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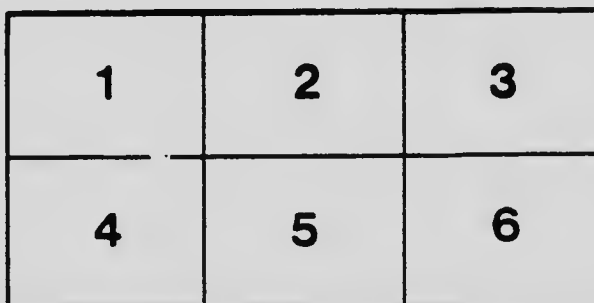
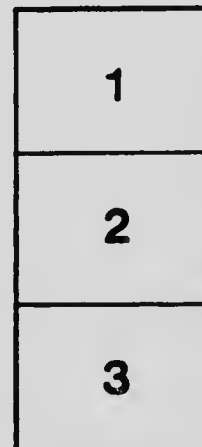
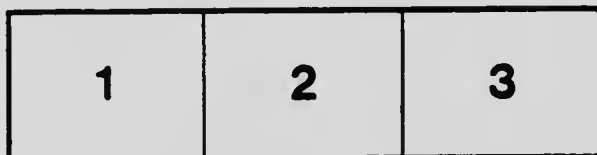
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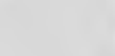
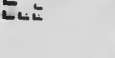
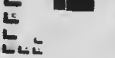
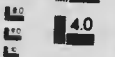
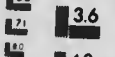
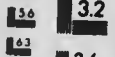
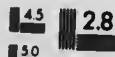
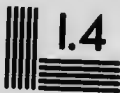
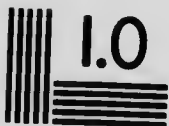
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THE LEADERSHIP  
OF THE WORLD

BY

F. S. MARVIN

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## THE LEADERSHIP OF THE WORLD

THE war goes on, with all its heroism and devastation, with no realization of German hopes, with a growing certainty that the Allied Powers will be able sooner or later to impose on a defeated foe the conditions which his criminal breach of international duty and the security of Europe appear to them to demand. It may not be amiss at such a point to examine one of the great fundamental questions in dispute, a question which has for many years tormented the mind of German publicists, and led them to many dangerous and perverted conclusions. What is meant by the hegemony of the civilized world? Where are we to look for it? By what organs and to what end can it and ought it to express its will?

It is not surprising that so great a question should have issued in the greatest armed conflict which history records. Many of us in all the leading countries of the world hoped that the latent danger might have been averted and a peaceful solution reached by reason and conciliation. Theoretically it was possible. In practice the problem has proved to surpass our powers.

It is significant that the greatest war since the Roman Empire should lead us back to the Roman Empire for its full explanation. The question of the leadership of the civilized world dates from then. For more than six hundred years, from the time when Rome defeated her greatest rival in the second Punic War to the final

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dissolution of the Empire before the barbarians, there was one undisputed leader. Rome combined in her own hands during that period the intellectual primacy which had been won by the Greeks, with moral and military forces drawn from herself. It was a moment of inestimable benefit to mankind, a consolidation which seems to us in the retrospect indispensable to the progress of the world; but it has floated ever since as a mirage to misguide and lead to destruction the headstrong ambitions of nations who have found themselves in possession of a temporary superiority over their neighbours. The mediaeval Empire fought and broke in a vain endeavour to regain it, for the Holy Roman Emperor was always struggling in vain to secure the dominion of Italy. Spain was ruined in the same pursuit for Empire. France has had more than one fatal paroxysm. We ourselves have not been exempt. Germany, as we shall see, has had many motives driving her to compete for the same now unattainable goal.

Now no conclusion from history can be more certain than this: what Rome did, she did once for all, and it cannot and should not ever be repeated.

The change of conditions which has made such an hegemony as that of ancient Rome for ever impossible again in the world, is so obvious that only a few of the maddest claimants, an occasional Napoleon, have openly aspired to it. The area of civilization which Rome had incorporated round the Mediterranean was extended by the Catholic Church, and the discovery of the New World made it far larger. The growth of trade, of science, of communication, produced a complex so vast and varied that no one centre could possibly control or keep in contact with the whole. In our own days it is less clear than it was that Europe as



a whole can retain the leadership of the world. But meanwhile the growth, the grouping, the inter-relations of the heirs of the Roman Empire have provided incessant problems for the two thousand years since. It is an acute crisis in this movement which is now upon us.

