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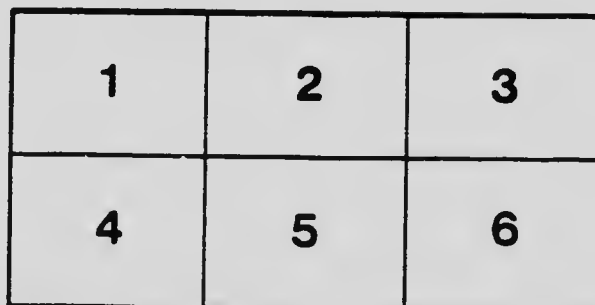
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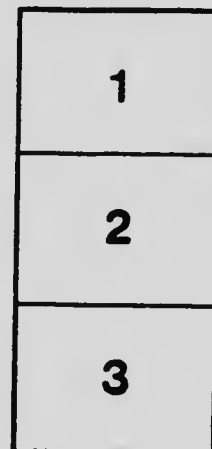
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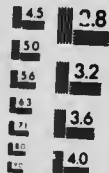
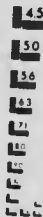
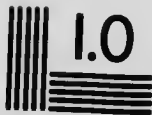
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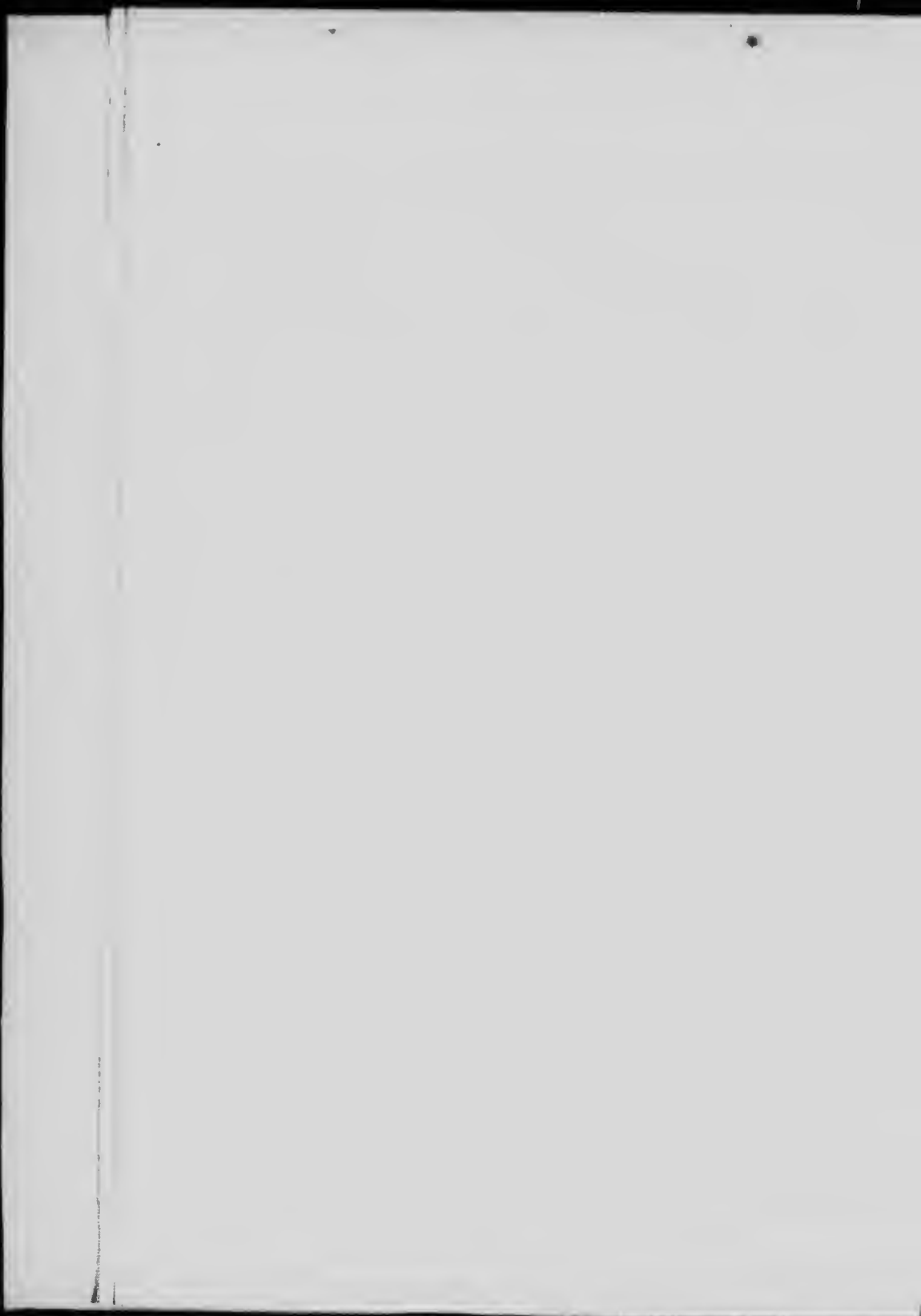


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**GERMANY AT BAY**









**MARSHAL JOFFRE**  
*(By J. Simpson, R.I.A.)*

# Germany at Bay

BY

**HALDANE MACFALL**

Major, late Sherwood Foresters

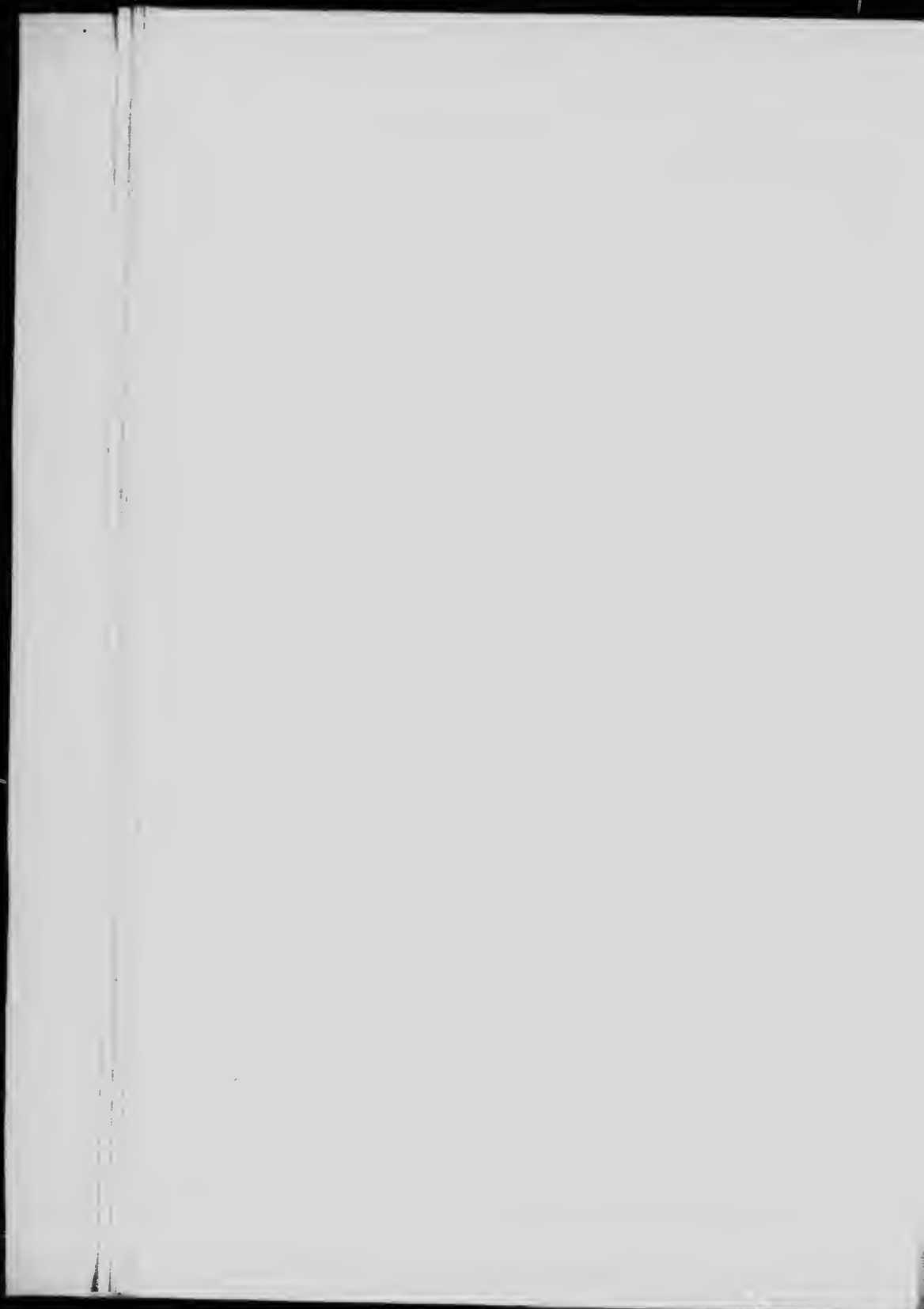
With an Introduction by  
**FIELD-MARSHAL VISCOUNT FRENCH**

WITH PORTRAITS AND MAPS

**CASELL AND COMPANY, LTD**  
London, New York, Toronto and Melbourne  
1917

First published *November 1917.*  
*Reprinted December 1917.*

**To**  
**My Comrades Who Sleep**  
**THE HEROIC DEAD**  
**Who Answered the Call of Joffre and French**  
**and**  
**Saved the World**



## A PERSONAL NOTE

*I had written and published "The Splendid Wayfaring," the first volume of a trilogy, just before the War, and was engaged upon the second volume, "The Book of Generous Courage," to prove the utter rottenness of the German Kultur in peace and its inevitable doom in the fierce test of the furnace of Battle, when the War broke out, as I thought it would.*

*However, the deliberate judgments based upon the strategic notes on which I had been building that volume, over some thirty years of keen study, have been proved to the hilt ever since the German rushed into this war. And in another form, more easily grasped by the simplest mind, I now put it before the Man-in-the-Street in the hope that it may do something to help to guide him as to how alone he can rid the world of the brazen god before whom the Hun had willed to make us all bow down and worship.*

*"The Book of Generous Courage" must wait awhile.*

*There is no time to be lost if Britain and America are to awake to the appalling danger that lies ahead in the making of Peace. To the American in particular the danger is as hideous as it is secret and sinister. The great American tradition of aloofness*

*from world affairs was a counsel of perfection—so long as no powerful enemy arose to assail it. But the German, with astounding craft, made of this apparently safe policy the very trap for destroying America. We in Britain have run a terrible risk from lack of strategic thinking, but we were nearer the danger and more easily alarmed. The American is far away, and wrapped in the mantle of the written tradition of the Monroe Doctrine. By consequence, it is unthinkable to an American that Germany could even dream of destroying her—yet the destruction of Britain and America is the aim of the German's war—it is to that deliberate purpose and to that alone that the Germans have launched upon this war. When, therefore, we find great American journalists telling us that the heart of America bleeds for Belgium, but has little interest in the Balkans; when we find our American Allies unrepresented in Paris at the War Council about the Eastern war, we are bound to recognize that the American does not even now realize that it is exactly this majestically heroic Serbia that matters in this war more than anything—that it is precisely this Serbia which held the gate shut to the Pan-German Map—and that it is precisely the making or unmaking of Serbia which will lead to the future welfare or disaster of America and Britain. Serbia is the bulwark of Britain and America, as surely as Britain is the bulwark of America against the German design of world dominion. And if this book prove nothing but that to the Man-in-the-Street it will not*

## A Personal Note

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have been written in vain. If America and Britain allow Serbia to fall, they will have to fight the German, enormously enhanced in power, in his strategy for World Dominion.

Since the ink dried on the last page in this volume, this midsummer of 1917, there have been such revelations—the American Ambassador, Mr. Gerard's "My Four Years in Germany"; the disclosure of the Kaiser's treaty with the Tsar for the attack on Britain in 1905; the publication of Russian State secrets—which all strongly support what was here deduced, that much which would have been challenged is now the accepted truth, whilst the calm, wise sanity of General Smuts and of the great American President, and their wide vision in Statesmanship, have done much to clear a dangerous situation.

My thanks are due to the Editor of "Land and Water" for the use of my friend Joseph Simpson's very fine portrait of Field-Marshal Joffre.

H. M.





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## INTRODUCTION

BY FIELD-MARSHAL THE VISCOUNT FRENCH

READERS of this book will find in its pages a clear and logical exposition showing the origin of this great War and the causes which, through a period of wellnigh a century, gradually led up to it.

Unlike many other books on the same subject, it is written by a soldier, who brings a calm and trained mind to the determination of the strategical issues, although of course I do not commit myself to agreement with every view expressed.

Speaking personally, I am naturally gratified that one who is a deep student of war should find himself able to write in such terms of my work as a General. The more so that he associates my name with that of the great French Marshal, whose military fame will assuredly earn for him undying glory when the whole history of this war is laid bare.

Inasmuch, however, as that history cannot be written for many years to come, and that it is by that history alone that the real value of our services can be judged and measured, I must gratefully decline to accept the author's generous appreciation unless and until it is thus ratified and endorsed.

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Nor, as the Commander-in-Chief of the British Army during the first year and a half of the war, does it become me to criticise the campaign. We soldiers address ourselves to the problems at hand, and we must leave the judgment of our acts to history.

But it is vital to our future that the plain man should lose no time in coming to grips with the significance of the war, and understand its broad strategy; for his voice, not the voice of the military commanders, will determine the peace. It is in his peace strategy, as Major Haldane Macfall here points out, that the German has entered upon his most dangerous phase of this war.

The actual conduct of the war and its progress is a matter for the Army and Navy to deal with exclusively. When it comes to any question of realising peace, the soldier and the sailor have to give way to the national direction, and in order to exercise this direction effectually it is necessary that the nation should fully understand the nature of the problem they are called upon to solve.

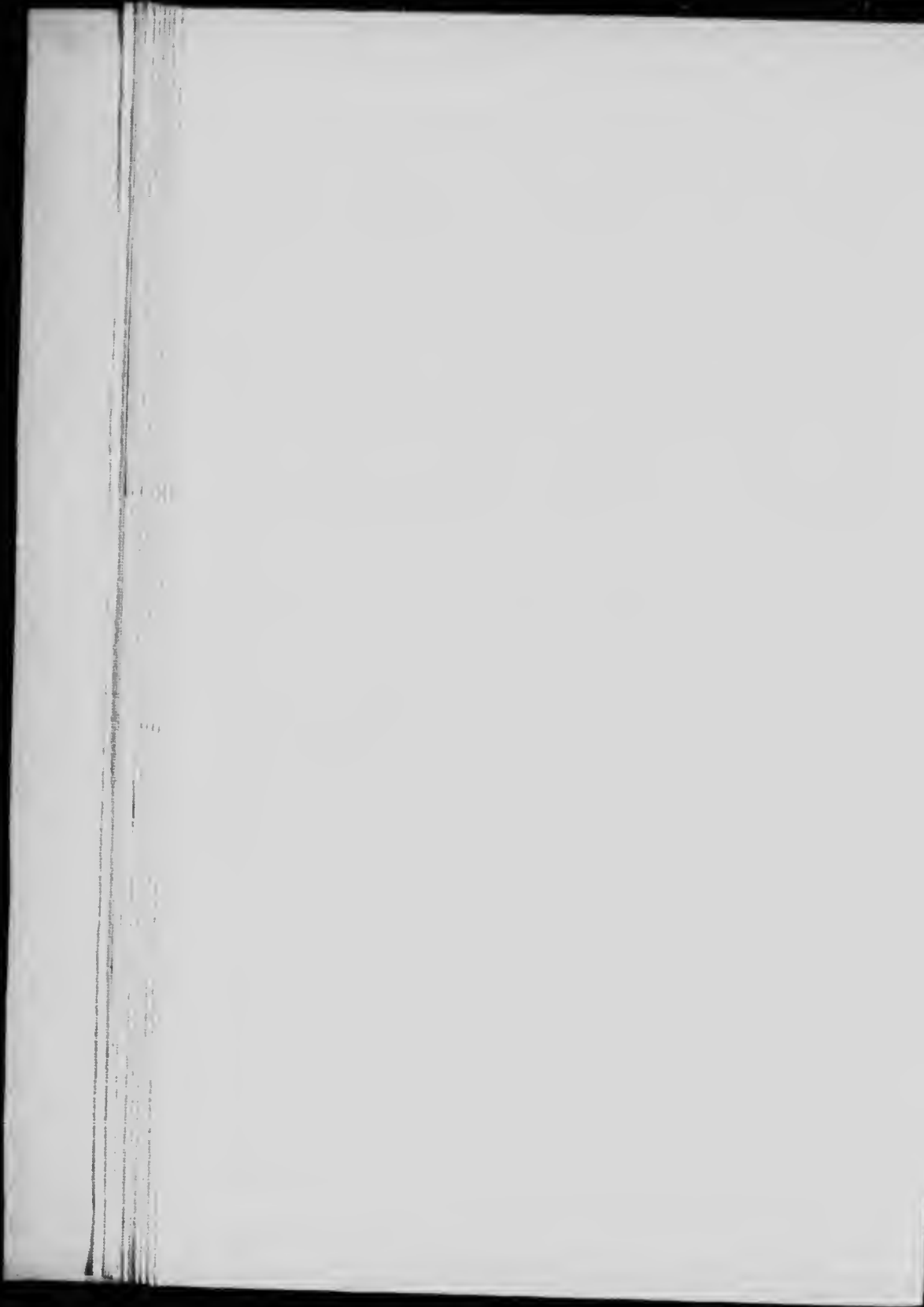
The hesitations of a section of the community in regard to the prosecution of the war show to an alarming degree how recklessly their lack of understanding is leading quite honest men to toy with a danger that would mean ruin to their people if a large public opinion grew up behind the desire for peace from war-weariness, or from crankish idealism, at the very moment when we are on the eve of the harvest. We all want peace—on our own terms. If there be any

## Introduction

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man who desires peace simply for the sake of peace, this volume will swiftly disillusion him. If it had been written with no other chapters than those pointing out the German peace strategy and what that strategy really means, I would say to the Man-in-the-Street that he should read the book and make himself conversant with its contents. I would like to add that the position of Serbia in the war, her heroism and her significance and her strategic importance, should be realised by everyone. No man of any common sense should remain ignorant of the fact that if Middle Europe comes out of the peace a German Empire, the war has been fought in vain. And if such a catastrophe should befall us, we shall have to wipe out the stain on our valour and our sanity with another great war.

FRENCH,  
F.-M.



**Book I**  
**OF STRATEGY IN GENERAL**





# GERMANY AT BAY

## CHAPTER I

### TO THE MAN-IN-THE-STREET

TO-DAY is the day of triumphing democracies. The master-folk of the world are democracies. It is the democracies that can compel their will. And democracy is government by the Man-in-the-Street—"government of the people, by the people, for the people." Liberty is the breath of the highest civilization to-day.

But if the Man-in-the-Street is to govern, he must first of all govern himself—he must *know*. The most deadly enemy to Democracy is Mob Law. The Man-in-the-Street must above all things beware of Mob Law. Even the voice of the popular Press is often the most arrogant and dangerous Mob Law. There is one weapon alone that will save the Man-in-the-Street from Mob Law—he must *know*.

And in this Great War, on which the whole future of civilization, of democracy, of individual freedom, rests, it is suicidal madness *not* to know.

It is above all things essential to-day for the Man-in-the-Street that he shall understand clearly what this War is.

## 4 To the Man-in-the-Street

These words are written for the Man-in-the-Street.

Not a moment is to be lost in understanding clearly what this War is about, what is happening, and why. Not only his to-morrow, but his future and his children's future are in his hands to-day and depend on his knowing. All this mad running about and abusing the German—for being a German—is as futile as all this admiration of German methods, on the one hand, and the idea of gentle persuasiveness to cure the Prussian cancer by our sentimental dreamers, on the other. It is worse—it is dangerous. The Man-in-the-Street must put aside the passing passions and panics and exultations and depressions of the street and the Press, and sit down and have a good square look at the whole thing; must try to grasp it as a whole. Much now depends upon it.

It is no more good to a man to think that he has any understanding of the battles being fought before his eyes without getting a general idea of what it is all about, than it is possible for him to understand the point of the simplest story if he miss the story. And there is nothing to be gained, but his yawns, if the story be made into a boredom.

The strategy of the war is as easy to understand as a novel.

To pore over and dig out the little petty details of the tactics of a battle will no more help him to understand the War than if he read Conic Sections. All such elaborate business is only useful for the expert. Being shelled in a dug-out for two years will not help to make a man, even with a Military Cross, understand strategy.

Nor can any man possibly understand the large issues of the War by being plunged into the Great

## To the Man-in-the-Street 5

Retreat and the Victory of the Marne. It will only leave him as empty as a pea-pod at the end of a dry autumn. It will bore him to tears.

As a matter of fact, the larger aspects of War are quite simple of understanding—the larger strategy to which the chaos of war is bent is even easier of understanding.

But it is quite hopeless for any man to get any true grip on this war and what it means for him and his future unless he try to grasp the broad facts of its strategy; and he can only do so by putting aside his own bias and prejudice and hopes. If he do not do so, he is a danger to his people and a curse to mankind—he is the enemy's best friend and tool. The very Idealist, if he do not understand the War, may by his very ideals be helping to bring civilisation in wreckage to the gutters. Idealism, founded on a highly cultured ignorance of strategy, is as utter a curse to a people as Reaction founded on ignorance and blind passion. Anything suicidal is a curse in War.

