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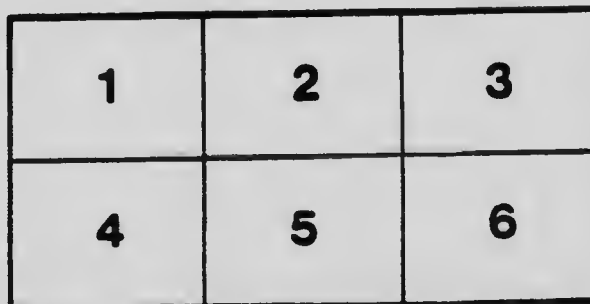
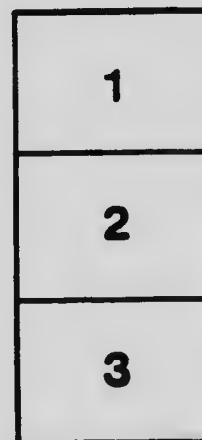
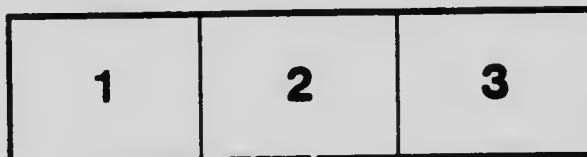
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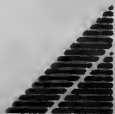
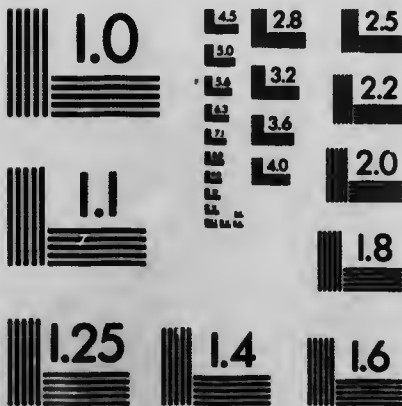
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Second Series

PAPERS FOR WAR TIME. No. 16.

GERMANY AND
GERMANS

BY

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BASIS OF PUBLICATION

This series of Papers is based on the following convictions :

1. That Great Britain was in August morally bound to declare war and is no less bound to carry the war to a decisive issue ;
2. That the war is none the less an outcome and a revelation of the un-Christian principles which have dominated the life of Western Christendom and of which both the Church and the nations have need to re-
examine ;
3. That followers of Christ, as members of the Church, are linked to one another in a fellowship which transcends all divisions of nationality or race ;
4. That the Christian duties of love and forgiveness are as binding in time of war as in time of peace ;
5. That Christians are bound to recognize the insufficiency of mere compulsion for overcoming evil, and to place supreme reliance upon spiritual forces and in particular upon the power and method of the Cross ;
6. That only in proportion as Christian principles dictate the terms of settlement will a real and lasting peace be secured ;
7. That it is the duty of the Church to make an altogether new effort to realize and apply to all the relations of life its own positive ideal of brotherhood and fellowship ;
8. That with God all things are possible.

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THOSE who have lived with Germans at home or in England in friendship so close that the difference of race was not always present to the consciousness, have had the advantage of seeing the idea of the German Empire not on its defence, but expressing itself as an understood thing. It is said that to understand a religion one should not read the books written to defend or to attack it, but should listen to its uncontroversial utterances addressed to believers whose faith is taken for granted. So also in matters of national feeling more is learnt from careless, spontaneous allusions than from reasoned statements.

It is true that in this unhappy but perhaps inevitable war we feel that we are attacking an immoral and unscrupulous militarism, set forth and embodied in practice with true Teutonic thoroughness by academic and political authorities; but the men who are fighting against us feel quite differently. The strength of the enemy lies in the fact that the average German soldier, who probably has never heard of Bernhardt, Treitschke, and Nietzsche, honestly believes that we are unwarrantably threatening the existence of the German Empire which it is his duty and his glory to defend with his life. The poignancy of this tragic situation arises from the sincerity and nobility of the feelings ranged against us, but in them lies also the hope of the future and the possibility, even in these present sorrowful days, of fulfilling the Christian duty of loving our enemies. It is true that the passion of

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devotion to the Empire seems to have blinded parts of the nation to the claims of honour, truth, justice, and humanity, but it has led also to the 'superhuman bravery' which our men at the front describe with regretful admiration.