For though the hegemony of one State in the world has passed for ever, there is still somewhere a leading force in the world's progress, a nucleus of stronger and more civilized nations who contain among them the fruits of man's evolution in far greater abundance and better diffused than among the remaining less-advanced peoples of the globe. There is a vanguard, which may lead if it will.

A concert of leading nations, bound one to another by links of high achievement in science and the arts of life, in political organization and outlook on the world, pressing on in friendly rivalry to greater strength and prosperity for themselves, while guiding and helping the more backward races,—this has been the generous ideal of multitudes of thinkers in all ages ever since the break-up of the Roman Empire destroyed the temporary hope of a world-wide civilization, diffused from one centre. It has taken various colours in successive epochs. The Catholic thinkers of the Middle Ages saw it in the light of a religious unity binding the most distant and diverse nations in a common hope under a common head. The better minds of the Renaissance, such as those who inspired the testament of Henri IV, saw it as a political alliance of independent States under enlightened rulers. The eighteenth century conceived the notion of free national democracies handing on the light to peoples sitting in the darkness and the twilight. But again and again the vision has been broken and hopes dashed to the ground by disasters

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which sometimes seemed comparable to the fall of the Roman Empire itself. The wars of religion which followed Henri IV were one such overthrow. The Napoleonic wars were another. The present struggle bears some ominous marks of likeness. We need to see through it, to discern the recuperative forces, to reconstruct at least ideally and for ourselves this comity of nations which history and reason compel us to accept as the guiding human force in the affairs of the world.

How then can we explain, before we come to healing, this last great breach among the leading nations of the West? The diplomatic case has been so clearly and so unanswerably stated in papers and in speeches that it would be idle, even if relevant, to review it here. But it is necessary also to appreciate the popular German view which is quite unaffected by the course of diplomacy, carefully concealed from the popular mind. They are faced, they think, by a danger of expansive barbarism on their Eastern frontier. This foe has, by the fatal accident of their central position, become allied with the Western foe they had to fight for their national unity in 1870, and we have taken the opportunity of dealing a felon's blow at our most serious naval and commercial rival.

The picture is a hideous nightmare of fear, hostility, and distrust. But so far as it is really present to the minds of multitudes of otherwise rational and moral people—and of this there is no doubt—it behoves us to understand its genesis, and, if possible, its cure. It is true that Germany is faced on the East by masses of men less civilized, according to ordinary Western standards, than herself. It is true that she has on the West a neighbour alienated from her by centuries of conflict pressed to a ruthless issue forty years ago. It

is true that owing to a long series of historical causes she achieved such national unity as she possesses much later and by more violent and artificial methods than her great Western neighbours. All this is to say that in spite of the strength of her central position in the continent, she has had exceptional difficulties to face in reaching the degree of cohesion and of international weight which her numbers and her mental force deserve. It explains, without wholly justifying, the fact, which Comte pointed out more than fifty years ago, that she remains the most military of the Western Powers. But precisely in these facts lies also the menace to European peace and security of which we have now the disastrous evidence before us. The strong and exceptional methods and organization which Germany needed as medicine for her own ailments, she has used as poison for her neighbours and the world.

This is the explanation of the strange paradox, noticed by more than one writer on the crisis, that German action was prompted both by fear and by overweening strength.

One gets the impression, in reading the modern German political writers, people like Treitschke and his school, of men peering at the world through the loopholes of a mighty fortress, constructed with the utmost skill, but giving the least possible inlet to light or life from without. They are afraid, and yet they have built themselves a stronghold in which they might, if they would, rest in security from any probable assault, and from which they may, if they will, commit the most damaging excursions upon their neighbours with the minimum of loss to themselves. We know the story of scores of such fortresses in earlier and wilder days. Built for defence, they became the

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home and instrument of lawless tyranny and widespread devastation. Treitschke himself is the type of the bluff, genial, not unattractive chieftain, a builder and a man of insight, not without moments of tolerance and even sympathy for his neighbours. The Germans themselves have compared him with some justice to our own Carlyle. But his followers—the Pan-German League and the like, whom he repudiated himself—received from his hands tools that they have used to deadly purpose, without the glimpses of humanity and progress which one may trace in his own work. In his own sphere much to the same purpose might be said of Bismarck. Take some of the pithy sayings in Treitschke's *Lectures on Politics* :

The map of our part of the globe has been much more natural since [i.e. since 1870]; the centre is strengthened; *the inspired idea that the centre of gravity of Europe must lie in the middle, has become reality.* Through the founding of the German Empire a tranquillity has entered spontaneously into the system of States, inasmuch as ambition in Prussia can now be silent; Prussia has essentially attained the power she required.