There is no word perhaps that alarms the Man-in-the-Street more suddenly into finding that he has an engagement than the mention of the word Strategy. To utter the word is as though one asked him to spend his week-end in studying the Higher Mathematics or in a "high-browed" debate on the Fourth Dimension, or to become partaker in the Higher Thought for his Bank Holiday.

But what exactly is this alarming Thing?

Strategy simply means, in its purest sense, the leading of an army.

To-day, armies are nations.

## 6 To the Man-in-the-Street

Strategy, then, is the *leading of a People so that that People shall achieve victory for its Will and its Aspirations when put to the test of conflict by such as assail that will and aspiration.*

That is all.

But that all is much—it happens to be everything.

Let us put it in an example that every man will at once understand—say Politics. It will have the advantage of being closely akin to the issues of the War.

You may like or you may dislike the idea of Democracy, as you may like or dislike the idea of an Aristocracy. But strategy has nothing to do with your likes or dislikes. The strategic issue—what a business man would call “getting down to business”—is whether supreme power in the world rests with an aristocracy or with democracy.

Aristocratic government is the government of a people by an hereditary class which inherits its office by the fact of its caste. Democracy, in Lincoln’s immortal phrase, is government of the people by the people for the people.

Both forms of society have a clear logical basis for their existence.

If a man be convinced—whether he like it or not—that that people is bound to maintain a dominant position in the world and be safe from any enemies that assail it, which is governed by a caste bred by generations of selection for the business; if he believe that the best governing class for a people’s welfare, whatever price that class may extort for its service, is produced by breeding from the governing class of the past, then he believes *strategically* in an aris-

## To the Man-in-the-Street 7

tocracy—that is to say, he believes that the people will best move to the achievement of its powers and superiority as a whole, and secure consequent safety, by a strategy that is dictated by an aristocracy, and will be best fitted to stand the assail of any other aristocracy or democracy.

If, on the other hand, a man be convinced—whether he like it or not—that that people is bound to supremacy in the world which is a people governed by the people for the people; and that its governors and leaders are better fitted to lead by emerging through sheer personality and capacity out of the whole community; and that that people can therefore alone reach its fulfilment in the freedom and content of the people, and that by such union of brotherhood the people will become the strongest and ablest power if assailed by any enemy, then he believes *strategically* in Democracy.

Therefore, a Duke may be strategically a Democrat—a shopwalker may be the most enthusiastic upholder of Aristocracy.

Both these men, of course, look to many and various things besides, in their politics, but both only believe *strategically* in their so different leaderships in the degree in which they rely on that leadership as being the supreme means of guiding the people to the fulfilment of their will to victory on the day that the people are assailed by the harsh test of conflict with an enemy strategy, which we call War.

Now it must not be thought that the leading of a people strategically begins and ends with War; it is going on in peace just the same.

Nor must it be thought for one moment that a man is *strategically* an aristocrat because he prefers to be

## 8 To the Man-in-the-Street

seen in, or has pleasure or pride in, the society of men of rank, or because he likes duchesses, or because a countess kissed his sister-in-law's aunt; nor is a man *strategically* a democrat because the countess did not call on his wife.

He is strategically only the one or the other in the measure in which he is firmly convinced that the habits, the moral, and the soul produced in the people by the State—that is to say, its psychology—will be the best driving force with which to impel his people to victory in the test of conflict when an enemy Will assails.

Such is strategy.

After all, why should it bore one?

Bernhardi and Clausewitz, and all the expert German writers on War are quite needless and more or less useless to the understanding of strategy by the Man-in-the-Street. The which is a great relief.

## CHAPTER II

### THE GERMAN GENIUS IN WAR

THERE is a widespread belief that Germany, whatever her other failings or shortcomings, however great or little in her various activities and enterprises, has at least the supreme genius for War—that she is mistress of the Science of Strategy.

That is to say, in other words, that Germany has some bag of tricks whereby she can overthrow and compel her Will upon any enemy that stands in her way and opposes that will.

The Man-in-the-Street, in the railway carriage, in the 'bus, in the office, in the club, in the shop and in the home, here and in America, and in neutral countries—in Turkey and Greece and Bulgaria to their undoing—probably in Italy and Spain, and maybe even in France—amongst those who detest Germany most—in a vast number of cases holds, in some articulate or inarticulate fashion for which he does not attempt to account, that Germany is supreme in, and has the supreme genius for, all matters of War, above all in Strategy—leadership in battle.

There are many things that concur to lead the Man-in-the-Street—even when he is in fighting kit to-day—into this idea, nay 'tis a very creed, so freely and shrewdly put about and arrogantly supported by the Hun, and believed in by the Hun with keen intensity—and hope.



## 10 The German Genius in War

All this arrogant fandango and blasphemous talk of the German "War-Lord" and the "All-Highest," and the claptrap of Potsdam, and the sabre-rattling, is swallowed by the mild civilian as if it were gospel. Ay, and in many a Mess is heard the same creed by officers who detest the Prussian and all his works, and are out to risk their lives to pull him down! It is amazing. But they have all seen it in print, so it must be true! The Press is quite as much convinced of it as Germany and the Germans. The Aristocrat is convinced of it.

It is all Mob Law. The Man-in-the-Street has never considered it with the eyes of knowledge. It may or may not be true. He really does not know. So he believes that it must be true. The Germans are a prolific people; and largeness always impresses the ranks of Mob Law. His own ignorance gives a Mob Law trend to the Man-in-the-Street on all matters of which he is ignorant.

No more dangerous doctrine could be held by the enemies of Prussia for their own undoing. Wellington is reported to have said that the reputation of Napoleon for invincibility had won many of his battles before a shot was fired.

To this danger the Man-in-the-Street has rushed through sheer slovenliness of thinking—sheer indolence has made him lie down with Mob Law.

Well, is it a fact?

The first and most important thing for him to discover is whether the German is supreme in the genius for War.

To discover the truth, the Man-in-the-Street has only to do one thing that is at all *difficult* for any of

## The German Genius in War 11

us to do. It is an essential act for the student of Strategy. To grasp strategy it is absolutely necessary to put aside, for the time being, one's prejudices, one's likes and dislikes, one's political or religious or moral bias, and to look facts in the face solely in their value to war. Simply that. Not to approve or disapprove those facts, for one has now to pierce the veil of the enemy's design, and to do so one must give *his* facts their fighting value—just as our own facts must be given their fighting value, not in the measure of our liking for them, or dislike or disapproval of them, but in relation to their strategic value in battle against the enemy's facts.

For instance: the Progressive mind is inclined to soften harsh enemy facts, and to mitigate the sternness of their intention just as much as the Reactionary mind is inclined to panic about them. Neither is wholly right nor wholly wrong strategically—neither has any value strategically. The strategic student must put aside all such bias ruthlessly, and look at facts in cold blood.

It is easy to see why the Progressive mind quite naturally, indeed inevitably, judges the intentions and acts of the enemy in a generous spirit *through its own moral and psychology*; whereas the only right way to arrive at the value of the enemy's acts and intentions is, in a calm and cold-blooded judgment, to weigh these things in the light of the enemy's moral and psychology—the enemy's habits and soul—and in that light alone. The enemy will be impelled by, and act upon, his own psychology, not on yours. Any other judgment is valueless for strategic decisions. Any other judgment is hopelessly impotent if you would seek to pierce the veil of the

## 12 The German Genius in War

enemy's strategic intentions and acts. Your enemy does not fight you under the guidance and ordering of *your* psychology—he cares nothing about it. It is no good to complain of that. He in return would have the right to complain that you were not fighting him under the laws of his psychology. Yet one hears and reads nothing more persistent than the absolutely futile, if wholly noble, complaints against the enemy for not obeying our laws!

The wild judgment of the Reactionary, fuming in passion and mere bias, is equally valueless; but even so, there is often a coarse instinct in it that leads it to hit the mark as often as it misses it, quite as much as does the Idealist mind—for, after all, both are groping in ignorance. It will at once be seen that, in affairs of War, the Progressive Idealist, by lulling his people into a false security, is as likely to be as dangerous as, or even more dangerous than, the Reactionary who, by his wanton and humiliating panic-mongering, at least alarms the people and puts them on the alert. It is one of the sad facts that the student of strategy has to face. The oft-repeated cry of "Wolf!" at every shadow in the night is as bad as is every panic of ignorance, but it is not as bad as the cry that the wolf is a lamb.

*Never judge the enemy's acts or intentions, then, except through the enemy's psychology—his habits, his moral, and his soul.*

For the same reason, to follow the Reactionary's guidance in strategy is absolute death to the State, when, as generally happens, in his panic the Reactionary almost invariably, even whilst he frantically waves his nation's flag in loose-mouth'd exaltation, demands, nay clamours, that his people should adopt

## The German Genius in War 13

th: enemy's methods, and transplant them on to his own government, instead of perfecting his own strategy and relying on his own people whom he vaunts with his mouth. *A people should never attempt to shape its own strategy on anything but its own psychology*; for, if it attempt to ape an alien strategic it must fail, since it lacks, indeed is inimical in soul and heart to, the alien moral, which is the whole driving force of that alien strategy. In any case, the prodigious impetus of its own psychology will always enable a people to overwhelm any strategy, no matter how perfected, that is merely an imitation of it.

A people which has lost belief in its own psychology, to such an extent that it clamours for an enemy psychology, is conquered before it strikes a blow.

Yet to-day we, whom the Germans openly and bitterly envy, are filled with so fantastic a modesty, owing to the loose-mouth'd ignorance of the Reactionary, that Mob Law runs up and down our streets demanding that we put off the psychology of the Top Dog, which has made us Top Dog, and array ourselves in the psychology of the lesser Dog that is snarling and yapping and biting at our heels in the hope to pull us down!

Ignorance is the most fiendish enemy to a people's pursuit of a victorious strategy.

The fact of a man being progressive in his ideals, or reactionary in his ideals, is of no value if the one be as strategically ignorant as the other. What is essential in order to get a grip of strategy is *to know exactly what the warring peoples are driving at, what is driving them, what precisely are their intentions,*

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*or lack of intention, and, are they succeeding or failing.*

Happily, the mastering of strategy need not in any way make for dry or musty reading.

Strategy is not to be mastered by tying a wet towel round the head and burning the midnight oil, poring over text-books. It is far simpler, far more profound, far more ordinarily human than that.

Far less can any man discover strategy by running to a military work on strategy, poring over the intricacies and phrases of our soldier-jargon, picking up a few catchwords, and straightway going forth and judging. This does quite well, let us say, for a journalist in order to give local colour to his "story." But strategy goes on in peace and war.

Nor will mere skill in battle do it. A general may be of great skill in tactic, but of the most mediocre ability in strategy. The acts of battle, even if winning acts, are of scant avail if they do not fulfil a victorious strategic.

Strategy requires an innate gift akin to *statesmanship* that is above system or machine-make. But once strategy is employed, it is not difficult to follow when shown by a careful student of it. It is one thing to create; a far simpler thing to understand and to follow. It is one thing to be able to paint a picture; another thing to know that it is a picture.

Before, then, we can know whether the German has the supreme genius for War, we must take a swift glance over his rise to the position which has led to this widespread belief that he is thus supreme.

## The German Genius in War 15

We must then get a grip of what his strategy is—a by no means difficult thing to do, even for the most simple-minded.

Then we must glance at his achievement in battle—broadly and simply, without any need to go into the intricate and confusing details of tactics—so as to judge whether he has been able to fulfil his strategy.

And from these easily established facts, but from them alone, not from the gossip of the market-place, the Man-in-the-Street can judge for himself whether the supremacy of the German genius for war be a bubble or a solid fact.

## CHAPTER III

### HOW THE STRATEGIC STUDENT WORKS

THE strategic student, having a good grounding in the laws of manœuvre in battle, which are called tactics (that is to say, manœuvres *in touch*), can then get a grasp of the statecraft that is called Strategy—the Leading of an Army into the Tactics of Battle. But this heavy schooling in war is no more necessary for the ordinary man in order to understand Strategy when revealed to him, than it is necessary for him to understand how to be able to paint a picture before he can enjoy that picture, or to be a potato before he can taste one.

Strategy, like Art, is often far more easily understood by the ordinary man than by a very highly specialised academic mind. But it will help the Man-in-the-Street if he watch how the strategic student has to work out the broader problems of war in order to pierce the veil that covers the enemy's design and intention, roughly somewhat thus:

The student of strategy must first of all get a grip on the psychology of the peoples at war—discover their moral, their habits, their soul as peoples—in fact, the driving power of their vigour to pursue their strategy. This cannot be done in a fortnight, nor by a talk in a railway corridor with a journalist. Yet it is impossible to discover strategy without it.

## How the Strategic Student Works 17

But it is very simple for the Man-in-the-Street to understand it when once it is revealed to him after being discovered.

He must get a grip on the general and broad—not finicking—history of the peoples in so far as that history has developed its present psychology. For, this not only gives the ability of the character of the people to pursue its strategy and see it through, but it also gives the likely intentions which that character is developing in its ambitions and aims and dreams. This study of the history of a people is very different from what a schoolboy or undergraduate is taught, and is more akin to what one might call a study of Foreign Affairs.

The strategic student must above all things get and keep a thorough grip on Foreign Affairs in general, but the Foreign Affairs of the warring peoples in particular. This knowledge of Foreign Affairs is absolutely vital to all strategy whatsoever. It is the guide to Strategy. It is the basis from which Strategy derives its whole design. It reveals the intention and the path of Strategy. It above all points to the end to which Strategy is being employed. But here again the most cold-blooded judgment is required by the strategic student to prevent him from being misled into guessing, or into the vague fairyland of desires and hopes. The piercing of this veil is rendered the more difficult by the elaborate system of juggling and intrigue which is the established tradition of the diplomatic services, which are so often taken up with their game of chess about small things that they only wake up to the big things when they suddenly bump their skulls against them.

Battle once joined, the immediate end of Strategy



## 18 How the Strategic Student Works

in battle is to destroy the enemy so that he is incapable of further opposing your will. To go to war with any other intention is sheer and wilful murder. But Strategy in Battle may often achieve victory which is rendered absolutely futile and mere bloodshed by the failure of the Higher Strategy of Statesmanship. I will particularly dwell on this and prove it to the Man-in-the-Street when we come to the *hideous danger that threatens us from Germany at the making of Peace even if the German War-Machine be smashed, and the Hohenzollern deposed, and France given back to France, Belgium to Belgium, and no rood of land this side the Rhine be under the German flag, if the Man-in-the-Street be caught napping.*

At the same time, let there be no mistake about it, the Higher Strategy of Statesmanship cannot compel its will on the enemy unless that enemy be *first utterly destroyed as a fighting force.* Complete victory in war must precede all strategic victory whatsoever. For, obviously, your enemy is not going to accept your terms as long as he has the power to refuse them, any more than he is going to turn back from his designs so long as he has scope to carry them on.

*And if your enemy, not wholly beaten to his knees, suddenly surrender a part of his design in order to patch up a Peace, then look to yourself, or you will become his tool and plaything, for he is but preparing your utter ruin!*

Now let us apply this to the Great War.

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**Book II**  
**OF THE STRATEGY OF THE GREAT**  
**WAR**



**SKETCH MAP OF PRUSSIA AND HER DOMINIONS IN 1815**  
(Territory shown in black)'

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## CHAPTER IV

### THE RISE OF THE GERMAN MENACE

PERHAPS the fact which had for the strategic student of our generation the most far-reaching effect, and which he noted with the most stern underlinings, was a cartoon in *Punch* in the year 1890, by John Tenniel—the world-famous drawing of *Dropping the Pilot*.

Probably the artist and the editor realised as little as the Man-in-the-Street what that cartoon meant.

To the Man-in-the-Street, here and the world over, that cartoon and the fact that gave rise to that cartoon meant little more than that the young Kaiser had taken the reins into his own hands and had dismissed his great Chancellor—the greatest man in Germany—out of sheer pride of kingship. The Man-in-the-Street shrugged his shoulders, perhaps quoted a tag from Shakespeare about Wolsey; the journalist wrote his "story," and hurried off to the next sensation; and there was an end of it. The utter lack of all strategic guidance in the national education probably prevented the educated from grasping its significance one jot. Indeed there were multitudes so ignorant that they hailed it as the beginning of an era that was to bury the "Man of Blood and Iron" and all his works. Bismarck, sitting in sullen retirement, must

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have smiled grimly. He was a man of infinite humour, who called his hound "Reichstag."

The last thing that the wisecracks thought of asking themselves was: Why, if the Man of Blood and Iron had malign designs on Britain, had he not struck, whose whole significance was that when he had a design he struck quickly?

To the strategic student that cartoon meant prodigious things—vast possibilities, appalling probabilities.

What exactly happened, and the why and the wherefore, the secret archives of Germany alone can reveal—may never wholly reveal. But the strategic student had to pierce the veil by deduction, and it was an essential of that calculation to treat facts in an absolutely cold-blooded spirit, to judge without bias, and to pierce through the strategy without allowing any of his own prejudices or his hopes or fears to blunt his understanding—above all, sternly to brush aside his patriotic, political, or moral bias.

What did this puzzling thing mean?

To the strategic student it was clear that Bismarck was in conflict with some new design, whatever it was, of the German Court. It was clear that the young Kaiser was pursuing a strategic, and was leading the whole German people to some deliberate adventure, to which the great Chancellor, Bismarck, the creator of Modern Germany, was so hotly opposed that he only saw in it the rushing to destruction of the great Power which he had devoted his life to building. It meant that, or it meant nothing. For that statecraft and strategy must have been of colossal and vital importance in the mind and will of the Lord

## The Rise of the German Menace 23

of Germany if he were prepared to sacrifice Bismarck for it. It must have been a colossal drift from his own design, which had never been remarkable for lacking in ambition, if Bismarck were prepared to fall from power in opposing it. Let us try to be just to Bismarck, for all the brutal mind of the Man of Blood and Iron. This thing meant as condition to the fall of Bismarck that the German people were behind the young Kaiser in their will to that adventure.

It was abundantly clear that this was no mere popinjay tomfoolery of a new uniform or an imperial strut or a conceited whim of the Lord of Germany, or Bismarck would certainly not have taken it so seriously and gone into solemn retirement over it. Whatever it was, it was pretty serious.

Another remarkable fact is noted by the strategic student. Bismarck, who knew how to play off the whim of any popinjay to his own advantage—none better—whilst he sullenly went into retirement, made no effort to expose the Kaiser's intentions; he kept sealed lips on what was clearly an adventure of the highest importance to the State.

What could that adventure be?

The strategy of it must be pierced at all costs.

That cartoon sent the strategic student to a study of German history under an impulse and with an intention very different from what would have made him turn over its pages at school or university.

Whether the diplomats realised its significance, or whether the War Office, we shall not know in our generation.

Popular feeling may have vented itself in laughter

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or anger or contempt or pity or jubilation at the tables of the well-to-do and the gatherings of working men. I have forgotten. It did not matter which. It was all valueless strategically.

The strategic student found, roughly speaking, what follows; and as he made his strategic notes year by year he saw that revelation being steadily confirmed by incidents and acts that baffled the public or left them cold. Nothing ever happened to contradict it.

Floods of popular feeling came and went; they meant nothing to him. Our Press one day lashed at France out of its profound darkness and blindness; it lashed at Russia another day; another day it fawned on the Kaiser. It suddenly took alarm and lashed at Germany. It did so as frantically as it had aforetime fawned. The strategic student went on making his notes without the slightest bias from it all. But what did trouble him as much as the wrongness and the danger of the attacks on France and Russia was the rightness as regards Germany. The cry of "Wolf!" might lull the people to weariness. Worse still, the Progressive and nobler Press was living on beautiful ideals, refusing to go into the hideous truth, and clogging the wheels of Statesmanship. The strategic student shared those hopes that the German people would throw down their tyrants and be free, as keenly as the Idealist, but his knowledge made him sadly turn from his hopes and grimly face the hideous truth. We shall see why. The supreme danger, however, arose from the Germanised Englishmen, who, distrusting Germany as bitterly as anyone, were so much in love with the German genius and so admired the German organisation that they

## The Rise of the German Menace 25

were violently employing every intrigue—and hotly clamouring to that end—that we should put off our habits and psychology and soul, and adopt the German psychology and habits and soul in order to stand the assault of Germany. If we had done so, we should to-day have been a German province.

However, let us back to that innocent *Punch* cartoon. What did the strategic student's researches reveal to him of the History, Psychology, and Strategy of Germany—her intentions, her means of achieving those intentions, and her capacity to do so?

### I

First, where exactly did Germany stand in 1870? And for what exactly did she stand?

We need not go into an elaborate survey of German History. A rough sketch of as much of it as leads to the German Strategic is enough—and it will refresh the memory and prevent haziness.

Germany had been a group of free peoples—very loosely knit together—orderly, plodding and methodical. Essentially democratic, these peoples a hundred years ago seemed the least likely to be enslaved. We shall see them, strangely enough, enslaved through the intellect and under the heel of Prussia.

To the weak-witted Prussian King, Frederick William IV—indeed to the Hohenzollerns divine right has granted *largesse* of madness—there succeeded his brother, first as Regent during the madness of the King, then as Lord of Prussia, crowning himself with his own hands as such at Königsberg, a man



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of high ambition and resolute power, William the First.

