

Nature, it is well known, loves the strong, and gives to them, and to them alone, the chance of becoming civilized. Are the German people strong enough to earn that chance? That is what we are to see. They have some admirable elements of strength, above any other European people. No other European army can be marched, in close order, regiment after regiment, up the slope of a glacis, under the fire of machine guns, without flinching, to certain death. This corporate courage and corporate discipline is so great and impressive a thing that it may well contain a promise for the future. Moreover, they are, within the circle of their own kin, affectionate and dutiful beyond the average of human society. If they succeed in their worldly ambitions, it will be a triumph of plain brute morality over all the subtler movements of the mind and heart.

On the other hand, it is true to say that history shows no precedent for the attainment of world-wide power by a people so politically stupid as the German people are to-day. There is no mistake about this; the instances of German stupidity are so numerous that they make something like a complete history of German international relations. Here is one. Any time during the last twenty years it has been matter of common knowledge in England that one event, and one only, would make it impossible for England to remain a spectator in a European war—that event being the violation of the neutrality of Holland or Belgium. There was never any secret about this, it was quite well known to many people who took no special interest in foreign politics. Germany has maintained in this country, for many years, an army of spies and secret agents; yet not one of them informed her of this important truth. Perhaps