

WAR AND CIVILIZATION

J. M. ROBERTSON

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WAR AND CIVILIZATION

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AN OPEN LETTER TO
A SWEDISH PROFESSOR

BY

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"THE EVOLUTION OF STATES," ETC.



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WAR AND CIVILIZATION

TO DR. GUSTAF F. STEFFEN

Professor of Economics and Sociology, Stockholm

SIR,—

There has been sent to me, unsolicited, apparently by a Swedish publisher, a copy of the German translation, entitled *Krieg und Kultur*, of a book by you, which purports to have been published in Swedish, early in the present year. I know not whether it was sent with any desire for criticism; but at such a time, and over such issues as you raise, a criticism in this form can hardly, I think, be demurred to.

As a Professor of Economic and Social Science, you undertake to set forth the causation and the real "rights and wrongs" of the present war. At the outset you deliver your verdict, substantially on the German side, promising in effect to argue the case thereafter

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in full. This promise, however, you do not keep. Claiming to know both Germany and England, you handle discursively, and to no clear scientific purpose, a variety of English utterances, upon which you unfavourably comment ; but you never return to the primary issue as first mooted. On the contrary, you frequently comment on the British position in the war as if you had never laid down what you describe as the fundamentals of the case in your opening pages. You seem, in fact, to forget your thesis.

Of the great sociological problems mooted by your title, further, I can find no coherent discussion in your book after the Preface, in which you deliver yourself of a few conventional phrases, not suggestive of any special historical or sociological study. So lacking is your book, accordingly, in the kind of matter one would expect to find in it, that, but for your status and your claims to offer a scientific view, I confess I should not have thought it entitled to a detailed reply.

Seeing, however, that you do put in the forefront of your book a deliberate pronouncement upon the causation of the war, and upon what may be termed the philosophy of war ; seeing further that you are an accredited Pro-

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fessor of Social Science, and that you are a citizen of a neutral State, I think it well to analyse your treatise. It has naturally given satisfaction in Germany. I propose to examine it from the point of view of the political and social science in the name of which you claim to speak.

§ 1. WHY IS THERE A WAR?

THE bulk of your space, unfortunately, is devoted to discussing, not the responsible pronouncements of the statesmen of any of the Allied Powers, but a number of individual deliverances, English and Russian, and a number of extracts from English and other newspapers. All such utterances, of course, are matter of sociology; but a scientific survey of the inception of the war, one would suppose, would take into account also the utterances which stand for the predominant judgment of the nations. Upon questions of war, as upon all others, there are divergent voices in all countries; and as you must be aware, some of those you discuss represent the views of very small groups or of mere individuals. Why you devote your time solely to these, never once dealing with the authoritative statements of the men to whom the nations in the mass look up, I am unable to

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guess,¹ save on the hypothesis that you feel that that course would make it much more difficult for you to pretend to justify your general verdict. Let us trace your steps. In your Preface, after some vague generalizations on the sociological aspects of war, you ask:—

What are the most deep-lying causes of this war ? What were, on the other hand, the mere accidental and superficial occasions of the outbreak of war ? [Your translator inserts *gerade jetzt erfolgten* between "the" and "outbreak," words to which I can attach no qualifying meaning.] What rôle was played in this war by old social and cultural sympathies and antipathies between the peoples ? And, above all, how do War and *Kultur* [= Culture or Civilization ?] react upon each other ? Is this war more barbaric or less barbaric than its predecessors ?

The first of these five questions you profess to answer offhand ; and I shall deal with your answer in due course. The second, in the wording of which you dismiss the whole question of right and wrong, you never attempt to answer at all. The third you talk round without answering it, perhaps dimly realizing that it was not worth putting, in comparison with the others.

¹ Among the advertisements at the end of your book, I see an announcement of another which seems to touch upon these matters. This book I am unable to procure. I deal with that which has been sent me.

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The fourth and fifth you never really face ; and of the fourth in particular you do not even seem to perceive the bearing. You follow the five questions cited with a series of others as to whether war might not be conducted with more respect for such moral values as humanity, self-respect, respect for the human worth of the antagonist, and so forth, all by way of preparing for a censure of English writers who denounce Germans—a censure passed by you after an implicit refusal to ask who forced the war, or whether it could have been avoided. And then you tell us that “it lies in the nature of the case that many important lights on the real relations [of the Powers at war] are not obtainable, or will only be accessible after the war is over,” and that such inquiries as yours are necessarily limited to the matters which come up in the course of the war.

The gist of all this is that you, while professing to discuss the war as an expert in political science, refuse to meet the straight political challenge put by the officially published diplomatic papers and statements of the warring Powers, and are determined to pronounce judgment on the strength of your personal impressions of the character and culture of the

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peoples at war, and your estimate of the trend of their previous political evolution. That is all that you give us in the name of social and political science. That this should be the dialectic method of a champion of Germany is not at all surprising ; it is the usual German dialectic method in the discussion of the war ; and it is the method natural to those who dare not face the simple issue : Who brought this war about? I propose to indicate to you some reasons for the judgment that this is neither the method of real social science nor the method of simple honesty.

From your whole procedure I gather that you are in entire sympathy with that of the body of German *savants* who announced to the world that the real question was whether German or "Mongolian" or any other "Kultur" was the best ; that German "Kultur" certainly *is* the best ; and that there is nothing more to be said, save that Belgians committed outrages on German women, and that British ammunition had been supplied to Maubeuge before the war. That the last statement is an official German falsehood, and that the preceding statement is a mere evasion of the indictment against Germany, are points on which I am not con-

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cerned to dwell. I prefer to come to the main point. Has it really never occurred to you that a nation accused, so to speak, of international rape and murder was only proving its consciousness of guilt by raising this issue of "Kultur" at all?

§ 2. THE PLEA OF "KULTUR"

You will grant, I suppose, that if an *individual* indicted in any court on a charge of murder were to defend himself by proclaiming the superiority of his Kultur to that of the person murdered, even a German judge would probably come to a speedy decision as to his guilt. If I commit a crime against person or property, you will perhaps admit, the quality of my Kultur has nothing more to do with the case than the question of the colour of my victim's hair. It seems strange that one should have to urge such an argument upon a Professor of Sociology ; but in view of your forensic methods and those of your German friends I feel that it is really necessary.

For you do in effect argue that when a nation is indicted for an international crime you can vindicate it by proving that its Kultur is the highest there is. Yet you never suggest that this is a principle of universal application : you

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introduce it only for the benefit of Germany. Like your German friends, you describe all past extensions of the British Empire as acts of robbery and rapine. None of you, so far as I am aware, ever suggested that the superiority of British to Boer Kultur was a vindication of British statesmanship in the South African War ; and though I happen to have been a strong opponent of that war, I am bound to say that I never heard of any British statesman or publicist who hinted at such a justification, with the exception of one Socialist friend of yours who talked about "frontier Alsacias," which after all is not quite so brazen a procedure as the German plea of Kultur.

You inform us that you spent ten years in England. You are, then, probably aware that a number of English historians have at different times written with retrospective censure of acts of British aggression. Gardiner, on the whole a eulogist of Cromwell, denounced pretty strongly the fashion of his resort to war with Spain. Thorold Rogers has said still more severe things of the British treatment of Holland in the eighteenth century ; and I cannot at the moment recall any English writer who had a good word to say for the treatment of her by

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Charles II. in the seventeenth. And though perhaps not many have spoken so plainly as did J. M. Ludlow, retorting upon Macaulay, with regard to the beginnings of British power in India, several writers of distinction have made plain admissions pointing in the same direction. There are in this country, in short (a thing that cannot be said of Germany), quite a number of important people who regard old acts of British aggression with disfavour, and have long been fain to think that this and other civilized countries had passed the stage of Kultur in which such things could be exulted in.

And now you, posing as the fine flower, so to speak, of modern social science—you, so prompt to vituperate the aggressions of the England of the past—you in effect endorse the German claim that an asseveration of the superiority of German Kultur is a real answer to a charge of gross iniquity brought against the German Government and nation. In such circumstances, I am really not anxious to meet the claim with any detailed demonstration of the deficiencies of German Kultur, though I could name a number. Rather I would point out that the very introduction of the plea is a proof of the common paralysis of the German moral sense. If

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a white man (say, a Professor) who had gratuitously killed a Hottentot were to tell me that his superior culture justified him, I should pronounce him twice a scoundrel for offering such a defence. And if this should read like a reflection upon your own moral culture I can only regret the circumstance, since my object is to expose and not to asperse you.

You tell us that you have "always posited Germany's powerful intellectuality, organizing genius, and universal spiritual [*seelische*] bent of mind¹ [*Veranlagung*] as the most *significant* contrast to the English mental sloth, the English State-negating individualism, and the English insularity.

You did not, I presume, think it worth while to say these things merely by way of indicating your pro-German leanings; you presumably thought it was an argument bearing on the war. Thus again and again you betray your conviction that if of two combatants one can, in

¹ Or "spiritual endowments." It is a rather interesting illustration of German *Gründlichkeit*, by the way, that two German-English dictionaries of high pretensions by German compilers (Köhler's, revised by Lambeck, and the revised fourth edition of Flügel's) give no English meaning for *Veranlagung* save "assessment." If an English lexicographer had done that we should call him incompetent.

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your opinion, lay claim to higher intellectual qualities and a more zealous cult of "the State" than have been developed by the other, it is justified in any war it wages, on any pretext, with that antagonist. For if you do not mean this your characterizations are but extrajudicial and unjudicial censures, discrediting you as a judge. During your stay in England you doubtless heard the oft-told tale of the solicitor who wrote on the back of the brief he sent to a barrister: "No case; abuse plaintiff's attorney." If you had any real "case" to put on behalf of Germany, you would at least have been careful to put it, I fancy, before you commenced a general disparagement of the other side.

When you do go about to deal with the war as a political event, you again refuse to inquire into its actual causation, on the score that some such war "had to" take place. This is your way of proving your "intellectuality." In the matter of the South African War, you may remember, a certain number of Englishmen evaded the moral issue by declaring that that war was inevitable. Recently, the head of the political party which was responsible for that war has declared that it is

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only in respect of men's folly or wickedness that any war is to be termed "inevitable." As you claim to have specialized in political science, it may be worth while to point out to you that the "inevitable" formula is equally applicable to every event in human experience, and has therefore no moral or scientific content whatever when applied to any one in particular. Such application is the device of men who have yet to realize that political science is just the science of the right management of national and international life. A doctor who should set out to prove that epidemics and diseases are "inevitable" would merely be demonstrating that he did not know his business. But such is the nature of your thesis in regard to this war.

A useful limitation of the debate may be attained by my letting pass, for the argument's sake, your protest against the claim on the side of the Allies that their ultimate object is to free the German people from the yoke of their militarism. On the previous page you had been ostensibly deprecating blind national hatreds, and wondering whether a modern war could not be waged on a higher ethical plane than the wars of the past. And the moment you come to an attempt on the part of one set of

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the combatants to create an ideal of an ethical kind, you can do nothing better than jeer at the proposition. The Germans, you in effect say, do not want to be freed from the yoke of their militarism.

So be it. I for my part not merely admit but claim, as against you, that a State or States which *forced* a war on a pretext of benevolent intentions would be utterly without justification. Their case, in fact, would be as bad as that of a State which pleads its Kultur as its justification for a brutal aggression. That they should set before themselves, when they *are forced* into a war, the ideal of preparing a better life for their enemies, seems to me a much nobler thing than the cultivation of a blind national hatred. But since you call for humane ideals only in order to jeer at them when they are proffered, let us agree to keep such matters out of the discussion. *Your* ideal is that the maritime power of the British Empire should be destroyed. Let us, then, inquire why you think so.

§ 3. THE PLEA OF GERMAN DESTINY

YOUR Preface past, your book begins with a section which ostensibly quotes largely from a treatise entitled "The Fatal Hour [*Schicksalstunde*] of the English World-Empire."¹ Your first paragraph begins with the sentences: "The British World-Empire is of another kind than any Empire which existed before it. It embraces not only a quarter of the land-superficies of the earth, but also the political lordship of the five great world-seas"; and ends with this: "That the British power, embracing different grades of political supremacy, stretches its ruling hand over seventeen-twentieths of the planet, is a fact which makes clear [*genau erkennen lässt*] how heavily the British Empire [*Imperium*] OPPRESSES ALL OTHER NATIONS, AND CURTAILS THEIR RIGHTS AND POSSIBILITIES OF EXPANSION

¹ In one reference you give the concluding words as *englischen Weltreiches*, in another as *britischen Imperium*. I presume you are citing an actual treatise.

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BY LAND AND WATER." Then you quote from the treatise in question these passages :—

Not so much in the immense extent of the British possessions as in their geographical distribution must we seek the pre-determinants of the outbreak of a warlike conflict with other States. The British world-power is no geographically defined realm like the Russian, which composes a homogeneous portion of the earth. The Empire of the Anglo-Saxons extends over our whole planet, and by this realm we find all the other States of the earth compressed. No one of these States can follow its natural tendency to expansion without sooner or later coming into immediate collision with the British power.

The British lordship cannot *further* extend itself without prejudicing the political rights and territorial possessions of other peoples. This ground of war is permanent in the degree in which equality exists between the military strength of the British Empire and that of the States which the expansion-lines of the Empire intersects.

The present British lordship cannot *maintain itself* without putting a limit to the territorial and political expansion of other peoples—a state of things THAT MUST LEAD TO WAR—to a war if the Empire is overthrown, to a series of wars if it is victorious.

Then you proceed to say that this citation seems to you to lay hold of the "deepest-lying causes of the present world-war"; and you add :—

For if England had remained neutral in the conflict between Germany-Austria and Russia-France, we should certainly have had a great war, but not a world-war. England's

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participation against Germany extended and deepened the great European conflict between Russo-Slavs and Germans to a world-war. And England's participation had its deepest and indeed its real ground in nothing else than the extent, the scheme, the tendency to expansion, and the *self-maintaining instinct* of the British World-Empire.

The life interests which govern societies as societies, States as States, economic systems [*Volkswirtschaften*] as economic systems, are those which alone, in the last resort, originate such a war as this. It has not its origin in the opinions or views of statesmen or of the multitude of private persons.

He who does not perceive this, and does not apply this knowledge honourably to the whole argument, is in my opinion incapable of discussing in a really thorough way the present world-drama and its details. The "Prussian militarism" in any special or deeper sense absolutely cannot be the cause of the war, for it is itself determined by social relations which lie immeasurably deeper down in the foundations of social life than "militarism" or indeed any "ism" with which the clamour of the hour and of the newspapers occupies itself.

After that memorable pronouncement in the name of social science, and, I suppose you would say, of Socialism, of which you are an advocate, you say you "make a pause in the main argument" in order to "deal for a little with the author of the citation and the literary field to which he and his here-cited work belong." That pause outlasts your book. Never again, in this volume, do you return to the main question on which you have so dog-

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matically and so thoughtlessly pronounced. On the contrary, you repeatedly discuss the policy of Britain as if you had never declared the war to be "inevitable" from the German point of view. You, in fact, put out of sight what you say everybody should always keep in view. I shall have something to say later of the various literary excursions which follow; but first we must examine your "main argument."

It amounts to this, that you, a professed Socialist and democrat, see no tolerable future for the world apart from the alternatives of the destruction of the maritime power of the British Empire in this stupendous war, and a series of stupendous wars continuing until that Empire is destroyed. Your words unquestionably imply that if Britain had stood aside from this war Germany would inevitably have gone to war later to destroy British maritime power. Representing this determination as arising out of the whole life-conditions of Germany, and as firmly held by the German nation, you furnish a sufficient exposure of the gross hypocrisy of the common German pretence that Britain wantonly entered into the war out of a desire to injure German commerce. Either you have monstrously falsified the whole facts as to German feelings and

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purposes, or the German nation and its many mouthpieces, with which you profess to be in close harmony, have falsified the whole case of the war in a fashion not to be matched in the history of human affairs. Day by day they continue to tell us that they were a peace-loving people, and that they had no wish for war, having nothing to gain by it. By your own account, Germany was unalterably bent on the destruction of the maritime power of Britain; and you say she was rightly so bent.

And for what reasons? You and the author you quote repeat again and again that British command of the seas means the oppression of all other nations, the denial of their political rights, and the arrest of their natural expansion. Of such "oppression" you do not cite a single instance in a book of over two hundred large pages. You do not so much as attempt to explain what you mean by "oppression." You do not, because you cannot, name a single other State which joins in the complaint that you formulate in the name of Germany. Russia, France, Belgium, the United States, Italy, Greece, the South American Republics, Japan, China—has any one of these States hinted that

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British naval power has been used to limit its freedom? Do you pretend that that power has been used in the past hundred years to trench on the freedom of Sweden, or Norway, or Denmark, or Holland, or Spain, or Portugal? Do you pretend to deny that in every one of Britain's Crown-ruled possessions, as in her own ports, the trade of the whole world has entered on equal terms with her own? Or do you dispute the avowal of German economists that Germany has gained immensely from the British practice of free trade?

What *is* this maritime supremacy of which you declare that its destruction is necessary to the freedom of the human race? If you have any comprehension of British politics, which you claim to have studied from within, you are aware that it means nothing else than the power to protect the food supply and the other imports of this country. Such power can be secured only by a preponderant navy: there is no other way. You in effect admit as much when you write of "self-maintaining instinct"; and Count von Reventlow, in a book published *before* the outbreak of the war, has expressly declared that the North Sea Convention would be of no avail in a great war. Survival, he

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declares, is to be secured "only by a country's own power of defence."¹ Exactly. Let any other navy, then, exceed in power that of Britain, and the life of the people of the British Islands is at the mercy of that other Power. Do you pretend that any people in the world, so placed, would do otherwise than safeguard its existence by an adequate navy?

