

## SHIRKING THE ISSUE.

Of course I do not doubt that you are sincere in your low esteem for the intelligence of the statesmen, in all countries, who held the fate of Europe in their hands. What I suggest is that, in constantly recurring to this idle complaint, you are diverting your own and your readers' attention from the true issue, which you dare not—or, at any rate, will not—face. That issue is simply : Who willed the war ? and you know as well as I do that the short, and plain, and only true answer is : Germany. You know—if you have any acquaintance with German political literature of the past quarter of a century—that not only the military caste, but all the official classes of Germany, were permeated with a theoretical and dogmatic war-worship, which made them openly contemptuous of all efforts towards the safeguarding of European peace. They frankly regarded war as Germany's most paying industry, and at the same time as a "drastic remedy" for the spiritual ills of all the world, and chiefly of Germany herself. You know that German technical efficiency had begotten in the nation at large a vast and overweening self-esteem—a megalomania which made them conceive themselves appointed by Heaven to confer their Kultur—by force, if need be—upon the whole world. If you have any doubt on this point I can refer you to scores