Becoming Regent in 1858, he saw Napoleon III wage his successful Italian campaign against France's hereditary enemy, Austria, in 1859 in order to free Italy.

The Regent promptly mobilised Prussia's army on the Rhine, and discovered its weakness. That this act of Prussia brought about the sudden peace between the two warring emperors over their coffee and cigarettes at Villafranca mattered far less to the grave and earnest Regent of Prussia than that the weapon of Prussia was weak. Becoming King thereafter, William I of Prussia at once set his hand to the task of making Prussia the overlord of all Germany. He drew to himself three men to the making—General von Roon as Minister of War, General von Moltke as Chief of the General Staff, and a Pomeranian squire, one Herr Otto von Bismarck—or as we should say, Mr Bismarck—whom he took from the diplomatic service, where he had been making a careful study of Russia at first hand, and made him the brain of the State. In the doing the astute and ambitious King placed the destiny of Prussia in the hands of the greatest leader of men that Germany has bred. The King was no small man, but the real King in Germany served him as Mr Bismarck; and William the First of Prussia was great enough to know it. From that moment Bismarck was to be Germany.

The essentially democratic Germans had their government by Parliament; and Bismarck had no love for democracies or parliaments. The Parliament hotly opposed the making of Germany into a vast

## The Rise of the German Menace 27

army—Bismarck had no other use for Germany, and with calm audacity tricked the parliament of its powers. The rising democracy had to be smashed; and with crafty skill of phrase, and by robbing it of power whilst pandering to its forms, Bismarck smashed it. He did it with the dramatic catchword of German Unity. With the King and von Roon and von Moltke, he created an army whose watchword was Thorough. Everything else was sacrificed to it.

To uproot the old love of freedom and good will out of this people needed consummate skill; but to create the people into one vast army demanded that uprooting. Bismarck filled their imagination with the ideal that only by surrendering their lazy freedom to become a vast army could they be really free and safe from assault from without. In order to be free they must first be bond—willing slaves to a unity of purpose.

Bismarck bewitched Germany with a shibboleth of Germany for the Germans—that Germany which was already wholly German in the best sense—and Germany followed the fine, masterful figure, unrealising that Bismarck meant Germany for the Prussians. It was the first surrender, but even that had to be compelled upon them.

Fortune favoured Bismarck's eagles, and helped further to hoodwink the German peoples.

In 1863 the Austrian Emperor, with that futile itch that has ever led Austria to her humiliation in diplomacy and in war, aspired to the quality of Cæsar over the German peoples. He received blunt refusal from the Hohenzollern.

What sullen enmity arose between them was stilled awhile by the craft of Bismarck whilst he tore

## 28 The Rise of the German Menace

the Elbe duchies from the brave but outnumbered and deserted Dane—and filched Schleswig, Holstein, and Luxemburg, while Britain, France, and Russia stood aloof (to their eternal shame—England was one of the peoples who, by the Treaty of London in 1852, guaranteed the integrity of Denmark, and how dear that aloofness has cost us all!). That war of 1864 against the Dane did much more for Bismarck; it proved to the Hohenzollern the value of the new army of Prussia, even though Europe saw it not, taken up with its own parochial affairs and intrigues. Bismarck and his fellow-conspirators noted the value of the new rifle and the thoroughness of the organisation of the new army.

The Polish insurrection of 1864 was crushed as swiftly as had been the Danes.

Bismarck fenced with Austria through 1865 whilst the increased Prussian army was moulded into perfected shape; he trapped Italy into alliance; fought his own parliament for power, organising with all his might the while for war, playing with unscrupulous skill to avoid appearing the aggressor; proceeded to lull France into friendliness, utterly jockeying the ambitious Louis Napoleon; outwitted France and Austria, mobilised the army, rent asunder the old Bund, violated Saxony, and striking swiftly and with all the concentrated Prussian might, crushed the Austrians at Sadowa on the 3rd July, 1866. By the 22nd of July, the Prussian reached the Danube, and stood before Vienna and Pressburg.

The French Emperor's moment came with the blow of Sadowa, but he let it pass. From that moment Bismarck knew that he had to deal with a "man of straw."

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The Treaty of Prague thrust Austria out of Germany, and made Prussia lord of Hanover, the Elbe duchies, Hesse-Cassel, and other broad German lands. Prussia thenceforth became acknowledged head and front of Germany. Bavaria signed forthwith a secret treaty that made her a part of Prussia in war; Würtemberg and Hesse-Darmstadt dared not refuse.

On the morrow of Sadowa, then, in all but name, Germany was Prussia.

With unscrupulous address, Bismarck at once turned to the business of smashing the France whom he had lulled into neutrality, and even into acquiescence, against Denmark and then against Austria. He had studied Napoleon III closely, and, as I have said, had found him a "man of straw." He had rid France of all her friends but Britain; and he now proceeded to lure Napoleon to the stupid antics that would display to the eyes of the world the innate unscrupulousness of the cardboard emperor in such a way as to leave France in the wrong and without allies. He egged on Louis to play the little Napoleon until he alienated every great State, and encouraged him in his love for the grand pose to intrigue against the smaller States on his own borders. Louis fell into every trap, and the French credit declined with him. Bismarck knew full well that the deserted Danes, Austrians, and German States would look on in sullen aloofness when France's day of reckoning came. He brought to the business all his unflagging unscrupulous skill, that was as merciless as it was masterly. By overthrowing the high military repute of France he saw that he would increase the military prestige of Prussia to in-

### 30 The Rise of the German Menace

vincibility; at the same time he would be able to compel the overlordship of Prussia upon all Germany. He brushed roughly aside the discontent and suspicion of the German peoples, and sapped their innate democratic spirit and love of freedom. He set up the ideal of Blood and Iron, and the German cowered in presence of what he saw that ideal achieve before his eyes. The military caste was raised to supreme power and honour; the secretly allied German States were organised on the Prussian pattern; the people were allowed to talk their democratic jargon founded on the French ideal, but Bismarck ever kept the danger of French invasion across the Rhine dangling before the southern German. He saw to it that the great moment that Napoleon III let slip for attacking Prussia on the morrow of Sadowa should never return.

Bismarck put into Louis Napoleon's head the idea of taking Belgium and Luxemburg. To review the uncertain mind of Louis Napoleon, his hesitations and his withdrawals, is unnecessary here.

In 1870 Bismarck had forged the machine to conquer France, and, in the conquering, to conquer Germany. He struck; and France and Germany went down. He did it with a ruthlessness and unscrupulousness only matched by his skill and will.

The deliberate aggressor, Bismarck, made the French Emperor appear and act the aggressor—and Louis Napoleon danced to his piping. The readiness of Prussia, when Bismarck struck, proved who was the director of the conflict to every sane man. Yet, if one read the works of the time written in England, it is amusing, if it were not tragic, to see how Bis-

## The Rise of the German Menace 31

marck threw dust in every eye, though it proves the stupid sincerity with which England hailed what it looked upon as the *liberation* of Germany!

Bismarck saw to Britain's being alienated by egging the French Emperor into irritating her.

He set up a vast spy system everywhere that told him all he wanted to know. The French found on the German officers who fell into their hands in 1870 far more complete staff-maps of the French theatre of war than their own.

Bismarck struck with a weapon so perfected that it swept Louis Napoleon, and the France that Louis Napoleon had made vulnerable, into the dust. The real France nearly saved herself; had she had one man of high military genius amongst her commanders she might even yet have been saved, but neither the Emperor nor the French General Staff, drawn from his confederates in his usurpation of the French crown, knew the psychology of Germany; they, therefore, understood nothing of her strategy; and went like dumb beasts to the slaughter.

The Man of Blood and Iron had made no such mistake. He had mastered the psychology of the French Empire from end to end—that France divided against herself, that hectic France of the Court afraid of the real France, a sullen France that watched and waited for the Emperor's fall. But to weigh the might-have-been is useless.

France was overwhelmed and beaten down, grossly humiliated, robbed of provinces, and made to pay vast ransom.

Now, to what goal Bismarck had next intended to move is hidden in the secret archives of Berlin.

## 32 The Rise of the German Menace

Everything points to the fact that in attacking Denmark, Austria, and France, his whole strategic intention was the conquest of Germany and the making of Germany into a vast Prussia.

Whether he now turned his eyes to the conquest of Britain is very doubtful. Bismarck was not easily intoxicated. With a huge and thoroughly well-welded army behind him, triumphant to a degree that astounded that army itself, it is certain that if he intended to assail Britain, and knowing the energy and swiftness with which he addressed himself to the strategy of his decision, he would not have hesitated to attack her. It looks as if Britain had not been in his scheme. We shall soon see what strongly confirms such a judgment.

But Germany leapt at a bound to the position of one of the greatest powers in the universe. The intoxication of that swift rise to power can easily be understood. Prussia, which had only freed herself from slavery sixty years before, rushed into an arrogance that betrayed to any student of strategic the greatest danger to Europe. But Bismarck held his hand. Uneasiness abroad gave way to quietude.

The fact was that the Man of Blood and Iron had brought forth a Monster whom very soon he could not control. He had fed it on Ruthlessness, and Ruthlessness was to become its god.

With the crowning of the King of Prussia as German Emperor, the old Germany put its neck under the heel of the Prussian, and a new Germany was born.

In twenty years that Germany was to trample upon Bismarck. In 1890 the Pilot was dropped.

## The Rise of the German Menace 33

### II

We have seen that the fall of Bismarck from power in 1890 sent the strategic student to piercing the veil of some new strategy that Bismarck clearly did not approve.

A survey of German History to the time yields one important clue which the strategic student notes down :

Bismarck had revealed his methods very clearly by 1870 even to the dullest mind. He had held off Britain and France in 1864 by guile whilst he destroyed the little Dane. He steadily increased his army and made a sullen enemy for Austria, France, and England. He had held off France and England in 1866 by guile whilst he overthrew Austria. He thereby enormously increased his armies and made another sullen enemy for France and England, who would watch their punishment with little regret. He next held off Britain by guile whilst in 1870 he smashed France, thereby reaching vast repute for his arms, establishing a tradition of Invincibility for the German in war, and making France a sullen spectator of any assault he might make upon Britain.

Bismarck was not a man of long delays. He did not waste a day in his designs.

But years passed; and Britain was not assailed.

Why?

Twenty years passed after Bismarck's mighty triumph and—Bismarck fell.

Why?

Surely, everything pointed to Bismarck's warning to the young Kaiser that this strategy and adventure, whatever it was, would wreck Germany! The Man



## 34 The Rise of the German Menace

of Blood and Iron was not the man to flinch from destroying Britain and America and striding to world-dominion if he considered it possible to do it. Nay, here was about the only living man to do it if it could be done. He clearly decided against some very vast enterprise. At any rate, he fell from power. The Germany that Bismarck had conquered, conquered Bismarck.

The Pilot was dropped.

The secret archives of Berlin close on the event.

But the strategic student has to pierce the veil.

He turns from the book of the History of Germany to his strategic notes on the psychology of Germany. What does he discover?

Had the triumph of Prussia in 1870 made any marked difference in the German psychology during the twenty years between Bismarck's triumph and Bismarck's fall? Was there any very marked change in attitude and thinking and aspiration in the Germany of 1870 and the Germany of 1890?

Yes.

A prodigious change. It could be *felt* everywhere. What exactly was it?

## CHAPTER V

### GERMAN STRATEGY ROOTED IN KULTUR

BEFORE any attempt is made to arrive at the German psychology it is essential to remove one particular source of error from the mind. To judge of Germany by the German of America, or the German who has shaken the dust of Prussia from his feet is puerile. There is no more grossly misunderstood man in the world to-day than the German in America. All that was best in the old Germany has left Germany with him; and whilst he naturally has a sentimental love for the land that bred him, he is probably as blind to the new psychology and strategic of Germany as any living man. To judge Germany by this fine type is sheer madness.

The Man-in-the-Street seems to have got it into his skull that the brutal acts and the ruthless horrors perpetrated by the German hosts are just isolated brutal acts of individuals or groups of men, or carried out under the Kaiser's orders or the orders of particular commanders, caused by blood-lust or the like. Worthy old gentlemen amongst us, and many writers on the war, seem incapable of understanding—they have not mastered—the psychology, the Kultur, of the whole people.

These fiendish and brutal acts are not isolated acts, nor ordered by individual commanders, nor due to the Prussian alone. They are the essential acts of

### 36 German Strategy Rooted in Kultur

the whole German conduct of war—an essential part of German strategic, quite as much so as is the employment of attack in massed formations, or the like. They are the deliberate essence of German Kultur. And it is for this very reason that it is absolutely necessary to know what is the German Kultur in definite terms, before we can arrive at any idea of German strategy.

It is only when German Kultur is grasped that it is possible to see why an Englishman or a Frenchman, even if he fought his war on the German strategic, would be unable to carry out that strategic to the same power as the Hun, owing to the utter gulf that yawns between their psychology and the German psychology, which is absolutely essential as driving power to the carrying out of the German strategic.

When worthy professors write long articles to show that the deposition of the Hohenzollern is the first essential to Peace, they might as well say that grinning through a horse-collar in Unter den Linden was the first essential for Peace. It only proves their hopeless lack of the grasp of strategy—to say nothing of Affairs.

To attempt to get a grip of strategy without knowing the psychology of the combatants—their character as revealed by their history and records—especially of an enemy, has been the long and supreme blunder of our military training.

It is probable that even the ambitious designs of Prussia, of Bismarck, the master of Prussia, would have been baulked by Germany herself, had it not been that alongside of the advance which Prussia steadily made in arms, there had come to the whole

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German people soon after the turn of the mid-century a revelation and a gospel which were to create a new Kultur that fitted Bismarck's intention and policy and aims like a glove—indeed, so fitted his design that Bismarck himself, in alarm at whither it led, flinched before it—and was to be sent packing by the crazy-witted braggart who had become his king. It came to a soil particularly suited to its growth at a season particularly fitted to bring it to rapid fruition—the soil of a coarse people but lately freed from slavery. Stein (1757-1831), the Prussian Statesman, initiator and inventor of modern Germany, who had formed the general scheme for the union of Germany under Prussia, on being given a free hand to carry out his Liberal ideas by Frederick William III. after the Prussian King's humiliation by Napoleon at the Treaty of Tilsit, resolutely carried through the Edict for the Emancipation of the Serfs in 1807, and the law came into force in 1810. Do not miss that fact of slavery!

Let us glance at this Kultur; the word is in everybody's mouth to-day. It is best to know exactly what it is and whence it came.

It must be noted at the start that by Kultur the German means a great deal more than culture—which indeed he has rather a contempt as leading to effeminacy. He means the whole of that practical German system of affairs, particularly the official machinery which, driven by a deliberate scheme, has raised him as a civilized man above what he looks upon as the savage—not only the culture of the intellect. Culture of manners he probably does not include—nor refinement, as we know the meaning of the word.

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### I

Strange as it may seem to the Man-in-the-Street, the direct origin and cause of the Great War is founded away back in the eighteen-fifties in a dangerous doctrine then being put about, but at the time probably looked upon as harmless enough, if somewhat heretical and not quite "the correct thing." Let us, therefore, glance at it awhile in its origins.

We have seen how the statecraft of Prussia was welding a weapon for the conquest of Germany, whereby to compel the German into a military power. It so happened that there came as a most vital aid to that statecraft a philosophy that blew the breath of a vast Germanic life instead of a mere parochial Prussian life into that Statecraft.

Germans had been dreamers, philosophising in the abstract, living in the ideal. Logic-chopping had about reached the limit of human endurance. But the widespread education and interest of the German in philosophy had prepared rich ground for a practical and working philosophy. Up to the mid-century, the German had been well content with the ideal, with Goethe and music and the humanities—even with Shakespeare and the musical glasses. Indeed what restlessness there was took the form of a trend towards a broad democracy. But the German was an ardent student and was reading. The which all looked well for democracy. The Prussians did not greatly trouble him except in that they were detested by the Germans. The Prussians had been a coarse and brutish people of down-trodden serfs, and Germany had always stood for liberty. Saxony, and the southern Germans in general, were French in their ideals.

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Now Darwin's "Origin of Species"—or to give it its full, clumsy, but significant title, "On the Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection, or the Preservation of Favoured Races in the Struggle for Life"—was published in 1859, and caused a prodigious sensation throughout this country, but in true British fashion the violent conflict of opinion over it was largely concerned with what seemed to be a challenge to religious revelation as held by the orthodox. In Germany, however, it was seized upon philosophically, and rapidly passed into German thought—the German student burnt much midnight oil over it, and further tried his sight and brain.

It must not be forgotten that near upon a century before Darwin's book gave print to one of the most far-reaching theories in human history, Darwin's grandfather, Erasmus Darwin, was one of several scientific men who had been concerning themselves with the struggle for existence and with Natural Selection. But the wild enthusiasm for, and bitter opposition to, Darwin's Theory created an epoch; and the German, however limited in invention, has never been backward in taking an idea. He is not less blatant in repudiating the origin of an idea when he has stolen it—just as a flunkey always behaves in his master's clothes.

Now it so happened that in the eighteen-fifties there was writing a dandified French aristocrat, whose philosophy fitted in most excellently with Darwin's startling teaching to the German mind. It is significant that this Frenchman's name, Gobineau, is not even mentioned in a British Encyclopædia which I have just opened out of curiosity, in an age when there is such widespread cackle of "Eugenics," which

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may roughly be said to be the science of breeding a healthy race, of which science Gobineau may be claimed to be the father, though Sir Francis Galton was the founder. It is interesting to note, by the way, that Eugenics, swiftly passed over to Germany, was feverishly taken up, and early held a most important position throughout the land. It is equally interesting to note that the Germans do not dwell too much on the fact that not only has the theory been the practice of many tribes from the earliest times, but that the Spartans exposed new-born infants on hill-tops to weed out the weak, and so produced the finest athletic men—who were the most uncultured and lacking in intellect of the whole of Greece. However, History has a way of repeating itself. Let us go back a little earlier to Gobineau, wherein is a great significance for the world to-day.

To begin with, to grasp the difference in the manner of acceptance of Darwin and Gobineau by the Germans in comparison with the English or the French is to go halfway to grasp the difference of their psychology in War. Gobineau's book "The Inequality of Races" has lately been translated into English for the first time, the year after the War began! Gobineau was writing in the 'fifties. When exactly he became a German cult is not quite clear; but he early became a German cult, a whole literature sprang up devoted to him in Germany, and he had a prodigious vogue. The moment we discover for what Gobineau stands we see why he was a German vogue.

Like Darwin, Gobineau was an amiable gentleman of breeding and culture. Joseph Arthur, Comte de Gobineau, came of a distinguished royalist family

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which had stood by the Bourbons. A man of wealth as of high social standing, Count Gobineau entered the French Diplomatic Service in which he ended his days; he knew many capitals, in the north, south, east, and west; and everywhere he was a keen student of religions, morals, and antiquities. He became more and more struck by the inequalities of the races in courage, mastery, intellect, culture. He put his researches into philosophic theory in his famous work. It was to have a profound influence on European affairs such as he little dreamed of. It was largely to create this War to-day. He strongly stated his theory of hereditary aristocracy. The crowd was, and never could be otherwise than, feeble in initiative, ignorant, slavish, a mob, hopeless, blind, unfitted for mastery. Education would leave it at heart the same. All that had ever been achieved in the history of man had been done by the superior breeds which had compelled their will upon the people and bent them to their own force and vigour. So he came to the conclusion that in race was to be found the key to national mastery and achievement. Nature was the final law. The laws of heredity and bodily vigour and the domination of the best bred were above climate or religion or forms of government. A man was well-born or he was not; that is to say, he came from a class that was fitted for mastery by long habit of his class or he was not fitted for mastery. It was the character derived from his ancestors alone that mattered; just as man was above the brute, so was the aristocratic class above the people. History and the different races, white, yellow, black, proved it. The blacks and the yellow peoples were inferior to the white in every way and were bound to remain



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inferior. All virtue, strength, beauty, intellect, courage, capacity, refinement, vigour, art, and taste, of the highest order were in the white races. Above all, the purer the white, the Aryan, the higher his place in the mastery of the world. Indeed, wherever there had been a great civilization it had been created by the supremacy of an Aryan caste. He gave the culture of ancient Egypt to an Aryan colony from Asia Minor; Assyria and China also; Greece and Rome found greatness through a ruling Aryan caste, so also with Persia and India—mixed subject peoples led by Aryan aristocrats.

But the master caste, being too small, intermarried with the subject brown or yellow peoples, and, thereby, lost their purity, and with the loss the nations fell. Mongrels always led to decay. Then came the point that was very sweet to the German—the Teuton and the Scandinavian, fair of hair and of skin, remain the purest whites to-day, they were the purest Aryans, therefore alone capable and fitted, and therefore having the right, indeed a sacred duty, to compel their mastery upon the world. To them all other peoples are but slave-folk.

Soon we find a German writer of the first rank arising who is to mangle Darwin and to steal the Frenchman's thunder and infect the whole German people with his gospel, so that the German student puts out his midnight oil and arrays himself in the pomp and panoply of war, short-sighted, spectacles and all.

