

## THE WAR.

(A paper read before the Charlotte County Teacher's Institute.)

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The subject assigned to me is a difficult one for those who have to deal with it in the school room, though there is no lack of material. Books, magazines and newspapers give us an abundance of war news, more or less reliable, and of theories about the causes of the war, and guesses as to how and when it may come to an end. We may be able to sift out for ourselves from all this mass of material the important facts, and to make up our minds in respect to the probabilities; yet all the uncertainties, just because they are uncertainties, and a large part of the unquestioned facts, for various reasons, are unsuitable for use in school.

Ten years ago, some of us would have said that all war news was unsuitable, and that war should hardly be mentioned in school except as a matter of history. All of our school histories we thought needed revision, giving much less space to kings and warriors, and more to the life of the common people and to the arts of peace.

This was, indeed, the popular view in the old country, as well as in this country and the United States. I should have been almost ashamed to confess at that time that it was not my view; but I was convinced by the words of Lord Roberts and others that war would come, and that we were doing wrong to let it come and find us unprepared.

The late Dr. Hay held the same opinion; and, at his request, I undertook a series of articles in the EDUCATIONAL REVIEW, on the Centennial Anniversaries of the War of 1812, not chiefly for the purpose of teaching Canadian History, but for the purpose of teaching through the schools, as far as possible, the great danger of not being ready for war when it came. The editor of the REVIEW was not so presumptuous as to think that our little efforts could accomplish much, where the great Lord Roberts failed; but he felt it was our duty as good citizens to do what we could towards counteracting the mischievous teachings of those who opposed all preparations for war in the mistaken belief that they were thus opposing war.

Before our little series of war stories ended, the Great War came. In school or out of school, it is the one thing of greatest moment to us now, and to everyone else in the civilized world.

It is a fearful and wonderful thing to be living at the time of the greatest war that the world has ever seen; when not only the fate of nations is to be decided, but civilization itself is in danger, and can only be saved by hastening the end of the war. Peace, even the precarious peace which we sought to preserve by the worthless expedient of shutting our eyes, we can now hope to regain only by submitting to German frightfulness, as Belgium and Serbia were forced to submit, or by continuing the struggle until Germany is ready to yield. There is no middle course. We cannot secure a permanent peace, or any other peace worthy of the name, by stopping the fight and closing our eyes again. Germany expects to win, or still professes a belief that she is winning. As things stand now, she has already won in Europe, on every front, east, west and south. If we stop fighting now, and leave her victorious, she will know that she can win again by the same methods whenever she chooses to renew the war.

We may have much yet to learn about the origin of the war; but we have an authoritative statement from the United States government to the effect that in 1898 a German officer told the late Admiral Dewey about Germany's intention of conquering the world. According to his prediction, the war was to begin in about fifteen years; so in 1914, when, as the Kaiser says, Germany was attacked by her enemies, the war was one year overdue.

To get some little idea of what the war is all about, let us try to get the German point of view.

Beginning with what is most difficult for us to understand, the Germans are thoroughly convinced that they are better in every way than any other people in the world, and that therefore God is with them and whatever they do God approves. All opposition to Germany is therefore an offence against God. German *Kultur* is for the healing of the nations. All the rest of the world has gone astray, but may yet be saved by submitting to German rule. It follows, of course, that the German government is divinely appointed, and should be universal.

Let me enlarge upon this point. Germany, you must remember, is not an empire. The King of Prussia is not Emperor of Germany. He is not so called. He is called the German Emperor; which is quite a different thing. There can be only one husband in a household. There