We have only to follow up your thesis in order to realize your unreadiness to deal critically with any question of international justice. Of an aggression *upon Germany* the British power was notoriously incapable. In no aggression upon Germany could any British Government have hoped for the support of the British people. Germany boasts that she is self-supporting; and an invasion of Germany could no more be attempted by Britain than an invasion of the United States. But if Britain's Navy ceased to be able to hold the sea-ways, Germany could not only starve her into submission in a few months, but could invade her in overwhelming force. And because the British people acted upon the plain necessities of self-preservation, you declaim, forsooth, to the effect

¹ *Deutschlands auswärtige Politik*, 1888-1913. By Graf Ernst von Reventlow, 1914, p. 303.

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that they are the tyrannous masters of the world, and the holders of seventeen-twentieths of the globe—as if the seas were a “possession.” You know as well as I that if the British Navy, strong as it is, were to make the slightest attempt to curtail the free use of the seas by other Powers in time of peace, all the nations of the earth would at once begin to combine against her. Of such a combination no Power has ever dreamt, because there was never given for it the slightest pretext in modern times.

On the other hand, you, the Socialist and the sociologist, are the zealous mouthpiece of the claims of *Germany* to rule the seas. For that is the only significant proposition to which your declamation points. Your rhetoric about the “need of expansion” felt by other Powers points to Germany and to Germany only. Do you suggest that any other State is seeking expansion, and is hemmed in by Britain’s power at sea? You do not even tell where and how Germany wants to expand. *You dare not*. But it is not hard to divine in part what you have in mind. At least twice in recent years Germany has contemplated an attack upon France by way of wresting from her some of the African spheres of influence which Germany

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envied her—for sheer envy is become, on your own showing, the ruling motive of Germany's foreign policy. Prince Bülow has expressly told us that German anger at the French intervention in Morocco was due not to the importance of the interests involved, but to the simple fact that *another* Power should thus get ahead. It could not be tolerated. Such interventions could be fittingly made only by Germany. And because Britain indicated a determination to stand by France against such German aggression, the German militarist class and the academic class who have become the priests of militarism see fit to shout, with you to help, that Britain is curtailing their "political rights" and their freedom. Their *freedom*!

This, then, is the freedom of which you are the champion: the freedom to break up the world's peace by brutal aggression upon other European States. It is not mere "expansion" that will satisfy Germany. It must be expansion at the expense of other civilized States. You are aware that the negotiations over the last Moroccan crisis ended in the cession by France to Germany of a vast area of the French Congo. In that arrangement Britain played a mediating part,

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her Government being anxious to avert war by showing that there was no desire to check German expansion where it did not mean wanton aggression upon another European State. If you, as a professed Socialist, had demurred to such arrangements on the score that primitive or backward peoples who have not attained to nationhood ought not to be exploited by any State, one could have understood and sympathized with the position, even if one held that the course taken was the best in the circumstances. But *you* are not concerned with the rights of undeveloped peoples. You are not pleading for the rights of Morocco. The only rights *you* are concerned about are the rights of Germany to go where she will, and to annex the colonies and protectorates of other States !

Does the desired process of extension end with territory under the control or influence of France? Surely not. Why all this indignation over the wide ramifications of the British Empire? As your German friends are constantly telling us, the English-speaking races have got all the best of the earth outside the boundaries of the other established States ; hence the Germanic rage. As the Crown Prince has more than once declared of late, with a display of economic

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insight not latterly common among German professors and politicians, Germany has not a colony "worth twopence." And the upshot is that she must have other people's colonies!

When you declaim about the extent of the British Empire on land, you set one wondering whether you understand that all the British "Dominions" so-called—Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa—are *self-ruled*; and that if any one of them should announce a determination to cut the political tie with Britain that is represented by the Governor-General, no British statesman would now dream of attempting to force them. They are far more truly voluntary members of the British Empire than is Austria or Turkey a voluntary member of the alliance of the Central Powers. They one and all impose their own tariffs upon the products of the Mother Country. Upon these Dominions, if anywhere, Germany looks with an envious eye. Do you think, then, that she *could* hold them in subjection even if the destruction of British naval power should leave her free to try to exercise there her "political rights" of "expansion," her natural "freedom" to annex what and where she will? If you do, you share to the full that German incapacity

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to understand the nature of the British Empire which revealed itself in the memorable calculations made at Berlin as to the disintegration and collapse that were to ensue when Britain went to war with Germany. Announcing, as you do, to the rest of us that you and they are the true *Menschenkenner*, the experts in men, you and they between you have put on record for the future historian a display of specialized and systematized delusion which recalls the legends of the ancient monarchs of the East.

§ 4. DEUTSCHLAND UEBER ALLE

PROBING your doctrine of "possibilities" of expansion," one thus realizes that you as a Socialist are prepared to subordinate alike the aspirations and the rights of all other peoples to those of Germany, or, let us say, of Germany and Austria-Hungary. You have apparently never asked yourself whether *all* States can possibly go on expanding *ad libitum* otherwise than at each other's expense. As there is clearly a political limit, represented not merely by the British Empire but by all the established States of the world, there emerges the conclusion that you hold your German friends entitled to do all the expanding in future, in virtue of those great qualities for which you certificate them. In your range of vision, a few States may perhaps hope for further expansion by conquest—Japan in Asia; Italy in Africa; Greece in Asia Minor, and so on; but the great mass of the nations must be content to

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remain as they are, like the "poor lion who hadn't any Christian," in the picture of the martyrs. There is but one grand exception, Germany. *She* has "rights of expansion," and *seelische Veranlagungen*, which must either find vent or entail on the human race a series of world-wars beside which those of Attila and Tamburlaine were but passing thunderstorms.

Austria, I fear, is not included in your sympathetic consciousness, save perhaps as a part of an enlarged Germany ; but clearly no other State is taken into account. Other States must be content to lead static lives : not for them is the soulful bent to world-plunder. But that Teutonia should be held-in by national boundaries, or warned to keep her hands off other States, is a wrong that can be wiped out only by the annihilation of the world-power of Britain ; whereafter the rest of the world will get along humbly and happily under the shadow of the protecting wings and mailed fist of the world-power of Germany. Then all will be well. No other State will be so ill-advised as to dream of expansion and political rights under those divine auspices.

Of course that is not exactly the way, the

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Germans put the case. Bismarck put it thus:—

A German hegemony in Europe would be more useful and also less harmful for the freedom of others than that of France, Russia, or England. That respect for the rights of other States in which France especially has always been so wanting at the time of her supremacy, and which in England lasts only so long as English interests are not touched, is made easy for the German Empire and its policy . . . owing to the practicality of the German character.

The policy of “the mailed fist” and the “shining armour” has since Bismarck’s day furnished a sufficient comment on this pleasing deliverance of the “honest broker.” You will perhaps not be surprised if I think it unnecessary to add any, especially after the revelation, in the Second Belgian Grey Book, of the conviction of Herr von Jagow that “small States can no longer lead the independent existence which they had enjoyed. They are destined to disappear or to gravitate into the orbit of the Great Powers.”¹ Suffice it that the German lust for “hegemony” is not in doubt, and that you are its vindicator, whatever you may think, as a Swede, of the official German view

¹ Grey Book cited, No. 2.

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of the necessary absorption of the small States by the great.

Without any purposive procedure on your part, then, there has emerged your naïve assumption, which is also the common German assumption, that simple racial envy is the noblest of human motives, and that that is necessarily the highest race which is the most envious. That is really the psychic content of your case. So far as the evidence goes, most of the world's peoples live collectively in each other's presence without any collective sense of envy. I propose to say nothing in this connection about Sweden, lest I should seem to introduce personal considerations ; but I cannot find that such States as Holland, Norway, Denmark, Switzerland, Spain, and Portugal had before this war been suffering from any wounding or depressing sense of their national littleness. In the past, it is true, some English writers of the imperialist school have assumed the prevalence of such a depression among the peoples of small States ; but their point of view appears to be latterly discredited as a species of sociological snobbery.

If they still cherish it, they will receive at your hands the comfort of an apparent corroboration. But, as we have seen, your evidence

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holds good only for the consciousness of Germany, or perhaps also of Austria. I have never found Norwegians, or Dutchmen, or Danes, or Swiss, or Portuguese writhing under a sense of their national smallness and inexpansibility. We are not here considering the aspirations of certain Balkan peoples for political union with their kindred, now under other flags : that is quite a different thing from the appetite for expansion with which you so warmly sympathize in the case of Germany, and of which you appear to recognize the existence, and admire the symptoms, in Germany alone.

It is only the greatest military State in Europe, then, with an area of over 200,000 square miles, and holding, in 1912, over a million square miles of colonial possessions, that suffers from the sense of oppression and compression which you so eloquently describe. And your social science, it would appear, has enabled you to see in this recrudescence of primeval tribal arrogance and cupidity, the lust to power and possession, a new and august development of Kultur. How you justify it, it is impossible to say, for you never appear to realize that its fitness may be called in question. Without once thinking to ask whether all States can

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indefinitely expand, you take for granted that in respect of one State the will to expand is not to be denied. And yet you have nothing but natural vituperation for that spirit when you think you can impute it to Britons.

Their exhibitions of it in the past, I suppose, you would cite as your answer to the present challenge. Quoting a work entitled "The Day of the Saxon," by Mr. Homer Lea, whom you describe as "a typical Anglo-Saxon globe-trotter" who happens to be an American, you speak of him as "in no less degree than Mr. Rudyard Kipling an incarnation of Anglo-Saxon pugnacity and Anglo-Saxon self-esteem." This is the beginning of your "pause in the main argument," which occupies the rest of your book. What, then, is the new argument? Supposing Mr. Homer Lea to be what you say, why, in the first place, do you make that in him an offence which you subsume as the height of political propriety in the propaganda of Germany? And why, in the second place, do you treat the personal equation of Mr. Homer Lea or of Mr. Rudyard Kipling as a possible ground for the justification of Germany in the present war? Doubtless they have swaggered in their own way as a host of Germans have swag-

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gered in theirs. Is it, then, the method of rational political science to take the random swagger of private individuals of a given race, in time of peace, as setting forth the motives and policy of the statesmen of that race in the case of a great war? At that rate, what becomes of the doctrine of Bernhardi and of Treitschke? The latter avows his faith in the necessity and the sanative character of a chronic war; the former not only does this but indicates the most ardent expectation of an early European war, which he thinks Germany will be perfectly justified in forcing on. By your tests, what result do we reach? Does a sociological discussion of the war consist in the alternate citation of the utterances of Chauvinist men of letters on each side?

If so, the proper course would seem to be an attempt to gauge the vogue and political influence of the two sets of writers. Do you, then, with your knowledge of England, pretend that Mr. Rudyard Kipling and Mr. Homer Lea and the rest of their school have had any such influence on British statesmanship in the past ten years as the propaganda of the Treitschke-Bernhardi school has had on that of Germany? Mr. Kipling has distinguished with his hatred

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pretty well all the leaders of the British Liberal Party from Gladstone onwards. He did not seem to suppose that they paid him much attention. As for Mr. Homer Lea, I confess I have not seen his book, and I have not yet met any one who has. As for you, you do not even attempt to estimate the real political significance of the writings you so lengthily discuss.

But if, as I suggest to you, all this discussion of individual literary utterances is a mere evasion of the main political issue, a futile resort to an endlessly protractible comparison of quotations, your tactic is but one more tacit confession that you cannot defend the German policy which made the war. You accuse "Anglo-Saxons" of earth-hunger, only to proceed to claim for the earth-hunger of Germany a free course, at the cost, it may be, of an age of war which will suffice to wreck civilization. A professed cultivator of social science, you have not a vestige of a scientific solution for the international problem. At most, you suggest that if the British Navy were so reduced in strength that Germany should be perfectly free to annex French protectorates, or to blockade the British

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ports, or to try her hand at annexing Canada, or South Africa, or Australia, the world might hope for peace: otherwise not. This is your contribution to political philosophy à propos of the war. *Sic cogitavit Steffenus*. And the sociological upshot is absolute nullity.

On your own principles, if Germany should succeed in her aims, every other State in the world will forthwith be in a position to recommence war propaganda in the name of the very ideals which you and the Germans now put forth. Germany having become the mistress of the seas, whatever be the amount of her land possessions, *their* "political rights" and "need for expansion" will be intolerably curtailed; and wherever they turn they will find themselves in conflict with the German World-Empire. And so *da capo*, till civilization is burnt up in pandemonium. Such delirium may be heard, I suppose, in pot-houses and in mad-houses; but it has not hitherto been dignified with the name of social science. You have the distinction of ostensibly putting that science at the service of the sword, making philosophy, in the words of our English poet, "procuress to the lords of hell."

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If you had simply argued that the wide spread of the English-speaking races, and the presence of their language in most parts of the globe, is naturally irritating to another pushing race, and if you had added that the bluster of English Chauvinists in the past has entitled men of other races to ask whether Englishmen propose yet further to extend their nominal *imperium*, you would be well within your rights as a political critic. The answer on the latter head would be that the whole drift of serious British politics is utterly opposed to any dream of further expansion. In fact, as you and your German friends have realized, there is no further opening for serious expansion save by way either of wanton aggression upon constituted States, or of subversion or curtailment of those which have wantonly entered on or forced this war ; and it is in resolute protest against such aggression that we are now involved in the world-war. If you should argue that the expansion of the past, and the rhetoric of the Kipling school, have entitled other States to be on their guard, I should readily assent. But you have not ventured to pretend that it was any development of British policy that moved Germany and Austria to the insolent attack

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upon Serbia and the bestial attack upon Belgium.

If, again, you should attempt to bear out your thesis of the necessity of war by pressing the point of the wide extension of the English speech, I would ask: What do you seriously think to be possible by way of—let us say—redressing the balance? Do you think it is feasible to root the English language out of North America? Do you hope to see matters mended by the imposition of the German language upon Australia or New Zealand or South Africa? The present diffusion of population on the globe is the result of all past history; and if Frenchmen can now sanely acquiesce in a development from which their country was excluded after having long been the chief competitor, what is it that prevents Germans from acquiescing, and relying upon their own Kultur and enterprise, which in fifty years have raised their country to the front rank in industry and commerce?

Again we must fall back on the avowal made in your "main argument." They cannot endure the semblance of a check upon their desire for expansion by aggression. After all their boasting about their Kultur, it turns out

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that they can find no real satisfaction in it. Their ideals, *your* ideals, are at bottom really those of the most vulgar type of imperialist that we have ever had in England. Norwegians and Swiss may be content to find happiness in culture ; not so the German, who claims to be the most cultured of all. He must be, like Osric in "Hamlet," "spacious in the possession of dirt." With sixty millions of population, he is miserable in the thought that he cannot have the little British Islands at his mercy after attaining to something like dictatorship on the Continent. And so he has resolved to put all things to the hazard, with the results which we are now facing. And you, it would appear, find all this to be in the straight way of civilization and social science, by reason of the deep-lying life-conditions of the peoples, and the intellectuality and the spirituality and the Great Heart of Germany, and all the rest of it.

§ 5. THE ACTUAL CAUSATION OF THE WAR

YOU may reply, though it would not be very consistent on your part to do so, that I myself have been discussing generalities about English and German ideals instead of the immediate political causation of the war. I have in point of fact been discussing your thesis of national drift and national needs, and showing to what a mere negation of science and sanity they lead. But I have posited it as the first duty of a scientific inquirer to face the actual political situation; and I propose to set against your apriorism an inductive account of the case.

You are, indeed, quite entitled to say that the war did not originate in the assassination of the Austrian Archduke in 1914. Here you unwittingly explode another of the hypocrisies of your German friends, who pretend that it did. They and we know, from Signor Giolitti,

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that Austria had planned and proposed to attack Serbia in 1913, and was then deterred only by the refusal of Italy to acquiesce. The essential point is, of course, that Austria was increasingly galled by the Slav propaganda which had assailed her from the moment of her annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, which lawless act upon her part was promptly backed up by Germany, against the remonstrance of Russia. From the point of view of men who regard all social and political science as a kind of social hygiene, the questions forced by Austria's ultimatum to Serbia were these: Cannot the present tension be relieved by the mediation of other States? Since an Austrian attack upon Serbia is certain to bring into the field Russia, now in a position to resist a German menace, and since that will be followed on the one hand by the entrance into the quarrel of Germany, and on the other hand of France, is it not the plain duty of all humane statesmen to seek to settle the original quarrel by some species of arbitration?

That was the view taken by the British Government, which acted accordingly. In the last Balkan crisis it had pursued the same policy, with the result of preventing the spread

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of the Balkan War to the northern States. At the time we were fain to think that even Germans saw in such diplomacy a service to civilization ; in point of fact the German Chancellor in the Reichstag avowed that Europe owed the English Minister gratitude. After the frightful spectacle of the Balkan War, to go no farther, we could not conceive that there could be any worse future for the world than an extension of fire and sword, massacre and desolation, through half the remaining territory of Europe. From you we now learn that there was something more intolerable, to wit, a British maritime power which, being sufficient to defend British commerce, was a perpetual limitation to German desires for expansion.