### II

Nietzsche (1844-1900), gifted with an astounding beauty of phrase, leaped to the new gospel. He

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filched Darwin's Survival of the Fittest and his Evolution of the Stronger breed above the weaker with its resulting mastery; and he filched Gobineau's Aryan theory—and, the better to conceal his theft, having sneered Darwin down, and indignantly repudiated Gobineau, he "invents" a name for the race that Darwin tells him is to be evolved by Man above himself, and calls it the race of "Overmen" or "Beyond-Men"; and he takes Gobineau's fair Aryan and calls him the Blonde Beast and makes him Darwin's evolved Overman; and he flings down all existing moral as being the moral of the superannuated Man, and builds up a Brute Morality instead, whereby the Overman shall overwhelm Man by sheer brute force and subjugate him. Christ is dead; Nietzsche has arisen. The irony of it was that Nietzsche was not a German, not a pure white Teuton, but a Pole; and that he held the German in utter contempt as a vulgarian, a boor; whilst Gobineau did look upon the Teuton and Scandinavian as nearest the pure Aryan, Nietzsche did *not* look upon the German as the Overman—his race of Overmen was a master caste of Europeans with no regard to nationalities—the "good European," the "Blonde Beast." The Beyond-Man, this Blonde Beast—for he must in order to achieve—was to set up a new Kultur utterly contemptuous of the old civilization which was a Slave-civilization, put forth by Christ to protect the slave-peoples from the rightful mastery of the Overmen. This Kultur was fully developed by Nietzsche in an exquisite phrasing founded on the prophets, enunciating the gospel of Brutality and Ruthlessness as the laws of the Overman—or what our journalists have translated into the bastard word "Superman."

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### III

Strange as it may seem, the whole of the puritanism and idealism and love of democracy of the German went down before the new gospel like a pack of cards. We shall see in a moment why. But, stranger still, this Kultur, thieved by a Pole from misunderstandings of the teaching of an Englishman and from the vacant theories of a Frenchman—both races utterly contemptible to the German—was set up as being the discovery, origin and psychology of the Blonde Beast, the German; and was, therefore, original and alone fitted to replace the civilization of the rest of the world, outworn and in decay. It was the duty of the German to put it upon the wide earth. Had not Nietzsche and Treitschke revealed it to Germany?—they were neither of them Germans, but they ought to have been. At any rate, they spoke German. Stranger still, this is not the cult of a small German Court for political purpose; it is the cult of the whole German people—taught in the nursery, in the school, and in the university. The student, once living and dreaming in the Ideal, has put off the ancient romance of German democracy and has put on the Prussian cap. He is suckled on this milk of human Unkindness. The very clerk and the tradesman and the people are taught it and believe it. It has made this War, as we shall see. And it has come about in strange fashion, as though the gods had driven this people mad in order to destroy it.

How widely and deep this Kultur has bitten could be seen long before the War. Wagner in later life met Gobineau and said that he had found in his

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gospel considerable solution of the perplexities which had troubled him.

The renegade Houston Stuart Chamberlain who married Wagner's daughter, he whose huge volumes of the "Foundations of the Nineteenth Century" blazon forth the German Kultur with an arrogance in its brutish gospel difficult for any Prussian to outdo, founds his whole exaggerated and confused learning boldly on Gobineau's work, leading with triumphant pride to the superiority of race of the German people. Scant wonder that the Kaiser put the Order of Merit upon him and ordered the book to be used throughout the education of his realm!

It is the grim irony of Fate that his creed only brought despair to Gobineau. Gobineau found that everywhere the Blonde Beast had allowed its fairness and its purity of beastliness to be degraded by inter-marriage, and every race was mainly half-breeds, so that the world is hopelessly destined to suffer the vice of democracy, to the annihilation of all the aristocratic qualities such as valour, refinement, taste, initiative, originality—such as Germany has in such abundance! The sole hope was in deliberate breeding and that hope was not to be expected; there was no hope for civilization, which was doomed.

It seems almost incredible that, on such a foundation of ethnology and history, such a monstrous and distorted Kultur and a widespread German ambition could have been built deliberately, set up deliberately, and as deliberately attempted by the whole people—with its arms, industry, intellect, wealth and brain flung recklessly on the hazard. But the German is a

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student, not a creator. He is an organiser of the thought of others, of the inventions of others, not an inventor. His logic is logic-chopping. He is by consequence easily gulled; and the moment he gave way to arrogance in face of such flattery he was lost to reason. The gods drove him mad.

Now it must be remembered that the German has always lacked the Gaelic largeness of philosophic vision. He is a logic-chopper. He has triumphed in detailed scholarship; by consequence he has always been an easy prey to the pseudo-philosophic. His spectacled industry is short-sighted. He builds on detail, and there being such a mass of detail, he mistakes a mass of detail for largeness of vision. So we shall see the German leaping to a new philosophy without first discovering whether its foundations were built on sound ground.

And there is this excuse for studious Germany. The loose and lazy freedom of her old habit *did* leave her open to assault from without, though her short-sightedness prevented her from seeing that that very freedom prevented her enslavement, whilst the giving up of that vital fire of her race lost her her freedom through enslavement to Prussia.

Also there is this excuse for studious Germany. The logic-chopping of her idealists had led her into the morass of grey pessimism which can scarcely be said to be a cheering prospect. To sit at the feet of Schopenhauer and brood on the prospect that life was a brutal and vulgar thing—that the hawk preys on the singing bird—that the best way to baulk life is to refuse to reproduce it—can scarcely add to the fibre of a people nor make it in love with languor. Suddenly sounds a trumpet note. Germany is a young

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giant asleep, lulled by sad music. Awake! The conquest of the wide earth is but at his Will.

### IV

It were waste of words—and now too late for words—to show him that the foundations on which he built his Kultur are dust and sand—the “Baltic strand.” Yet it is well to glance at the rottenness of the foundations of the German Kultur.

Late research by science has proved that the vague conclusions in which he founded his Kultur do not exist. There are no pure races. It is like as not that there never were. Even if he were not a mongrel from near the beginning, Man has been nothing else since the recorded memory of man. Not only was the ruling caste everywhere not pure Aryan, but it is not known whether there has ever been a pure Aryan since the life of man began to be recorded.

A people that takes to its bosom flattery based on so obscure and confused and questionable a foundation, can only be the eager victims of a mad conceit. If any pure Aryan race whatsoever exist it is quite certain that it is not the mongrel race that speaks the German tongue. The Prussians above all have less pure Aryan blood than some of the battalions against which they are flinging the Prussian Guards to slaughter for the sake of setting up the new god, “red of claw” and Ruthless of heart and soul.

Nietzsche, who lived in debauches of intellectual ecstasy even if intellectually incapable of creating original thought, had at any rate this logical gift that once he accepted a gospel he saw that all life and moral must be made attune to it or it was no

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gospel. He boldly flung down the moral of civilization as it was, repudiated Christ as being the prophet of that discarded moral, and as fearlessly set up a moral of Anti-Christ in which he gloated and which alone could be attune to the race of the Blonde Beast, his Beyond-Man.

But his Beyond-Man was born out of a blundering misconception of Darwin's Survival of the Fittest. Darwin and his Interpreter, Huxley, before they died, were baffled by the fact that the moral of civilization and Brotherhood, whilst obviously creating the finer races, did not fit in with a theory of the Survival of the Fittest by Ruthless Strife for mastery. Huxley's Romanes lecture was a public confession of this baffled state. But Nietzsche would have none of it. The Survival of the Fittest was by Ruthlessness and brutish selfishness, therefore the new moral must be Ruthlessness. Whilst Darwin and Huxley stood baffled, Nietzsche blundered on. None of the three bent his eyes to the obvious and root question of the whole problem: How had Man as the fittest, arisen above the Brute?

Man rose to dominion over the brute by the Survival of the Fittest and the Struggle for Existence. Granted. But what was fittest? *How* did he do it? By Ruthlessness? Not a bit of it. The lion and the wolf were as Ruthless as he, and with greater bodily power to enforce that Ruthlessness than the naked, defenceless thing that was Man. Man had a glimmering higher cunning, and a Hand, with a Thumb on that hand, wherewith to grip and hold and throw; but even so he had gone down before the more ruthless and powerful brutes, but for one thing—and one thing alone. By union with his fellow man—by

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brotherhood—by that comradeship wherein he added his fellow's cunning and skill and strength and brain to his own and gave his own to his fellow—by that readiness to sacrifice himself for his comrade's sake and his comrade to sacrifice himself for him. So that he came to meet in the valley's debate, thence to dwell in the village, thence to the walled town, until the State widened his boundaries, his skill, his valour and his strength by a more august and wider brotherhood. So from a little Kingdom he passed into self-governance in a wide democracy as he stands at the head and front of power and comradeship to-day. And by union and brotherhood alone can he win the masterplace in the world. And by no other means shall he so win to mastery and by no other means shall he rise on the dust of his dead self to that Beyond and Above-People that shall be his heirs and reach to a higher majesty and dominion, come what else may.

What Nietzsche, and German Kultur, were intellectually and by innate brutishness of soul incapable of understanding was the obvious fact that Man, having arisen above the brute by comradeship and brotherhood and by these alone, the Ruthless Man was doomed by and through his very Ruthlessness, as the even more Ruthless lion and tiger and wolf and snake had been doomed to destruction, by the union of the brotherhood of man against him. The Ruthless man digs his own grave by very assumption of Ruthlessness, since the first act of his fellows, even guided by no higher motive than fear of that Ruthlessness, is to slay him. And they do slay him. So that even Fear was above Ruthlessness, to say



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nothing of Valour being above it. The moment a democracy wills that its tyrant shall die, that tyrant must die. Ruthlessness, by its very fact, could not create comradeship, since it implies lack of union, for the interest of the Ruthless would be to slay the Ruthless, lest they themselves be slain. That which is opposed to the brotherhood of man can never hope to live in brotherhood or by brotherhood. To cut away the brotherhood of man whereby he arose above the brute, is to plunge him back to the brute. And so it has happened—as it was inevitable that it should happen. The Upstart of Europe, unable to acquire the civilization of the Europe into which he has thrust himself, looks upon the brutishness out of which he has arisen as supreme to the civilization which he is too vulgar and brutish to acquire, and raises his swinehood to a religion.

In such wallow, then, the Prussian Upstart rolled and arrogantly proclaimed his splendour; and by Heaven, by consequence of his arrogance, there were only too many to stand in open-mouthed awe and to talk of his wonderful brain, his wonderful organisation, his wonderful invention and valour and thoroughness and intellect. There are many who think so yet—the Upstart was rich and powerful and arrogant, and folk are ever impressed by such gawds.

As a matter of fact the invention and intellect of which he boasts, what had they done to place him above the rest of the world? Did the German discover or invent the shuttle or the loom, steam or electricity, the steam-engine or the steamship, the telegraph or the telephone, or electric light or gas or chloroform or the submarine or the aeroplane, or railways or railway-tickets, or the newspapers, or any

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mortal thing that is at man's service to-day? Is he not rather the more remarkable for having had the brains to invent so little?

But the renegade Houston Stuart Chamberlain hath spoken, and the Order of Merit dangles upon him. And Gobineau is god of Germany.

Is the Man-in-the-Street of opinion to-day, in the hard test of facts and the clash of peoples, that Valour, Taste, Refinement, Initiative, Originality, have been markedly and pre-eminently Germany's supreme gifts in the War or in peace, as he was told that they were before the War and half believed?

Nevertheless the Man-in-the-Street, and many in High Places, here and in neutral countries and perhaps in America above all, believe that at any rate the German is supreme in War and Strategy. Well: let us see!

If the German be supreme in War and Strategy, he must have a Strategy. What exactly is German Strategy?

## CHAPTER VI

### WHAT EXACTLY IS THE GERMAN HIGHER STRATEGY?

WE have seen the fall of Bismarck from power in 1890. We have discovered throughout Germany a vast difference taking place in the psychology of the whole people between 1870 and 1890. The arrogance aroused by 1870 has been fed by a new philosophy, a new creed. They are a different people. They have a new Kultur.

The Man-in-the-Street may say: Yes, this Kultur quite clearly accounts for the foul soul of Germany in war to-day. It even accounts for his deliberate Sadism—that wanton, filthy, and gratuitous criminality and treachery and unmentionable beastliness that mark all his acts. But how did it create the War? and in what degree is it the direct foundation and fount of the German Strategy?

Well, unless we grip hold of it firmly we cannot understand German strategy; yet, before we can decide whether the German is supreme in War we must discover exactly what is his strategy and whether he has *achieved* that Strategy.

#### I

Now, when Bismarck fell from power and went into retirement, there were men about him who had been closely attached to him. Was there any very

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prominent man of these, closely allied to Bismarck, who did not share in his disgrace? Perhaps there was even one who, on the contrary, was markedly favoured by the Emperor.

Yes.

One man in particular.

His name Treitschke. The Kaiser, the Court, the Army, Society, all Germany sat at the feet of Treitschke and drank in wisdom from him.

What had Treitschke to tell us?

### II

Many quite worthy old gentlemen and superior young gentlemen are under the quite honest conviction that the German is fighting under the heel of a masterful group of Prussians with whom he is not at heart in accordance. They think in fact that the German is at war under a tyranny that he does not at heart approve, just as was the Russian; and that, like the Russian, he is only too ready to hurl down the Prussian as the Russian hurled down the Tsar and the bureaucracy.

There could be no more insane delusion.

We have seen the Prussian arms advance to the great triumph over France in 1870. We have seen the German thrilled by the new Kultur. *We are about to see that Kultur deliberately adopted by the State and made into its Strategic, that is to say, its leadership to war.*

It is futile to say that what Treitschke taught Germany was an illogical jumble. It was. So were Gobineau's and Nietzsche's philosophies. But all contained that half-truth which is worse than a lie.

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And whether sound or unsound the terrible and tragic fact remains that the whole German peoples leaped at it as their inspired gospel. No Crusader ever went into battle against the Saracen more firmly guided by his faith than the German went with his Kultur into this war.

Well, for what exactly did Treitschke stand? What was it that our own egregious Professor Cramb told us that we should adopt as our own culture or be lost, and that the renegade Houston Stuart Chamberlain vowed to be beyond our capacity? What is it that the jingo admirers of Germany amongst us strive to compel into our psychology as being so superior to our own psychology which, when all's said, has set us amongst the supreme peoples of the earth?

Do not let us fiddle with, or be hazy about, what has guided the German strategy in this war or we perish—body and soul.

At what stage precisely Treitschke came to wide influence throughout Germany it is not wholly easy to determine. The triumph of Prussia in 1870 intoxicated the German and made the time ripe for Treitschke. The German was looking about for new worlds to conquer. He was open to any flattery that should transcend his own high arrogance and conceit. From that day, steadily the influence of Treitschke grew—then more and more rapidly spread—until in 1890 the strategic student makes the note that Bismarck has fallen and another rules from behind the throne of the Lord of Germany. Treitschke has triumphed. The Kaiser's supreme treachery has begun. The strategy of all Germany has been decided.

Every officer in the German Army and Navy, every student, every bank-clerk and tavern-lord was

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soon raising his glass to "The Day!" Every officer was soon looking to the day when he should drink the toast free of charge in the pleasant lands of France.

What had done it?

Enter Treitschke.

### III

Treitschke (1834-1896), a Czech, therefore a Slav (his forbears had come out of Bohemia into Germany), belonged to the Saxon aristocracy. Becoming deaf when young, he had to give up the keen desire of his youth, and of his life, for the Army, and was lecturer in history at Leipzig from about 1859 to 1863; at Freiburg to 1866; thence to Kiel, whence he went to Heidelberg until 1874, *when he went to the University of Berlin*, where he died in 1896. Note the date of his going to Berlin, whither he goes with a vast reputation.

The boy, whose greatest hero was Blücher, had disapproved the abortive revolution of 1848, and by seventeen he had an ardent belief in the union of Germany under Prussia. He had early formed his ideas, and resolutely diffused them amongst the students, who were soon flocking to him—the unification of a powerful Germany which alone could come by the destruction of the small weak States. Bismarck came to power in 1862, and at once Treitschke found his hero, and decided that Prussia was alone fitted to be overlord of a united Germany. When in 1864 Austria and Prussia united to crush Denmark, Treitschke was thoroughly foul of the smaller German Kingdoms, and went to Freiburg to teach the gospel. By 1865 he was openly proclaiming "We must cease

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to talk about law and right." He had picked up the Gobineau Kultur fast. The overthrow of Austria by Prussia in 1866 saw Treitschke being approved by Berlin, exactly in the measure of his hatred of the southern states. At Heidelberg he greatly increased his influence over young middle-class Germany. In 1867 Bismarck formed the North German Confederation, and as chancellor of it, compelled upon it compulsory military service on the Prussian model, thereby raising a formidable army for Prussia.

The war with France in 1870 saw Treitschke ecstatically hailed by his students as they went forth to "conquer at any price." He proceeded to discover that Alsace and Lorraine were really German, and he thundered that they must be taken. The setting up of a German Emperor at Versailles realized his first great dream. He became a member of the new Reichstag and was Bismarck's hottest champion. Soon he was deeply interested in Nietzsche's philosophy, which tallied with his Gobinism. In 1874 Treitschke went to Berlin University, and he rapidly increased his public thereby. In 1888 the Emperor died. Treitschke's lectures were soon attended by all the intellect and fashion of Berlin. His writings were carried and taught throughout the youth of Germany. The new Kaiser accepted his teaching and had it spread throughout Germany with insistent enthusiasm.

What was this teaching? In spite of the blasphemous assumptions that Gobinism was the will of God, and that anything else was contrary to the will of God, out of it all emerges the new German Strategy. In spite of his utter lack of humour, as when he deplored the spread of education as setting up the claim of the devil of Socialism to power, which is, of course

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a frank confession that the democracy only requires education to give it that will and capacity and power for dominance which he trounced as impossible and a disobedience to God in a people; or his praise of German arms in giving Peace to the world after calling Peace a curse to humanity (!)—he was, for all his lack of common sense, founding a new Strategy for Germany. What was this teaching of the great Prophet of Prussia from the chief chair of history in Germany—that was the theme of all the School textbooks—that his pupil Bernhardi made into Manuals for the instruction of all German officers—to which all society in Berlin flocked to listen as though to a popular play?

The new German Kultur was being clearly formulated into the new German Strategy by Treitschke. What was it?

Let Treitschke speak it out of his own mouth:

### IV

Out of the twilight of the Past, Germany's destiny had been foreshadowed in her very beginnings in the guidance of her God, Odin—the German god of War. Valour had ever marked her for its own; her Kultur had stood forth ever to the envy and admiration of the world. But she had departed awhile from her mighty destiny through too great devotion to Culture alone. The Germany even of Goethe had been steeped in the idyllic, concerned only with culture for culture's sake, at best with the good of humanity; and Germany, being the mighty power that she is, conquered the world with that culture, conquered the realm of the intellect.



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Then Germany had awakened and hearkened to the supreme revelation that she alone could lead humanity. The grey pessimism in which she seemed doomed to sink, fell from her, and with blithe courage she took up the burden of her appointed destiny. To her making came Prussia to whom had been granted the guidance of Frederick the Great. The culture, the twisted ways, the contempt of moral as the world understood moral, the daring and the unscrupulousness, the love of power and the ruthless prosecution of war to make his country great in this mighty man were the supreme example for Germany to follow. Sworn covenants and written treaties were but "filigree-work, pretty to look at but of no consequence." Chivalry in war was but a fantastic and mawkish sentiment unfit for such as should have Ruthlessness for battle-cry.

Prussia's manhood, bred in the stern climate of the north, her youth made vigorous by the "free and bracing winds of the Baltic strand," had been granted the task of welding Germany into a people; and to Prussia had been vouchsafed the Hohenzollern, God-sent, to guide the German destiny to its supreme fulfilment—dominion over the world. (By God Treitschke clearly always meant Frederick the Great—or a relative.) For the Hohenzollern by divine right had discovered the inability of democracy to govern greatly—the Hohenzollern had rid the German peoples of that once-accepted incubus of mob rule and freedom and love of humanity with which she had so long toyed.

It was only when Germany put the petty ideal of personal freedom from her, and realised that the authority of the State over the individual could alone

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bring the people to power as a whole, that Germany shook off her lethargy of democracy and entered into her destiny as world-conqueror. The State must be master of the individual, and without appeal. It was by Bismarck's triumph over parliament that the Hohenzollern came to power, and thereby led Germany to Unity. The German democracy would never have welded itself into a State. It was only by having a King granted to them who could choose his ministers, who in their turn could create a vast machinery of government, that Germany was enabled to stand before the world armed and equipped at all points, dreaded for her might.

Democracy was the ideal of vulgar uncultured breeds like the English and their "American spawn," or the weak product of efficiency such as overwhelms the intellect and culture of the French. Democracy lacked the gift of creating leadership, whereas Kingship rested on the faculty for drawing leadership to it, unfretted by mean jealousies of the popular will. (It will be noticed that his audiences never seem to have been fretted by the fact that Treitschke had a poor opinion of the German people!)

The sole significance of the State is Power; and Power rests upon War.

Sentimentalists flout at War; but throughout all nature, as throughout the whole history of man, the supreme law was War, Might is Right. Even they who vowed Right to be Might, went to war to prove it! War gives us the final judgment of Nature. Evolution points to it as the supreme law. The decision of War was the only ultimate just decision, since it was the decision by which men would abide.

Democracies had to be woo'd to the making of

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war by sentimentalists; but war was Germany's God. (Here be it noted that Frederick the Great has to give place a little.)

