

AN ANSWER TO BERNHARDI

FEW names have been more frequently quoted among us of late than that of General von Bernhardi. His volume *Germany and the next War* is generally taken among us as an exposition of the inner mind of Germany. The writer of this tract can only say that after many years of acquaintance with religious and philanthropic circles in Germany, it is his belief that most of their leading minds are quite unacquainted with it, and that, if they were, they would repudiate its ideas with indignation. But it is unfortunately also true that it does represent the party in Germany which is now in the ascendant, so far as we can learn its mind from its press and its public actions, and that this party is heartily supported by the nation. For a full understanding of how this came to be, it is better to wait than to attempt premature explanation.

What is Bernhardi's central thought? It is that war is, and always will be, a necessity, and that it is our duty and wisdom to recognize this, and give it its due place and honour in all our thoughts.

Now the view that war is a necessity is unfortunately held by many good Christians and Idealists, but it is held with a difference. They believe that war is a consequence of human sin, and they tacitly assume that sin will always endure in God's world. But they hold that sin need not have been, and so they are able to condemn war, just as they condemn every form of evil. It is man's doing and not God's purpose.

Bernhardi is more logical and more uncompromising.