

OF PEACE TERMS

of the German people of all classes regard the act of attempted self-defence by Belgium as having exonerated her assailant from guilt.

Thus on the face of the official manifesto of the German Government it is plain that the Allies have to deal with a Power which recognises no moral standards in its dealings with other States. That any morally sane mind could at once find the "oppression of Greece" monstrous and the devastation of Belgium innocent is not thinkable. It would be unfair to the normal savage to say that such an ethic is on the savage plane. Savages do not thus add insane sophistry to savage deeds. We must either suppose the German Government to be jesting (a thing not readily associable with German officialdom), under circumstances in which jesting would certainly be symptomatic of moral insanity, or pronounce it so radically iniquitous as to call for an international treatment analogous to that meted out to individual criminals.

But the official attitude of the German Government in this matter only partially indicates the moral realities of the case. While it affects boundless indignation at the proposition that it and its allies should make amends and yield territory, it has quite certainly been planning to take territory from the States it had so far been able to victimise. As to this there has been no disguise among the general run of German publicists. It is not merely the common run of the newspapers and the propagandists of the stamp of Bernhardt that have been proclaiming the necessity of the annexation of Belgium. A number of them did that before the war,