

what a German might have seen if he had turned his eyes on England early this year. In what words would he have been likely to describe what met his eyes? A Government defied in one of the three kingdoms; an apathetic people who rejected the advice and traduced the motives of the veteran leader of their armies, when he made an appeal to their manhood; who relied on their navy, and complained when called on to pay for more ships; unable or unwilling to defend themselves, each man with his own right hand. Our Legislature would have shown him an habitual preference, on both sides alike, of petty party aims over large national interests, which turned the august Mother of Parliaments into a by-word among the nations; and all the time his ears would have been dinned with vociferous professions of sanctity which accorded ill with the meanness and luxury of our lives. All this he would have seen, or thought he saw. It is true that the view was one-sided, and he might have seen more had he wished to; but it was not all illusion. The basis of concrete fact was wide and solid, and it provoked war and seemed to justify it. It is well we should not forget this ourselves; for those tendencies actually held the lead amongst us at the time; even now they are far from being extinct, and, unless we are watchful, they may easily recapture us. If, exchanging parts, we had observed Germany at the same period, we should have found a great nation straining every nerve and sinew on the prosecution of a single aim; without doubt or dissension among themselves, sacrificing all that opposed that aim, and training, like a good athlete, for its realization. Whatever we may think of the aim, and, so far as it was self-preservation, we must approve, there was nothing in the spectacle itself to inspire contempt