This has a ring of sincerity. The man who said it did not desire an aggressive, world-conquering empire. But the 'inspired idea' is just the heady stuff which sets on other people to do the mischief. Why, because Germany happens to be the central land-mass of Western Europe, should she become the 'centre of gravity of Europe' in a political or moral sense, still less of the world, which has tended more and more towards the West?

The North Sea has the worst coast imaginable in Germany because of the sandflats. . . . But even here can be seen how man is able to overcome natural

obstacles. This Germany, with its forbidding coastline, was yet once on a time the leading sea-power and, please God, it shall become so again.

This is more dangerous, though one cannot help admiring the confident challenge to Nature. So far as it is aimed at England, it ignores the fact that an island has a natural claim to a stronger navy and that we have never aspired to a commanding army.

But there is a further and more serious point in Treitschke's teaching which needs closer attention. We rejoice that any neighbouring nation is consolidated and gains security and strength : we may even admire the energy and determination that make of the most unpromising sea-board in the world the home of a rising sea-power. But what of the place which this aspiring and strengthened nation is to play in the comity of leading States in whose hands the future civilization of the world mainly rests ? It is on this side that the recent political philosophy of Germany leads to such an abyss. We find, it is true, one or two perfunctory statements in Treitschke that 'every nation exhibits a different picture and a different conception of the divinity' and that 'all civilization aims at making human life more harmonious' ; but no guidance whatever is offered as to the way in which the leading Powers generally and Germany in particular are to co-operate in what must be the greatest and crowning achievement of mankind. On the contrary, words, ideas, arguments crowd on one another, which directly oppose the combination of human efforts to further the common interests of the race.

We all know the theory of the divine State and the divine monarch. It has played a part in our own political history, but has an even greater importance with the Germans. Treitschke is a late inheritor of the

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doctrine, and has given one aspect of it a particularly dangerous turn. It assumes that the basis of the State is power—the collective power of all the members used primarily for the common good of all. What are these common interests? ‘It is very obvious,’ says Treitschke, ‘that the first task of the State is a twofold one; it is, as we have seen, power in an external direction and the regulation of justice internally; its fundamental functions must therefore be the organization of the army and the administration of the law. . . . The second essential function of the State is to make war.’ Thus not only is the first part of its primary function to organize the army, but the whole of the second essential function is to set this organization in motion. Whatever function in civilization the State may also possess, this stands in the forefront and proclaims the militarist régime. It is interesting to compare the conclusions on the same point of the greatest of early theorists on the nature of the State. Aristotle, living himself in a time far less suited to rational and peaceful contemplation than our own, declared that the primary function of any community was ‘Life’, and the next to that ‘A good life’.<sup>1</sup>

The whole point in these questions, as in those of private morals, is where we lay the stress. We may pay perfunctory lip-homage to the duty of kindness at home and educating our children, but if we spend our main energies on personal display and arranging pleasure-trips for ourselves, we are worse than a sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal. But in some of these Treitschkean writings we hardly get lip-homage to the duty of the State towards other members of the human family. The old Kantian ideal of a condition of universal and per-

<sup>1</sup> Aristotle's *Politics*.

petual peace—not of course to be immediately realized but to be worked for steadily through years of compromise and agreement, broken by occasional and inevitable conflict—this is openly flouted as nonsense. 'Self-sacrifice for a foreign nation is not only not moral but it contradicts the idea of self-preservation, which is the highest thing for the state.' From such a State, it is clear, whatever may be the private virtues of its citizens, no help could be expected for the victims of the Turk, no stay of execution for the Chinese, no pity for the Belgians.

The bias which such a theory of the State must give in dealing with colonies and weaker races is obvious. Every great nation must have its colonies as a fair share in the 'domination of the transatlantic world by the aristocracy of the whites'. If it has not a share proportioned to its strength and its ambition, it will fight for it, and it will 'anticipate the obvious dangers of over-population by colonization, on a large scale'. The 'scramble for Africa' is thus elevated into a principle of State, without any real concern for the millions of men of other races and colours who form at least the rear-guard of the human army on the march. Have we not advanced in four hundred years beyond the position of the 'conquistadores' of the New World?