For, indeed, the German Empire seems to the German 'the lordliest life on earth'. We must remember that the men and women who were the parents and teachers of the soldiers now in the field spent their youth in the glory and exhilaration of the newly-founded Empire. Their childhood was inspired and thrilled by tales of the Franco-Prussian war of 1870, the heroic venture of its enterprise, the gathering of kindred armies under one leader, the sudden and magnificent success, the devotion of soldiers, the gallant figure of the old King, the chivalrous Crown Prince, the irresistible march on Paris, the glory of the day at Versailles when brothers in arms met at the enemies' gates to form a new unity which should outshine the ancient splendours of the Holy Roman Empire. The capture of Alsace-Lorraine and its forcible retention within the Empire seemed only the recovery of a province lost in an hour of weakness two centuries before, and it was confidently expected that the lapse of a few years would revive the dormant sense of German nationality. It was the recall of a missing member of a family, unwilling, no doubt, for the moment, to return to his deserted kindred, but sure to be won in time. The change in the map which made the Rhine, as the song says, 'Deutschland's Strom, nicht Deutschland's Grenze,' aroused an enthusiasm such as we can imagine best by remembering our own joy when the Sirdar entered

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Khartoum. The German feeling for the Rhine can be understood only by sympathy, and the stately colossal figure of Germania at Niederwald, formed of the metal of French cannon and gazing across a river now all her own, expresses one of the most vivid thoughts in the mental world of the average German. I have seen divisions of soldiers marched up the hill to gaze at the statue and to hear the story of its installation. One cannot read the poetry of that time without a quickened pulse, and poetry gives a truer idea of national feeling than the discussions of diplomats. No doubt the authorities were not always so true-hearted, so rich in faith and devotion, as the common people, but it is the common people that were called on to love, not the actions of their small band of leaders.

Besides the exhilaration and thrill of a new Empire, the natural love of a nation for a long and glorious past was not unsatisfied. Julius Caesar had indeed crossed the Rhine, feeling that his magnificent success in Gaul was incomplete unless he attacked the still more formidable enemy across the river, but instead of a tale of victory, his book records only his half admiring wonder at the ways of the Germans and he 'decided not to proceed further'. A century and a half later Tacitus described Germany, her people, her religion, and her social customs, in a book every paragraph of which points the unspoken contrast with degenerate Rome. The heroes of the Nibelungenlied and Gudrunlied rival the Homeric chiefs in manliness and courage. Charlemagne might be considered a national hero, and Barbarossa by a yet surer claim. German heroes had fought in the Crusades and

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held back the onset of Slav barbarism. The fact that Germany as a unity never existed till 1870 does not debar the German child of to-day from claiming as his own inheritance all the achievements of the individual Teutonic states and no small share in the Holy Roman Empire. Though the clear-cut unity of our English history is lacking, the German is proud of his Teutonic antiquity and his mediaeval heroes, just as the Greek of any city state could claim his share in the glory of Homer and in the splendour of the Hellenic name.

The Empire thus possessed the double fascination of high antiquity and fresh youth, and aroused both the reverence due to an aged mother and the tender solicitude naturally felt for an adventurous child. There was a new world in which to follow an old tradition, and the patriotism, which sprang into sudden flame when the old embers were brought together and breathed on by a new inspiration, is one of the strongest forces in our modern world. It was fed also by fuel perhaps even more potent, by personal devotion to certain men. The German has always been a hero-worshipper, and in the House of Hohenzollern he believed he had found his heroes. The history of that race, from its cradle in the Swabian Hills, through its vigorous youth at Nuremberg and Brandenburg, to the royal crown of Prussia and the Imperial Throne, had been adorned by many magnificent and romantic figures, the Great Elector, Frederick the Great, and the sweet Königin Luise. The rulers who have represented the Empire since its foundation in 1871 have seemed worthy of their great house and name.