The proposal to Austria was that she should allow other States in some way to decide how her grievance against Serbia should be remedied. If she did not like a plan suggested to her, she was invited to suggest another. Serbia's answer to her ultimatum had been conciliatory to a degree entirely unexpected by those of us who had studied the former document. Everything pointed to a compromise, if any compromise would be accepted. But

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Austria insisted on going on with her invasion. And so Russia began to mobilize ; and Germany, already mobilized up to the point of perfect readiness for an instant attack, declared war, pretending that Russia had forced her hand. She could have called upon Austria to go to arbitration, and she refused. And France, allied to Russia, as Germany was to Austria, and knowing perfectly that if Russia were overthrown the oft-repeated German menace against herself would soon become a ruinous reality, took the field as in honour bound.

Now arises the point of the British intervention. According to you, that can need no defence. Britain being for Germany an intolerable obstacle to her overseas expansion, a war with Britain was bound to come at Germany's first convenient moment. Many Germans, it is true, are not quite so cynical for their own part as you are on their behalf, though they are certainly less honest. They declare that they had no ill-will to Britain, and that our participation in the war was an outrage. Evading the question why they backed Austria in a determined breach of the European peace, and refused to urge her to go to arbitration, they

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irrelevantly accuse us of a desire to destroy a commercial rival ; thereby tacitly admitting that Germany was determined on war, since the British policy expressly aimed at peace, in which their commercial progress would have gone on uninterruptedly. But you, I take it, will not waste time over this forensic procedure. In your opinion, war with Britain was a German necessity : only it would have been more convenient for Germany to fight Britain later.

Many of us, as it happens, having no such belief in the inevitableness of war between great civilized States, were profoundly disturbed by the problem of our intervention in the war. We had not the slightest wish in advance to see Germany ruined, being convinced, as Free Traders, that the industrial prosperity and expansion of any State is a means to the prosperity and industrial expansion of the others. For us, the first problem was, whether Britain should intervene in a quarrel arising out of the Austro-German and Franco-Russian alliances. Only the knowledge of German policy and purposes in 1906, 1908, and 1911 could in any degree reconcile us to the idea of a deliberate participation. But when the

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decision had to be taken at once on the claims of France and the right of Belgium to support, there was no dilemma left. The German invasion of Belgium has been, save one other, the foulest deed in history for six hundred years ; and even if Britain had not been pledged by treaty to protect Belgian neutrality, most of us would have felt as much bound in simple morality to intervene as we should if we saw a ruffian assaulting a woman hard by.

This was not a case of a quarrel growing into a war for lack of good sense on either side. It was a sudden and murderous attack on a friendly State, without the slightest pretence of grievance, on the sole and false pretence of necessity. The most questionable act in modern British history, the attack on the Danish fleet at Copenhagen in 1801, was venial in comparison, seeing that Denmark was actually, by coercion, a member of the Northern Coalition, and her fleet would certainly have formed part of Napoleon's. The German plea of necessity is thrice falsified. *After* hurling on Belgium an avalanche of horror and destruction, the statesman who had cynically avowed that under sheer "necessity" he was doing a wrong for

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which reparation would have to be made, pretended to find that he was justified because Belgium had in advance ascertained that Britain would support her. The second falsehood is worthy of the first. Germany's "necessity" was to crush France ; and she added the ignominy of failure to the blacker shame of having inflicted hideous destruction and massacre on an absolutely unoffending State that was too weak to defend itself. Had Germany been content to defend herself as a brave man might, instead of marching through the blood of the innocent like a brute treading down women and children, Germany would have been in a stronger military and an immeasurably stronger moral position to-day.

§ 6. THE CRIME AGAINST BELGIUM

ON this abominable deed you are significantly silent. On page 86, citing an English pronouncement on the destruction of Louvain, you say that you will "not at present comment on this extraordinarily interesting extract, but will later return to the question of what happened at Louvain." Two pages farther on you cite the comment of a Gothenburg journal to the effect that while the Germans had burned "a few villages," the English in the Boer War had done the same thing on a far greater scale ; and, further, that in previous years the English journals had loudly denounced Belgian cruelties in Congoland. The only further comment I have noted in your book is a quotation from an English wiseacre who claimed that the destruction of places where a civilian fired on the invading soldiery is a necessary rule of war: *dura lex, sed lex.*

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I do not think that even that wiseacre meant for a moment to justify the brutish destruction of Louvain and the massacres of innocent Belgians. If you took him to do so, you will, I trust, realize the logical consequence of the position, namely, that if a Russian army should enter Berlin, and a Berlin boy should fire a pistol at a Russian soldier, the Russian army will be entitled to level the entire city with the ground, and make hecatombs of the inhabitants on the ground that "*Man hat geschossen.*" Not being desirous of such reprisals, I will here note two things. One is, that you make not the slightest attempt to face either the mass of *neutral* evidence or the written *German* evidence which proves that many times over the German soldiery in Belgium wrecked and massacred on false alarms, when *no* firing had been done save among themselves. The other is that in your whole book there is not one word either of shame or sympathy over the mangling of blood-drenched Belgium. Not one word.

By your whole polemic, you implicitly condone the deed. You reason, I suppose, that as Belgium stood in the way of the German advance she must be trodden down, even as the British

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Imperium must be trodden down because it stands in the way of German expansion. Your fellow-countrymen, I hope, will realize that you take up these positions as an academic Socialist. I say this with no anti-Socialist bias, being one of those who recognize in the Socialist ideal the highest ethical and the highest economic conceptions of social life. But I do desire that it shall be realized that the mass of German and Germanized Socialists are no more fit to realize that ideal than are those who resist them. The German Socialists revealed their moral calibre when they appealed to the Socialists of Belgium to yield to Germany, and not to have anything to do with the "bourgeois idea" of honour. I shall come later to your philosophic endorsement of that counsel. The immediate matter is the virtual surrender to German militarism made even by Socialists who profess to repudiate militarist ambitions. Herr Bernstein, sore bested between his nation's policy and his own ideals, affects to see Chauvinism in the anti-German enthusiasm of the nations of the Quintuple Alliance. All the while his own country, the mainspring of all the evil, is reeking with Chauvinism, as it has been for many years on an ever-rising scale. Your

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thesis shows as much. If the determination to expand by aggression is not Chauvinism, what is?

The plain residual fact is that German Socialism has proved utterly impotent to check German megalomania and German aggression ; and if it does not wholly repudiate the doctrine of Germanism which you put forth in the name of Germanism *and* Socialism, it will stand as identified with a policy which means the wrecking of European civilization. I shall come later, as aforesaid, to your thesis in this regard, considered as a political forecast. Here we are considering its morality. And I am bound to say that your combination of Socialism with racialism, the theory of human brotherhood with the gospel of race hate and race dominion, is quite the most sinister intellectual phenomenon yet thrown up by the war.

And this is the more significant because you alternate your doctrine of Germany's Destiny and Britain's Doom with a reiterated claim that Germany is a morally admirable nation. It is not at all clear whether or not you use this thesis as your friends do the Kultur plea, implying that to claim general beauty of character is to rebut charges of crime. If so, the German

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case has already become beautifully confused. The argument runs, in effect:—

1. We have the finest Kultur: no argument as to our morality, therefore, can arise. [If it could, why raise the question of Kultur?]

2. The German nation, having produced Bach and Beethoven and Goethe, has a great and noble Heart. Its alleged crimes, therefore, cannot be crimes.

3. All the while, neither Kultur nor Heart matters. Germany is checked in her need of overseas expansion by the British fleet. Therefore British maritime power must be overthrown. [And, by implication, it would have to be overthrown even if the British Kultur and Heart were as good as the German, or better.]

These three ludicrously disparate and discordant lines of argument you employ by turns without the slightest sign of recognizing that they are reciprocally destructive. You, the professor of Teutonic social science, are much less coherent than many of the popular mouthpieces of German *hybris*. Many of them are content to say one thing and stick to it. Herr Harden, for a time at least, was content to shout: "We wanted the war; may the Teutonic devil throttle

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those who pretend that we were forced into it by our enemies." Those whom he wanted to throttle, again, were content to say: "We are a peace-loving people. Our enemies forced us into this war." Of course you can plead the example of the German Chancellor, who has been fain to cancel and restate alike his immortal deliverance about "scraps of paper" and his public and official avowal that he was committing a wrong against Belgium. But he at least does not pretend to run both sets of propositions, either concurrently or alternately. It takes a Teutonic expert in social science to manage that.

Seeking, then, for an explanation of your incomparably confused procedure, we find it in your consciousness that the world in general has a heart, and that that heart loathes and execrates the action of Germany. It will not, you realize, listen for a moment either to your plea of Destiny or to your plea of Kultur. So you are fain to seek to whitewash the crimes of Kultur and disguise the naked brutality of the plea of Destiny. You had perhaps some inkling that your arguments were supplying a brilliant recomposition of the ancient fable of the Wolf and the Lamb. Hence the interpo-

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lation of the plea that the Wolf has a Great Heart.

I have dealt with your first and fundamental plea of Destiny. Let us now proceed to consider your restatement of the Kultur plea in combination with the Heart plea as a rebuttal of the world's indictment of German iniquity.

§ 7. THE GREAT HEART OF GERMANY

ONE of the outstanding puzzles about your book, considered as the work of a professed student and teacher of social science, is that whereas your absolute premiss is the inevitableness of a German effort to destroy the British Empire, you laboriously criticize a number of British writers who take a hostile view of Germany's action in precipitating the war. In effect, your message to Britons is this:—

1. Germany *must* destroy your *Imperium*—that is, your command of the seas—because you stand in the way of her further overseas expansion. The right of such expansion vests in those who are able to exercise it. Germany will be able to exercise it when she crushes you. The rights of other States do not count. Not being *able* to make a successful aggression, they have no rights. And those who cannot resist such

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aggression have by parity of reasoning no rights either.

2. But Germany is all the same a great and gifted and noble-hearted nation, which has produced admirable music, and you are very wrong when you denounce her and wish her ill. Her militarism is necessary to her. What you ought to do is to resign yourselves to her inevitable supremacy.

Absurd as it looks, that is really the gist of your book. You evidently suppose that you are refuting English critics of Germany's political and military action when you tell them that they do not *know* Germany. This is, in sum, the answer you make alike to the charges of military atrocity and to the charges of national egoism. Exquisitely irrelevant as it is, let us examine it as we have examined your main thesis.

I regret to have to begin by exposing the fashion in which you deal with English correspondents with whom you profess to be on friendly terms. You tell us (p. 33) that in the beginning of September, 1914, you wrote to some of the English "friends" whom you had made during your ten years' stay in London, and with whom you have been in nearly continuous correspondence since, asking them for

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their views on the situation, and particularly on the relations between England and Germany. One of them used the phrase: "Russia has turned over a new leaf"; and you afterwards quote this with the addition of the English tag, "Don't you know!" in derision of your correspondent.

But this is not the main matter. You asked your correspondents for permission to publish their replies; and one of them, you avow, withheld that permission, on the score that he did not feel himself qualified to make a public pronouncement. You then give all his initials—including the further identification of the second letter of his first name—and also the last letter of his surname; and you further proceed to describe him as a keen economic thinker, a famous academic teacher on sociologico-economic subjects, a man with a long "free-church ministerial" career behind him, and a great student of Aristotle, Augustine, and Dante. These particulars, with the first and last letters of his surname and his other initials, at once name him for every man of letters in Britain. You have to all intents and purposes given his name while professing to respect his wish that it should not be given. It is necessary to state

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these facts as exhibiting your conception of friendship and personal honour.

Before transcribing your friend's letter, you proceed to say that, like your other English correspondents—

he is lacking in the deeper knowledge of the German nature and the German Kultur obtainable by direct observation. His and their travels on the Continent have commonly been through France to Italy—unless they were to Norway. Especially has friend W——d often made me regret that he was not rightly qualified to sympathize with Goethe's world of ideas and poetic vein of feeling, or even to find a point of contact with it. None of the greater spirits of Germany, to my knowledge, plays any part in the life of my English correspondents. And, what consists with that, they are collectively, apart from the Wagner-enthusiast, G. B. Shaw, unmusical. I do not believe that any one of them has in the deeper sense felt [*erlebt*] Bach or Beethoven. On the other hand, they have all a full appreciation of the art of a Dürer and a Holbein.

I have transcribed this precious pronouncement in full, as throwing an important additional light on your critical method. The evident implication is that Britons who do not know their Goethe and Bach and Beethoven cannot fitly sit in judgment on German national policy. It is another application of the famous *Kultur* argument, which so triumphantly entitles Austria to annex Serbia—if she can, and both

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Germany and Austria to annex Turkey, and Persia, and Spain, and Portugal, and India, and Japan, and China, where, it is to be feared, Bach and Beethoven and Goethe are not appreciated as they deserve.

Without discussing afresh that memorable stroke of moral philosophy, I desire to submit to you some fresh considerations. As it happens, many people in Britain *do* know their Bach and Beethoven and Goethe, and, amazing as it may seem to you, they are even more severe in their estimate of German policy than is your friend W.—d, from whom you quote a signally absurd argument imputing guilt to Britain for failing to keep the Germans out of Belgium. Let me name two of my own friends, whose permission in this matter need not be asked—William Archer and Ernest Newman. Archer, like myself, has been from his teens onwards a lover of German literature of the great period down to Heine, and a reader of the later. Newman, who puts Bach at the head of all composers, and is steeped in German and other continental music, has written two books on Wagner, one on Gluck, and one on Hugo Wolf which has been translated into German. Do you suppose that they have anything but derision for your Kultur

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argument in general, or your special thesis that it is only lack of interest in German literature that makes Britons denounce the policy which has produced this monstrous war? If you doubt my word, ask them. The late Professor Seeley and Matthew Arnold, as you are probably aware, were great admirers of Goethe. Do you think they would have had anything but execration for modern German policy, or anything but contempt for your championship of it?

My own case does not matter ; but it happens to be the fact that I began in my teens, more than forty years ago, to read Lessing and Goethe and Heine, to say nothing of the philosophers and the historians and the scholars ; and that German culture accordingly must have played some part in my development ; perhaps the more because I have all along been a humble adorer of Beethoven, whose music I think I may even have to some small extent *erlebt*. I have further striven as a politician, during a good many years, to promote friendly relations between Germany and Britain ; having even had the honour to read a paper in the German Reichstag when that was hospitably lent to the Inter-Parliamentary Union for its Conference in 1908. All the while I was deeply impressed by the dangers involved

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in German militarism ; but I was only the more anxious to collaborate with those Germans who also realized them in building up safeguards of public feeling and national treaty against war.

All this I mention by way of introducing a topic which for you, I suppose, is irrelevant, but which seems to me of vital interest as illustrating the bias and purpose of German military policy. A number of us in this country, recognizing that British predominance in sea power, however absolutely necessary to our preservation, might give reasonable cause of disquiet to Germans, strove for an arrangement which should remove such ground of disquiet by making non-contraband commerce immune from capture at sea in war. It was on the score of risks to their commerce that the Germans seemed entitled to plead cause for alarm ; and this seemed the way to solve the problem.

The British Government, naturally, was critical of the proposal. After a series of parliamentary discussions, however, our Foreign Secretary, Sir Edward Grey, made an express offer to the German Government to agree to the abolition of capture of commerce at sea in war, provided that such abolition were made

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a basis for the reciprocal restriction of naval armaments. That offer was rejected by the German Government. It was publicly repeated, and again it was rejected. Yet again it was publicly repeated, in another form, by Mr. Churchill, and again there was blank refusal. To those of us who had striven with all our hearts for a settlement it was henceforth fatally clear that, whatever might be the outcome, the existing German Government was determined to have no friendly understanding in the way of maritime peace policy.

In this you, of course, will see nothing wrong. In your view Germany must have *predominance* at sea, must be in a position to hold the British Islands at her mercy. There could thus be for her no reciprocal restriction of armaments. She must go on building till she had outclassed us. Then, holding this view as you do against all criticism, what earthly significance is there in your demurrers to British criticism of German developments? What on earth does it matter how many of us knew our Bach and Beethoven and Goethe? If, let us say, as many Britons read Goethe in the original as there are Germans who read Shakespeare, or as many who read Goethe or Lessing in translation as

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there are Germans who read Shakespeare in translation (which, after all, is what they mostly do), would that make any difference? Do you mean to suggest that in that case the British people would be content to further German designs against either British or French colonies, or to lie at the mercy of a superior German navy?

Your psychological processes and your political arguments are to me so astonishing that I cannot be sure whether you do or do not think this. If you do, I can only say that it is for me one more illustration of the moral obtuseness, not to say hallucination, developed by the modern Germans' worship of power, and cult of self-praise. They collectively claim to make much of Shakespeare; and when I lived among them I found them making much of Dickens, though not of Thackeray. Yet it would appear that withal they have grown collectively to hate the British people more and more. I do not see, then, how any multiplication of readers of German among us could well make us disposed either to further German aggression or to live under Germany's heel.

Trying to find a rational basis for your argument against W.—d and your other English

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friends, I ask myself whether you mean that a full knowledge of German and of Germany would have made us sorrowfully respectful to Germans as a great and noble race who fought us because they must, and to whom we could not impute any unnecessary barbarity in warfare ; or whether you might possibly mean that if we knew Germans and Germany and German Kultur as you do, we should have felt bound to stand aside and let the Kaiser's armies wreck both Belgium and France ; waiting sadly for the day when Germany's destiny led her, as you say it inevitably would, to reduce us in turn to subordination. If you do not mean any of these things, what *do* you mean? And is it necessary to tell you that such conceptions are the last word of political hallucination?

