

have been guilty." In the same impassioned speech to the German officers in his army he declared, "this diabolical practice of ravaging and destroying lays a dead weight." On a previous occasion he had begged, "Let us not imitate our ancestors of confusion, the Goths and Vandals, who, by destroying everything that belonged to the fine arts, have delivered down to posterity their barbarity and want of taste, as a sort of proverb and byword of contempt."

*Kultur!*

"Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?" Germany is true to her record.

"Nothing," writes Colonel Edmonds, "is more demoralising to our troops or more subversive of discipline than plundering." But, as Bentwich points out, "the theoretical inviolability of private property on land is circumvented on the Continent by a liberal interpretation of the necessities of war, and the German staff-rules actually recognise and give legal validity to a number of harsh practices under the title of *Kriegsmanier*, which temper, or rather whittle away, the laws of nations (*Kriegsraison*) on the ground that military necessity brooks no restraint." The plea of military exigencies, military necessities, is no new one on the lips of German casuists. They have always had sophistries to controvert the restrictive tendencies of accepted mitigations of war. They have gone further and urged success as plausible excuse for outraging humane conventions. To what lengths the doctrine has been carried von Bethman-Hollweg displayed when he made his callous and cynical statement in the Reichstag on August 4 last year: "We are now in a state of necessity, and necessity knows no law." The justification of necessity once admitted, law does end—for who is to define "necessity"? By the standards of a Bethman-Hollweg the offender decides. Which is absurd.

What is to be the conclusion of the matter? Are we to admit the apostles of *Kultur* correct in upholding the doctrine of might as right? Is physical force not only dominant but the deter-