

being placed with their own men. Besides, it mattered little where they were placed, they were invariably dissatisfied anyhow. Those I saw were sullen, arrogant and often insolent; displeased with everything and everybody and most difficult to deal with. They always spoke of their rank and their Iron Cross—unavoidable it seemed to me, as I never came across an officer without it—as if entitling them to privileges shared by no one else. They were well pleased with themselves and their doings, frightfulness and all, and never did I hear from any of them a word which sounded like disapproval of the atrocities they had witnessed. Personally I only know of one German officer who disapproves this frightfulness, and his mother was a Russian. On the contrary, I heard a captain say that the Belgians had been treated much too leniently, and that all the civil population ought to have been driven out of their country and those who resisted shot on the spot. This officer was a Prussian. The marked difference between Prussians and South Germans, well known to those who have visited Germany in times of peace, has been amply illustrated by the conduct of the different units in this war.

“The Prussian is cruel by birth, civilization will make him ferocious,” said Goethe,