The real ground, however, for ascribing to you some such irrational view of the case is the semblance of reasoning by which you seem to convince yourself that Germans cannot have been guilty of atrocities. The fundamental outrage on Belgium you treat as " necessary " : you then take for granted that the people of Bach and Beethoven and Goethe cannot be guilty of crime. You and some of your journalistic compatriots seem to think that because you say

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you "know" the German Heart, your acquittal of Germany is to outweigh (1) the systematic investigation by the Belgian Government; (2) the juridical examination and report of the Commission presided over by Lord Bryce; (3) such *neutral* testimonies as that of Dr. L. H. Grondys in his book, "The Germans in Belgium: Experiences of a Neutral," and the reports by Dutch journalists of the brutalities and indignities inflicted by German officials on wounded British prisoners in transit; and (4) the deadly witness borne by scores of letters and diaries found on the bodies of dead German officers and soldiers, or taken from prisoners.

A Dutch man of science, presumably, is as judicial a neutral as a Swede; and you will find Dr. Grondys difficult to dispose of. But let us turn to the German diaries. This last order of evidence, one would suppose, could hardly be evaded, even by a determined special pleader. Professor Joseph Bédier, of the Collège de France, has printed a number of documents, with facsimiles, and, wherever possible, with exact specifications of the name, rank, company, and regiment of the writers. I make a few extracts, beginning with the record

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of the night massacre in a village near Blamont on September 1, 1914:—

They [the slain villagers] were all buried at once, to the number of sixty. Among them many old men and women, and one woman about to be delivered. It was a ghastly sight. There were three children who had huddled close to one another, and had died together. . . . *They* [the villagers in general] *had been telephoning to the enemy.* And this morning, 2 September, all the survivors were driven out, and I saw four little boys carrying on two poles a cradle in which was a child of 5 to 6 months old. *All this was horrible to see.* A blow for a blow. Thunder for thunder. Everything was pillaged. And I also saw a mother with her two little ones; and one had a large wound in the head, and had lost an eye.

So testifies Paul Spielmann, of the Prussian Guard. You will perhaps reply that this was a just punishment—*dura lex, sed lex*—for “telephoning to the enemy”; and I do not suppose it will occur to you to ask how such charges are sought to be *proved* by soldiers “seeing red.” But it may interest you to recall that Article 50 of the Hague Convention of 1907, signed by Baron Marschall von Biberstein for Germany, provides that “no collective punishment, *pecuniary or other*, can be collectively inflicted upon a community for individual acts for which they cannot be held responsible as a

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body." Does your scientific imagination enable you to conceive of the whole inhabitants of a village "telephoning to the enemy"? and do you think the Hague Convention contemplated the shooting of children and pregnant women on such a pretext?

Another soldier's notebook (32nd Infantry, 4th Reserve Corps) has the entry:—

3rd September. *Creil*. The iron bridge has been blown up. Consequently we burnt the street *and shot the civilians*.

The bridge had been blown up by the French engineers. Do you approve of the German reprisals? If so, what exactly do you expect the Allies to do when they get into Germany?

Take again an extract from the diary of Private Hassemer, of the 8th Corps:—

3.9.1914. Sommepey (Marne). A horrible blood-bath. The village burned down; the French thrown into the burning houses; civilians and all burned together.

Here is the German: "Ein schreckliches Blutbad. Dorf abgebrannt, die Franzosen in die brennenden Häuser geworfen. Zivilpersonen alles mitverbrant."

Take the testimony given in the diary of a

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Saxon officer (178th Regt., XII Army Corps,
1 Saxon Corps):—

26th August. The beautiful village Gué-d'Hossus has [soll] quite without guilt been destroyed by burning. A cyclist [soll = it is said] had an upset, and thereby his gun exploded: so they fired in his direction (*Gleich ist auf ihn geschossen worden*). The male inhabitants were simply thrown into the flames. Such atrocities, it is to be hoped, will not be repeated.

It is to be hoped! A score of diaries and letters tell that the thing was done constantly. And if you are disposed to argue that these deeds were not officially authorized, read the proclamation of General von Bülow at Liége on August 22, 1914:—

The inhabitants of the town of Andenne, after having protested their peaceful intentions, treacherously surprised our troops. It is with my consent that the General in command has caused the whole place to be burnt, and about 100 persons have been shot.

And read the proclamation of Baron von der Goltz in Brussels, October 5, 1914:—

In future, the places nearest the spot where such acts [destruction of railway and telegraph lines] have taken place—*little matter whether guilty or not*—shall be punished without mercy. . . . Hostages have been taken . . . at the first attempt to destroy railway or telegraph or telephone lines they will be immediately shot.

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You mention that farms near blown-up railways were destroyed in the South African War. Do you pretend that gangs of hostages were in those cases taken and shot? If you want more details you will get them, with facsimiles of the documents, in the brochure of Professor Bédier. They are quite up to the level of the preceding. "Three women hanged on trees" is one of the episodes chronicled by the *Kulturträger*. I will give just one citation more:—

In this way we destroyed 8 houses with their inmates. In one of them two men with their wives and a girl of eighteen were bayoneted. The girl made me suffer (*kounte mir leid tun*), she had such an innocent look; but one could not check the excited troops [*Menge*], for at such times [*dann*] they are not men but beasts.

In a second pamphlet, dealing with some German press criticisms of his first, Professor Bédier tells how some of the critics actually argued that *Menge* here meant not the troops but the villagers! I recommend that defence to your critical investigation. Professor Bédier confesses to having inadvertently translated *Granaten* by "bombs" (the *original* meaning of the word) instead of "shells." That is the one real error which the Germans have dis-

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covered in his versions of the facsimiles, apart from minor points of doubtful decipherment. In one case they argue that the story of the violation of a virgin "*noch junge*" was misrepresented by reading those words as meaning "not yet nubile" instead of "not very old." In another case the critics really show the procedure to have been worse than was supposed. To nine-tenths of the revelations not even a pretence of a rebuttal is offered.

If you care to read the article by Professor J. H. Morgan, entitled "A Dishonoured Army," in the June number of *The Nineteenth Century and After*, you will find further evidence of the same kind. Apart from a number of highly attested accounts by British officers and soldiers of the killing of British wounded and prisoners, and of the frequent use of the white flag to do the work of an ambuscade, Professor Morgan cites, as does Professor Bédier, evidence from the diaries of German prisoners in France. Thus the under-officer Göttsche, of the 85th Infantry Regiment (IXth Corps), 4th Company detached for service, writes under date "Okt. 6, 1914, bei Antwerpen" :—

The Captain called us to him and said : "In the fortress [i.e. Antwerp] which we have to take there are in all prob-

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ability Englishmen. But I do not want to see any Englishmen prisoners in the hands of this company." A general "Bravo" of assent was the answer.

In the diary of Richard Gerbold, of the 71st Regiment of Infantry of the Reserve (IVth Army Corps), killed in September at Nouvron, is this passage :—

Here also things occur which should not be. Great atrocities are of course [*natürlich*] committed upon Englishmen and Belgians. Every one of them is now knocked upon the head without mercy. But woe to the poor German who falls into their hands.

The last sentence tells of a natural belief in reprisals. But an under-officer named Schulze expresses in his diary the belief that the stories of French and Belgian atrocities were invented by his officers to prevent him and his comrades from surrendering. And Professor Morgan investigated the facts as to the Army Order ascribed to the German Brigadier-General Stenger, which, as you may have read, the German Government declared to be a forgery. The French transcript [in German] runs :—

Army Order of 26 Aug. 1914, about 4 p m., as it was given to his troops by the leader of the 7th Company of the 112th Regiment of Infantry at Thionville, at the entrance of the wood of Saint-Barbe: "From this day forward no more

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prisoners will be made. All prisoners will be executed. Wounded, whether armed or defenceless, will be executed. Prisoners, even in large and compact formations, will be executed. Not a man will be left alive behind us."

This seems incredible enough. But Professor Morgan received through the British Intelligence Department (1) the testimony of a captured German soldier of the regiment named, otherwise found to be a truthful witness, to the effect that 65 out of 150 British prisoners were killed in cold blood by their escort on or about the 23rd of October on the road to Lille, and that the escort were praised for their conduct; and (2) the field diary of Reinhart Brenneisen, reservist, of the 4th Company, 112th Regiment, which contains this entry, dated in August:—

There came a brigade order that all French, whether wounded or not, who fell into our hands, were to be shot. No prisoners were to be made.

It might be worth your while to read Professor Morgan's entire article. He and Professor Bédier, I may point out, are students accustomed to exact historical inquiry, presumably on a par with yourself as qualified investigators.

If you suggest to me that on the side of the Western Allies irregular and unauthorized

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vengeance was taken for such crimes, I would answer that that may well be. The spirit of vengeance has been aroused by German action on all sides. But the immediate point between us is the official German origination of this policy of savagery. As a professed *Menschenkennner*, can you suppose that such atrocities are new in human history, even if they were supposed to have been latterly suppressed? Did you seriously believe that Germans or any others, waging savage war on an unarmed population, and finding themselves baffled by unexpectedly powerful foes, had ceased to be capable of playing the beast? If so, why? Because of Bach and Beethoven and Goethe? Can it occur to you that the Kultur which generates such hallucinations is the Kultur of fools?

For men capable of reflection, to say nothing of knowledge of the history of the German occupation of France in 1870, there is no mystery about the discovery that men waging war in a foul cause will do foul deeds. One day we shall perhaps have a scientific investigation of the states of consciousness of the German troops, officers and men, Socialists and non-Socialists, who were engaged in the first invasion of Belgium. If so, we shall doubtless

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learn of many who were profoundly sickened, and of some who were broken-hearted. We have already heard of such, and some of those facsimiles of diaries reveal them. But we shall probably hear of many more in whom uneasy conscience wrought as poison, turning them into maddened brutes. It is an old saying that we hate those whom we have wronged ; and though Germany has of late professed a special hatred of England, which so wickedly refused to wait to be fought separately, there are many reasons for inferring a prior eruption of base hatred towards the Belgians who so unexpectedly and so fatally delayed the "necessary advance" of your German friends. What else could account for those "three women hanged on trees," for instance?

Do you propose to reject the testimony of these facsimile'd diaries, and the further testimony of the document which declared that *dann sind es keine Menschen, sondern Tiere*? If you do, judicial readers will draw their own conclusions. And it still remains for you to deal, from the international point of view, with the German Government's policy of sinking passenger and merchant ships either without any warning or with no provision for the saving of

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life. Up to the outbreak of this war it was an accepted position in international law that ships of war, if compelled to sink non-combatant ships, should save the lives of the crews. Contravention of this rule was regarded as piracy. The commander of the *Emden* always observed it ; therefore, great as was the damage done by him to British commerce, he was always spoken of by his enemies as a brave, capable, and chivalrous fighter ; and upon his capture he was treated as such. Since his capture the German Government has resorted to the method of piracy on the widest scale upon which it has ever been practised by an ostensibly civilized nation.

The sinking of the *Lusitania* is a test case. An unarmed passenger ship is sunk with an enormous loss of life. The Great German Heart is uplifted in universal rejoicing over the drowning of hundreds of women and children. The German Club at Chicago, you may remember, was wild with delight at the news. And what were the German excuses? As published, they were these :—

1. That the *Lusitania* was armed. This has been demonstrated to be a deliberate falsehood ; and the German subject who in the American

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inquiry asserted it on oath has been convicted of perjury.

2. That the *Lusitania* carried munitions. Even if this were true, it would be no excuse. By international law a ship carrying contraband of war may in case of necessity be sunk, but her crew and passengers must be saved. The German submarine could not save the passengers: it could only sink the ship.

3. Britain, by preventing German imports of food, was seeking to starve the whole population of Germany; therefore Germans are justified in drowning British women and children.

This I take to be the masterpiece in the whole literature of national hypocrisy. In the siege of Paris the German army avowedly did its utmost to starve out the population of Paris. If a French ship of war had at that time contrived deliberately to sink a shipload of German non-combatants, including women and children, would either Germans or Swedes have admitted the act to be one of justifiable reprisals?

As you are now well aware, further, there was no question of starvation in Germany. Germans alternately shriek at the wickedness of trying to starve them and boast that they are self-supporting. All the while they leave

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the starving population of Belgium to be fed by neutrals and by the Allies.

And now I will put a simple question. Do you suppose that if the German navy had obtained command of the seas it would *not* have stopped all imports of food into Britain? Do you doubt for one moment that the German Government would in that case have used starvation as a means to reduce its enemy to submission, just as it did in the case of the siege of Paris? As I can hardly conceive of your offering a denial, I will suggest no rejoinder.

There remains the matter of the bombarding of unfortified places on the seacoast, and unfortified inland towns by means of air-craft. In the case of the first raid of the kind, that on Scarborough, the German official announcement declared that Scarborough was a fortified place. This you presumably know to be a falsehood. Do you think the German staff did *not* know it? And did you observe that the Great German Heart showed any misgiving over the record of the killing of a number of women and children?

The falsehood and the policy have been resorted to again and again. In the Zeppelin raids on London the victims were again, in large

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proportion, women and children. Almost no military damage was done. The same holds good of most of the German attempts to drop bombs on Paris. And yet when, *after* a Zeppelin raid on London, over which the Great German Heart exulted, a body of the airmen of the Allies by way of reprisals dropped bombs on Stuttgart, the King of Württemberg tearfully described the attack on his "dear town" as "shameful." Did you, I wonder, assent to that proposition? If you did not, many Germans did; and you may perhaps begin to divine how, after all that series of manifestations of German brutality and German hypocrisy, your handsome testimonial to the German Heart sets up in non-Teutonic readers, whether belligerent or neutral, a spirit of sheer, unbounded derision. When you claim to pass decisive judgment on such a case in virtue of your knowledge of the German Heart, you merely set up inquiries as to the state of the Swedish Head.

One more test I invite you to put before you renew your pro-German propaganda. So far as can be ascertained thus far by British official inquiry, about eight hundred thousand of the total Armenian population of one million have been deliberately massacred by the official

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action of Germany's esteemed ally, the Turkish Government. One puts down such figures in a mechanical way, conscious that they stand for a measure of horror and wickedness with which one's imagination is unable to grapple. If the statement is even half true, it removes Germany for the time being from the topmost rank in international crime. The Turk has outgone the invasion of Belgium. But the important point is that the German military authorities expressly assent to the action of their allies. Count von Reventlow is quite explicit. Writing in the *Deutsche Tageszeitung* on October 6th in reference to America's demands that Germany should intervene on behalf of the Armenians, he says:—

For a German there can of course be no question of meddling at the instigation of a third party with the affairs of our Turkish ally. If the Turkish authorities believe it opportune to take vigorous measures against unreliable, bloodthirsty, riotous Armenian elements, it is not only right but even a duty to do so.

Turkey can always be assured that the German Empire will always be of opinion that this matter only concerns Turkey.

Thus does the Great German Heart, fed on Bach and Beethoven and Goethe, adjust itself to the unimaginable savageries of its comrades-

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in-arms. What, do you suppose, would Bach and Beethoven and Goethe, not to mention Kant and Herder and Heine, have thought of it all? Have you excuses ready? Eucken, you may tell me, has no misgivings. I can well believe it. He will find here a parallel case to the "necessary German advance" through Belgium. That is just what I am driving at. That Great German Heart of your racial predilection turns out to be but a variant of the Great Turkish Heart of its cherished alliance. This is what Teutonism has come to. The German champion of the spiritual life against the degrading tendencies of modern materialism and the pretensions of "Mongolian Kultur," has no scruple about the Teutonic employment of Turkish Kultur against British and French, or the incidental massacre of four-fifths of a tortured people.

And as the spiritual expert's philosophical case, on analysis, had simply consisted in saying to his opponent, "I am holier than thou," some of us are no more surprised at his new ethical positions than we were at those of the company of *Gelehrten* who defended the infernal wrecking of Belgium by asserting the superiority of German Kultur. We are, in fact, now incapable

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of being surprised at any ethical developments that may take place in a country in which the gospel of war for war's sake has become predominant. That seems to be really the fundamental issue.

§ 8. THE EFFECTS OF WAR ON CHARACTER

YOU seem indisposed to discuss in detail, though you raise it, the question whether war is any longer rationally to be regarded as a method of civilization, or of national progress. But whatever may be your views on the subject, there can be no question as to the prevalence in Germany of a belief in war for war's sake. In all countries and in all ages, I believe, there have been soldiers and others who have either directly or indirectly glorified war, irrespective of its aims or its outcome. Our English Wordsworth once told the Deity: "Carnage is Thy daughter." But he grew ashamed of the utterance, and deleted it from his works; and in most civilized countries, barring Germany, most men have latterly come to the simpler conclusion of General Sherman, that "War is hell!" Sherman had made war; Wordsworth had not. Apart from the sentimental utterances

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of some generals, who liked to ape Moltke, it would be impossible to find in the literature of any of the Allied nations, or in that of the United States, such an array of utterances in advocacy of war for war's sake as are to be culled from that of Germany since Goethe. Here is a handful collected by an eminent journalist:—

Wars are terrible, but necessary, for they save the State from social petrification and stagnation. It is well that the transitoriness of the goods of this world is not only preached, but is learnt by experience. War alone teaches this lesson.—*Kuno Fischer.*

War is as necessary as the struggle of the elements in Nature.—*Von Schlegel.*

I recognize in the effect of war upon national character one of the most salutary elements in the moulding of the human race.—*Von Humboldt.*

It has always been the weary, spiritless, and exhausted ages which have played with the dream of perpetual peace.—*Treitschke.*

A thousand touching traits testify to the sacred power of the love which a righteous war awakens in noble nations.—*Treitschke.*

It was war which laid the foundation of Prussia's power, which amassed a heritage of glory and honour that can never be again disputed. War forged that Prussia, hard as steel, on which the new Germany could grow up as a mighty European State and a World Power of the future.—*Bernhardi.*

The efforts directed towards the abolition of war must not only be termed foolish, but absolutely immoral, and must be stigmatized as unworthy of the human race.—*Bernhardi.*

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The inevitableness, the idealism, and the blessing of war as an indispensable and stimulating law of development, must be repeatedly emphasized.—*Bernhardi*.