One knows of course that there are thousands of good Germans who would not subscribe to the doctrine and are working for the betterment of mankind in every quarter of the globe. But unfortunately the doctrine, which again is not confined to them, finds expression in its most naked and brutal form in their public writers and their public actions. It is the worst devil which has to be cast out, before the leadership of the world, in the common interest of all its inhabitants, can be

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established with any hope of large success, and without the imminent risk of the recurring cataclysms which have hitherto interrupted all great efforts at concert.

The group of great nations which emerged from the dissolution of the Roman Empire were England, France, Spain, Italy, and Germany. It was in this order that they gained their national unity, which is one very important factor, among others, in the problem before us. From this point of view it seems fair to give the preference to England and date her final consolidation from Chaucer and the end of the fourteenth century, whereas France had to wait for the end of the Hundred Years' War and Louis XI's absorption of the feudal States. In Spain the Moorish occupation postponed the process still further, and the intellectual and material ravages due to religious persecution exhausted the nation and have till the present prevented her taking a place in the concert of people correspondent with her size, position, and population. Both Italy and Germany come much later in the race for political unity and strength, and both were affected by that conflict between the Pope and the mediaeval Emperor which was the leading political issue in the Middle Ages. Both nations, however, counted for far more in Europe at the revival of learning and intellectual life in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, than their political and military power would have warranted, and Italy, when her union was achieved in the 'sixties of the last century, became a compact, well-defined country, needing only small rectifications of her northern boundary, to be coincident with her nationality and easily defended from external attack.

Germany, however, unfortunately for herself and for the rest of the world, was beset by political difficulties



both within and without. With a large, vigorous, and intensely patriotic population she was, and to a large extent still is, divided into a number of politically independent States. The incorporation which France achieved four hundred years before, through the personal activity and political genius of Louis XI, Germany only secured, and to a smaller degree, by a great war carried out at the expense of France. The stamp of blood and iron was thus set, for long if not for ever, on her national life. Nor is this all. The problems on her western and eastern frontiers were bound to call forth either self-restraint or ambition on the part of any people. On the west, kindred people holding the mouths of great rivers draining her own land: on the east, people of lower civilization, often turbulent, always expansive. In these circumstances the success of a strong and ambitious Power, such as Prussia, able and willing to lead and unify the nation, was a foregone conclusion. Prussia herself was served by a series of able and devoted men. From the time of Frederic the Great to her fight against Napoleon and again in the crowning victory of 1871, she won the allegiance of all patriotic Germans by her supreme power of organization, her bold strokes of foreign policy, her persistence, and her national enthusiasm. But the triumph of the centralizing State, with that tragic discord which has so often marked the evolution of German life, involved the decay of the generous instincts of the older, less organized German, and a set-back to ideals, except of force and material success.

Of the five great nations, three pre-serve their intellectual eminence. France, Germany, and England, judged by their contributions to science, literature, and the arts of life, stand in a group apart. But in

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the volume of its learning, its detailed scientific work, its music, Germany is easily first. The industry and docility of her population are beyond compare. Whether socialist or bourgeois, they have been led to the barracks, the class-room, and the polling-booth, with the same marvellous precision and discipline as we have witnessed in a hundred rushes upon our trenches on the Aisne and the Yser. How to combine this order and teachableness with some understanding and regard for the rights and feelings of others, to harness these incomparable forces not in servitude, but in willing co-operation with the progressive nations throughout the world,—this is the true problem, secondary in time to the immediate necessity of inflicting a decisive blow on an aggressive and ruthless enemy, but supreme in importance for the well-being of Europe and mankind. For humanity must be justified of all her children.

The group of five nations which took up the work of Rome has varied much. Spain, since the seventeenth century, has no longer a seat at their council-board. The United States, Russia, and Japan have within the same period established their place in the first rank. The present grouping is the result of long historical evolution, working within the limits of the land masses of our planet. You have a central group—France, England, and Germany—with a nucleus of Belgium and Holland offering a neutral meeting-place for international associations in their capitals. A fringe of small and highly cultivated States to the north, with two large and two small States to the south, complete the great *massif* of European culture. East and west are the colossal powers of Russia and the United States, standing the one for Eastern Europe and Northern Asia, the other for the New World. On the east come

the Japanese, now clearly marked out as the guardians and tutors of the undeveloped giant of the Yellow race. Further south the offshoots of the British race in Africa and Australasia and of the Latin States in South America complete the picture.