The whole significance of a people lay in War. Valour in war is the supreme moral. All else gives way to that. And such being so, the mastery of the world having always gone to them that were greatest in war, it was every German's duty to make Germany the completest master of war that the world had yet seen.

The banker and the clerk, the landowner and the peasant, the seaman and the landsman, from King to village lad, should so order his life that his inspiring aim and object should be the aid that his particular activity would bring, each in his degree, to the perfecting of the power of Germany in battle on that day that she went forth to conquer. Not only should every man worthy of the name of German, the greatest name a man can bear, be compelled to train as a soldier, but his work-a-day life should be shaped to the perfecting of the machine of war. He should strive to be hard and capable of endurance. The army was above all other honours. Prussia had taught the nation to be an army—the army a nation.

Every nation outside Germany is an enemy; every agency of craft and cunning and unscrupulousness should be employed day and night to sift out the details of the nations so that they might be destroyed. The element of surprise, and of the swift blow on the surprise, were of prodigious value in war; so Germany should seek by skill and utter unscrupulousness of diplomacy to separate and keep nations apart whilst she prepares her mighty hosts for the Day and enfeebles the enemy for the attack even whilst she

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herself arrays herself for battle and the destruction of each in turn. Ruthless cunning is a part of Valour. (How Treitschke had the effrontery constantly to charge Britain with perfidiousness after this is a German miracle!)

No peoples had the right to live except under the domination of German Lordship, German Valour, and German Kultur. The lesser nations that stood in her way must suffer overthrow and be beaten to their knees; but the predestined dominion of Germany should not lose its aim in petty conquests—it was for Germany here and now to seek out the mightiest people, and to concentrate all the vast resource of her wealth, her industries, and her valour upon the humiliation and conquest of the strongest peoples—her factories should pour forth the weapons for, and her Kultur concentrate its whole science and skill upon, that overwhelming. Not a day should pass in a German's life without his feeling that he has done something, however small, towards that Day. Every German should live for an heroic purpose.

Germany, lulled by the humane fallacy of the lesser peoples, had heretofore taken her concept of life and morals, like the others, from an alien Eastern genius, arisen in Galilee, born out of the Jewish race—a contemptible people who were the parasites on all civilised nations. Germany had thereby been deflected from her ancient destiny. The Germany of old, overwhelming the mighty Roman Empire, had found a once virile Rome conquered by an alien religion out of Galilee; and the German in his turn had been spiritually conquered.

But Germany has now awakened to the fact that her creative power lies in giving the world a new

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religion, born out of her own soul and her own Kultur, grown on her own soil, the religion of Valour. (Treitschke was never troubled by truth or accuracies, however, and forgot to explain that Gobineau was French and Nietzsche a Pole.) Yet, mark how even whilst Germany had been conquered by the alien religion of Galilee, the purity and nobility with which she had followed it, brought forth an absolutely original architecture wherein to house it—the Gothic! (Treitschke was not much of an authority on art, and probably did not realize that the best Gothic was French.) How much mightier will be her higher religion of Valour, and how much nobler the architecture in which she will house it! (This was rather a long shot for Treitschke.)

Seek danger! Give heroically! Whether Germany rise or fall, at least she will not fall the thrall of an alien God, but the disciple of Ruthless Valour, the essayer of heroic deeds; for her no cloudy pallid heavens beyond the grave, but an heroic adventure along the pathway to Valhalla, the tomb of heroes.

Germany has flung aside the alien moral brought from Galilee; and she has created a moral of valour whereby Valour is alone its own judge of action, alone its own standard of conduct. She is about to compel that moral upon the world. The day of salvation came to the German when he ceased from surrendering his genius to an alien moral that had enslaved it, unlike the lesser breeds of the world, who are in power to-day by accident and owing to the long slumbering of Germany; but these will fall prone to her Will and bow them down to her dominion and her moral if Germany nourish her Valour and attempt what her Valour can achieve. For none can resist

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that ordered Valour; and none has the power or the right to question her acts.

What had the ideals and ethics of alien folk to do with Germany? It was for Germany to create a moral and compel it on the conquered. The test of a moral was not its approval by man, but its significance to Germany. All history proves that a people practised that moral only which brought it power and dominion. For a people to preach one moral and live another is a lie.

Now the alien breeds had come to an insane and unvirile dislike of war—preached against war—had set up for themselves an ideal of Peace. But war is not the scourge of mankind, the barrier to human progress; war is the mightiest thoroughfare whereby man in the struggle of evolution reaches towards perfection. He who cries out for the abolition of war is guilty of an immorality; he fears his stronger neighbour. For a great people there is no standing still between world-dominion and ruin—'tis one thing or the other—there is no other choice. War is, therefore, a most virile need of life. Through war alone may a people rise to mastery. "The happiest death is for him who, in the hour of battle, feels the blood drip upon his brow from the laurel-wreath of victory."

And Germany, thrilled by her destined and appointed lordship over the universe, must search out the greatest obstacles to be overcome—and the most formidable is the vast sea-realm of England. Germany must overwhelm other peoples, but England must be crushed—and after England, "her spawn in America." There lies the only path to that world-dominion and splendour which German Valour and

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German moral are begotten and destined to attain! For a people are not overwhelmed until their moral is made subject to the moral of the conqueror. Across Germany's mighty destiny lies this one dangerous enemy. All others are as nothing to this England. By the valour and moral of Germany, by hate and craft and ordered preparation, the might of England and America could be overthrown, and made as naught by the German people.

The danger is only in the seeming. England's realm is vast, but is built on rotten and still rotting foundations, just as "her spawn in the United States of America" were born in corruption and have expanded in vulgarity and British self-sufficiency. The German who went to America should live in communities apart, so that the German genius should not suffer weakening from the American debasement; he should accumulate wealth so that on the day of reckoning he might help the Hohenzollern to overthrow the English genius of the futile Republic. This England lives on tradition. Her immorality, her arrogance, and her pride are an outrage to every German; for to Germany's long absorption in the higher conquests of the soul is wholly due England's security, within which this gross race has come to mastery and imperial position. Germany had been tricked and befooled for centuries by the British, and had suffered it. But she has the habit of supremacy, this English breed; therefore her crushing and overthrow by Germany must be the more thorough—England will never forgive our strength. (Evidently the foundations of poor old England were not so very rotten after all!)

When England had not attacked Germany to save

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the Dane, and then to save Austria, and then to save France, England had been a treacherous but timid enemy; but when England balked Germany's will on France, she did so equally because she was treacherous and afraid—and when she attacks Germany it will be because she is treacherous and afraid! (Evidently whatever England did was bad Kultur!) Therefore Germany must prepare secretly and treacherously to overwhelm England so that England shall not be ready. (Treitschke evidently feared this rotting England above all other peoples!) Compare the valour and Kultur of Germany with those of England, whose world repute is out of all measure with her real strength or her worth, social, intellectual, or moral. England? A splendid sham! This nation of shopkeepers wields a sham dominion; it lives a sordid political life and a hypocritical home existence—it is a dominion of conceit and insular insolence. It is a bubble reputation. Her wide dominions vast spread beyond her strength to keep and hold—her armies a little tribe of mercenaries paid for their courage! (Treitschke little knew what wealth was showered on Tommy and his officers—evidently what he could *not* believe was that British officers *paid* to serve the State!) The British Empire was built up neither by valour nor by genius nor by the ordered scheme of a mighty policy, but by the indifference of other peoples, by the duplicity of her ministers, above all by the high hazard and good fortune of her island home upon the great world-path of the high seas. Greatness had been thrust upon her. She stands a Colossus 'tis true, a giant—with feet of clay. And the uncultured world adores bigness and respects it. But, in this vast universe of ours, the thing that is a sham, the thing



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wholly rotten, though it may endure for a time, cannot endure for ever. The whole tale of history witnesses to that. This sham dominion of England will fall; and with what a shout of exultation the nations will hail that fall of this Island People!

The world asks cantingly—England herself asks—What moral right have the Germans to make war upon this people? Germany answers that England possesses a fifth of the habitable globe. Ought Germany to allow her to possess a fifth of the world? England, with her wonted hypocrisy, vows to Germany that she has no quarrel with the Germans; but England's very existence is the stumbling-block to Germany's dominion over the world. Her avowal of goodwill to Germany is but a cover to her fear of Germany. She has risen by robbery and holds the spoils of the world; what right has she to expect goodwill from the nations? England has all to lose, nothing to gain by conflict with Germany; Germany has all to gain, nothing to lose—Germany who can do aught she desires to do! England's title-deeds to dominion are solely violence and treachery, backed by valour—for she has a certain valour. (Treitschke evidently thought it better to give the shopwalkers back a little pluck or his appeal to Germany to trample on so feeble a folk might seem too easy a job!) What right has England to complain if the German tear her title-deeds from her by violence and valour? A narrow sea alone saves her from conquest—and it is for Germany to master that narrow sea. The rest is sure. The great world-robber, glutted with booty, like a burglar retiring from business, asks the protection of the police from the ill-will of his neighbours! These Hague International Tribunals are

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set up by England and "her American spawn" in order to protect themselves against the German. As if there could ever be a judgment of a nation by nations! The sole authority of a State is its own Power. And this hypocritical show of horror of wars, and this placing of international disputes before an impartial jury of the nations, are but a subterfuge of the English and their like to baulk the destiny of Germany which has a higher Valour, a higher Kultur, and a higher Moral than theirs. Why should Germany bow to *their* moral which Germans do not approve?

It is not for a vast heroic people like the Germans to fix their eyes on petty conquests. As Germany overthrew aforetime the might of the immortal Roman Empire, so to-day her task is in keeping with her high estate; and the vastest Empire of our times, the successor of Rome, lies before the German for the destroying—the might of England. (An amiable soul, this Treitschke! He is clearly hedging so that when England is destroyed Germany shall be able to boast that the poor shopkeepers were really devils of fellows to overthrow!) If every German does not envisage this her destiny, then Germany is a futile thing, and of no account—a dreamer content with the dream—a nothingness—her Kultur invalid, her valour futile.

England is at her height, and must inevitably soon decline. Who will seize her realm and her magnificence? Has not Germany a right to a place in the sun? Is this England so vast that, growing old, she has the right to bequeath her greatness to her kin across the seas? She cowers behind a Fleet, hating war and fearful of taking up arms, a timorous craven

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people who will surrender to the first onslaught of the German legions. Her Colonies stand aloof from her, governing themselves, not subject to her valour and her ordering. India watches but for the moment to strike her down—India which she had not the culture nor the valour to compel to her own moral and culture! The English soldier is of poor courage, and the army beneath contempt. England is for ever begging us to disarm, because her strength is failing. Why does not Belgium ask us to disarm? England is in the autumn of her Empire; and her stolen fruit is for the gathering. Panic tears through her Press at every word of Germany's preparation for the Day of Reckoning—as it ran aforetime through the streets of decaying Rome when word came that the German was at her gates.

Let Germany concentrate her will and hate to the whole design of crushing this fantastic and ignoble realm of England; let her pass no day or night without increase of will to destroy her and to usurp her sway and her dominion with a ruthless, more ordered, and more valiant overlordship of the world.

Germany is predestined to guide the future of humanity. And precisely as Prussia had had to conquer Germany before Germany could become a people, and move to her appointed destiny of world-dominion, so must the world be first conquered that Germany may compel her Kultur upon mankind and rid the earth of the thousand and one warring and chaotic morals that afflict it. And Germany one, one in Valour, one in aim, prepared for war as one man, who shall be so great as to put bounds to her ambition, or to set landmarks to her vast estate? So, only by war, by conquest, may Germany reach to world-

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empire, so only compel the German Kultur and the new religion upon the universe!

### V

Thus spoke Treitschke. And Germany adopted what he spoke from end to end of her people. Bismarck fell in 1890. Germany passed her first Navy Bill in 1900. Treitschke did not explain how Germany was going to keep up her War-moral after the world was under her heel, but probably hoped much from her air service against the Moon. *Mad as it may all sound, this was and is Germany's whole strategy.* Not the Kaiser's nor the Prussian's alone, but Germany's whole aim. Day and night, without ceasing for a whole generation, she has worked and striven for it and for nothing else.

It is true that she vaunts herself as being in arms against the whole world; but she has made her war, superior in numbers, in metal, in equipment, to all her enemies.

Here we have out of her own mouth, not invented for her, her moral, her Kultur, her strategy.

Is she supreme in War? There is only one way of being supreme in war—that is by power to achieve one's strategy.

In other words, has she achieved her strategy? And can she achieve it?

## CHAPTER VII

### THE GERMAN WAR-MACHINE

To the Man-in-the-Street this Kultur and this Strategy may sound incredible, fantastic, impossible. But the Man-in-the-Street must get out of his own psychology and moral and try for a while to get into the skin of the German.

The German is by nature a kindly peace-loving man, philosophical, industrious—not by nature given to war. He likes an easy well-fed life; and he was much given to love of democracy. Prussia ground him down. Then his swift rise to power under the Prussian heel intoxicated him. He was ripe for the new psychology and the new strategy that appealed to the upstart soul that had crushed *his* soul as is proved by the fact that he allowed his officers to put brutalities and indignities upon him which no Englishman or Frenchman or American would have let him do twice and live.

That there are Germans of finer temper it would be ridiculous to deny; but they are in such a minority that they may be dismissed from all calculation in strategy. The cream has long since left the country.

The fact remains that whatever Germans there may be who stand for liberty, the people are so much a slave-race that they have not the courage to win to democratic government or to compel a constitution on the Crown. The finer breed have departed to the

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great democracies and become no small part in the uplift of those democracies. Of all the hundreds of youth whom I was called to train in battle-practice in the opening years of this great War, none were of finer metal, nor more hotly hated the German Kultur, than young Schweder and his like, and I pay this tribute to them on behalf of their brothers in arms that mayhap it may be blown on the winds to where their heroic spirits walk the twilight in the northern lands of France, the Military Cross glittering on their ghostly breasts.

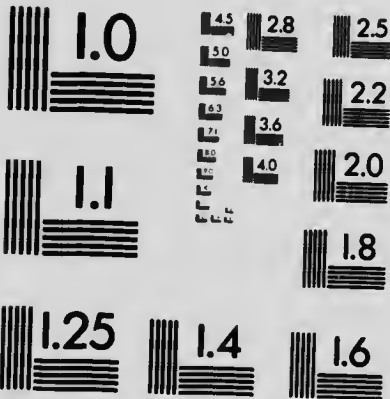
To the German, from end to end of the German-speaking peoples, so far from its being fantastic and impossible, the new strategy came as the very breath of their bodies. What is more, the whole German people, from the Kaiser to the harlot, from prince to hotel-waiter, has pursued that strategy day and night for a whole generation, without misgiving, without hesitation, without cavil, without questioning.

It has been suckled from infancy, been taught from the tenderest years, been the school lesson, the chief education of the university student. It has been distributed by that vast and wonderful system of education for which Germany is remarkable. To it Germany has bent the whole of her wealth, her consulates, her colonies, her industries, her mind, her intellect, her intention, her waking and her sleeping, her railways, her vigour, her marvellous organisation, her embassies—to the creation and perfecting of an absolute war-machine such as has never been attempted by mortal man. Nothing has been left to chance. She has hesitated at no criminality nor baseness nor treachery, as we understand these things in



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our psychology, but which in her psychology are virtues and to that degree strategically her soul, in order to organise a secret service in every part of the habitable globe which for perfection and completeness of cunning and efficiency and detail it would be impossible to surpass. No scruple has balked it. From the Kaiser to the harlot the steady treachery has gone on. Kultur excused, nay glorified, every vice so that it but increased the power of the War-Machine. Royal marriages prostituted princesses of the blood-royal to it; and to it these fine ladies prostituted the dignity and honour and well-being of the people they went to govern, and repudiated their first duties and their oaths to these peoples. Nothing was too small or mean—nothing too vast or daring.

And to do Germany justice, this was as it should be from her point of view, since it was her Kultur, which she had set forth to compel on a futile world.

The German governess in your home, the German hairdresser who clipped the heads of the Aldershot subalterns, the waiters in the restaurants, the clever German lad whom you helped along out of his poverty and to whom you gave a job, the dandy who flirted with your daughters in smart London drawing-rooms, all were creating this vast war-machine quite as keenly as Bertha Krupp's workmen were welding the molten steel for your annihilation.

This is not the place to describe this vast war-machine in detail—a machine so perfect for war, its Staff-work so thorough that when war is joined, the German Commanders receive from Berlin an exact estimate of the methods, character, history, and fighting system of the English and French commanders opposite to them, or likely to be opposite to them.

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The German maps were so perfect that many of the paths not marked in English and French maps were found on them.

But there was one thing the machine could not do—its Kultur prevented it,—it could not discover the soul of the armies opposed to it, nor the soul and heart of the commanders; above all it could not, therefore, foresee their strategy. It judged the enemy's strategy by its own Kultur. We shall see that this blunder lost them their War.

Employing the utmost secrecy in its preparations, knowing the supreme advantage of surprise in War, choosing its own moment at which to launch this stupendous war-machine, with every man and gun ready and in place to move, with numbers of men and guns and equipment and with weight of metal in vast superiority to all its enemies, Germany in the July of 1914 decided that The Day had come; raised glasses exultingly to conquest of the wide world, and stepped forth to battle.

Perhaps the Man-in-the-Street will now realise the stupendous task that faced Joffre and Sir John French as they grimly took up their commands of the French and British armies in the summer of 1914. It was a burden from which the strongest of men might well have shrunk; at which the stoutest heart might well have quailed.

To these two men, that must have been an awesome day as this vast and most perfected war-machine, impelled ruthlessly without scantiest sense of chivalry, in overwhelming numbers, poured over the borders and swung into its mighty battle-array.

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE BRITISH AND FRENCH WAR-MACHINES

LET us leave the vast German War-Machine awhile as the German legions take up their allotted battle-array, exultantly singing their war-songs, which are soon to turn to songs of hate; and let us try to pierce the minds of the two men charged with the awesome task of having to break it or see their people perish. For, be it marked, these are now the sole issues.

On what could Joffre and Sir John French rely in such a terrible hour?

Let us first consider the smaller army that took up its position on the plains of Flanders and Northern France to bear the assault of this host, since naturally it looms more intimate to the English-speaking peoples, who, when all's said, were bound to become Germany's greatest, most dangerous, as well as most powerful enemy. Nor must we think only in terms of infantry when we think of England's battle value, but in terms of sea-folk and land-folk as one.

The Man-in-the-Street can scarcely realise what Sir John French had to rely on, as he stood in the silence of his own hard thinking and surveyed the colossal task before him.

Sir John French was well known throughout the army as one of the ablest and most tireless students of

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strategy whom we possessed. He had proved himself swift to carry out his decisions, and swift to arrive at them. He was a born cavalry-leader. He was far more than that. His was one of the few reputations that came out enhanced by the Boer War. He had the advantage, besides, of having been trained in the navy in youth. He had by his profound study of strategy rid himself of the danger of becoming merely a great leader of one arm of the Service, he had thought always of War in terms of guns and cavalry as well as of infantry. He was without taint of that parochial vision of strategic which may do very well to get a battalion commander or a brigadier safely through a scuffle with savages—the chief danger of our War Office system. He saw War large and whole. What Sir John French did not know of the British army, its advantages and its limitations, its strength and its weakness, was not worth knowing. His strategy proved him.

Organisation holds supreme place in the minds of our War Office. The marvellous organisation, the smoothness with which the British army was slipped over to France and swung into position, and the secrecy maintained throughout, were an achievement that must stand as an eternal credit to the British war-machine. That secrecy and the skill that directed the deployment for battle were to bear rich fruit—they caused that hesitation and search for the British army by the German General Staff and roused that apprehension as to its being on the German's sea-flank which balked and delayed the opening moves of the German strategy, which delay and uncertainty were to save the full weight of the German Corps from at

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once being hurled on the British flank and so, by consequence, led the German to the great disaster of its vaunted war-machine that was to lose it for ever its tradition and repute for invincibility. By some poetic justice it was the British army, small as it was, that was to be the eternal baffler of the German designs.

But we British folk have it as a fine quality of our psychology that we are not afraid to face the weaknesses quite as frankly as the strength of our adventures. Our democratic essence leads us to thrash out our affairs in public. And 'tis best to calculate our faults and shortcomings frankly, as Sir John French had grimly to face them when he looked upon the immortal body of men who will live in history as the British Expeditionary Force, the flower of Britain's chivalry, whom he was to lead to a victory that will live to all time.

The army of the British people is the one army amongst the Great Powers which is constantly trained by battle. Perhaps it is for this very reason that we are not prone to build up a very rigid war-machine. There is of necessity the element of go-as-you-please in its constitution. We no sooner get our methods tied in red tape than Fortune cuts it to pieces by the sharp lesson of a new experience. This and the innate psychology of our race give an enormous impetus to individual initiative—an invaluable factor on the day of battle. Unfortunately, the god of Organisation is a jealous god, and stands across the threshold of the War Office. The strategic student is ever as the Cinderella of Whitehall. The great weakness, by consequence, is that the strategic officer, instead of being the most powerful influence at the War

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Office and in the direction of the War Office, has largely to create and develop his own study. It does not inspire every aim and direct every act in the army; and in consequence, strategy sinks to an inferior place to Organization.

Now, dangerous as such a state of affairs is, and is bound to be, it fortunately happened to save the British army from a far more appalling menace—the Germanization of the British psychology and its consequences, the Germanization of the British army. And it saved it as though by some God-sent urging in what was a somewhat curious way.

