

## CHAPTER I—INTRODUCTORY

### THE BREAKDOWN OF GERMAN MORALITY

#### I

THE outbreak of the great war, as we can now see, was but the culmination of a condition that marked the greatest crisis in the history of the German people. The whole-hearted manner in which the entire nation entered upon a brutal war of conquest and plunder, with the attendant breaking of treaties and the scorn of all the rights of others, marked a serious breakdown in German national morality. The inception and conduct of the war reveal Germany as totally indifferent to all moral considerations, firm in their belief in the right of the strong to trample on the weak, and callous to the moral condemnation of the world. Never before has a great nation been revealed as so reprobate. And the cruelty and inhumanity and faithlessness that have so shocked the world have been outdone by her cynicism and shamelessness, and the