The conquered belongs to the conqueror, with his wives and his children, his goods and his blood. . . . Society . . . regenerated by the action of war, breaks on every side into blossom and verdure, and . . . puts forth dazzling, fruiting genius.—*Nietzsche*.

This list, as you are aware, could be greatly extended. Only the other day, Professor Reinhold Seeberg, of Berlin, capped all these deliverances by announcing,¹ in his capacity of Christian and theological expert, that in Germany war is "everywhere recognized" as "a renewer of idealism in our hearts, and as that which pours iron into the blood of men. . . . War is a work of love. . . . If the highest law and rule of morals is love, and if war is moral—and of this there can be no doubt—it follows that war must also be a work of love." Such pronouncements, I suggest to you, are rather more important proofs of a national state of mind than those of Mr. Homer Lea; inasmuch as they abound in Germany to a degree which immensely exceeds the vogue of Kiplingism in English politics. It may suffice here to add a citation of the philosophic gospel

¹ In the *Illustrierte Zeitung* in October 1915.

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of war as preached by the "national" ¹ German philosopher, Hegel:—

War is not to be regarded as an absolute evil. It is not a merely external accident, having its accidental ground in the passions of powerful individuals or nations, in acts of injustice, or in anything which ought not to be. Accident befalls that which is by nature accidental, and this fate is a necessity. So from the standpoint of the conception and in philosophy the merely accidental vanishes. . . .

It is often said, for the sake of edification, that war makes short work of the vanity of temporal things. It is the element by which the idealization of what is particular receives its right and becomes an actuality. Moreover, by it, as I have elsewhere expressed it, finite pursuits are rendered unstable, and the ethical health of peoples is preserved. Just as the movement of the ocean prevents the corruption which would be the result of perpetual calm, so by war people escape the corruption which would be occasioned by a continuous or eternal peace. . . .

As a result of war peoples are strengthened, *nations which are involved in civil quarrels winning repose at home by means of war abroad*. It is true that war occasions insecurity of possessions, but this real insecurity is simply a necessary commotion.²

I do not pretend that this part of the PHILOSOPHY OF RIGHT is very characteristic of Hegel, or that it is at all coherently wrought out. It seems to me, indeed, a mere divagation from

¹ See *Hegel als deutscher National-Philosoph*, by D. K. Rosenkranz, 1870.

² *Philosophy of Right*, § 324, note and add., Dyde's English translation.

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the very purpose of a "Philosophy of Right," inasmuch as it simply evades the fundamental problems which the idea of Right raises. In particular, the comparison of wars to storms, the account of these as "preventing corruption" in the ocean, and the conception of national life in peace as "stagnation," seem to me as unphilosophic a set of metaphors as can well be found in the literature of philosophy. Corruption is envisaged as a cause of disease and death in the body politic; whereas war not only engenders an abundance of moral corruption but may altogether destroy a body politic as such. And after thus representing war as "necessarily" chronic, Hegel, relapsing into sanity, explains¹ that it is understood to be temporary. Also he forgetfully speaks of a given war as "utterly useless." Also he dismisses the false platitude of Carlyle and Tolstoy, acclaimed by the egregious Steinmetz,² that the readiness to die ensures victory, and that it is in itself ennobling. Robbers and murderers, remarks Hegel, risk their lives without fear for a crime.³ But the fact remains that,

¹ *Philosophy of Right*, § 338.

² *Die Philosophie des Krieges*, 1907, p. 204.

³ As cited, § 328, note.

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aiming confusedly at a philosophy for the State, he has laid it down in so many words that war is a necessity, that it elevates and purifies nations, that it is ethically healthful, and that it is beneficial as a stop to domestic strife.

You will perhaps agree with me that it is well worth a sociologist's while to weigh that doctrine as a sociological proposition. It seems to me to be, scientifically speaking, its own *reductio ad absurdum*, and, ethically speaking, one of the clearest proofs of the demoralizing effect of war on character. For Hegel's doctrine, which would have moved Kant to horror and indignation, is logically, in effect, Nietzsche's—that any war is a good war, and that none needs any justification. Of course Hegelians might argue that Hegel took for granted the rectitude of German statesmen in any war they made. But one doubts whether the Prussian State-philosopher troubled himself about any such premiss. We know that in his pre-Prussian stage he was the zealous eulogist and champion of Napoleon, in whom he saw “the soul of the world,” reducing political chaos to order. And in any case Hegel's argument really rejects the moral premiss. For if any war, *qua* war,

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ennobles and elevates any nation, how can the question of the justice of the pretext arise?

The first practical question raised is, whether Hegel was thinking (he does not tell us) of a victorious or of a losing war, of the effect on the victors or the effect on the vanquished. It may well be doubted whether it was the latter; though some kind of ethical case might be made out for his doctrine in that direction. On any view, he cannot be supposed to have thought only or mainly of that; for on that view he would be exhorting peoples to lose battles and be conquered in order to be ennobled—a doctrine not sanely to be proffered for Prussian consumption. He must in the main have been thinking of the effect of an exhausting war—such as that of the Seven Years—on a nation which finally triumphs. And on that view, ethically speaking, he was simply negating the possibility of any international ethic.

For if a nation is to be thought of as ennobled and elevated on the score of having ruined and humiliated another, what moral obstacle can there be to universal international rapine? Not only would perpetual peace be, as was declared by Moltke (that distinguished moral

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æsthete), "a dream, and not even a beautiful dream"; but *any* peace, save one of exhaustion, would be an unworthy abstention from the noblest form of effort. The ideal nation would be the aggregate of ideal savages, a body of men collectively aiming for ever at slaughter, at the ruin and destruction of others. *Schadenfreude*, the "joy in others' sufferings"—that significantly German name for the *thing*¹ that Germany has above all nations latterly sought to multiply—would be the normal, the ideal frame of mind of the members of the ideal State. To this complexion comes the State philosophy of Hegel, the doctrine that only as a member of the State has a human being a truly moral existence.

May I suggest to you that this is in effect moral lunacy, the raising of human folly to the *n*th power? I know, of course, that religious platitude-mongers in most countries have been wont to argue (not knowing it to be a Hegelian idea) that because suffering can purify individuals, national suffering (by which is meant the suffering of millions) is a purifier of nations. That, apparently, was Wordsworth's notion,

¹ I see that Pastor Loeber, of Fremdiswald, pronounces it "genuinely German and genuinely Christian."

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afterwards repented of. But surely a true philosopher would at once see the vast fallacy involved in raising such an inference from a fortuitous experience into a rule for conduct. A war undertaken *because of* the belief that wars purify national character is an utterly different thing from a war undertaken on a given ground of quarrel, and subsequently *found*, or supposed to be found, to have had a purifying effect. The other argument is but the legend of the roasting of the first pig by the burning of the house, turned from a jest into a serious philosopheme.

One can understand how experts of the physical sciences, working by experiment, are apt to treat a process of non-conscious or non-purposive human action as something to be purposively repeated with the same results. Darwin so erred when he argued that the struggle for survival set up by over-population must be deliberately maintained in order to secure the kind of progress it had caused in the past. He had not realized, as a moral philosopher might be expected to do, that over-population deliberately effected or encouraged in order to force "progress" would be an utterly different thing from the previous operation of

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mere instinct. You, surely, must see this. But Hegel, and many other Germans, apparently could not; and we are compelled to linger over and elucidate it.

A drunkard, let us say, falls and breaks both of his legs, and is turned by his long period of suffering and weakness into an abstainer. Shall we, then, break drunkards' legs in order to make them better men? If the problem be put as one of mere utilitarianism *in vacuo* (the fashion in which opponents of utilitarianism are wont to present its problems), it raises the similarly utilitarian problem whether the great relief that some drunkards give to their wretched families by breaking their own *necks* should be made a ground for purposive action by drunkards' families to *that* end.

The rational utilitarian answer, as you will, perhaps, admit, is that such purposive courses are vetoed by *total* utility; and that even if any nation is found to be ostensibly "purified" by a bloody war—that is, if twenty millions of people are seen to be more serious and intellectually energetic after the slaughter of two millions of their stock and the agony of many millions more—that is no better a reason for making another war than is the observed

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reform of some drunkards after accidents a reason for wilfully breaking other drunkards' legs—to say nothing of breaking their necks for the sake of their families. Hegel, in short, was merely closing his eyes to the whole problem of total utility. He never even asked whether the leg-breaking method in international affairs would not brutalize nations as it would certainly brutalize individual men in their personal relations ; or whether nations, once “ purified ” by the fortuitious experience of a desperate war, are not simply proving the utter futility of their alleged purification by *needing* another. In the terms of the case, they are not purified by recollection, for surely all have had wars in plenty. Temporarily bettered, they become, *ex hypothesi*, worse than ever, inasmuch as they lose from thought a great moral lesson.

If we apply à posteriori criticism to the position, it fares no better. In fact, if one could suppose that Hegel was seriously summing up past history in his theorem, one would be entitled to pronounce him the falsest historical philosopher in a nation that has a great deal of false historical philosophy to answer for. If he had concretely alleged that the men of

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ancient Rome were progressively elevated and ennobled by chronic war, we should know what to say. As a matter of fact, he saw and said that the path of Rome was a mere road to ruin, as he saw that the Thirty Years War was a mere wrecking of civilization. But his thesis remained current to corrupt the German soul. Speaking generally, it may suffice to say that on his theoretic principles the period of most rapid moral progress in human history must have been the period of maximum savagery.

The later Romans themselves sought in the alleged *pax Romana* a vindication of their past ; on Hegel's theoretic principles it was a treason to the cause of moral civilization, inasmuch as it meant the fixation of corruption. And his doctrine, as a political proposition, culminates in this monumental political absurdity, that conquest is the highest national political aim, and that all the while universal conquest, the complete fulfilment of that aim, is necessarily the complete ruin of good social life, inasmuch as it has made an end of the only process by which a human aggregate can be withheld from collective demoralization. To save the world, there would have to begin a new era of universal *civil* war, war *within* the universal

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State. In which case, why not extend the Philosophy of War at once into a Philosophy of Murder?

If Hegel, the "profound" philosopher *par excellence*, was thus merely postulating an empirical impression without any critical reflection worthy of the name, it is not likely that Fischer, or the declamatory Treitschke, or the military Bernhardi, had done any clearer thinking. Can you see any signs of their having either reflected adequately or collected any concrete evidence? Let us take Treitschke, the historian. It has, perhaps, already occurred to you that "the dream of perpetual peace," stigmatized by him, occupied the mind of Immanuel Kant in the age of Frederick the Great; and that this is one of the many items which serve to show the precarious character of the judgment of the distinguished historian. According to Bernhardi, Frederick's Prussia was "hard as steel." According to Treitschke, it was latterly a "weary, spiritless, exhausted age." Perhaps you will agree with me—it would be interesting to agree on some points—that the two publicists are equally far from the truth. At least you will agree with me that the general

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question is worth serious discussion at the hands of sociologists.

I would therefore suggest to you that, putting aside the question of the effects of war on a people consciously (and really) defending itself from aggression, we find the whole history of mankind testifying to (1) the decivilizing effect of cultivated militarism, (2) the demoralizing effect of protracted warfare, and (3) the falsity of the notion that war breeds great art or literature. Do you want instances? Take these:—

1. Sparta, cultureless, mindless, incapable even of maintaining its own social ideal, inasmuch as the civic system decayed into a "close corporation," with all the property in the hands of a few.

2. The effects of the Peloponnesian War on Greek character, as portrayed by Thucydides.

3. The march of Rome, from the stage of Regulus to the stage of Augustus, and from the stage of Augustus to that of Augustulus.

4. The complete ruin of the whole ancient civilization of the Mediterranean, as a result of the successive imperialisms of Macedonia and Rome.

5. The rapid and vicious degeneration and

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disappearance of the Teutonic conquerors of Italy and Spain.

6. The moral and mental depression of England after the conquests of Edward I, again after those of Edward III, and again after those of Henry V.

7. The destruction of the moral, mental, and artistic life of Germany in the Thirty Years War.

I know that some English writers have sought to see in the plays of Shakespeare an artistic consequence of the defeat of the Spanish Armada: we have our dilettantist sociologists, like other nations. But as none of these theorists has tried to indicate any great literary or other efflorescence as following on the Wars of the Roses, or the Civil Wars of the seventeenth century, we seem entitled to infer that they, like Hegel, wrote on this topic without critical reflection. And I doubt whether you will allege that the wars of Charles XII had any perceptible effect in elevating the moral, mental, or artistic life of Sweden.

The issue may be raised again over the sequelæ of the wars of the French Revolution and the overthrow of Napoleon. I doubt whether many English students would claim that in the generation after 1815 there was a more

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vigorous play of either intellectual or artistic life in victorious England than in defeated France. As France certainly showed more intellectual expansiveness than did England in the latter half of the eighteenth century, after France had lost and England won North America and India, there may arise, once more, the question whether *defeat in war* has a medicinal quality lacking to victory. But I doubt whether you will be disposed to maintain such a thesis. The rational inference would seem to be simply this, that a nation *withheld from* foreign expansion necessarily puts out more energy at home—a consideration perhaps worth the notice of your German friends.

If, finally, we consider the case of Germany after Jena, and that of France after Sedan, we shall perhaps agree that in the former it was not mere war that wrought regeneration, but a resort to new methods, in imitation of other countries—a resort which might have been made *without war*, if only Prussians had been a little more enlightened, a little less ossified in national pride and the traditions of the age of Frederick. And may we not say the same of the regeneration of France, again become republican, after 1870?

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To those of us who have seen in war the great negation of human progress, the destroyer of a hundred civilizations, the final failure of reason to regulate international life, the lesson of such sequelæ has been that the nations, having learned a new wisdom after humiliation, should henceforth seek by wisdom to escape humiliation. What was discovered after the war, in each case, was simply that the given nation had been astray in a number of its administrative and educative methods. Is it rationally to be inferred that in order to make afresh such discoveries, or to act upon them, nations must chronically go through the delirium and agony of a war? Must the house *always* be burnt down to roast the pig? That this is pure nonsense is proved by the multitude of reforms effected in time of peace upon purely rational motives, without reference even to the reminiscences of war. In short, the rational verdict seems to be that whatever moral or intellectual revival may occur in any nation as a result of crushing defeat in war is not a gain that any nation wants at that price.

And after all who can tell, who has scientifically sought to ascertain, what are the offsets? No nation lives all of a piece : there are always

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diverse currents ; and the bitterness of humiliation may generate new evils even alongside of ostensible improvements. Prussia had a national revival after Jena ; but was it all gain? However that may be, it is certain that it was not the medicine of defeat that the above-cited writers were thinking of when they penned their encomiums on war. They were thinking not of Jena but of Rosbach, when they wrote before Sedan. And the fact which I finally wish to press upon you is that in no nation in the modern world has the gospel of war for war's sake had such a multitude of apostles as in Germany. From no other literature could you cite such a handful of utterances from men of standing and men of vogue as I have given above.

You will have observed that these citations, which, as I have said, could easily be multiplied, stand for no special school of German thought. The difficulty would be to find a leading German publicist, not expressly a pacifist, who has called the doctrine in question. A generation ago Karl Hillebrand, one of the surviving revolutionaries of 1848, delivered a set of lectures in London on the History of German Thought, in which he noted the predominance

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in latter-day Germany of the cult of the State, and expressed the hope that "as soon as the long-yearned-for national State is complete and insured against inner and outer enemies, Germany will come back to the creed of the real founders of her civilization"¹—the men, that is, who saw in the free moral and intellectual development of the individual, and not in the State, the end of life. Yet Hillebrand, the Liberal and humanitarian, explicitly affirmed that the Seven Years War was "a fertile war, *because a necessary one*"—fertile, that is, because it enabled the Germans in general "to feel themselves a nation again";² and necessary, it would seem, for exactly the same reason.

It was "necessary," in short, for Frederick to declare a war without a decent pretext, to inflict endless misery on the German world, and decimate the population of Prussia, in order to elevate the characters of those who were left. Now, it is just this way of thinking that makes intelligible to the rest of us the ready or ultimate consent of the German people to every atrocity wrought on their side. Listen to Dr. Grondys,

¹ *Lectures on the History of German Thought*, 1880, p. 225.

² *Idem*, pp. 57, 58.

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who, albeit a physicist, really seems to me to have a better comprehension of the sociology of war and the "psychology" of the German people—if we must speak, as you do, of national psychology—than you, the sociologist, have attained to. In the Preface to his account of what he saw and learned in Belgium in 1914 he writes :—

At the close of my sojourn in Belgium the wholesale shootings and destruction that had taken place still caused legitimate amazement, for the German theories had not as yet been revealed. Thus in my narrative I may seem to insist upon the almost incidental character of these misdeeds. At the beginning of the month of October I should have had no right to believe in a regular system of devastation and extermination.