The triumph of the German arms against France in 1870 raised the genius of Moltke to a pinnacle of Moltke-olatry that still retains more worshippers than one likes to say—a wide idolatry which to-day perhaps is scarcely realised. As I was a cadet at Sandhurst with Haig and Congreve and others now famous as leaders at the Front, I will take the date of the middle 'eighties as being as good as any from which to judge that to which I can bear personal witness. Moltke-olatry reigned supreme in our training. All that Moltke said or did was accepted without question as the last word on War. Of German psychology we were taught nothing, knew nothing, and were content to know less.

But on leaving Sandhurst, those of us who took up the study of strategy—and we had to do it pretty secretly, for it was rather bad form—were soon beginning to discover that so far from the collapse of France being due to the invincible genius of Moltke and the German genius for war, it was still more due to the utter incompetency of the French commanders, who did not represent the French genius for

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war at all, but were the product of a corrupt Court; and not only so, that so far from Moltke having compelled the French commanders to his will by genius, the French commanders had themselves been so utterly ignorant of strategy, that they had actually dumbfounded Moltke and his commanders by themselves deliberately moving to the positions for certain defeat, into which the Germans would have tried to drive them had they given the German the chance of compelling the French commanders to their will. Moltke again and again hesitated to act, absolutely incredulous that the French commanders could have done what they had done.

A still more close study of facts soon revealed that, even so, the fighting genius and heroic valour of these badly led French troops would have smashed his design again and again had it not been for the initiative of Moltke's army commanders, the control of whom had passed outside his powers.

The strategic student, once challenging Moltkeolatry, was soon challenging the academic schooling of the British armies in Prussian methods. Led by men of keen mind, a little older than ourselves, such as the early-doomed Colonel Henderson, we were soon realizing that the driving force of a nation's strategy was that nation's psychology—its own habits, moral, and needs, and soul—and were soon studying the genius of Lee and the commanders in the American war of North against South, which had much more to teach us. Above all it turned us back to Napoleon.

The Boer War came to our strategic chastening. The academic strategy of the Prussianised system utterly failed us. There was a jesting story going the rounds that one of the disciples of Moltke, a famous

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writer of text-books, was found seated on a bridge, in tears at the defeat of his troops by the Boers, as they had not done a single thing which according to the laws of tactics which he had taught should be done in war. Whether true or not, the yarn had its moral.

Out of that war emerged the men who had been dogged students of strategy; and Sir John French and his captains came to this hideous business in the August of 1914 with the larger vision. They knew the German psychology and the German strategic; they were saved the madness of employing it—they saved their people by handling the troops in the British tradition and psychology. And the small army went into battle confident in its right and experience, with the confirmed habit of fighting at a disadvantage in numbers which none of its enemies would have had the hardihood to attempt. And it went into battle at least with this advantage, that the German did not understand, and was incapable of understanding, its psychology. The German staff were therefore utterly baffled by its strategic—lost precious days in searching for French, who, judging him by their own psychology, they felt sure would rush to Brussels out of British sentimentality, and so be cut off and annihilated. The days that the German War-machine wasted in searching for the British army in Belgium were the first nails in the coffin in which German invincibility was laid to rest and in which was sealed its doom, as we shall see. Sir John French's consummate handling of the superb troops he commanded when the Germans found and pressed him with appallingly overwhelming numbers prevented the Germans from recovering their blunder; and once Sir John French turned upon them, the Ger-



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man felt his sting and was never again able to heal the wound.

Had Sir John French been betrayed into putting political, or other sentimental consideration, before strategic consideration in battle—as repeatedly blundered the much-vaunted German war-lords—he would have been lost. But the man who was such a profound student of strategic, that when faced by the Irish danger, he had resolutely brushed aside all his own personal bias, and had taken up a strong strategic position—knowing full well the while that by so doing he raised powerful and unscrupulous enemies at every hand who would not hesitate to pull him down from amongst his own people—proved the steel of his blade before the German fired his first shot of treachery against the civilized world.

Next let us try to discover what Joffre had to rely upon.

Without access to the secret documents of the French archives, the student of strategy amongst us nevertheless began to notice certain prodigious changes in the whole French army about the 'nineties. When these changes were initiated it would be hazardous to guess. But as far as can be gathered, the whole moral of the French armies was uplifted and knew a vast impetus in the 'nineties. The younger bloods of the French General Staff, impelled by the leadership of Joffre and Foch, began to make a close and intense study of Napoleon's secret instructions in the archives. Foch, dominating the Ecole de Guerre, resolutely abolished the old brutal discipline, and substituted for it the discipline of Will, the forthright Willingness of comradeship. He

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realized that a people's psychology was the driving force of its strategy, and the only creator of mastery in battle. He might not have put it precisely in those terms, but it was so. The French army threw off Moltke-olatry, and at once leaped to a new life that meant all the difference between victory and defeat on the day of conflict. Joffre's and Foch's influence upon the army was astounding. They won their war in those days of Peace. The French soldier now not only served the State with a discipline of the Will to serve, which brought him in line with the British habit of good-fellowship between officers and men, but the French soldier deliberately trained himself to the phlegm that his leaders advised him to add to his high fighting attributes. He deliberately put upon himself every strain of discipline that the German soldier was subserviently compelled to endure by the brutality of his officers. By consequence, it is unthinkable that the French and British soldier required what is a recognized thing in German battle, that grim picket of sentries following the German attack and shooting down any frenzied fugitive who does not at the first challenge go back into the slaughter—a picket that had to be employed against their own troops even at Verdun in spite of the overwhelming numbers of the vaunted German warrior! It is said, for what it is worth, that the French Staff found amongst Napoleon's papers elaborate notes as to how he would have crushed his own victorious strategic had it been employed against him. Whatever may have guided the French Staff, the re-creation of the French strategic on the soul of the people was complete in a decade. Moltke-olatry was dead. The self-discipline of the French armies boded ill for the

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German War-machine. France had won to confidence in herself—was prepared to die to a man rather than that the German should again prevail against her. That famous general order to the army, dictated by Joffre in the name of the Republic, about the October before the War, revealed the psychology of the French Army to the careful student of strategy. The Man-in-the-Street perhaps never even heard of it. He was taken up with the well-advertised volumes of Bernhardt, in so far as he was interested at all.

But, when Joffre's call to the French armies rang out in the order of the day that was to tell them to stand and strike the German down on the Marne, that teaching of the October before the War saw the French troops, confident in the face of enormous odds, halt and turn upon the German and, with their British comrades, break him—and fling him back in disaster from which he was never to recover as he sullenly retreats to the doom that has hung over him from that day.

Joffre's teaching had not been in vain.

What had Russia to set against the German War-machine?

That great riddle of the world, this vast space of the unknown, this mystery that had swallowed the ambitions of Napoleon—what did it hold for Germany?

Russia was feared by Germany in a way difficult to understand by an Englishman or Frenchman. Germany feared her diplomacy, feared her millions, feared her deadly distances, her winters, as a child fears the dark. Towards Russia her frontiers were more vulnerable than by the Rhine. The German

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might laugh in his cups over the overthrow of Russia by Japan—but he knew only too well that *Russia* so far from having been overthrown, had scarcely been touched by Japan. A corrupt Russia had been overthrown—that was all. But the real Russia! a Sphinx still.

The German knew full well that if he flung all his strength at France, the Russian was bound to take the offensive if he were not mad enough to wait until the German fell upon him flushed with victory and at his highest strength. He knew that the Russian strength was concentrated where aforesaid it had been scattered. The only hope of Germany was in an Austrian offensive, forestalling the Russian, and overrunning Poland. Beyond that, as Moltke had warned them, little was safe in the doing.

The Russian mobilization must be slow, but it would be complete in a month. Kuropatkin's experiences in the Japanese war were set forth by him, and the whole Russian army rapidly reformed upon them. The General Staff had learned its lesson in war and learnt it well. Cavalry must learn to fight like infantry; rifle fire must be given great attention; artillery enormously developed; officers must be tuned up in character and training; the soldier more fully trained for battle; reserves must be developed. The advance in the Russian army was a marvel. The Staff work was developed to a high pitch. There would be no more of the blunder of unrelated and isolated battles by commanders of corps on their own field.

For this mighty restoration no man did more than the great commander to whom fell the leadership, the Grand Duke Nicholas, a frank, and wise man—a man

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who bore on his shoulders the added burden of knowing the weakness and folly and corruption of the Court, and the danger in which that Court stood from Germany on the one hand and the enmity of enlightened Russia on the other.

As regards Italy, the Germans were frankly suspicious of her, and did not admit her to her full councils after Italy refused to be their catspaw in Serbia. The German had sufficient sagacity to know that Italy would never betray Britain; that therefore her conduct would largely be influenced by Britain's attitude. She at any rate made no blunder about Italy's honour.

## CHAPTER IX

### BREAKDOWN OF THE GERMAN STRATEGY

Now it is a futile possession to have the finest musical instrument in creation if you cannot play upon it.

Did Germany's strategy in peace succeed?

Here was Ibsen's tragedy being produced in history. The Thief of the King's Thought could not use the King's thought. The mountebank Kaiser had stolen Bismarck's thought, but could not use it. He could but try to repeat it like a well-learnt lesson. It was usurping Bismarck's thought, but there was no Bismarck to guide.

### I

When precisely France began to realise the new strategy and intention of Germany it is not easy for us to fathom. But France had learnt her bitter lesson in 1870, and day and night she wrought to blot out the crime that had been committed upon her. She knew that the day would come—must come—and prepared for it. For that reason she was never to be so easy a prey as in 1870, as Britain might be.

This Bismarck who stood arrayed in helm and cuirass, a mighty figure of a man, the ideal and idol of the new Germany, its Man of Blood and Iron, had said in the September of 1870: "France must and

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shall be paralysed—for she will never forgive us our victories.” But the crushing of France needed a greater power and will than even Bismarck could command.

When Bismarck fell from power in 1890, he knew that the France that lay before Germany's new strategy was a very different France from the France of the Empire that Germany had flung down. And he knew that the brutal humiliations he had so needlessly put upon her had increased that strength. Be sure of that.

Bismarck it was, the idol of Germany, who laid down the law to the Prussian soldier in 1870 that *“True strategy consists in hitting your enemy and in hitting him hard; above all, you must inflict on the inhabitants of invaded towns the maximum of suffering, so that they may become sick of the struggle, and may bring pressure to bear on their government to discontinue it; you must leave the people through whom you march only their eyes to weep with. . . .”*

France never forgot it.

France has had this hideous menace *at her doors* day and night for forty years. Her whole development has had to be carried out, hampered and perplexed and burdened by the necessity to be armed against it. She had learnt by bitter experience that the German's bond was as worthless as his word, that whether he smiled upon her or frowned, danger was in either.

When exactly the British Government or Diplomatic Service or the War Office awoke to the disastrous results of the French defeat of 1870 to the British Commonwealth, it is not easy to determine. It

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is locked in the secret archives of the State. I have shown how the strategic student in the army, from lack of recognition by the system of our War Office, was piercing the veil that covered the strategic intentions of Germany. But there was no channel by which he could communicate his discoveries to the State; and the Press was not open to it except as spasms of sensation, even if the public or the universities had been educated to understand it. The blind panics in the reactionary Press were started at any and every hare, so that they failed when they might have been of value against Germany; the more progressive section of the Press refused to believe the German menace simply from as profound ignorance of strategic as the reactionary Press, though their whole motive was sincere and noble.

Army men all vowed that war was at hand—but as they did so whether they did it from strategic insight or not, and as they had done it for a generation, they carried little weight, and deserved to carry none.

Such was the state of strategic of Germany's enemies as far as they could be plumbed.

The strategic student could only pray that the Governments at any rate, knowing more than he did, understood what he understood.

The cloud of embarrassment revealed by many writers on the war proves that the writers at any rate were wholly in the dark as to its higher strategy. It is questionable if the Governments were much better. But that Britain's Anglo-Russian Agreement of 1907 showed her sympathy with the French Alliance with Russia, at least proved the official alarm of Germany. Yet, a brilliant man, once Prime Minister of the British people, Lord Rosebery, writing an introduc-



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tion to Buchan's "History of the War" as late as the October of 1914, tells us frankly that no one knows "the subtle causes which produced this convulsion"—that he cannot believe that this war was being planned in a "diabolical and cold-blooded scheme," that we must "suspend our judgment as to the real causes of the war till time and documents give us the clue." Now Lord Rosebery was Prime Minister in 1894-5. Does he mean to say that the Foreign Office, the Embassies, and the strategic intelligence of the Army did not pierce the meaning of the fall of Bismarck in 1890? And that since then he has so absolutely missed the significance of Foreign Affairs that two months after the declaration of War by Asquith he still does not understand? Does Lord Rosebery seriously interpret the function of Statesmanship, of the Diplomatic Service, of the Army and Admiralty, to be to wait until "time and documents give us the clue" to the strategy being steadily levelled against us to our undoing?

The appalling fact is that there is *an utter absence of strategic vision* in affairs of State and of the Commonwealth. In every great change in affairs there ought to be but one aim—strategic judgment. The blindness of the whole government, of the military, of the diplomatic advisers to the state as to the exact strategy of Germany in this war came near to wrecking us all for ever. To blame this Minister and that Minister is farcical when we remember the lack of strategic insight in the captious.

A "business" government is about the most futile of Statesmanship. A government by the Press is as bad. What is of first necessity for a people to lead them to victory is Statesmanship, for which "busi-

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ness" or journalism is no specially good training—to which indeed it is more likely to give a dangerous bias.

### II

When a war breaks out the strategic student opens his map and that map tells him what will constitute victory or defeat. If a certain part of that map can be made to hold, then the holder wins his war; if it cannot be made to hold, then he loses his war.

To the ordinary man that map is just a vague affair on which he pins little flags which strategically means about as much to him as though he pinned none. But he can at once see with the eye of the strategic student when the revelation of that map—a quite ordinary small map will do—is put before him.

In no other way can he understand the strategy. By poring over the little intricate details of the ebb and flow of battle, he certainly will not—for the student of strategy cannot.

Let us see what the map reveals, with the knowledge of Germany's history, psychology, and strategy, to guide us to the discovery of her exact *plan of campaign* to establish that strategy.

### III

We now come to a state of affairs which it is absolutely necessary to grasp if the Man-in-the-Street is to get out of the dangerous haze that bewilders even officials in high position in the governments.

The Germans had *two* schemes or "plans of campaign" most deliberately pursued, the one the support of the other; and as even our diplomats in the Balkans

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seem to have bungled the business to the advantage of Germany, there is every excuse for the Man-in-the-Street.

To anyone who had closely studied Germany for the last generation, the supreme aim of her Higher Strategy—the conquest of Britain and America and the establishment of World Dominion—was obvious. And it is unthinkable that the Statesmen at the head of affairs here—even if deaf, indifferent, or blind or careless in America (which is unlikely)—could be ignorant of that strategy, were it not for Lord Rosebery's frank confession. It is incredible that the Kultur and openly talked-of ambitions of Germany were missed—it is incredible that the fall of Bismarck was dismissed with a witticism over a glass of wine at the Embassy dinner-tables or at Downing Street. It is incredible that the steady strides of Germany to the carrying out of it were missed—the rise of the German Fleet—the increase of her armies and munitionment—and the direction of her whole national energy to it.

But the means whereby to achieve that strategy, the "plan of campaign," is not so easily realised. And Germany employed every diplomatic means to try to lull all suspicion of that plan. Yet so splendid a thing was it that the German could not refrain from headiness and boasting. The strut betrayed him at every street corner. Like the villain in the play he wore the dark cloak of mystery but he had to bawl to the gods that he was disguised.

Germany's plan of campaign to achieve his strategy was as follows :

It was certain that if Germany boldly attacked Britain, France would seize the chance to fly at

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the German throat, and would bring Russia with her. Therefore Britain and America must be tricked until France and Russia were first smashed and rendered powerless—this would have the added advantage of seeing the German assault on Britain carried out, not only with a sullen and deserted France looking on aloof—what remained of France—but Germany being mistress of Belgium and Northern France, mistress of all this vast industrial area for her munitions, would also be at the sea-gates of Britain and so bring her naval supremacy to naught. This was the first string to her mighty bow—Germany's *First Plan of Campaign*.

Now, before attacking France and Russia, Germany could make herself tenfold more powerful for her assault upon Britain on The Day, by carrying out the masterly tradition of Bismarck and first increasing her war-machine to the uttermost. To do this best—in other words to prepare a second vast machine for the conquest of England, as the supreme onslaught must eventually be on England herself—was to create a vast *Pan-German Empire* from the Baltic and Atlantic to the Persian Gulf. The chief excuse was to be an arrogant claim to commerce and expansion for commerce—this excuse, to cover her strategic, constantly kept before the world, would hoodwink the “nation of shopkeepers” and turn their vulgar eyes angrily to the mere commercial aspect of it. But whilst Germany was only too delighted to get commercial advantage thrown in, her setting up of this *Pan-German Empire* was absolutely strategic in its object—it would give her a solid Central Europe as a magnificent jumping-ground off which to leap to her mighty adventure. It split the world apart, and

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Germany was on the wedge. By perfecting its railway communications it was safe from all attack from the sea; and it commanded Egypt and India whilst it cut off Britain from India and her Australian Commonwealth. It would above all lull the suspicions of America which would never realize that her gravest peril lay in such a strange place as the Balkans until it was too late—and America's bulwark, Britain, was gone.

The map of this Pan-German Empire was posted all over Germany in the February of 1916. Austria was in it. Italy, though an ally, was suspect, and not allowed too much into it. Bulgaria was secretly party to it, as was the Court of Greece. Turkey was absolutely committed to it, her tyrant Enver being completely bought. Roumania and Serbia alone barred the way; but the gate of Servia must at any rate at all costs be smashed in, and the Pan-German Empire would be complete. Roumania could be swallowed as Holland could be swallowed when required.

*I want the Man-in-the-Street to grasp this Second Plan of Campaign, this second string to Germany's mighty bow for the conquest of Britain and America, before he attempts to try to understand the War.*

All sorts of perplexing political events are at once explained by it. Germany's contemptuous rejection of the protest by Britain, France, and Russia, against the Austrian annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1908, showed the price she was prepared to pay rather than lose one acre of the Pan-German Map. Her sullen attitude towards her ally Italy in Italy's war with Turkey revealed her bias in 1911, and, for the strategic student, confirmed his opinion. The Germans must have hugged themselves with delight over

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the Press agitation against the Italian atrocities—if, indeed, they did not stir it up.

Now he will understand why Germany launched her war over an "affair with Serbia"—*now he will understand why Serbia was NOT a mere excuse for the war*, as the worthy old gentlemen are convinced that she was the mere excuse—and *now he will understand why Germany fought the heroic little people of Serbia with such dogged persistency and bitter hate*. For, once Serbia was overthrown, Germany's *Pan-German Empire* was a reality. She calculated well—she has overthrown Serbia, and *the Pan-German Empire is in being*. This was Germany's one strategic victory.

The Man-in-the-Street has got to understand at all costs that *if, at the Peace, the Pan-German Empire remains, Germany has won her war*.

*If Germany be defeated in the West, if Belgium be given back to the Belgians, if Northern France with Alsace and Lorraine be restored to the French; if the Kaiser be deposed; but if the Pan-German map remain German, no matter to what humiliations the German bows, then the German has won his war*.

Let there be throughout the wide world no mad mistake about that!

From that ideal position she will leap forward to world-conquest with an increase of power and a War-machine undreamed of by Bismarck. The Second string to her mighty bow of conquest will have been woven and its strands secure

When the German has been broken in the West, then, if the conquering peoples leave him his Pan-German Empire, Germany has won her war. This will be shown, and the means whereby to uproot it, later.

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### IV

By the irony of circumstances it came about that the making of the Second Plan of Campaign was to bring about the launching of her vast war-machine to her First Plan of Campaign. It was touch and go whether it would be necessary so to launch it, but a little State, Serbia, had the audacity to shut the gate to a Pan-German Empire.

Had France and Russia allowed Serbia to be trampled upon, then the Second Plan of Campaign would have been completed without a Great War, and perfected before launching on the First Plan of Campaign. The Pan-German Empire would have been a reality, achieved without war except the crushing of a little people by a giant as a man cracks a walnut. Bulgaria, the Court of Greece, Turkey, all waited only for the German troops to appear at their borders in order to declare for the Pan-German State.

Whether our diplomats realized this is hidden from us in the volapuk of official juggling which may conceal knowledge or conceal strategic ignorance. God knows. But the Russian Government made no mistake; and the French presumably none—and the British Government none.

Germany's mighty pathway to world-conquest was blocked. She decided that the making of that pathway must be fulfilled. Indeed she dare not hesitate lest she lost Turkey and Bulgaria to her Pan-German Map. She decided that the moment had therefore come in which she must risk even the launching of the War-machine to the making of her First Plan.

She did so the more recklessly in that she was

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convinced that the dullard British would never go to war for the sake of Serbia—assumed that the British government, from its lack of strategic insight, was wholly blind to the fact that this Serbian gate was really of more vital consequence to Britain than to France or Russia. Our diplomatic correspondence rather points to the fact that we were thus blind to it.

