

of strength—a consciousness of strength, not only actual but potential, and even more potential than actual. It was not only that they knew that they had the big battalions; that they knew that these battalions were admirably drilled and organized; that they knew that the whole nation was fully prepared for war. It was not only this—but they also knew that the nation had the spirit and the courage, the energy and the resolution for war. They knew that it was prepared to make enormous sacrifices. They meant to show the whole world what they could do; and what they would do in the way of brilliant achievements after the war was finished—when the German flag floated alone over the ruins of an independent Europe.

It must be confessed that there was a certain grandeur in these ambitions. They rested not only on the consciousness of strength but on the consciousness of virtue—the consciousness of possessing a particular group of warlike virtues—the stern self-discipline, the thrift, the persistence and self-devotion, which had raised Prussia in spite of her poor and barren soil to be the foremost of German states, and which just a hundred years ago had animated the German Army in the great War of Liberation from the Napoleonic tyranny. The Germans think—and not wholly without reason—that neither we nor the French, in our acquisition of empire, have shown virtues such as these.

When they speak of 'the justice of their cause', that is what they mean. They think that we stand in their way, and prevent them from obtaining that which is their due. They think that we are decadent, and enervated by long peace; and they are determined to wrest from us this empire of which we are not worthy.