But since this we have been enlightened by documents of great importance. First, General von Stenger's order of the day, directing that no prisoners should be made, and that of General von Bissing, which affects to justify the conduct of the Germans in Belgium; then numerous articles in German newspapers and reviews which reduce these scandals to an organized system.

The thesis which inspires the Germans is that of the minimization of effort and suffering. According to this theory, the massacre of St. Bartholomew was justified, because, by one violent blow, it obviated a long-drawn-out religious war, and diminished the number of victims. "Let us be ruthless," say the Germans, "that so we may minimize the sufferings of nations."

The German armies have accordingly carried on two simultaneous wars—one against the enemy's hosts, the other against the weak and helpless.

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Let us admit the force of cold reason, and confess that their position is strong and extremely logical. By their secondary war upon the homes of the poor, civilians, unarmed men, and the wounded on the battlefield, they have almost succeeded in disheartening citizens and discouraging combatants. In Belgium I saw citizens in the midst of ruins who had lost all hope in the future of their country.

But should not the Germans, who claim to be the educationists of the world, know that threats and violence which do *not* intimidate engender imperishable hatred? They have shown themselves very poor psychologists, for their methods have strengthened the resistance of the Belgians. Reinforcing clear conceptions of right and wrong by rage and indignation, they have rallied fainting souls and despairing hearts to the support of great and far-seeing leaders—King Albert, Cardinal Mercier, the Burgomaster Max, and many others.

By their coldly calculated methods they have made war, *that splendid and terrible phenomenon*, a thing of sickening horror. Will posterity be able always to distinguish between the lofty courage of their officers, the magnificent devotion of their soldiers, and the deliberately sinister methods of which they have left traces on every hand?

Dr. Grondys, you will observe, is not a professed pacifist: he can even think of a war which he has *not* seen as being a “splendid and terrible phenomenon.” He neither hates war as war nor hates Germans as Germans. He simply notes what the Germans have done by way of deliberative policy. And he shows—does he not?—that massacre and devastation are the “necessary” outcome of the German gospel

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of the "necessity" of war—aggressive war. He exhibits no *parti pris*. He admits that in a case in which two German soldiers bayoneted in the stomach a girl who resisted violation, "the military authority appeared to have punished these brutes." But he also shows that the authorities could practise the grossest iniquity, and that they were aware of cases in which soldiers fired their rifles in sheer excitement and then accused the civilians of shooting.

In one place, seeing a crowd of about thirty weeping women, girls, and children, conducted by German soldiers, and learning that these women had fled with their whole families and returned to find their homes burned, he asked: "Why have you burned their houses, since these people, who were absent, could not have fired on you?" The answer was: "They should have remained. If they had received us properly, nothing of the sort would have happened."

Again: "In conducting me out of the church, the [German] officer advised me to be on my guard. The soldiers were extremely agitated, *and rifles sometimes went off by themselves.*" "An officer menaced a soldier with punishment

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for having fired a shot during the night, and thus spread panic among the ranks of the garrison." And yet many villages were destroyed, and hundreds of men, women, and children massacred, on the simple pretext that "*Man hat geschossen.*"

As Dr. Grondys suggests: "It would seem that the Germans, who do not lack courage when fighting, are horribly afraid of dangers in the towns where they like to think themselves in safety."

But of course that is not the gist of his record. I will not attempt to note all his heartrending reports of callous cruelty and massacre, but merely point out that they include such things as this:—

Professor Scharpé told me that . . . the village of Linden was fired because one of the inhabitants killed a German soldier. The latter, along with a companion, had violated a young girl, after tying her parents to chairs. The father freed himself from his bonds, seized a gun, and slew one of the aggressors. The German officers ordered fire to be set to the houses, and the parents of the young girl, bound again to their chairs, perished in the flames.

Among other corpses seen by M. Scharpé was that of a two-year old infant, killed by bayonet thrusts. . . .

Here, you will note, an officer is implicated. I observe that some American sociologists, while

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repudiating all sympathy with German policy, accept the explanation that every army contains a certain percentage of criminal types ; and from this I do not dissent. But it should be remembered that the same generalization applies to officers. Dr. Grondys testifies on the one hand that " pillage goes on apparently under the eyes of the officers,"¹ and that the *majority* of the officers with whom he spoke were " well conducted, with courteous manners." One of them " hesitated to express an opinion about the devastation of villages, and threw the responsibility of it on superiors who had ordered it."

So we come to this, that the decent men and officers in the German army cannot control either the other types or the terrorist policy which recommends itself to a majority of the generals ; and the result is that there has taken place an infinity of hideous cruelty and foul wickedness. If you feel so disposed, perhaps you will contribute to sociology a theory of how all this evil, to say nothing of the slaughter and the agony of millions of men and the bereavements of millions of families, are to be

¹ " According to their custom," again, " the pillagers before leaving had left their filth in the beds."

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held as cancelled by the subsequent complacency of the survivors and their posterity on the score of victory.

Or do you assert that the survivors and posterity are not merely complacent but superior? This thesis does seem to be implicit in the pronouncements of Fischer and Humboldt and Hillebrand and the rest. Do you think you could give any concrete evidence in support of it? Let me suggest a test problem. Lessing and Herder and Goethe and Kant, to name no others, would seem likely to have developed very much as they did even if the Seven Years War had not occurred during their youth. Is it pretended that the generation which followed produced a more valuable crop of geniuses and publicists? And has German genius, moral or other, visibly multiplied in the generations after 1815, or after 1870?

I recollect seeing in Germany, in the eighties, an exhibition of pictures of episodes in the Franco-German War, painted by German artists. I do not think I closely examined all—the experience was too trying; but I can freely say that I have never seen such a shameful exhibition of sheer artistic incompetence, before or since. I could not see in it one approach

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to decent mediocrity. I found, on the other hand, a cultured German who acquiesced in my judgment, and who pronounced that, in respect of the war-pictures produced by French artists, "France has extorted victory from defeat itself." And I have never since been able to feel that the Kultur which had achieved that German exhibition, evidently with no suspicion of its artistic ignominy, can really be the flower of the world's Kultur even in other directions. War, apparently, could not make artists in Germany. Did it, then, produce thinkers, moralists, musicians? Has the repute of German music seriously risen since Wagner, or of German poetry since Heine, or of German ethics since Kant? Scholarship, doubtless, is maintained, also "applied" as distinguished from original science; but are these the essence of Kultur?

When your German friends of the Kultur class put forth their historic manifesto about the wickedness of supporting "Mongolian" against German Kultur, some of us asked whether those sages realized that whereas Russia in the past half-century had produced at least four of the great novelists of the world, Germany had not produced even one of the second rank. Novelists, of course, are not the sole tests of

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Kultur ; but surely the inability of a people to produce a great novel is a hint of serious cultural deficiency. Ten years ago, most of us would have said that Germany possessed at least one man of literary genius, Gerhard Hauptmann. But the production, before the war, of Hauptmann's fourth-rate novel, "Atlantis," had already forced many of us to decide that the genius had gone out of him—the one well-known German literary artist of the day who had clearly had it.

And thus we come to the question whether the German Kultur, impregnated as it is with the cult of brute force and of the beneficence of war, and the conviction of the supreme beauty of the German character in all its aspects, is not a Kultur poisoned through and through. Is not the eternal vaunting, the daily litany of self-praise that has gone on for a hundred years, swelling to a roar since 1870—is not that alone almost a sufficient explanation? Do you think that either Kant or Goethe would have admitted the moral healthiness of a nation for which boasting had become ostensibly as absolute a necessity as food? If an habitually boastful man is admittedly a culture-failure, odious to gods and men, is it arguable that an eternally,

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boasting nation is a culture-success? Is not ingrained arrogance the very counter-sense of "culture," in any sense of the word? And if the boaster be in the terms of the concept a bully, who, if not a coward, is perforce a ruffian, is there any escape for a boastful nation, when it wilfully precipitates a monstrous war, from any form of blood-guiltiness that war has ever evoked? I commend the sociological problem, as dispassionately as may be, to your scientific attention.

§ 9. THE PSEUDO-SCIENCE OF
“NATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY”

MY main reason for doubting whether you will come to a scientific conclusion is not merely the fact of your German partisanship, or, what I take to be still more fatal in your case to the process of judgment, the national and the sectarian lines of bias which set you, to begin with, in passional opposition to Russia. Upon this I will speak in the next section. What I am moved first to dwell upon is your adherence to the notorious fallacy of what may be termed the German school of sociologists, the fallacy embodied in their very phrase, “*Völker-Psychologie*.”

I am aware, of course, that even in Germany there has been critical opposition to that form of pseudo-science, even as there was in France powerful criticism of the æsthetic ideals of French classic drama long before Lessing assailed them in Germany. If I recollect

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rightly, the German journal of *Völker-Psychologie* died of inanition some years ago, which would seem to suggest that its contributors had begun to feel that their science was spurious. And perhaps there has been no better exposure of it than that accomplished in the work of the Austrian Friedrich Hertz, *Moderne Rassen-theorien* (1904), written partly on the provocation of that of the Anglo-German charlatan, Houston Stewart Chamberlain. But as the ideals and æsthetic code of the French classic drama held their ground with the many long after they had been riddled by skilled criticism, the German pseudo-science of *Völker-Psychologie* holds its ground in the German world to this day. You yourself are one of its practitioners.

The central fallacy or sophism of the school is the assumption that races and nations have each a psychology or psychosis of their own, innate and inherited, like the psychic character of an individual. Applied to history, this assumption yields the vacuous thesis that every nation has achieved what it achieved, or failed where it failed, because it was or was not fitted by its national character to do the thing in question. Thus the Persians had no theatre

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because their talent was not dramatic, and the Romans succeeded in epic rather than in drama because “the soil of Italy,” = the Roman character, was adapted to the former and not to the latter. Following, I think, a German lead, Renan on these lines pronounced that the “Semitic mind” was naturally monotheistic and non-mythological; and German empirics, starting from the same premiss, have inconsequently differentiated between the Carthaginian and the Judaic and other sections of the “Semitic mind.” This “psychology” of the Colossians, the Philippians, the Ephesians, and the Galatians has been dear to the German soul for over a hundred years. Its master-stroke, perhaps, was the discovery of Teuffel and others that at a given moment the “Roman character” made a somersault and either died or grew different.

It is upon these lines that so many German publicists have dilated on the “Latin character” and the “German heart” and the “psychology of the English”; and you, trained by the German pattern, profess to have studied the English character on its native soil. And, just as the Germans in general find food for their national self-esteem and stimulus to their mad-dog policy in the asseveration that they have a special sort

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of Heart and a native brand of Kultur, and all the rest of it, you draw support for your claim that Germany is in the right and England in the wrong from your conviction that you found the "English character" revealed in some of Mr. Galsworthy's novels which present unrighteous and unlovable types. He has exhibited, you tell us, "*the* modern typical Englishman," and he is a merciless, truth-loving revealer of the mysteries of the "English bourgeois-heart of the decade 1900-10." You cite first among his books *The Man of Property*, and you say that with Mr. Galsworthy's works in his hand one is "richer in human knowledge, knowledge of England and of the present day."

It is rather hard on Mr. Galsworthy thus to be made the minister of your *Völker-Psychologie*; and it is with no ill-will to him on that score that I pronounce your verdict as unsound in its literary criticism as in its pseudo-scientific aspect. To begin with, there is no "*the* typical Englishman"; and, in the next place, Mr. Galsworthy's very passion for types makes him a misleading guide to English life for theorists like yourself. His "Man of Property" is no more *a* typical Englishman than he is a typical Bulgarian or a typical Swede. He is but a

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personification of a characteristic—a kind of artistic creation as old as Ben Jonson in English literature, and chiefly notable to English critics in respect of its vital divergence from the true and great humanist art of Shakespeare.

But this is by the way. These incursions of yours into *belles lettres* are ostensibly by way of strengthening yourself in your sense of the obnoxiousness of the Anglo-Saxon from the point of view of German interests. And the whole upshot is merely to demonstrate your determination to plump for the Great German Heart against the “insular” Anglo-Saxon. As polemic on the rights and wrongs of the war it is the very idlest special pleading. I could name to you a dozen modern German novels in which there is hardly to be detected a hint of the existence of noble or lovable men or women ; but I should not suppose that in doing so I was giving relevant support to my indictment of German policy and military practice. All that is but “leather and prunella.” When the great histories of the future come to be written, it will not be in the light of Swedish impressions from Mr. Galsworthy’s novels, or of Swedish imputations of “insularity” to the British Empire. To my own thinking there is only

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too much moral insularity in all nations, my own and yours included ; but a Quintuple Alliance is not rationally to be impeached in detail by your methods. Britain is the ally of Russia and Belgium and France and Italy, and falls to be judged politically in line with these. And the *Welt-Gericht* of the future, I take it, will not proceed in terms of mere national likes and dislikes.

You may or may not be aware that your own nation, like Germany, is frequently spoken of as antipathetically as you speak of England. I do not find that this is a common English view ; and my own experience of Swedes has been favourable. But an old Norwegian friend of mine used obstinately and habitually to characterize them as untrustworthy, unscrupulous, unamiable, and other unpleasant things. Not merely because of my personal experience, but on general principles, I always combated him, refusing to admit that nations had characters thus assignable ; but he was as fixed in his ideas as you can claim to be in yours. He claimed to "know" the Swedes. And I suppose he could have made out an impressionist case, very much as you make out your impressionist case against England.

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Of this I am very sure : there are in England and in France and in Italy hundreds of literary men and women who, knowing Germany, could make out, if they would, a far more deadly picture of German arrogance and vulgarity and littleness of soul and bad taste than you have done in regard to the Anglo-Saxons of your aversion. It has been done, in fact, fairly frequently ; though the German novels of military life seem to make such exposures rather unnecessary. Could any enemy draw a more repellent picture of German army men than is done in these novels?

Nevertheless, I should count him an inadequate sociologist who took aspersive novels, whether German or English, as giving an adequate presentment of German life ; and I should even respectfully decline to accept as a presentment of either “ the ” or “ a ” typical German far finer artistic work than is to be found in the books I allude to. Our great novelist Joseph Conrad (who, you may remember, is by birth a Pole) has recently produced a novel, *Victory*, written before the war, in which the central intriguing villain is a German, Schomberg, and the hero or quasi-hero is Axel Heyst, a Swede. Heyst's father

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had been an expatriated Swede who died in London, dissatisfied with his country, and angry with all the world, which had instinctively rejected his wisdom. . . . For more than sixty years he had dragged on this painful earth of ours the most weary, the most uneasy soul that civilization had ever fashioned to its ends of disillusion and regret. One could not refuse him a measure of greatness, for he was unhappy in a way unknown to mediocre souls.

We are not told that this is a "typically" Swedish attitude to life, though there are such Swedes ; but of Schomberg, who had appeared long ago in one of Conrad's earlier stories, and who may be described as a *Schweinhund*, the author subtly writes: "I do not pretend to say that this is the entire Teutonic psychology ; but it is indubitably the psychology of a Teuton." And most non-German readers, I believe, will assent ; there is such a "family likeness" between Schomberg and so many German "types," so-called, in the German novels. And yet, though one of Conrad's oldest and warmest admirers, I confess I cannot accept his implied conception of a "typical Teuton" if it involves, as it apparently does, the denial that very similar "types" may be found among non-Teutons—say, Frenchmen, or Italians, or Russians. The concept "Teuton" is in itself problematic ; for do not you and your countrymen regard themselves as "Germanic" ? To my thinking the

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Heyst of Conrad's novel might have been a German, and Schomberg might have been a Swede or a member of some other “race” altogether. Have we not all known villains of our own race or people and fine souls of another? Conrad is a man of rare genius, and if his genius cannot carry theoretic conviction in such a matter, pseudo-science assuredly will not.

More comprehensive methods than that of dramatic portrayal of character have been used, without malice, to convey an uncomplimentary picture of German civilization as a whole. You may have read in Cross's *Life of George Eliot* how the latter, after spending seven months in Germany with Lewes in 1854-5, remarked in her diary that in all that period, mixing always with educated people, they had never heard one witty or brilliant remark. And you may remember, too, her mention that “Du Bois Reymond spoke very decidedly of the German civilization as inferior to the English.”

Since then, you may remind me, Germany has made great progress. Of course she has! Even in 1855 George Eliot could say that the Germans, with all their bad taste and bad manners, were not the worst people to live among. And had we not all come to think

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that we had reached a state of things in which the really cultured people of all nations realized the defects of their own and the points of superiority in others? During your stay in England, you surely met with a multitude of people whose great concern was to *raise* the levels of English life. And I gather from a German account of your book, *The Problem of Democracy*, that you tell "bitter truths" to your own political party. What is true of your Swedish politics is just about as true of German. Everywhere, in short, among the States of the Quintuple Alliance as in the Germanic, it was the business of sane men to develop scientifically the life of peace, in intercourse and competition with each other. And this progressive state of things, you inform us, had to be smashed up, because German freedom and need of expansion could not tolerate British naval superiority. For *that* reason Austria must invade Serbia on a spurious pretext, though warned that such an invasion would bring in Russia, whose interference would bring in Germany, whose intervention would bring in France!

What has become now of *Völker-Psychologie*? For what scientific reason was that empty phrase

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dragged into the discussion? You rebuke certain of your compatriots for hollow phrase-mongering. I fancy they could now make a damaging retort. What worse state of things could they, in their short-sightedness, have engineered than this outcome of your Germanic Imperialism, over which you make empty play with the pseud-idea of *Völker-Psychologie*?

