

Sir Robert's Speech.

Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen,—

"Today there is but one thought in our hearts, and it is fitting that I should speak to you of the appalling struggle which has been forced upon our Empire. I say forced upon us, because I am convinced that no nation ever desired peace more sincerely than the nations which compose the British Empire; that no statesmen ever wrought more to avoid war than did the statesmen of Great Britain in the weeks which immediately preceded the conflict.

"There is not time, nor is it necessary that I should dwell upon the occurrence which determined the issue. The great events which brought about the establishment and consolidation of the German Empire—under Prussian domination—were well known to you. Bismarck foreshadowed in a famous phrase the policy of the future. "The great questions are to be settled," he said in 1862, "not by speeches and majority resolutions, but by blood and iron." Then came, in quick succession, the war against Denmark in 1864, the downfall of Austria in 1866, and the overthrow of France in 1870. The policy of blood and iron seemed to consummate the realization of that which has been the dream of Germany for centuries. Germany became an Empire; the King of Prussia became its Emperor. The military spirit of Prussia dominated German thought and German ideals. The intoxication of victory aided by a propaganda preached to every child and every young man by the foremost thinkers of Germany imposed on its people an ideal and an ambition which included the dominance of Europe, and, indeed, of the world.

Insidious Teaching of the War Advocates.

"The world has only recently come to realize the astonishing teaching to which the German people have listened for the last half century. Among many others, Treitschke, a great professor of history, whose influence upon the young

men of Germany cannot be over-estimated, and Bernhardi, his disciple, have preached the religion of valour and of might. War has been glorified as a solemn duty for the cause of national development. They proclaimed that the State is not only justified, but bound to put aside all obligations and to disregard all treaties insofar as they may conflict with its highest interest.

"War," said Bernhardi, "is in itself a good thing. It is a biological necessity of the first importance... "War is the greatest factor in the furtherance of culture and power; efforts to secure peace are extraordinarily detrimental as soon as they influence politics.... Efforts directed toward the abolition of war are not only foolish, but absolutely immoral, and must be stigmatized as unworthy of the human race.... "Courts of arbitration are a pernicious delusion. The whole idea represents a presumptuous encroachment on natural laws of development which can only lead to the most disastrous consequences for humanity generally.... The maintenance of peace never can be or may be the goal of a policy.... "Efforts for peace would, if they attained their goal, lead to degeneration.... Huge armaments are in themselves desirable. They are the most necessary precondition of our national health."

Germany Has Long Been a World-menace.

"The profound influence of this teaching upon the German people may be realized from their unquestioning support of the enormous increase in their military and naval forces. Beyond question Germany is the greatest military power in the world. Without any such need as makes a great fleet imperatively necessary to ensure the safety and even the existence of the British Empire, she has built up in ships, personnel, dockyards and all other essentials a powerful navy de-