The German people have thus a strong position in the central group, and to them would naturally fall the primacy and guardianship of the northern States of Europe. No one would grudge it, did not the guardian show so strong an inclination to devour his wards. But this question of the right relation of the strong Power to the weak is at the root of the present conflict. It is a hopeful feature both for the issue of the war and the future happiness of mankind that the cause of the Allies is bound up, both on the east and west, with the fortunes of a small State struggling for its independence, while their opponents, Germany and Turkey, are detested by all their subject races. In this matter the United States, in Cuba, in Porto Rico, as in China, have set a high example to the world. France has done well in Tunis, and latterly in Algeria and the East. England, whatever her errors in the past, has now a practically unanimous Empire to support her cause. Russia, we hope and believe, will crown her career of heroic efforts for freedom abroad with larger grants of freedom at home. But Germany, full of national self-consciousness and with the thoroughness which marks all her actions, does nothing for her subject peoples, except impress upon them with relentless vigour the stamp of German ideas, German institutions, and German language.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> A characteristic story has just reached us of the treatment of the prisoners of war in the fortress of Königstein. There was an Englishman there with a number of Frenchmen. He reported

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Happily the war finds us serving with zeal the general commonwealth. It is in the mid stream of our best tradition to clinch the opposition of Europe to any Power which threatens the security and independence of others. And this time, happily also, we are side by side with the Power which has, more often than any, illuminated Europe with the light of a new principle or a burning watchword. France led the Crusades for religion in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, and for freedom in the eighteenth. But since the latter, heroic and externally disastrous like the first, so great a change has come over the texture of human society, especially in the West, that we must expect the results of the present war to differ, as widely as the tactics and dispositions of the armies on the field differ from anything on record. The growth of two human factors in the century since Waterloo is really its most notable feature; these two are science and sympathy. Both are indispensable, and her triumphs in the former will not save Germany from the consequences of her deficiency in the latter.

It may seem a strange and unseasonable hour to be looking for traces of a growing sympathy and amity among the nations of the globe. Yet it is obviously true that the world has become one in the last century in ways and to a degree which had not been dreamt of before steam and electricity were turned to the purposes of man. Larger aggregates of men are now collected in cities and in political communities than at any previous period in history. They are in hourly receipt of news from the ends of the earth, except when Govern-

that they had no complaint to make of their food or general condition. The governor was fortunately a gentleman. But they were all compelled to receive lessons in German every evening!

ments for their own ends obstruct or suppress the passage of the truth. Lines of commerce, exploring travellers, have knit up the most remote regions with the centres of intensest life. By intercourse, small and eccentric languages and cults are being blotted out, and common ways of thought and life more and more diffused. So many different societies for international purposes have been formed, that two special centres for transacting their business have been opened, one at Brussels and the other at The Hague. At the root of all lies the extension of scientific methods and results, greater in the nineteenth century than in all earlier centuries put together. For science is the great unifier of the world, as language is the unifier of nations.

Now, throughout this process, especially on its mechanical side, the Germanic people have played a distinguished part. The Humboldts at the beginning of the century were the pioneers in international co-operation for scientific expeditions and recording observations. In the hundred years which have elapsed since their time the mass of German work has steadily grown. There are at the present moment as many German members of foreign learned societies as of any other two nations put together. Their mass of printed books far exceeds any other country's. They have organized their national life and social service with a thoroughness with which no one can compete. This contribution to the world's work and progress would remain, even if they were blotted out by an overwhelming defeat from the front rank of nations.

But such an issue to the war is by no means to be expected, even if we desired it. The break up of a mighty nation which has achieved its unity by years

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of costly and deliberate effort, is not promoted by external attack. With them, as with us, the loud blast which tears the skies will serve but to root more firm the native oak. Any changes in the direction either of constitutional government or of decentralization must and should come from within, and they do not directly concern our present argument. What we are trying to see in focus is Germany, or the Germanic Powers, as an essential part of the leading human forces of the globe, Germany and Humanity, a hard collocation for us at the moment, but one that must be faced if the war is to leave us with a balance of hope in the world.