Thus, according to this Bismarck pattern, just as he had always fobbed off their allies whilst he smashed his immediate enemies, so now it was decided to smash France and Russia in detail whilst Britain was fobbed off into neutrality. And of a surety, the German would have emerged therefrom enormously enhanced in power, in repute for invincibility, and in highways and approach to the ultimate and supreme object of his strategy—the conquest of Britain and America and World Dominion.

Bismarck, be you sure, had realised that the trick could not be played again—even with a less astute statesman than Asquith,—realised still more clearly that France must be utterly crushed first, for France was ever ready to take advantage of leaping at the German throat if the Hun attacked England.

Had the Kaiser struck when Britain was embroiled with the Boer, with France and America gravely antagonistic to that adventure, things might have gone badly for Britain—and for France and America by consequence. Perhaps Kruger's event "that was to stagger humanity" revealed a German itch. The German flinched and his moment passed. The first strategic defeat suffered by Germany before the breakdown of the War-machine was inflicted by Campbell-Bannerman. South Africa was given a Constitution. It was to save South Africa to the



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enemy of Germany, who had counted on something far otherwise.

Such was the state of affairs when the vast machinery of Germany's spies, from the Kaiser and his ambassadors down to the harlots of the streets, assured Berlin that the Day had come. *Britain would not fight.* Ireland was in rebellion and would rise. She had been given a Constitution by the British peoples, but the Army refused to carry it out. The Colonies were discontented and would do nothing. South Africa would burst into rebellion. India would seize upon the first opportunity to throw off the tyranny of the white Raj. Labour was on the edge of Revolution, and industrial strikes were about to paralyse all British strategic. It was even fatuously believed by the Germans that the Woman's Movement was paralysing the Government, that the Militant Suffragists would strangle the nation! The Army was contemptibly small; and the people would not allow conscription—without conscription an army of large numbers could not be raised! Britain would not fight. The Embassy vowed it.

The German launched his War-machine in the West. His legions marched.

For answer England declared War. It was Germany's first great strategic defeat of the War.

The vast machinery of agents and spies came crashing down—it was rotten. The German Embassies were dupes of their own arrogance—they knew nothing.

Germany violated Belgium. The German thereby made it impossible for Britain to remain neutral even if Britain had been gulled. Her strategy in relation

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to Britain was fatuous, incompetent, and inferior to that of a negro republic.

By consequence the German strategy suffered defeat even as her legions went forth to battle—she brought the might of Britain against her, and the seapower of Britain was to bring her war to disaster after disaster. It was precisely what her whole strategy had been bent on avoiding.

Her wide-flung Intelligence Staff, again, deceived her into launching her War-Machine in error about Ireland. The strategic student is not concerned with the rights and wrongs of Ireland, nor with the passions of parties. It should never be forgotten by every Briton, whatsoever his political bias, that when danger came from without, Ireland baulked the German strategic and by her loyalty to the commonwealth not only rid the Colonies of all hesitations but prevented an Irish ill-will in America—that she sent some of her finest armies into the war—and that her blood, as always, has been freely poured out to save us all. Strategically, there is no greater insanity than a discontented Ireland. Germany's Intelligence Staff, again, broke the German strategic in its deductions about the Army. The peoples of Britain and her far-flung race sprang to arms as at the stroke of a magician's wand, with no slaves' need for compulsion—sprang up by millions; and what armies! armies that were to prove the masters of the vaunted German hosts which they were to fling down in spite of their huge odds in numbers and metal. Labour has vindicated itself by colossal self-sacrifice in blood for the race. The Colonies have sent of their multitudes and valour, eagerly, feverishly—and are the terror of every German battalion. Women have risen to the

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occasion above the wildest hopes. And not least, Britain's entry into the war meant Italy's defection from Germany. The sole blot on the British scutcheon has been the trader who has looked to profit, as by habit, where he ought to have been too well content to share hardship with his race.

In not one single degree has the German strategic calculations about Britain come to fruition !

Is the German genius supreme in War ?  
Let us see !

## CHAPTER X

### OF BATTLE

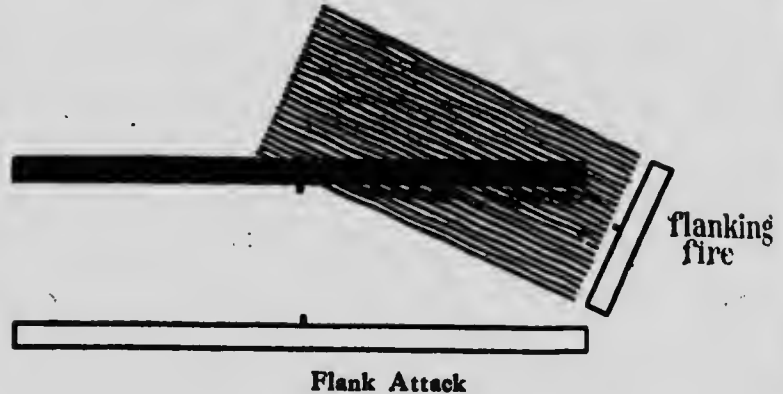
Now, whilst we need not waste any time or trouble on Tactics, there are some half-dozen moves of an army which it is as well that the Man-in-the-Street should have quite clear in his understanding. They are just a few broad and simple acts in War which are strategical as well as tactical—the A B C of the soldier's calling—they are the moves of the pawns in the chess of war. All battle is but a shifting or combination of these moves. And it will make for easier understanding of war if the Man-in-the-Street grasp these moves which are the eternal manoeuvres of all battles whatsoever and in all time. It will rid him of all slovenly thinking about "flanks" and "envelopment" and "turning" and "enfilade" and "lines of communication."

Let us put it very simply. For the soldier it is unnecessary—his whole work is guided by these moves in battle.

It is obvious, when an army gives battle, that the troops are "deployed," or lined out, so that every rifle and gun can strike.

Now, the weak spot of this order for giving the heaviest blow to the enemy is at once seen, for if attacked at its end or "flank," instead of in front, only the very few men at that end can turn and

strike—all the others would only destroy their own men; thus :



Here we have the black army taken in flank by a part of the white army. Not only so, but the white army's men who are deployed against this vulnerable flank, "enfilade" or rake it with their whole fire and "roll it up," whilst the rest of the flanked army can do nothing to help the assailed flank in time to save it.

It will be noticed also that a very small number of men, by enfilading that flank, can destroy a very large body of men at very little punishment to themselves, for they are attacking with all their deployed strength, whilst the assailed flank can not strike back.

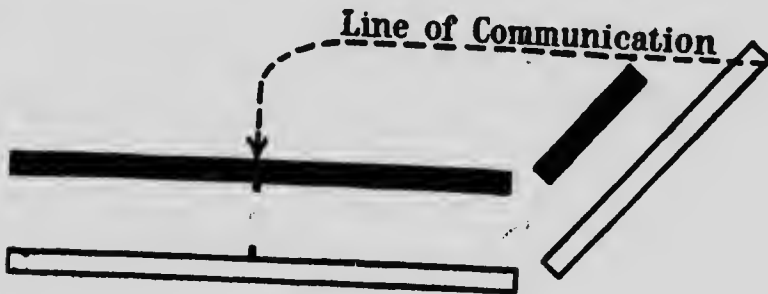
Now the only way to counter the threat of this flank attack is to swing back that end of the black line—what is called by us soldiers "refusing our left" or right, as the case may be (*see next Sketch*). Here we have our black army, instead of allowing itself to be attacked and smashed and rolled up, "refusing its left."

But this "turning a flank" has not only the ad-

## Of Battle

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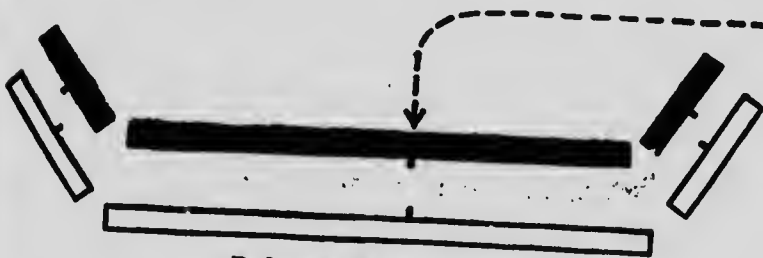
vantage of threatening the rear of our black army, but it is a grave threat to our black army's "line of communication," whereby the black army is fed, rein-



Turning a Flank

forced, and munitioned. And if the black army cannot be fed, munitioned, and reinforced, it is defeated. It is "down and out," even if it do not lose a man.

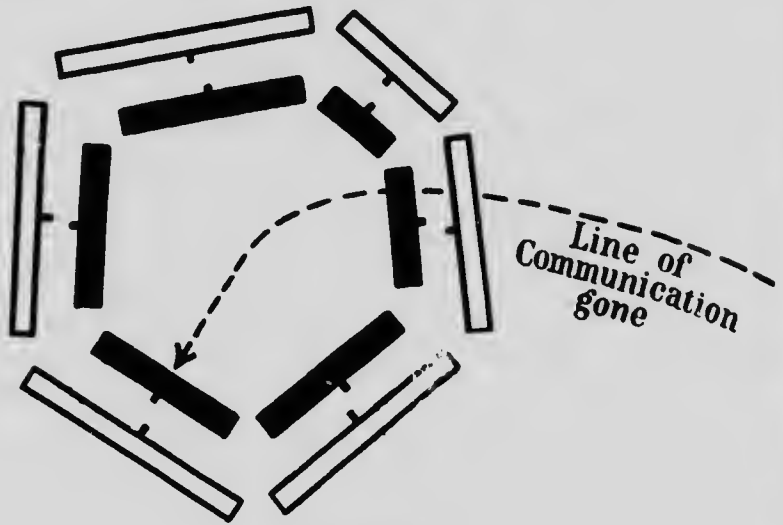
But, worse still, supposing the white army turn *both* the black army's flanks, and the black army has to "refuse its right *and* left," thus :



Refusing Right and Left

until, worse still, the black army has to go on "refusing its flank" and becomes encircled by his enemy's armies—or what is called "enveloped"—the

black army becomes absolutely cut off, and to fight further is useless bloodshed, thus :



Envelopment

The black army's lines of communication are gone. He can get neither reinforcement, nor food, nor ammunition, nor other supplies. He is assailed from every side. He is the target for every weapon, whilst the enemy is a difficult target. He has found his Sedan.

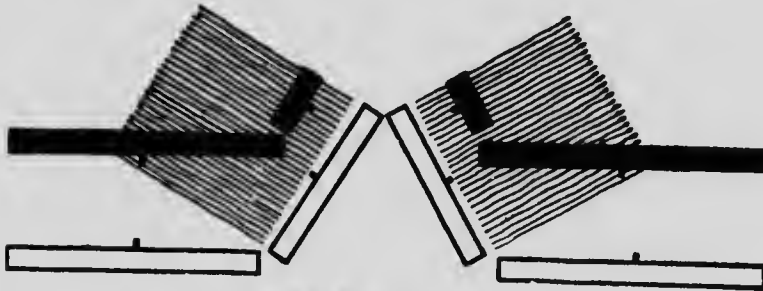
If he can stand a siege in a good position he may be relieved if strong help be at hand; but that help must be swift and strong. If not,

It is the end.

Surrender is simply a matter of time.

The only other manœuvre that may puzzle the lay mind is the danger of being "pierced." Piercing is

simply the thrusting a wedge *into* an army instead of going round its flanks. It is more costly, as a frontal attack has first to be overcome; but the result is also deadly, for, once through, the broken part of the pierced army is then "turned" or flanked outwards, and destroyed in detail in its two separated parts thus:



Piercing the Centre

The dread of the word "outflanked," the anxiety for one's "flanks," the struggle to prevent "envelopment" and the like in the soldier's mind will now be easy to understand.

The Man-in-the-Street will also see at once the vast importance assigned to numbers.

There is one term which seems to trouble the amateur writers on the War, and even some of the military writers who ought to know better—the word "initiative." The Man-in-the-Street should be clear about this. We soldier-folk mean by initiative quite a simple thing—to "hold the initiative" is to have the power to compel your design on the enemy, which means in battle *the power to compel him to fight*. You naturally compel him to fight to his disadvantage and your advantage—that goes without saying.



Now to hold the initiative does not necessarily mean that you take the "offensive," in other words attack him. For example, if a stronger man attack you, and you lure him into such a place that he cannot take advantage of his strength and then smash him, *you* have the initiative, *not* he. In the same way, if you be in command of an army, it may suit you best to lure the enemy to take the offensive and attack you on the defensive—for instance, he may be in a very strong position, whereas, if you by falling back can induce him to give up all the advantages of that strong position and so draw him away from it to attack you in what will be a strong position for you but a weak one for him, the "initiative" will be with you, not with him. Indeed, not only is he the victim of your initiative, but his very advance from a strong to a weak position is a "false offensive," for he is going to be assailed and fallen upon the moment he has been befooled.

We shall see in a few minutes the greatest example in war of a "false initiative" in the famous German "outmarch to Paris." Here we have a "false initiative" deluding an overwhelmingly stronger German army into following the will of the commander of a very much weaker army, until the commander of the weaker army has reduced its strength by over-extension and exhaustion and distance from its supplies, when he turns on it and overwhelms it with disaster. The German during the whole of this Great Retreat was trying to compel the French and British to stand and fight, but he had not the initiative, that is to say, the power to do it. Joffre, on the other hand, lured the German host to where he wanted to fight, and, having the initiative, he so compelled it to fight and be smashed.

## Of Battle

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The chief blundering of most of the writers on the war as regards what we mean by "initiative" is most apparent when once the armies join battle. Once battle is joined, the "initiative" has gone, it is now a "soldiers' battle," what "initiative" remains is with what we call the reserves, or the "mass of manoeuvre" which the commander keeps under his hand to send where he wishes as the needs and developments of the "pinned line of battle" dictate. This seems to confuse many writers, particularly in thinking that the sorties of a besieged garrison *show that the besieged have the initiative!*

However, the question of "initiative" need not fret the Man-in-the-Street. He can quite well understand the strategy without bothering about academic discussions over it.

## CHAPTER XI

### FALL OF THE GERMAN WAR GOD

BUT there was the War-machine!

Germany had the vastest machinery of War built by human ingenuity. Nothing had been left to Chance. It was acclaimed that the German was supreme in War—his strategy invincible. He might make a sorry botch of his strategic in diplomacy; but the War-machine was a very different affair. Nothing could resist it!

Germany launched the War-machine.

Now, the Man-in-the-Street is not going to be troubled with tactical details. He has only to follow the larger strategy of the War for awhile. He will only be asked to master the most simple general map of the business, without perplexing intricacies. Any schoolboy could do it.

It is easy for him to grasp that the French frontier of Germany is heavily fortified—that it runs from the Belgian frontier to Switzerland—from *Verdun* to *Belfort* as its end fortresses.

If the German hosts did not crash through this fortified frontier of France, it was taken for granted that they must line out and swing round through the plains of Belgium and so, what is called, "turn it"; that is to say, they must go round the Verdun end

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of it and so, swinging in, with Verdun as the pivot, encircle the armies on the fortified frontier.

Whatever the German did, he must do quickly, or he was lost—he would become a besieged people.

It was presumed by the world at large that he would *not* "hack through" the French frontier because the world held that it would take months—all his military writers had said so. But what the Higher German Command *thought* was not written for the world.

The absolute condition of his strategy against France at any rate was understood clearly, that he must *swiftly overwhelm France*.

For this he had vast superiority in numbers and artillery; he was ready—to the last cartridge.

So far, the general public and the journalists were pretty clear. There was much feverish "reading up" of military text-books, and our soldier jargon began to be flung about like nuts in a monkey-house. But this was quite useless. In fact it was worse than useless, it was dangerous, and it led to a panic in the Press; which was so unable to understand, that it is significant that, at the very moment when Joffre and French had completed in the Great Retreat one of the mightiest achievements of man, the credit and repute of the French and British arms were never deemed in the memory of living man to have stood so low!

The strategic student works in a far different way. Putting aside all opinions and guesses and bias and gossip, he concentrates solely on such *facts* as reach him; and his whole endeavour is to make a sequence of rough sketch-maps showing where the enemies'

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armies were on the evening and morning of each day's bivouac. These tell his trained brain the intention of the enemy's strategic as it develops—and even if he be baffled at times, they never fail to reveal to him at any rate what the enemy did *not* intend to do.

Germany's violation of Belgium was an utter blunder in strategy, for it brought Britain into the war at once; but there were higher strategic reasons which the German accounted greater than the enmity of Britain. It was a vile thing to do; but strategy is the leading of armies to victory. Therefore the violation of Belgium had a strategic intention. What was it? We shall see—if we disregard gossip and guessing.

The German at any rate violated Belgium.

To his intense confusion, his advanced guard got knocked down on the doorstep. But it is quite a mistake—as we shall see—to think that the German was troubled by the resistance of Liège causing delay to *his rush on Paris*. What did trouble the German was that the Belgians were not going to let him walk through Belgium at his own sweet will. We shall see why.

His much-vaunted organisation also seems to have got into a tangle—it will be found that the much-lauded railway system behind the German frontiers became badly congested. This block on the lines of communication would have been tragic for Germany if one of Joffre's commanders had not blundered. But we are coming to that.

However, a couple of German armies, under Kluck and Bulow, advanced into Belgium with remarkable caution but certainly not from inability to smash

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through the Belgian opposition; and, instead of lining out along the French frontier at once and being followed by the other armies for the rush on to Paris, they as a matter of fact dawdled in Belgium. Why?

Let us fix a few dates. On Sunday, June 28th, 1914, the heir to the throne of Austria was assassinated in Sarajevo, the capital of Bosnia—unfortunately the one man who might have saved Austria from Germany. In the early days of July German officers abroad were recalled, and Germany was selling her stocks abroad for gold. When all was ready, on the 23rd of July, Austria presented its ultimatum to Serbia for reply within forty-eight hours—six o'clock on the evening of Saturday the 25th July. To accept the Austrian conditions meant that Serbia would pass under German control, and the German highway of the Pan-German Empire would have secured the Serbian gateway to its secret ally Turkey—whilst Bulgaria would at once have shown its hand. On July 29th Austria bombarded Belgrade; and Russia mobilised her southern armies. On July 31st Germany declared a state of war; and sent an ultimatum to Russia, ordering instant demobilisation and reply by 11 o'clock next day (1st August); and at the same time sending practically an ultimatum to France who forthwith mobilised on that Saturday, 1st August—late in the evening, the Germans violated the French frontier. On Saturday evening (August 1st) at 5 o'clock, Germany declared war on Russia. On Sunday morning, August 2nd, Luxemburg was overrun by German troops; and German cavalry moved up to Longwy and across the Vosges, down to near Mülhausen in Alsace on the Swiss border. Some

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30,000 men under von Emmich moved to the Belgian border. On Monday the 3rd, Mr. Winston Churchill reported to the British Cabinet that the whole sea strength of Britain was ready for war—and the British Fleet disappeared into space. On the 4th of August Sir Edward Grey wired to Berlin to ask if Belgian neutrality would be respected, giving until midnight for reply; the British Ambassador at Berlin was handed his passports before the time expired. "Do you mean to say that you are going to make war for a scrap of paper?" asked Germany's Chancellor with scorn. At 11 o'clock on the night of Tuesday, 4th August, Britain was at war. Berlin went mad with war-fever.

Now we have seen that obviously if Germany were attacked by France and Russia, her only hope of success lay in destroying each in detail; therefore in a swift conquest of France first, leaving her free to take Russia next.

Equally obviously, therefore, Germany *must* take the offensive.

Speed was essential—a long-drawn struggle would mean starvation, bankruptcy, and inevitable defeat, especially with Britain's sea power against her. Germany's vaunted commerce and finance were built on rotten foundations, founded on credit—she had even borrowed from her enemies in order to create the vast War-Machine against them—and financial jockeying must collapse in a long war.

She could leave Austria, stiffened by Germans, largely to hold Russia whilst she flung the whole weight of her might upon France. Her man-power was seven to four against France and Britain com-

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bined, in a short war—her artillery and munitions were vastly more than seven to four.

To turn the French fortified zone north of Verdun by a rush through Belgium had indeed been an open secret in German military writings. It has led to its being accepted as a truism, and this has led nearly every writer upon this war to see what he went forth to see—the swift rush of the German hosts through Belgium on to Paris. These military writers in Germany were little likely to have the confidence of the Staff as to what precisely the Staff intended to do; and instead of being accepted by the public, they ought to have put the public on their guard. I have even heard wonder expressed in messes that the German did not attack the French fortress line instead of going round by Belgium! This is the supreme limit!

As a matter of fact, that swift rush through the Belgian plains on Paris did *not* take place, *nor* was it attempted. Watch the dates! It was attempted and pushed hard later; but it so happens that it was not even intended at once, but something far different. It was certainly intended that the French and British commanders should be gulled into the idea that it was intended; but that is another affair.

Why was it not attempted?

There was a prodigious massing of German armies in Luxemburg and the difficult hill country and forests of the Ardennes; but the forward movement of Germans in Belgium more naturally caught the public eye. The hastily gathered divisions under von Emmich pushed into Belgium on the evening of Monday, 3rd August; by Tuesday evening (4th August) they had closed in on Liège. Leman put up



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his great fight. By the 6th the Belgians were falling back; on the 7th the Germans were in the city.

