

SHIRKING THE ISSUE.

the title-page of a copy of your book on "The World-War," presented by you to some charitable enterprise, with the following autograph inscription:—

It needs only half a score of mediocrities, distributed in the right places as European Ministers of State, to plunge two hundred millions of people into misery.

GEORGE BRANDES.

When I find you harping on this catchword, I am moved to slip the button off my foil and tell you in plain language that you are taking refuge behind a poor platitude in order to evade your intellectual and moral duty as one of the leaders of European thought. If you are really so ignorant of the antecedents of this catastrophe as to think that any possible genius on the part of the Entente statesmen could have averted war, in the face of Germany's craving for plunder and domination, then I suggest that you ought to be silent until you have adequately informed yourself of the state of the German mind during the past twenty years. But it is absurd to suppose that your attitude is due to ignorance. You know very well that the fount and origin of the whole evil lies in Germany. You saw it coming—you predicted it—years ago. Then why do you now make it your business to