

GERMAN PHILOSOPHY AND THE WAR

PROFESSOR CRAMB has said that it would be possible to treat the wars of 1866 and 1870 as the work of professors and historians. With the addition of philosophers this might be said *a fortiori* of the war of 1914. It is at least true that no account of the events which led up to the present crisis can be complete which does not include the course of philosophical ideas. There is the more need to recall this inner history at the present moment as attempts have not been wanting to fix a large part of the responsibility indiscriminately on what is popularly known as German Philosophy which has dated from Kant.¹ What I believe on the contrary can be shown is that, so far as philosophy is responsible, it is one that represents a violent break with the ideas for which Kant and the whole early idealist movement stood. It is a story of a great rebellion, I believe on the whole a great apostasy.

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GERMAN IDEALISM

If we would understand the significance for modern thought and life of the work of Immanuel Kant (1724-1804), we must recall the spirit that dominated the leading thinkers in England and France in the eighteenth century. It was an age of steady advance in physical science, the method of which is the resolution of objects

¹ See *Times*, Sept. 21, 1914. Letter by 'Continuity' on 'The New Barbarism'.