It happened to be my lot as a young girl to spend the

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momentous years 1887-1889 in Germany, and to witness from within the country the rapid succession of the Emperors of 1888. It would have been impossible not to sympathize with the ardent feelings of admiration called forth by each of the Kaisers as he appeared to the simple and warm-hearted people who form the great majority of the nation. Each of the three with his strongly-marked characteristics made special appeal to German sympathy and loyalty. The first of the Emperors, 'ein lieber, alter Herr,' now approaching his ninety-first year, but even yet a figure of stately and friendly strength, presenting himself daily in person with a winning confidence to the loyal gaze of his subjects beneath his window, was a familiar picture in the mind of every German child, which the sense that his stay could be but short surrounded with regretful tenderness. The Emperor Frederick was a hero of another type. He had been the idol of his troops in the French war, and had many personal advantages of looks and bearing, but the main thought of him was of moral force and intellectual ability, wide sympathies and cultured refinement. If he had lived, one feels even now, things might have been very different, but the hundred days of his brief reign could do nothing for his people except to leave them an ideal of fortitude and resignation.

The Emperor William II was a young man, not yet thirty, and no very clear idea of him had been formed in the minds of the ordinary people. But the pathetic circumstances of his unexpected rise to power won for him a sympathy which his personal qualities soon kindled into enthusiasm. His people were deeply impressed

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when they heard that he spent the first hour of his reign in prayer, and his outspoken piety appealed to what was best in the nation. His impulsiveness and habit of enthusiastic speed, his energy and restlessness, his very self-confidence and delight in his own power, all gave evidence that Germany had a man of vivid personality, no mere imperial nouentity, at the head of her states. *Punch* expressed very sympathetically the hopes and desires of the German people when in June 1888 it pictured the young knight keeping his vigil, like Victor Hugo's Charles V, at the tomb of Charlemagne :

Verse-moi dans le cœur, du fonds de ce tombeau,
Quelque chose de grand, de sublime et de beau.

With the three Emperors the grim figure of Bismarck was always in view, but even that man of blood and iron was endeared to the common people by a hundred anecdotes revealing humour, geniality, and a simple kind of outspoken piety. His dismissal by the Emperor a year or two later gave an unexpected shock and seemed to some an act of youthful ingratitude and arrogance, but to others it seemed to mark the beginning of a new era in which other and more gentle ideals might make their voice heard.

There was in those days among the common people little envy or bitterness against other nations. Germany was still absorbed in her new consciousness of imperial greatness and her line of progress had not yet brought her into conflict with the advance of others. ' Deutschland über Alles ' did not at first mean the subjection of other countries, but the subordination of the selfish interests of individual states to the welfare of the Empire. Foreign

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aggression was not a familiar thought to any but the Prussian Kingdom, and the other German states were too little accustomed to carry much weight in European politics to embark at once on ambitious schemes of world empire. Their ideal was a national one, and they were at the moment indifferent to the existence of other nations.

A purely national ideal was possible in the days of the isolation of nations, but in our times, when the world 'has become one neighbourhood', other claims, duties, and responsibilities demand a place in the framing of the *Politik*. But Germany, instead of forming a new kind of empire, followed the well-worn path of military ambition, and aimed at establishing a domination of the type already existent, striving to build by rapid and powerful acts an empire like those behind which lie centuries of quiet growth or obstinate struggle. She claimed to share the rule of primitive races without undergoing the discipline which has taught Britain her slowly learnt lessons. She desired admiralty without the price of it. In passing the bounds of Europe she entered into competition with other European nations which had gradually and almost unconsciously acquired paramount influence in Africa, Asia, and America.

It was natural that Germany, having conceived no original or new ideal of empire, should make her aim a copy of the aims of Great Britain, France, and Russia, and it was no fault of hers that she entered so late into the brotherhood of empires and found, like the dreaming poet in Schiller's verses, the world already distributed to others. Her fault lay in the lack of an originality capable

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of forming an ideal of a different kind of eminence, and in a mechanical following of what had been in others the lines of natural development. Rome never intended to 'govern the nations', nor Britain to 'rule the waves', but the inherent qualities of the two peoples led them gradually to attempt deeds which seemed the inevitable necessity or duty of the moment, till each suddenly awoke to the consciousness of her world-wide importance. The self-conscious empire of Alexander the Great, on the other hand, fell apart at his death. The year 1870, when events were ripening for the proclamation of Queen Victoria as Empress of India, when Livingstone had opened up Africa, and the United States had been welded together into the paramount power of the western hemisphere, was too late a date for a new World Empire to take its origin, unless indeed it could shatter the scheme of things and build up a new world on the ruins of the old.