The results of this growth of science and sympathy, both on the present situation and the future, are of the highest moment. We are absorbed just now in tracing the effects of the scientific evolution on the fighting both by sea and land. But far more profound and decisive ultimately will be the influence of science on the restitution of prosperity and the future organization of the world. So great is the increase of productive power due to science, that the huge expense and the ravages of war will be repaired—so far as they can be materially—within less time than any previous great war has required. This is, on the one hand, an assurance to those who fear that a decisive victory may leave Europe lopped of one of her vital members. On the other hand, the community of the world created by science must persist and deepen. It is idle for German men of science to turn their back on the world and divest themselves of foreign degrees. They must for many purposes still use the common scientific nomenclature and still enjoy the fruits of scientific discoveries made by the university of mankind. Thus

it is to science that we may look for the great recuperative forces which will be needed to fill up the chasms and rebuild the ruins of the war. It can do much,—except restore the young lives and the old beauty that have gone.

But for the future unity and guidance of the world it has a deeper meaning. The world has been made one by science in a new, intimate, and permanent sense. But it is not only or mainly the material links which count—the railways and steamers, the telegraphy, the international finance. These may be, and often are, destroyed or disturbed by external causes, by war and rumours of war. But the achievements of science, especially as applied to ameliorating human life, are a common possession of which no national jealousy can prevent the diffusion or hinder the use. Can any one suppose or conceive that a Pasteur or a Koch, a Lister or a Virchow, will be less universally acclaimed after than before the war? And deeper still are those currents of thought which are bringing men of all nations closer together on questions affecting the validity of their knowledge and the purpose of their life. We are coming gradually to recognize that it is these things, far more than armed strength or political hegemony, which give a title to the leadership of the world, and the claim is open to members of all States, irrespective of size.

Our argument has brought us to the point from which we may appreciate the need and the appropriateness of the Latin-French word 'Humanity', in its broad-fold sense of feeling, and of the concrete whole of human beings considered as one. It would be exceedingly interesting and instructive to trace its history; but one point is clear. The equivalent German word

'Menschheit' or 'Menschlichkeit' has never had the vogue which 'Humanité', 'Umanità', 'Humanidad' have enjoyed among the Latin races, and, through one of our happy borrowings, among ourselves. The leading French Socialist journal is *L'Humanité*, the German is *Vorwärts*.

It is a commonplace among a certain school of somewhat cynical criticism to treat 'humanitarianism' in politics as a passing phase of pure sentiment, which was swept away by the inroads of what the Germans call 'Realpolitik'. Nothing could be further from the truth. With certain ebbs and flows due to transient causes there has been, ever since Europe recovered from the shock of Napoleon, a steady growth of the belief among the masses of the population in the West and all intelligent statesmen, that the activities of the State should be concentrated upon securing the best conditions of life for all, and that this is only possible by peaceful and active co-operation with other nations. The 'sentiment' of the early nineteenth century has only given place to a more deliberate and reasoned prosecution of the same end. Nor has the sentiment itself suffered any abatement. In England, France, and Germany there have never been so many multitudes as at the present day who would respond to any appeal to human brotherhood, and one may safely say the same of Italy, the United States, and Russia. The passion is there, and within each State steps have been taken in various degrees to secure the desired welfare for its own citizens. The failure has been in co-operation between States to avoid conflicts and reduce armaments and to unite the forces of the leading Powers in helping and guiding the weaker. China, Persia, the Congo, the Balkans, the Indians of South



America, the Arabs of Tripoli have cried aloud in recent years for more collective wisdom and humanity from those who are able to coerce them in the name of science and Western policy. Their needs will not be satisfied until each Great Power recognizes larger interests beyond its own, and, without endangering itself, prepares to treat others as a good man tries to treat his neighbours.

The special causes at stake in this war are therefore bound up with the widest issues which can appeal to mankind. They embrace the maintenance of treaties, but go beyond them. We are dealing with the terms on which the nations of the world, especially those in a commanding position, are to associate with one another, and the objects of their common action. On the threshold of this question it will occur to the plain man that any useful co-operation must be to the last degree difficult and often impossible in the atmosphere of deceit, lying, jealousy, and suspicion, which is now revealed and hangs like a stifling miasma over the field of battle. It is a sensible relief that the main source of this is not with us, and we are marching in full force and determination against its most responsible authors. But after all a sword is a poor instrument for dispersing a fog; and until the general tone between nations is one of security and goodwill, little will be effected by specific proposals for arbitration and disarmament, open diplomacy, or insurance against war. Definite reforms can, of course, be secured by force of arms, e. g. in resettling the uneasy provinces to the west and east of Germany. But, given our success in this—a restored Belgium, a liberated Alsace and Lorraine, an autonomous Poland, and a Slav Switzer land in the Balkans—the work of the future, the active co-operation of the leading Powers for the prosperity and advancement of the whole world would still remain to be begun.