The one element of psychic fact behind that verbalism is the truth that predominant national *states of mind* are generated by institutions, by propaganda, by literature, and by recent national experience. *That* is not the concept of the pseudo-science of *Völker-Psychologie*. The Germans of the day of Lessing and Kant and the day of Goethe held in general a quite different attitude to world-politics from the attitude of Treitschke and Bernhardi. They were as far removed from the temper of Treitschke or Nietzsche as from the temper of Mr. Kipling. Race, then, has nothing to do with the latter-day German mood, since the race remains the same. †

If a race can *change* its “psychology” from generation to generation, the conception is all the more nugatory. Nothing is left, scientifically speaking, but the conception of political aggre-

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gates of human beings of a given grade of culture, swayed for the time by prevalent teachings and induced states of mind. For that matter, Germanic propaganda has long been largely a product of men not of German stock. Treitschke and Nietzsche were by descent Slavs ; Nietzsche was even anti-German, though his *Welt-Anschauung* has been so largely assimilated by Germans ; German Liberalism before Bismarck was largely the work of Jews ; and it was Jews, Marx and Lassalle, who laid the foundations of German Socialism. The German militarism which you seek to vindicate as the expression of a fundamental German character, is simply the outcome of certain political conditions, historical events, and wholesale governmental propaganda in press, pulpit, schoolroom, and university. In any other race at the same general level of civilization the same conditions and factors would have produced similar results. And all races are plastic to circumstance.

Thus scientific and pseudo-scientific sociology alike fail to carry a *verdict* on the justifiableness of the Germanic forcing of the world-war. Germany's guilt or innocence is to be settled irrespectively of her antecedents. We are not responsible for the sins of our ancestors save

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in so far as we choose to become so by boasting of them. The policy and doctrine of Frederick the Great are at most only explanatory of the policy of Germany to-day, unless Germans choose to embody them in their code ; and even if Lord Bute had been unjustifiable in his withdrawal of England from her alliance with Frederick, that would not form a rational ground for the modern German pretence that British policy is persistently treacherous. As you are aware, Frederick not only threw over his own allies again and again, but expressly and explicitly justified the breach of treaties in general by kings in the supposed interest of their States. He was furious with Bute for treating him as he would in his own interest have been ready to treat Bute. Hegel, as you are aware, elaborately affirmed the same doctrine, as befitted the chosen philosopher of the Prussian State. Bismarck, who in one of his mock-moral moments vituperated British policy in general, was fully the most unscrupulous statesman of the modern world. No Englishman of his or our day has approached him in point of systematic duplicity.

But all that is strictly irrelevant to the question of the guilt of Germany in forcing the

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world-war, and in her damnable invasion of Belgium in particular. These matters are introduced here only because you in effect have raised them. We judge Bethmann-Hollweg on his own words and deeds ; and we condemn the German nation in the aggregate for its action, not for the predatory deeds of Frederick. And thus we are prepared in advance to negative, as morally irrelevant, the polemic against Russia with which you follow up your unfavourable account of the Anglo-Saxon and your vindication of the German Heart.

You do not, I observe, present us with a *Völker-Psychologie* for Russia as you do for Anglo-Saxondom. In this connection you rely mainly on your prophetic insight into the future. And as your argument here constitutes the most remarkable, I may say the most astonishing, part of your case, it is entitled to close separate consideration.

§ 10. THE ARGUMENT FROM RUSSIA'S
PAST

MANY Swedes, we know, view Russia with dislike and apprehension as the traditional national enemy ; and in this respect and to this extent you may be taken as *a* " typical Swede "—that is, a sample of one kind of Swede. Once upon a time many Englishmen held a similar view—another illustration of the factitious and evanescent character of so-called *Völker-Psychologie*. Of course such national states of mind have real causes : they root in the historic past. But it would be quite irrelevant, as I have been arguing, to seek for them any permanent political validity as grounds for a verdict on any given war which originates in another set of causes. For rational men, outside of Sweden and Russia, there is little room for moral choice between Charles XII and Peter the Great, save in the outstanding fact that Peter was the saner energumen of the two. And you yourself, as I read you, ground your anti-Russian and pro-

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German verdict on your apprehensions for the future.

You are particularly sarcastic over the remark of one of your English correspondents that "Russia has turned over a new leaf," to which you, as aforesaid, add the courteous tag, "Don't you know!" by way of deriding the man whom you had induced to write to you a friendly letter. I readily grant you that if the claim made for Russia were put as a *reason* for our going to war with Germany, independently of any German act, it would be absurd—and equally absurd whether well or ill founded. But who ever suggested that it was such a reason? And what right has a pro-German, of all people, and you of all pro-Germans, to deride it even if it were put as a reason? What about Germany's past, and Turkey's? And what about your own final plea that Germany *will* "turn over a new leaf"?

You may perhaps reply that in making an ally of Turkey the German Government abstained from any pretence that Turkey had "turned over a new leaf." So far as I am aware, they did. But their academic mouth-pieces, on the other hand, were loudly disparaging "Mongolian Kultur," by way of justifying German policy, at the very moment that

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the rulers were about to join hands with Tartar Kultur. And inasmuch as your own ultimate temperamental and passional ground for your pro-Germanism—a ground underlying all your quasi-sociological argument against the British *Imperium*—is that any and every act of Russian policy is to be construed in terms of Russia's past, what exactly have you to say for a Turco-German alliance? The past of Turkey is tolerably black; and to its foul record its present rulers have contrived to add a new and immortal infamy by the matchless massacres in Armenia. On your own principles, is not that a reason for bracketing German Kultur and German policy with those of the Kaiser's esteemed and acclaimed ally?

Again and again you thus puzzle one by your supreme inconsequence. Among your Russian friends is Kropotkin; and from him, as from your English friends, you obtained a letter, which, you confess, was for you "a great and melancholy [*schwermütige*] surprise." Kropotkin, you observe, is "like many a richly gifted Russian, in nowise a *Menschenkenner*"—a connoisseur in human nature. But are you? How could a real *Menschenkenner* be so utterly taken aback by a deliverance from a man with whom he was well acquainted?

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Even as your German friends, those distinguished *Menschenkenner*, reckoned on civil war in Ireland, successful revolt in South Africa, Egypt, and India, and the separation of the British Dominions from the Empire, you counted in advance on the adhesion of the Russian *intelligenzia* to the German cause in this war. It is the last word in political blindness. And still it is on your *forecast of the political future* that you finally rely for your justification of your pro-Germanism !

To be sure, you proceed to explain Kropotkin's adherence to the cause of his own race and country, his distrust and detestation of German militarism, by his preference for his philosophic Anarchism over the philosophic Collectivism of the German Socialist party, and his fear that German success in war would mean the success of that political ideal as against his. Here, to my thinking, you are simply libelling him. He is really a more conscientious politician than yourself. Had Russia forced a war against Germany in the fashion in which Germany has forced this war on Russia, Kropotkin would, I believe, have denounced Russia and justified a Germany that was defending herself. But I have no wish to pit myself against you as an

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inspired *Meuschenkenner*, walking as I do by the mere light of common sense. I simply put to you the dilemma, Wherein do you differ from Kropotkin as you describe him, seeing that you expressly ground your desire for German success on your trust that it will mean *the triumph of Socialism in Germany, and therefore in the countries which Germany may subdue?*

Here are your words :—

Kropotkin proclaims the universally known fact that the German aristocracy (Junker) and the Prussian dynasty have an all too friendly attitude to the maintenance of the Russian autocracy. But he does not draw from this premiss *the one possible conclusion*, namely, that *Germany's victory over Russia must be also an overthrow of the rule of the Prussian aristocracy and a triumph of the German democracy*, and that, conversely, *Germany's defeat would infallibly prolong the sway of the Prussian aristocracy and of German militarism*, which would find itself constrained in the near future to make war against an intolerable situation in Europe.

Such is your piquant corollary to your demonstration that the "freedom" of the nations can be attained only by the overthrow of Britain's naval power and the substitution of Germany as mistress of the seas. Even as the German Socialists counselled the Belgian Socialists to submit to the Kaiser, you counsel the Socialists of all the other nations to submit to him on the strength of your precious prophecy that his

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triumph will mean the speedy triumph of German Socialism, whereas his unfortunate defeat would mean the continued supremacy of Prussian Junkerdom and militarism. This after you had explained to us that German militarism in general is rooted in the whole life-conditions of the German people.

I will say nothing here of the incomparable arrogance of the position, or of the colossal folly of the conception that nations can be induced to welcome defeat by such a vaticination, or of the tactic of informing all the non-Socialists of Europe that this monstrous world-war is ultimately a war for the establishment of Socialism everywhere under the ægis of the German Social-Democratic party. That tactic seems to be on a level with the announcement that from the German Socialist point of view honour is a notion fit only for *bourgeois*. I prefer to invite you to reflect on the utter baselessness of your forecast from the point of view of inductive sociology.

Presumably you have some regard in your thinking to induction. You can hardly mean us to understand that for you sociology is a matter of inspired prediction, after the manner of the ancient prophets. And I would ask where

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in history there is a semblance of pretext for the surmise that the triumph of Germany in this war would mean the triumph of Socialism in Germany. *Concessions* to Socialism it might conceivably mean, if the Socialists could argue that they had been whole-hearted collaborators in the conquest. But could they? The Roman *plebs* could secure grants of land after a conquest on such a plea. But the Roman *plebs* had not a journal, a *Vorwärts*, to exasperate the patriciate and the average patriot by indirectly exposing the hollowness of the official propaganda, criticizing the programme of annexation, exploding the myths about the atrocities committed by the enemy, and revealing the sufferings of the German poor from lack of food.

In view of this state of things, and of all historical experience, what shadow of ground have you for your Socialistic forecast? After the fall of Napoleon the patriot Liberals of Prussia had some right to count on political reforms as a reward for the part they played in stimulating the War of Independence. Did they get any? Stein, the liberalizing statesman, was left broken-hearted by the Vienna settlement to which Prussia assented, and by the home policy which followed upon victory. Arndt and

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many another democratic patriot were exiled. The reactionary German romanticists, on the other hand, mostly became the paid henchmen of the reactionary German States. So much for the sequelæ of Prussian victory after Waterloo.

In Britain, as you are well aware, they were relatively much the same, though Canning was no friend to continental autocracy. Despite intense popular misery, seventeen years had to elapse before the nation could obtain the Reform Bill, which merely granted the kind of parliamentary reform that had been energetically and widely demanded fifty years before, with sympathy from Pitt. On the other hand, it was after the *defeat* of Jena that Stein carried his abolition of the serf status of the Prussian peasantry, and it was after the *defeat* of 1870 that France established the third Republic on the ruins of the Napoleonic dynasty. I will not answer for the sanguine forecast of some that in a defeated Germany the Social-Democrats are likely to effect a democratic revolution. I have seen no signs of the capacity for such a revolution among the German people. But at least such a forecast is a hundred times more plausible than yours.

You tell us, with regard to Russian hopes, that you have "absolutely no faith in the self-

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certified testimonies of 'revolutionary' phrasemakers, according to which they have the capacity suddenly to 'liberalize,' to 'revolutionize,' to 'civilize' a victorious Russia." Why, they, may I ask, should you expect us to have faith in *your* subjective forecast of the socializing and demilitarizing of a victorious Germany by the Social-Democrats? Kropotkin, you say, does not know Russia, which he left in 1876. But Kropotkin should know through his compatriots as much of present-day Russia as you know of present-day Germany. He is, you say, "a great, incurable phantasiist in the field of practical life, and especially on that of social reform and politics." Why, then, did you reckon on his adhesion to your view of the situation? Was the expected assent of an incurable phantasiist to *your* view of the matter a satisfactory kind of support? You knew his way of thinking when you asked him for a letter. Phantasiist he may be; but are you not the phantasiist *par excellence*, with your expectation of Russian support and your faith in the surrender of a victorious Kaiser and Junkerdom to the hated Social-Democrats?

From the standpoint taken in this letter, forecasts of the evolution of a victorious Russia and

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forecasts of the evolution of a victorious Germany are alike finally irrelevant to the moral issue which it was your duty to face. You wax indignant over what you call the "barbaric Anglo-French calumnies against the German people." We have seen that therein you are expressing merely your bias, not the result of any investigation of the atrocities charged upon the German armies. But supposing these atrocities to be kept out of the question, there remains the monstrous and world-seen atrocity of the invasion of Belgium, for which, so far as I can see, you can offer no semblance of moral defence.

And this raises an issue which you might do well to consider. Sweden, you think, incurs danger from the power of Russia. I will not argue as to whether she did not incur a much more real danger at the hands of Germany: on that head, apparently, your mind is made up. What you have to say about Herr von Jagow's doctrine of the necessary future absorption of small States by large, or of the common German aspiration to annex Holland and Belgium, is a matter which concerns your compatriots. I am not aware that such doctrines and aspirations are current in Russia with regard to non-Slav nationalities. But supposing either your appre-

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hension or the other to have any foundation, what would be, in a time of danger, the world-position of a Sweden which had either applauded or viewed without a particle of resentment the foul German attack on Belgium? I am thankful to know that many Swedes detested it as heartily as I do ; and I have full trust that Sweden will not now be made the victim of the lust for expansion of any foreign Power. But if Swedes in general stood at your point of view, what claim would they have to general sympathy if their country should ever incur Belgium's fate?

To you and those of your countrymen who may still harp on their animosity to and fears from Russia, I can only repeat that to justify on such grounds Austria's attack on Serbia and Germany's attack on Belgium is to stultify the very grounds given. Russia could not conceivably have a worse ground for invading Sweden than had Germany for invading Belgium. That Russia will ever commit such a crime I no more believe than I believe that Britain will. But it is not upon any prophecy that I stake the claim that France, Belgium, Russia, and Britain are solidly against the world-menace of Germany. That menace you yourself have endorsed and justified in the most unreserved fashion ; and against a Germany which enlists Turkey and

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homologates the stupendous massacre in Armenia I gladly welcome the alliance of Russia.

Concerning new Russian aggression there is, on your own principles, as little ground for fear as there is for the hope that a victorious Germany would turn democratic and respect the liberties of the nations. Russia has not been complaining of overwhelming need for new expansion. She has sought, it is true, ice-free ports, and I fancy she will now obtain some; but she is the last Power in Europe likely to hypnotize her population by a demand for colonies. She needs, above all things, to develop her own resources, so long manipulated in German interests. She has not a host of doctrinaires calling for *Weltmacht* by fair means or foul, and insisting on supremacy at sea. And she has no fears for her seaborne commerce, upon which to found a policy of naval expansion.

That there may be something in some of the pleas you urge on behalf of some sections of the Russian population I am not concerned to dispute, even though you hark back to the conquering exploits of some ancient "Swedish warriors," as if these were valid political arguments. The Ukrainians, you tell us, have grievances, even as the Irish have had in the United Kingdom. So be it. I do not, as you

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do, expect a millennium to follow close upon Armageddon. But I am bound to say that Russia's future is for me a more hopeful subject than Germany's as expounded by you. Russia has not morally *gone back*. Her culture, contemplated on the side of humanism, has in the past fifty years shown a relative lift not seen in that of her enemy. Tourguénief and Tolstoy, Dostoyevsky and Gorky, have given to mankind a gift not paralleled by that of the specialisms of Germany.

You have, you tell us, "the deepest respect for the intellectual riches, the spiritual treasures, that may still slumber in the Russian soul." But, you add, "I know that they must there for the present simply slumber. And I know that no one can yet tell how they will finally awake, or when they will become a living reality in the light and in liberty." And you apply once more, in this connection, the simple German dialectic :—

Is there anywhere any thinking man who has travelled from Köln to Moscow . . . without receiving for his whole lifetime the deepest impression of the immense difference in the culture-levels of the people to the west and east of the frontier? German order, German cleanliness, German comfort, German rectitude, (!) German KULTUR on the one side; and on the other Russian disorderliness, Russian dirt, Russian *poverty*, Russian corruption, Russian cultural primitiveness.

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On such grounds you think you justify your hopes that Germany will crush Russia, and Austria conquer Serbia. And Belgium? Are German orderliness and German Kultur so superior as to justify there the brutish devastation of a territory, the savage decimation of its non-combatants, the extortion of the last coin of the survivors, the exaction of their labour upon pain of death, and the leaving of their famishing masses to be fed by alien charity? This, for you, is German rectitude. What, then, is it that accounts for the common German practice of leaving filth in the beds, on the unconsumed food, in the churches, and in the furniture of the French and Belgians wherever possible? German cleanliness?

Your ethic is so grotesque that I will not combat it further. On your view Germany has a fairly clear right to annex Sweden, which is still in parts rather primitive, is it not? So be it. But if the question be of the possibilities of progress before the two nations, Russia and Germany, I am bound to repeat that the hopes of mankind seem to have the better chance on the Russian side. Within some two centuries Russia has advanced, under enormous natural difficulties, from substantial barbarism to a state of civilization in which she can show a humanist

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art with which Germany has nothing to compare, and some names in science which specializing Germany would be proud to be able to claim. And what has been the nature of the progress of Germany, which had a civilization in many respects at least abreast of that of France and England in the sixteenth century?

