

THE CURE FOR WAR

which men become aware by following the principles. And as the bad artist understands less about art the more he practises it badly, so we nations of Europe understand less about right living and thinking and feeling, the further we, as nations, depart from the Christian way. And now we are faced with the result of our departure in this war, which reduces all our rivalries to an absurdity, as if we were game-cocks fighting out of mere pugnacity until we were all desperately wounded or dead.

And the worst of it is that we have to fight and should do wrong if we abstained. This particular cause of ours is just and the immediate sin of this particular war is our enemy's. But the Europe in which our enemy became capable of this sin is the Europe of all of us. We have all been more or less infected by that evil principle upon which the Germans have acted. They believed that we should do what they have done if we had the chance. They are the criminals, made by bad social conditions, and we should think of ourselves as policemen, not as angels fighting devils. These Prussians are men like ourselves, perverted by a more resolute idolatry than ours, more actively foolish and dangerous because they have thought and willed more clearly in a wrong direction. But still they are men, and if we believe that the virus working in them is peculiarly Prussian we shall soon be believing their false doctrine of race again, and they will not be men to us at all, but merely Prussians, and everlasting, inevitable enemies.