So the German foreign empire, large and important though it was before the war, is a structure rather than an organism, and may fall to pieces unless it is forcibly held together. From this and other similar causes comes the German worship of force which is now bearing such bitter fruit. Ambition on the one side and fear on the other have driven Europe into an agony of pain and loss, the one party striving to destroy all that hinders what it claims to be its legitimate development—the other to defend what it claims as its rightful inheritance.

Sympathy with each other's aims, and a temper less given to suspicion and *Schadenfreude*, would probably have averted this war; the patient goodwill on both sides might have found a means by which Britain and

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Germany might each render, without collision, her characteristic service to the world. But the past cannot be altered, and all we can do is to learn our lesson and do better in the future. Whilst rejoicing that at the darkest hour Britain followed the path of honour and realized that there are things more precious than peace, we can all prepare for a happier future by trying even now to look with sympathy on Germany. We are bound as Christians to love our brethren and to love our enemies, and the Germans stand to us in both these sacred relations. Sympathy will prove the straightest and easiest path to love. The love of which St. Paul writes, no facile emotion but evidently an affair of the will ; enduring all things, suffering long, not easily provoked, thinking no evil —this love is ultimately a reasoned sympathy. And in our case sympathy with Germany's ideals and aims would be less difficult if we would take pains to realize how many noble and good qualities combine to make a German feel that it is ' a sweet and honourable thing to die for his country '.

An ordinary German is influenced far more by the lessons of his nursery and schoolroom than by the politics of the moment. The constitution of the Empire, which gives the average citizen only a negligible share in the policy of his country, has made politics the affair of a specialized class rather than a widely diffused interest. The many restrictions on liberty of speech and writing have deterred the best men from taking part in active politics, and the German habit of mind is more passive and amenable to authority than ours. We do not find in Germany the same eager probing into the causes of

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the war that we find in Britain, or the same imperious claim to see all the diplomatic correspondence that preceded it. These things the German has not been trained to consider his affair, but almost the deepest thing in his heart is the thought planted there in early childhood of the beloved Fatherland, the glorious Empire, the gallant Kaiser, the almost divine mission of the German race.

Therefore the average German is not responsible for the war in quite the same degree as the average Englishman, who certainly had clearer information and greater freedom in expressing his opinion, and we should be slow to include him in the same condemnation as those leaders of his who, as far as we can see, deliberately attacked the peace of Europe. And if we look away from the war, and remember Germany as we knew it before last summer, how much room there is for the sympathy, admiration and gratitude which are the springs of international goodwill.

It would be useless to deny that there are elements in the national characteristics on both sides which tend to obscure our fundamental likenesses. Much that is best in either is common to both nations, devotion to duty, stubborn courage, tenacity of purpose, respect for principle, patriotism, and the love of simple things. But there are many superficial qualities antagonistic to a good understanding with each other. The North German habit of mind is uncongenial to us in its stiffness, clumsiness, boastfulness, sentimentality, and absence of respect for the feelings of others. Nor is ours congenial to Germans—our quiet consciousness of unspoken superiority, our irritating reticence, our maddening tranquillity in great matters, our annoying crossness over