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The hindrances in the past have been as manifold as the weaknesses of human nature. The actual occurrence of occasional wars is not the most serious of them. Much worse than this is the generally ineffective and negative character of the concerted action of the Great Powers when they come together. They are usually quite satisfied and happy if they prevent anything worse occurring than they have actually before them. The Balkan problem which is the immediate cause of the present war is a conspicuous instance. It was difficult, but clearly not beyond the wit of man, to devise a settlement better than anything realized in those regions. The Powers met and discussed it in the fullest detail. Their positive constructions have in each case already broken down, and their preventive measures, which it was hoped had averted a general war, only succeeded in postponing that event for less than two years. It will be said that in this case the local conflict only veiled an irreconcilable opposition between some of the Great Powers themselves, which nothing but the sword could settle. This may be so; at any rate after the event we are unable to deny it. The most certain point is that in public as in private differences, the essential preliminary of any agreement is a determination to settle and a frank exposition of rival points of view. These were wanting, and though they are found not unattainable in private disputes, they still appear Utopian in international matters.

There is, however, a large range of questions on which exchange of views and effective decisions are taken even between countries which are sharply divided on *la haute politique*. It would enhance the goodwill of nations and increase the chances of harmonious joint action in other matters, if the settlements in these

more obscure though vital questions received more public recognition.

Two recent instances may serve to illustrate many others. For several years an international committee has been meeting under the authority of various Governments to decide on joint action affecting the conditions of labour. On this committee, France, Germany, and England were always able, when they agreed, to impose their will on the rest. Even in the throes of the Moroccan crisis the three Powers were working to limit still further the hours of women and children, and to give a universal half-holiday to factory workers. Another instance, a few years earlier, was the adoption, at the instance of France, of a universal nomenclature of diseases by all the Powers now engaged in destroying life.

The special significance of such agreements lies in the fact that they are a new development, due to the industrial revolution and the spread of science. There is nothing comparable before the nineteenth century, and the movement grows apace.

It is important to note that many, perhaps the most binding, of international links are not connected with State action at all. This is the case with religious and with most scientific work, which is constantly bringing men's minds closer together without any apparent approximation to a confederation of Europe. Some of the organs of the new spirit will be political—arbitration courts, international labour committees, possibly some day an international police. Others, the most far-reaching, will and should remain non-political.

For this lies at the heart of our criticism of the modern German theory and tyranny of the State, that the greatest and deepest things which bind mankind together and create what we call 'humanity', are independent

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of State control, and would grow even without State support. Religion, science, sympathy, these are the strongest bonds, and the changing groups of nations which hold for a time the leadership of the world, will attain the common end of human good only so far as their policy is inspired by these moving forces greater than themselves. We believe that in this crisis our cause and that of France is in the true line of human progress, and that a defeated and regenerated Germany will bring priceless contributions to unite with ours. We believe, too, that the war has brought for ever into the inner circle of leading Powers the half-Asiatic Russian, whose simple life has long concealed a power of affection and devotion, an enthusiasm and strength of character, which more highly organized and materialist civilizations often blunt.

Some changes in the grouping of Powers and the sympathy of nations, the greatest of wars was bound to bring. It will not go deeper, or destroy the immemorial links of European culture, based on a common inheritance of science, language, and history. When the storm has passed, we shall see again, enthroned in its ancient seat, the spirit which inspired the greatest of modern poets, the Spirit of Union, without which man's activity would revolve in a barren circle to sheer destruction.

Strange contradiction, that we turn to the leading poet of Germany both for the strongest condemnation of Germany's recent and present spirit and for the strongest hopes of healing hereafter.

Alle menschlichen Gebrechen  
Sühnet reine Menschlichkeit.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Goethe to Krüger (1827): 'All the sins of human nature pure humanity redeems.'

# OXFORD PAMPHLETS

## 1914

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