By reason of the Thirty Years War, that edifying object-lesson in the ennobling and civilizing effects of warfare, she was arrested for two hundred years in respect of her "comfort," and for at least one hundred years in her intellectual evolution. As for her moral progress, has there been in the aggregate any since Kant? Do you count the Hegelian philosophy of war an upward step in human thought? Is the *aura* of Treitschke and Bernhardi a hygienic advance on that of Goethe? Is the invasion of Belgium a "cultural" improvement on any campaign since Attila? Germany carried through the Thirty Years War; Frederick deliberately precipitated that of Seven Years; Pertz boasted that Germany began the war against the French Revolution; Bismarck deliberately planned the wars of 1866 and 1870; and now Germany has of aforethought brought on the world-war, with your Swedish blessing. I think the Russian record is rather more promising than that.

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Of old irreverent German Jews ascribed to the German "Michel" the virtues of the ass and the vices of the bear. Grown into an artificer, and, in large proportion, a Social-Democrat, he is the obedient instrument of the makers of the vilest war of aggression that has been waged for centuries. Whatever "spiritual riches" may have "slumbered" in him seem to have done very little towards flowering. Affliction may evolve them; victory certainly would not. Victory in 1870 made him drunken with clownish vanity; and *Siegestrunken* he has remained for four and forty years. Victory to-day would leave him proud of marching over the prostrate face of Belgium, and lusting to repeat the exploit elsewhere.

The Russian people, who instinctively resisted the resort to useless war with Japan in 1904, who before had gladly warred to liberate Bulgaria, who eagerly took up arms in 1914 to save Serbia, seem to have more of human good and saving sense in them. If they are the less instructed, the more is to be hoped from them. But that, once more, is not the real issue. The real issue is whether Kultur is a defence against an indictment for rape, murder, and arson.

§ 11. THE POLITICAL BARBARISM OF GERMANY

STRANGE as it may seem to you, then, I meet your general plea of the super-civilizedness of Germany with the counter-assertion that Germany has long been and still is one of the politically backward, and is thus now one of the most dangerous, countries of Europe. As you will have seen, I do not for a moment claim that my own or any other country is politically developed to perfection. It is a question of relative development. But any true sketch of the political development of Germany in the past two hundred and fifty years must reveal that relative backwardness.

To begin with, the Thirty Years War threw all German civilization behind for two centuries. It is a German culture-historian who affirms that "the German of the seventeenth century was thrown back into utter barbarism by the Thirty Years War."¹ That is doubtless an over-

¹ Hillebrand, as cited, p. 77.

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statement ; and it is unnecessary to add that a nation's misfortune is not its crime. But that misfortune itself is the proof of extreme political immaturity. The torn France of the sixteenth century could produce the *Satyre Ménippée*, and could attain to national unity after the Wars of Religion. Germany still had the Thirty Years War before it. And the Peace of Westphalia accentuated her immaturity in every respect. German statesmanship could compass nothing better than the rule *cujus regio, ejus religio*. Of self-governing institutions there was hardly a vestige in the three hundred States.

Thus it was that Frederick of Prussia could in the eighteenth century plunge without warning into a war of sheer ambition, his people and his Ministers obeying him because they must. Here was a predatory war without conscience, acclaimed by the whole Prussian people to this day as necessary, fertile, just, glorious, and all the rest of it. Ranke gets over it by remarking that "happily" moral criticism "is not the task of the historian." When it is a question of the misdeeds of France he is conscious of no such limitation. Here we have the explicit acceptance of iniquity as part of the German code.

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Britain, you may say, was in these days not blameless. Quite so ; but we have the verdict of Hegel, with an eye to the eighteenth century, that "in England, for example, no unpopular war can be waged." ¹ This, again, is an overstatement : the war with the American Colonies was to a large extent unpopular ; and it was admittedly the self-will of the King that wrought it. But the point is that the judgment of the people did come into play. In Germany that factor first came into vigorous operation in the War of Liberation. But it was followed by no political development, no growth in self-government ; and in the constitutional collapse of 1848 the inevitable political incompetence of the German people as a whole was fully manifested.

Then came the Bismarckian handling of Prussia on the old monarchic lines, with a masterful statesman behind the King. And whereas other countries went to war for good or bad reasons—Britain in the Crimea, foolishly enough, by way of resisting Russian intervention in Turkey—Prussia deliberately *picked* quarrels and stirred up wars, in order to build up Prussian power and effect the unification of Germany. As

¹ *Philosophy of Right*, § 329, add.

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Hegel had foreseen, that could not be achieved without force. Germans could not unite for unity's sake. Only as a result of a victorious war, a triumph over France, a debauch of racial vainglory, could they frame a German Empire.

Thus once more was the German national mind decisively conditioned by mere events and antecedents. There has been no adequate inner development, no education in the great task of self-government, which is the world's apprenticeship to international ethic. A success of violence, a triumph of racial animosity, was the high-water mark of national attainment. The Reichstag was to remain an assembly where the Kaiser's Minister was responsible to his master alone. The Great Germany of the new era was to get its substitute for education from the doctrinaire gospel of Socialism and the eternal liturgy of self-praise, the specific mark of the primitive, of the savage, of the barbarian.

Once upon a time Lessing could talk of "French vanity." To-day the reproach would savour of burlesque. German boasting, notorious from the days of Ariovistus, grew anew upon the old roots from the day of Frederick onwards. Already rant about Her-

Political Barbarism of Germany

mann the Cherusk and the Roman tyrant was classic before Treitschke was born.

Hillebrand notes "that peculiar national pride of a literary and scientific character which ever since [1815] has been proper to Germany, and which ultimately has kindled also the national pride in things political."¹ Precisely. Always the factor is pride, the phenomenon which "goeth before a fall," the nutriment of the barbarian, the negation of true culture. Of that wine the German people have drunk daily and hourly since 1870, till their notion of defence against a charge of foul crime, and of wantonly plunging Europe into war, is to roar their own praises, in the manner of Ariovistus. Even Hillebrand must declaim of "that army, which, even should it ever become superfluous for the defence of national independence, should it ever cost us twice as much as it does, will be maintained as that national high school of unselfishness, reverence, manliness, and true idealism which it has been for the last seventy years, in the silent times of universal peace, still more than in the stirring moments of glorious warfare."²

Unselfishness, reverence, manliness, and true

¹ As cited, p 255.

² *Idem*, p. 212.

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idealism, even as we have had them in the invasion of Belgium and in the endorsement of the Armenian massacres! Had it ever, one wonders, occurred to Hillebrand, when he was aspersing the France which had given him shelter and hospitality, that there too there had still longer been the same school of all the virtues?

Since you make so much of "extracts" by way of indicating the "psychology" of the British people, I will lay before you a set which you are not likely to meet with in the German newspapers, but which have been published in the English. They are from the diary of a German scholar-soldier, Private Becker, 6th Company, Ersatz Battalion, 3rd Foot Guards, Landsturm, who in civil life is Professor of Latin at the Bonn Gymnasium. The notes extend over August and September last—the first month in Russia, the second in France. From a long transcript I select the following:—

August 2nd.—On again. Exhausting march. Bad treatment of stragglers, especially of one-year volunteers. Bad food, quite insufficient. Insulting language. The officers lounge in carriages. The men are indignant.

August 4th.—March to Zamosz. I can go no farther. Always the same brutality of the N.C.O.'s towards the men who are going lame. Low spitefulness. Abuse.

August 7th.—March of from 17 to 18 miles. Flies, dirt. . .

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One lives like a beast in the filth. The officers divide the presents from home among themselves. They take away the tent canvas from the men, and have fine tents put up for themselves in which they wrap themselves up comfortably. They go on the spree, they steal the bread and wine out of the wagons, and all the while they are drawing big rations.

August 9th.—We are now three miles from the front. The 3rd Company has come back ; all the men I knew in it are either wounded or killed. Only the officers and N.C.O.'s are in good shape ; their number is astonishing considering the losses in men.

August 10th.—Threats of punishment for the smallest blunders make life unbearable. In presence of the haughty and independent attitude of the N.C.O.'s the men seem like mere ciphers, like a herd of cattle.

August 11th.—The officers look splendid. They are gay and always making jokes. The men march with their heads down, buried in their own thoughts, without speaking.

August 14th.—In action. . . . Awful fire. The regiment has lost about 170 men. "It is stupid to attack so strong a position," muttered Captain B—. *All the same, that did not prevent him from firing on his own men.*

August 15th.—In pursuit of the Russians. Worn out by excitement and hunger. Exuberant cheerfulness of the officers. Colonel, major, captain, laugh boisterously. Their faces beaming, shining with fat. For us, hardships, dirt, hunger. . . . The young soldiers are grossly treated by the old soldiers, who answer them in monosyllables and hardly deign to look at them. We are treated like criminals and worse. . . .

Passionate desire for peace, amounting to physical pain.

And why should one die ? Why ?

August 18th.—Spent the day in holes. Slept ; nothing to eat. In the evening made a line of trenches joining up the shell holes. The German soldier has no personality ; he is a machine.

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August 19th.—The day before the fight I saw, on the march, a colour-sergeant beat a recruit with a stick. This morning the same sight. March all night without a halt. Major Count Stillfried is ferocious. Soldiers are tied to trees for eating biscuits and apples or lying to an officer.

August 21st.—The officers have tents and tables like tourists, and have an abundant spread. . . .

August 29th.—As soon as the attack opened, *the officer commanding the company, Lieutenant Reinicke, stayed behind, and nothing more was seen of him ; not only so, but the section leaders and the non-commissioned officers stayed behind. The sections and groups advanced without leaders. Indescribable jumble. We had heavy losses, but one no longer notices them.*

August 31st.—Our leaders yesterday remarked, "You shall have something to eat when you have taken the trench."

September 5th.—Food absolutely insufficient. . . . The old soldiers and non-commissioned officers stick to the travelling kitchens and stuff themselves.

September 21st.—*Lieut. Reinicke has got the Iron Cross.* Every morning, drill, with the usual accompaniment of abuse and threats. In itself, what is required of one at drill is not so bad, but it becomes a real torture on account of the system. This morning, when we fell in, I made a wrong movement, as the sun prevented my looking to my front. Immediately the colour-sergeant put me down for punishment. . . . As a result of our marches in Poland many of us have sore feet. Every day the colour-sergeant checks some of the lame men, threatens them, and puts them on extra fatigue.

September 27th.—One gets stunted intellectually. One has no longer a single idea except to keep going physically. Always the same longing for peace, and before my eyes the spectre of the French front close at hand, with the horrors of its artillery fire. *Lieut. Reinicke has been drunk since yesterday.*

Political Barbarism of Germany

This would seem to be on the whole weightier evidence than Hillebrand's as to the real working of the German national school of "unselfishness, reverence, manliness, and true idealism." For those of us who have known Germany there is nothing very surprising in the picture. The brutality of the drill-sergeant, the selfish arrogance, stupidity, and vulgarity of many of the officers, were matters of common talk there thirty years ago ; and it is perfectly natural that in the interval things should have gone from bad to worse. The military novels tell as much. Ever more heavily has the yoke of militarism lain on the nation, drilled and taught to glory in its chains.

Militarism in Germany has reached its worst in brutality precisely because Germany has developed the most soulless species of militarism. Theirs is not an army for defence but an army for *Macht*, the army of a nation that reached success by provoking wars, and can frame no nobler ideal. In no other army is there such an extremity of sunderance between captains and men, such brutal tyranny over the privates, such insolent licence among the officers. Shall I tell you why? In no other army would it be endured. The army of France is democratic

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because France is democratic. Officers who tried to treat their men in the German fashion would have short shrift ; but they do not try, because they are in a different relation to begin with. The feudal spirit is gone in France: it still rules in Germany.

In one of the early months of the war an American journalist was invited by the German Staff to move among their armies and see them at work. He testified to splendid organization, and every appearance of high efficiency. As to the discipline, he reported that he saw " only one instance " of the reputed brutality of the system: the case of an officer who struck a soldier twice on the face with his riding whip for omitting to salute him. You will admit, I think, that such things, even if common, were not likely to be freely done in the presence of an American reporter. If by any possibility it could happen in the French or the British army, there would be a fair chance of the officer being either knocked down on the spot or shot soon afterwards. But we do not hear of such things in the French or the British army.

From officers like these, from men bullied and degraded by the drill-sergeant from day to day, to expect chivalry in warfare would be fantastic.

Political Barbarism of Germany

Efficient organization may produce an efficient supply of munitions, as against a foe less organized: but no mere military machine can so produce high-minded men. Brutalized men will take to brutal licence when they can; ignoble officers will make ignoble troops. It is all of a piece. Hillebrand was theorizing *in vacuo*, talking "in the air," in what he elsewhere declares to be the manner of the German Professor. Set beside the transcript from reality, his picture only testifies anew to the developed German gift for the mental manufacture of unreality.

And this, too, is clearly consequent. It is from the moral consciousness which found the Seven Years War "fertile because necessary," and necessary because potentially fertile, that we get this pæan to German militarism, the militarism in virtue of which the armed officer must slay the unarmed civilian compatriot who jostles him. And that is the militarism which has forced the World War. - Not such as this was the militarism of France, driven to arm more and more efficiently against the German bully who had insolently menaced her four times between 1875 and 1914. Not in France, and not in Russia, had militarism and vanity pro-

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duced a nation declaiming daily in its very schools about the need for *Weltmacht*, and insisting upon adding dominion of the seas to predominance upon land.

The German national mind, like the German Empire, has been machine made. "It was written," says Hillebrand, "that our political ideas should be framed by professors, as professors had framed our literary and artistic, our religious and philosophical ideas."¹ But the essential fact is that the professors have latterly been the mere gramophones for official "records." So long as they thought for themselves they counted for nothing with the rulers. Hegel was the first of note to don the livery, and for long he had few imitators; so that in the next generation Haym could hold him up to a severe censure. But after 1870 the tide turned. In 1880 Hillebrand could write that "the nation in which Madame de Staël did not find two minds thinking alike on any subject has become singularly gregarious, nay uniform; the great producer and consumer of original ideas is content nowadays to feed on some few watchwords mechanically repeated."²

For twenty years past, in ethics and in

¹ As cited, p. 276.

² *Idem*, p. 224.

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economics alike, the professors have dyed all their teaching with a State gospel of *Weltmacht* which vitiates both sciences to the core. All thought is coloured alike; and the German youth gets but Teutonic self-worship and might-worship under the names of political and moral philosophy. Thus what was true in 1880 is doubly true to-day. "The new German patriotism, which is not to be confounded with the old Prussian, was not and is not *naïf*. It is conscious; it is intentional; it has a tincture of pedantry because it has been made by scholars and literary men. It has sprung up from a feeling of *want* of patriotism such as had reigned before, and against which reaction was necessary. . . . Hence the exaggerations of German patriotism. It was not born naturally or spontaneously: it was the fruit of reflection."¹

But it had a virgin soil, so to speak, a politically barbaric soil, to grow in. And so Germany has become the most habitually boastful of all the nations, and by natural extension the most domineering, the most contemptuous of others and their rights. Where other undemocratic States have been tyrannous by tradition, Germany is so by theory, by dogma, by race-gospel,

¹ Hillebrand, p. 288.

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by the self-intoxication of a perpetual roar of rhetoric. Even the Socialists, winning an election, boast that Germany is intellectually the head of the world, and they intellectually the head of Germany. And you know something of their "empty phrase-mongering."

They have had some good intentions. So far as propaganda without action could go, they have talked for internationalism and repudiated race-pride. At least, they were doing so ten years ago. But latterly they too have had their "Jingoes," who have talked of *Herrenvolk* and *Pöbelvolk*, patrician nation and *plebs* nation, and have done their best to foster the war-spirit against Britain. The saner spirits have always been powerless against the ever-rising tide of militarism, national envy, and national arrogance.

And thus we find a German army educated to brutality, driven to savage fury by unexpected resistance, breathing curses as a ritual, striving daily for some new form of "frightfulness," blindly hoping to terrify where it cannot overcome by the most enormous fighting organization. In the old days Friedrich Schlegel and Hegel spoke feelingly of keeping war civilized. "It is the highest glory of civilized nations,"

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wrote the former, "to repress and subdue by the sentiment of honour, by a system of severe discipline, and by a generous code of warfare, respected by all the belligerent parties, that tendency and proneness to cruelty and barbarity inherent in man."¹ And Hegel proclaimed that "modern wars are carried on humanely. One person is not set in hate over against another. Personal hostilities occur at most in the case of the pickets."²

And after three more generations of the highest German *Kultur* we have the inundation of bestial rapine in Belgium, the massacres of helpless civilians, the using of women and children as "shields," the bombarding and bombing of unfortified towns, the poisoning of wells, the sinking of passenger ships, the cult of the Zeppelin, and the shooting of Nurse Cavell. For they are the supreme *Menschenkenner*; and they are sure they know by their science that enemies can always be terrified, even as they knew that they could detach Ireland and India and Egypt and South Africa from the British Empire. And every new outrage brings in new myriads of British recruits; and India,

¹ *Philosophy of History*, Lect. II.

² *Philosophy of Right*, § 338, add.

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spontaneously offers more and more of her treasure, and the Dominions more and more of their men, and America more and more of her munitions ; and the German name becomes more and more " a hissing and a byword " among the nations.

The psychology of your friends is the psychology of the braggart. The science of war they mastered like the other physical sciences ; and they took for granted that their mere barbaric instinct, their race-pride, and their appetite to power yielded them a science of man, a *Völker-Psychologie*, in which their ascendancy was deducible even as might be the operation of an explosive shell in physics. That is to say, in the most essential knowledge of all, in comprehension of the vast process of international action and reaction, of the way of working of the souls of nations and of free men, they are the most profoundly unscientific of all the civilized peoples, and by consequence they are the most barbarous. That is my thesis.

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