjects, and by the presence of members (other than the Prime Minister) having no departments to supervise. Only the head of a department can be fully in touch with the problems that arise in it; and the opinion of a person deprived of that touch is apt to be in the nature of advice in the air. I view therefore with some misgiving the recent arrangement by which the Cabinet is to a great extent cut off from the great offices which carry on the several branches of the actual business of government, and by which a secretariat is interposed between the supreme governing committee and those offices.

The story which I have told of the attempts of governments carried on during a quarter of a century to set in order the machinery for the direction of the Army and the Navy, illustrates what I believe to be the chief weakness of our national life—the want of faith in knowledge. The educated class, which the democracy has found in almost hereditary possession

of the machinery of legislation and administration, has relied on good breeding and a liberal education, of which the hall-mark was and is the degree of one of the universities—especially the honours degree of one of the older universities. Such an education undoubtedly develops the powers of the mind and produces ability. But the members of a government require more than ability; each of them requires a mastery of a subject, of the art or science upon which are based the activities of the office which he aspires to direct, and of its application. This mastery is to be had only through a long apprenticeship—the devotion of the best years of a man's life to the profession to which he is called. In the army and navy the leading has suffered because the officers received a professional training without the basis of a previous liberal education such as the universities give to their better students. That can be remedied now, if the government wishes, because the new armies contain all the young men of liberal education whom the country has produced, and among the officers, old and new, of the expanded army, will be found when search is made a Carnot, a Hoche, and even a Napoleon.

But far more dangerous than defects in the combatant services, which remedy themselves in the hard if costly school of war, is the weakness of government that necessarily results from giving authority to men without knowledge or experience of the kind of business over which they are set. There are only two methods of forming a committee for governing a nation —for directing the nation's work. One is that hitherto

practised, by which a personage distinguished by party services, or by anything except mastery of the business which he is to superintend, is placed as Cabinet Minister at the head of a department, while its permanent chief, presumably the competent man, is made his subordinate, his adviser whose advice he may reject. This is government by incompetence. It has been accompanied by inefficiency and confusion and can lead only to defeat. The other method is to appoint as Cabinet Minister at the head of each department the most competent master of the work which that department has to do. The old wrong method was due to conditions which made the consideration of party all-important. It may be doubted whether, worked on that method, the constitution is as satisfactory as the late Lord Salisbury thought it for the production of happiness; assuredly it will never produce victory. In war the mere thought of party is treason.

Unless the spirit in which the constitution has been worked for the last fifty years is changed within the next six months, the constitution and those who have worked it will disappear in defeat and revolution. To-day the submarine and the aeroplane are telling all men that the alternative is between defeat and victory. Victory cannot be won by a government of amateurs. A government that seeks victory must begin by entrusting the conduct of the war to men who understand war.

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