

cumstance to which neither we nor our enemies are, though for different reasons, inclined to give the prominence which possibly it deserves. The alliance between France and Russia may have struck many Germans with fear. The alliance was amply justifiable. It was necessary to the safety of both the allies. But it contained a menace to Germany. Nor was this latent threat the less terrible because the conquest of Alsace and Lorraine made it impossible for France to forgo lasting hostility to the German Empire. To the mind of an historical investigator it may occur that the Great Powers of Europe ought to have insisted in 1871 that the fate of Frenchmen, who detested the idea of being by force turned into subjects of Germany, should receive careful consideration, and should be determined not by a treaty forced by victorious Germany upon conquered France, but by a European Congress. On this view, the neglected duty of 1871 may be held in part responsible for the worldwide calamity of 1914. The impartial inquirer of 2000 will examine, as we ought even now to consider, how far a distinction should be drawn between the ambition of the German Government, with its Prussian officials, and the wishes of a large number of the Kaiser's peaceable subjects. This is a matter on which few Englishmen can now speak with certainty. My belief, not willingly entertained, is that a vast majority of Germans identify the worldwide predominance of the German Empire with the progress of mankind, and share the delusion that every blow struck at Germany is a deadly blow to the development of civilization. This is not the first time on which kings and people alike have imagined a vain thing. The reflectiveness of Bishop Butler suggested the question whether a whole nation might not go mad. The historical knowledge and