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trifles, our horror of pose, and our indifference to pomp and circumstance. We have different ideas of freedom ; the Englishman will take orders from a policeman but not from a soldier, the German prefers military rule even in civil matters. We place different values on freedom of speech and representative government. A deep-going divergence is apparent in the attitude towards women. A really serious obstacle to mutual regard is the difference in our sense of humour. For more than seventy years educated Britain has been trained to a certain uniformity of taste by the weekly issue of *Punch*, which, with very rare lapses, speaks in language free from coarseness and cruelty, unsparing in the freedom of its criticism, yet owning the limitations set by justice, decency, and human sympathy. We have been taught by this and other great humourists to see an amusing side to everything, even to ourselves, to recognize the narrow line between the sublime and the ridiculous, to handle even serious matters with a light hand, to shrink almost nervously from boastfulness and ostentation. But Germans seldom find *Punch* amusing, and we see little that is not deplorable in their comic papers. It is this difference of taste, accentuated by such writers as the authoress of *The Caravaners*, which often makes the two nations impatient of each other, so that we fail to see the strength and sincerity of the feelings which express themselves in ponderous personalities—they fail to see the dignity and patriotism which are disguised under our self-ridicule.

But divergence of taste and manners, though difficult to ignore in personal intercourse, need not render sympathy impossible. What is needed is closer contact, more

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patient study of each other's habits of thought and mental world, a truer sense of proportion and a clearer recognition of our real similarity of aim. As years have passed since the foundation of the Empire, we have watched Germany wrestling with the same difficulties as those which perplex ourselves. Like Britain, Germany is trying to do her duty to the uncivilized nations within her sphere of influence. At home, the social and economic problems, and that which lies at the root of them all, the problem of education, have not reached their solution in either country, but both nations are earnestly striving to solve them and have profited greatly by each other's experience and example. In the matter of faith both are enduring the same shock of assault, and both are struggling to learn the very truth of the beliefs which are so dear to both nations, and which have produced in the one country Bach and in the other Milton. The educated German has a claim on the sympathy of all who are likewise storm-tossed :

Is he not sailing
Lost like thyself on an ocean unknown, and is he not
guided
By the same stars that guide thee ?

Both nations are witnessing what will be, we trust, the birth of a renewed faith and devotion among the educated youth, and in the great struggle between Paganism and Christianity in the East both nations play a prominent part.

On our debt to Germany it is superfluous to expatiate. In music, philosophy and scholarship the modern world owes more to Germany than to all the rest of Europe put

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together, not to speak of the pleasure of visiting that beautiful land, or of unnumbered personal kindnesses from those with whom we are now at war. So that if sympathy, pity, gratitude, and kinship are the sources of love, it should not be too hard for us even in the dust and heat of conflict to refrain from bitterness or vindictiveness, and to answer fury with patience. The wild outbursts of passionate hatred of which we read in German poems and speeches need find no echo in Britain. They are the cry of men bitterly disappointed and cruelly disillusioned rather than an expression of permanent feeling, but we should have no excuse if we replied in similar language.

When the war is over, both nations will emerge weaker, poorer, sadder. Both will cherish heroic memories, both will mourn beloved dead. We shall turn wearily, both of us, to build up our national life again, and many years must pass before we recover from the cruel strain of these murderous months. No doubt the Germans will have suffered more severely than we, and it will be for many reasons far harder for them than for us to forgive the past. Englishmen will not be slow to put away resentment ; we have often fought before, and defeats have taught us a sober estimate of our strength and of our place in the world, but the new Empire had never been defied before and Prussia came into it victorious from three great wars. Whatever the terms of peace, we must expect on their side the bitterness of a deeply wounded spirit.

Few things will so seriously affect the future of Europe as the temper of mind in which Britain comes out of this great struggle. The magnanimity which in after years we shall wish we had shown and which, perhaps, at the

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time we shall wish to show, cannot be acquired in a moment. We cannot hate the Germans right up to the end of the war, and then find ourselves generous and sympathetic, able to resume our old ways of working together, and quick to realize our common bonds of religion and origin and our common task. It needs the practice of sympathy through all the days and weeks of this sorrowful contest.

Our sympathy cannot wisely express itself now in urgent demands for peace. The moral necessity which dragged Britain into the war must keep her there till the end is gained. To make a premature peace on an unstable foundation would only transfer the suffering of our time from our own to the coming generation, a responsibility from which we may well shrink. But in kindness to the alien enemies within our gates, in sincere intercession for our estranged kindred, in avoidance of harsh judgments, in gentle thoughts and words, a channel may be found for the love which to those who call themselves Christians is 'the fulfilling of the law'.