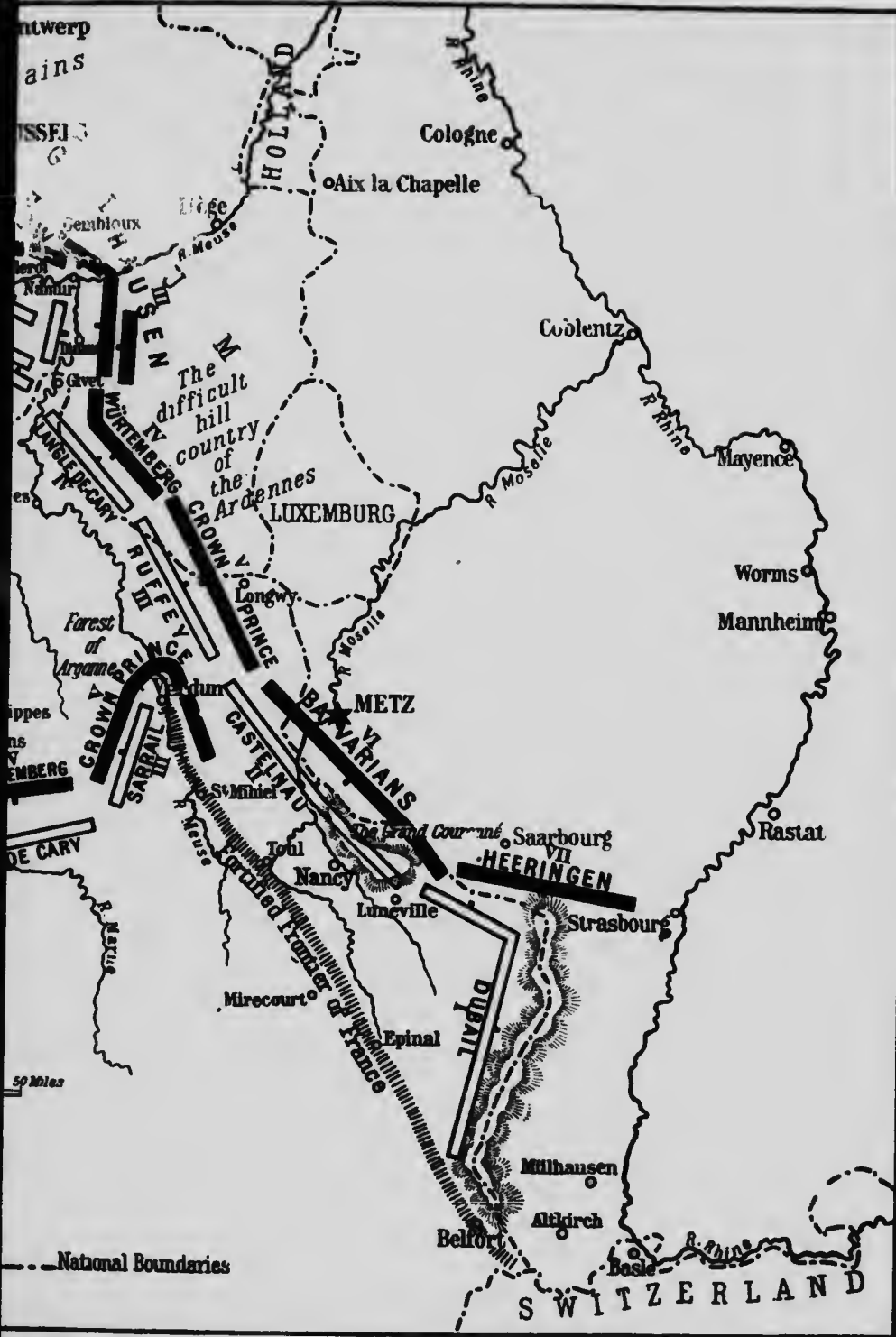
On the night of this same 7th of August the secret embarkation of the British Army began—in ten days, with astounding skill of organisation, the British Expeditionary Force was in France. The British Navy made its power felt for the first shout of war.

The German First and Second Armies—they numbered their armies from the sea flank—began to pour into Belgium about the time that the fastest battleship of the German Fleet, the *Goeben*, with the *Breslau*, after a melodramatic exit from Messina (5th August) “went out to battle or die,” but bolted in fear before a British cruiser, the *Gloucester*, which knocked some pieces out of them, as they *made for the Dardanelles*—thereby giving the clue to our bewildered diplomats, if they had only had the guidance of some strategic Staff, to that German strategy of the Second Plan of Campaign to such as could read. In a few days Germany's commerce on the high seas had gone, and the dreaded blockade had begun. You may be sure that this was not lost on the German Staff; but *it did not speed up the “rush on Paris”!*

The German armies were a long time getting into line in Belgium for that rush on Paris.

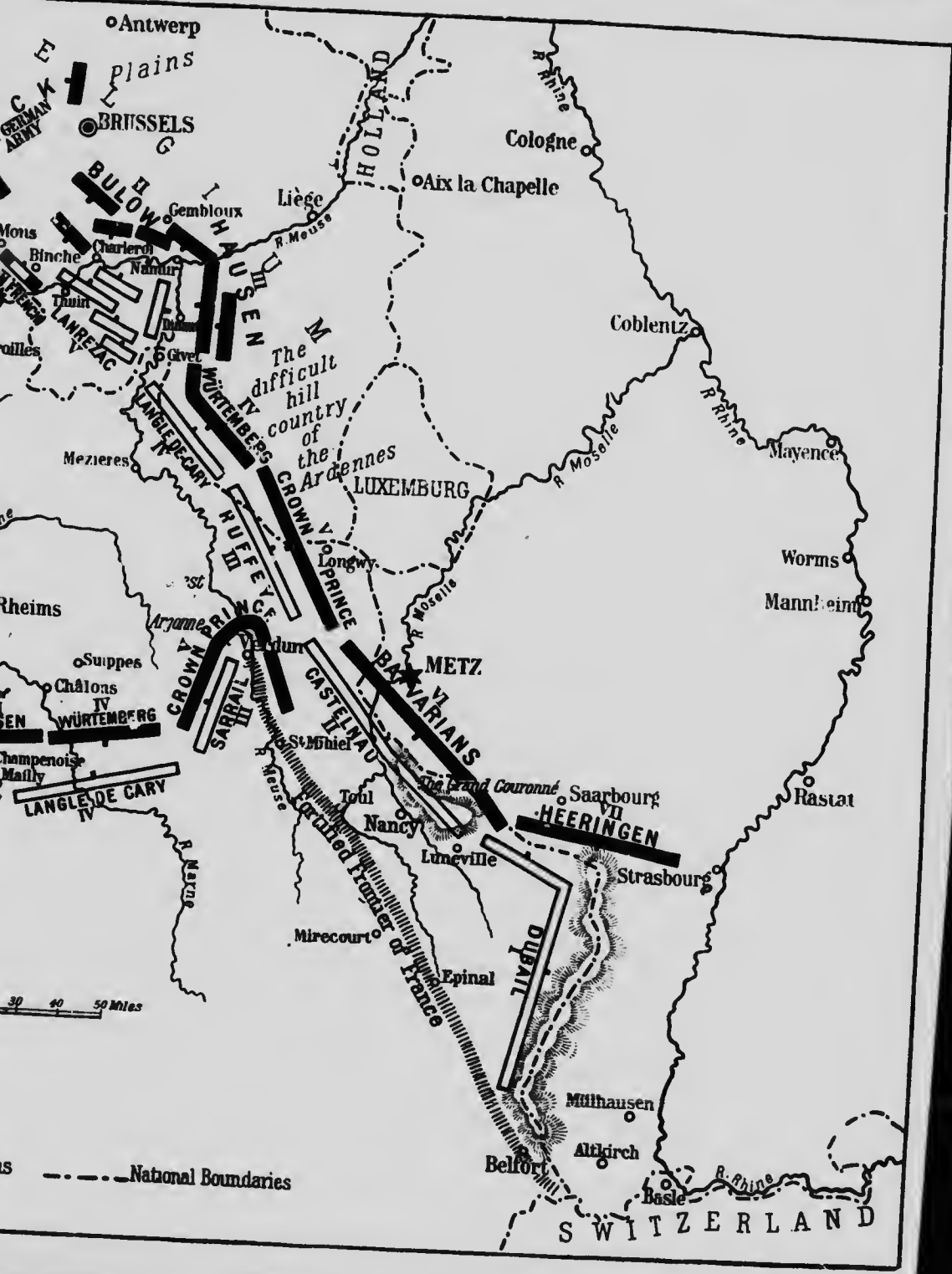
Days passed, weeks were lost. Why?

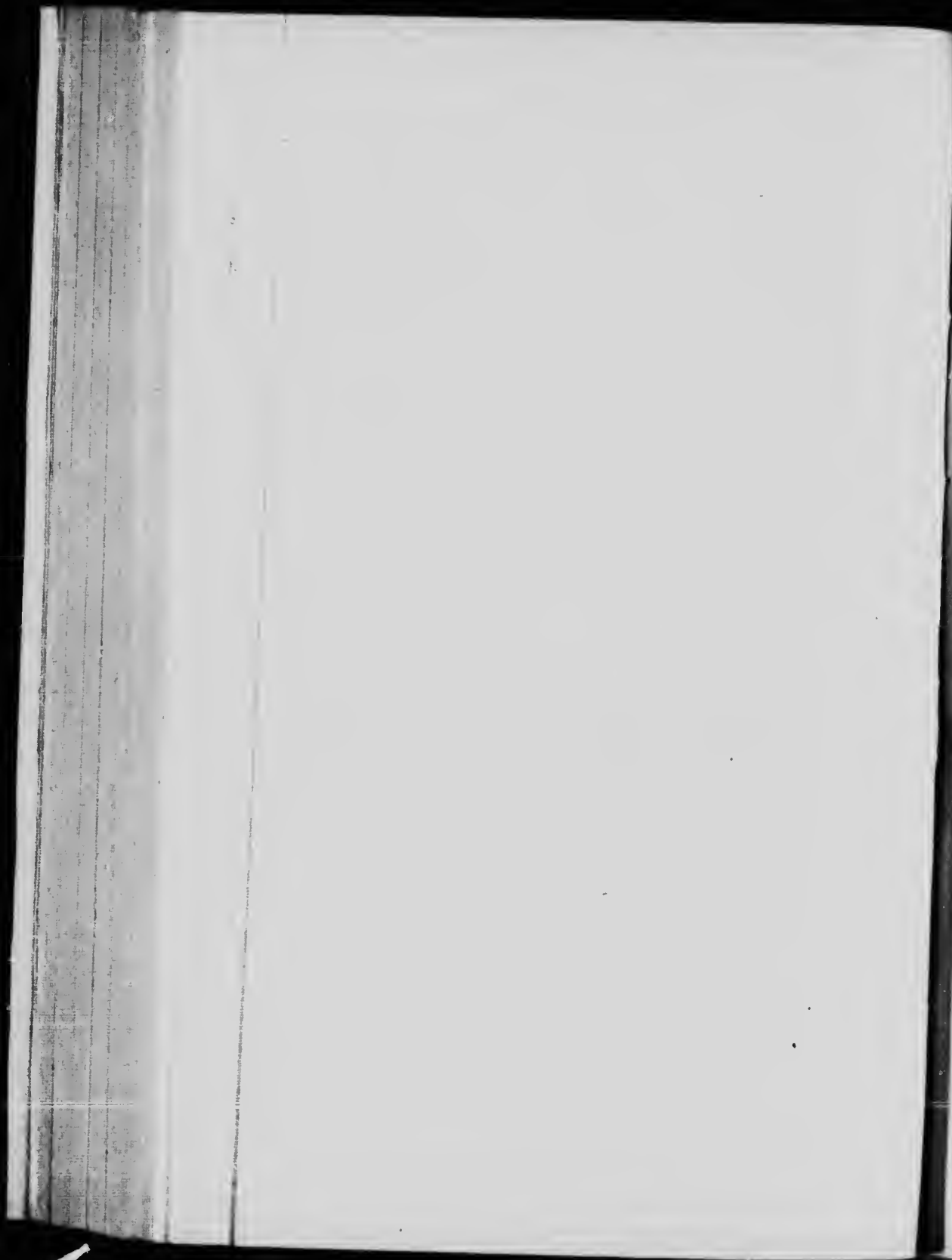
Now the opening moves of the Germans put two alternative problems of their intentions to the French Staff. The chief fear of the French Staff was lest Belgium, being overawed by the Germans, should let the German hosts sweep through Belgium unopposed before the French and British armies had completed their concentration. On the other hand, the threat in



SKETCH-MAP ILLUSTRATING THE STRATEGY OF THE WAR UP TO THE GREAT RETREAT AND THE BATTLE OF THE MARNE, SHOWING ROUGHLY THE POSITION WHEN THE GERMANS BEGAN TO LINE OUT TO ENVELOP IN BELGIUM, 22ND AUGUST, 1914, AND THE POSITION WHEN KLUCK SWUNG IN BY PARIS, 4TH SEPTEMBER







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Belgium might simply be a blind to take the French mind from the German frontier, north of which enormous massing of German armies was taking place—and Joffre very soon discovered this to be the right solution of the German strategic.

*The German was massing in enormous force for an attack on Nancy, on what is called by the French Staff the "Grand Couronné"—and, if victorious, they could smash through the French fortified zone at the "Trouée de Mirecourt" (Gap of Mirecourt) and, besieging Toul to the north of it, and Epinal to the south of it, thus masking them, pour easily into France on a fifty-mile front.*

As Germany invaded Belgium her Staff noted with keen satisfaction that the ring-forts of Liège were as paper defences against her heavy artillery, since as the French fortress barrier was also relying largely on ring-forts, they would have crumpled in like fashion. *But France also noted it, and at once mended the error.* However, before the effects of heavy German artillery on Liège were apparent, Joffre had decided that the German concentration above Verdun and near Nancy meant the taking of the French armies in rear if the German broke through the Grand Couronné, as will at once be clear to anyone from a glance at the map; and the likelihood of it was at once assumed by the French Staff, and taken for granted fortunately, and acted upon accordingly, or the communications of the French armies north of Toul would have been lost.

Joffre, then an unproved quantity to the public, decided *at once* to ward off the German concentration on Nancy at all costs by an attack in Alsace which would cause confusion in the German Staff. Joffre

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had done everything that mortal hand can do to make the Grand Couronné impregnable; but there are limits to invincibility—and the vast German hosts being concentrated thereby were the most deadly danger. Joffre now showed how thoroughly he had mastered the psychology of the German. He knew that if he struck in Alsace, the Germans would think that the lure of “the lost provinces” had driven Joffre to try the invasion of Alsace-Lorraine. Gathering hurriedly what troops he could, Joffre ordered their commander to move; and so, on the 7th of August, the day the Germans entered Liège, was launched the first French attack in Alsace near Belfort, which surprised and routed the Germans at Altkirch, and the French entered Mülhausen as victors on the heels of the German rout. Joffre also wished to seize the bridge-heads on the Rhine and stop the steady flow of German troops from Southern Germany to the reinforcement of the threat to Nancy; he must at all hazards weaken the concentration of the hosts before Nancy by alarming the German Staff with the fear of a French invasion of Alsace. The Germans took alarm; and their counter-attack smashed the French thrust; nevertheless the Germans learnt a bitter lesson and suffered severely. *It was a tactical defeat for France; but it was a strategic defeat for Germany.* The Germans poured down into Alsace, and the attack on Nancy had to be postponed. Joffre had befooled the German Staff; had stopped the concentration on Nancy; and had seized the initiative in the war—though the Germans did not realize it—and having seized it, he never again let it go. But it was the chief part of his strategy to befool the German into thinking that Germany held the initiative.

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Our armchair warriors scolded Joffre roundly for wasting in a fatuous struggle for the "lost provinces" troops that had better have been sent into Belgium to save Brussels! We shall see.

The German Staff was, as a matter of fact, longing and hoping for the French and British to keep their eyes on Belgium, trusting that the French and British psychology would make them rush to the aid of the Belgians; whilst Joffre, knowing the German psychology, made the German, on the contrary, sacrifice strategic concentration on Nancy to their belief that the French were rushing to the lure of Alsace.

The German Staff wobbled.

But let us go back for a moment and see what exactly had happened in Belgium when the French launched their first attack in Alsace on the 7th of August.

On the 2nd of August, four huge armies concentrated on the Belgian frontier of Germany—Kluck (Ist), Bulow (IIInd), Hausen (IIIrd), and Würtemberg (IVth), violating Luxemburg down to its French frontier. Next day (3rd August) Bulow (IIInd) violated Belgium. On the 4th of August, Liège refused to surrender to the German summons; the German knew that Belgium was not an open road—that night Britain was at war. The effect of the British declaration of War in defence of France and Belgium upon the French people was prodigious.

Bulow (IIInd army) sent his 10th corps under Emmich to attack Liège on the evening of the 5th; Kluck (Ist army) keeping inactive behind him. By the 7th of August the Germans were



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in Liège, and Kluck's and Bulow's men pouring over the Meuse.

Ah! cried everyone, the attack on France was to be the much-advertised sweep through the Belgian Plains on to Paris. Copies of Bernhardt's book were sold out in large editions. But, was it? If so, why did not the German armies pour into Belgium? Namur was not attacked until the 20th of August—a whole fortnight!

The Germans were well prepared to make the rush through Belgium—they in fact did so at an astounding pace when all other plans failed. But the rush through Belgium on Paris was not its original strategic nor its chief intention. The German Staff had as a matter of fact decided to *make of Belgium itself the cockpit for the destruction of the French and British armies at once*. The sweep through Belgium could always be taken up any time if needed, if this German strategic failed. But the swift decision would be the annihilation of the French and British in Belgium. If the French and British would only rush into Belgium the war was finished. The German had huge armies concentrated in the Ardennes to cut off and destroy them.

The German Staff felt certain that the French and British armies *would* rush into Belgium; weaken the French fortified zone, and go to their doom. They were so certain of it that they sent forward strong reconnaissances to find them in Belgium, and all over Belgium.

Why did a million men of the flower of the German army, the IIIrd (Hausen), IVth (Württemberg) and Vth (Crown Prince) armies remain inactive except for a few reconnaissances at Longwy, Verdun,

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and Dinant, and give the French armies a fortnight in which to concentrate their strength? Strategy has only one explanation; and events were to prove it. The French were to be lured into Belgium, cut off and smashed in Belgium, and their fortified frontier pierced. That the Crown Prince's army lay north of Verdun proved it—to him was to fall the conqueror's part of marching on Paris through Rheims.

The German reconnaissances in Belgium on the 11th and 12th of August were to discover whether the French and British were in Belgium, making the fervently desired march for Brussels. Time was passing. The German Staff were baffled. *There were no Frenchmen nor British north of the Sambre.* Then why were the Belgians concentrating about Antwerp if the British and French were not going to connect up? The French and British could not be leaving the Belgians to their fate! or—were the British landing in Belgium to fill in the gap between the Belgians and the French? So Kluck thrust out feelers towards the coast.

Suddenly, a German reconnaissance at Dinant on the 13th and 14th of August met with a sharp repulse by *Frenchmen* on the 15th—the French must have begun their advance into Belgium at last, said the German Staff. The French were walking into the Belgian trap!

Now, as a matter of fact, by the 14th of August the five great armies of France were concentrated and ready for battle.

Joffre, making Verdun the pivot at the northern end of the fortified zone of the French frontier, carried his free line roughly speaking along the southern

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edge of Belgium with the British on its sea-flank near Maubeuge, behind Mons. Without going into confusing details, we may put it simply that the French fortified zone was manned by a superb army always ready for instant battle including the famous 20th Division or "Ironsides"—Joffre covered this fortified zone from Belfort to Verdun with the

Ist French army under Dubail and the

IInd French army under Castelnau.

The IIIrd French army under Ruffey covered the pivot of Verdun.

Then :

The IVth French army under Langle de Cary, and the

Vth French army under Lanrezac, continued the line westward along the Belgian border to

The British army under Sir John French, which formed the flanking bastion by the fortress of Maubeuge.

A scattered VIth army was being collected away towards the sea.

But the German Staff did not know this. They were feverishly anxious to know it. The German armies of Kluck and Bulow were hunting hither and thither through Belgium to try to discover it.

Suddenly, on the 14th of August to the utter bewilderment of the German Staff—as well as the world in general—*Joffre struck a second blow in Alsace-Lorraine* which caused as heavy slaughter as any action up to the great German Defeat on the Marne.

The Germans could not believe that Joffre was "leaving the Belgians to their fate," except from passionate sentiment for the "lost provinces."

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But Joffre, seeing that he could not get superiority in numbers essential for a decision in Belgium, saw that with the British and Belgians, he *could* waylay the German right wing which was in the air, wandering about west of the Meuse, and annihilate it on the plains of Brabant, if he could deceive the German Staff that he was about to invade Alsace-Lorraine in enormous strength. And the Germans were deceived. They thought that the armies under Pau, Dubail, and Castelnau now hurled at them were enormously greater than they were—they happened to be less than half the size of the northern and western French armies. And the British had not yet arrived in position; whilst the VIth French army was only gathering away by Compiègne in order to leave the British concentration free from confusion.

Joffre struck and completely deceived the Germans.

Dubail (Ist French Army) had been seizing the passes of the Vosges when Castelnau to the north from Nancy, and Pau to the south, dashed forward, Pau to seize Mülhausen and the Rhine bridges up to Strasburg. Pau's victory of Mülhausen was swift and complete; and the Germans with great loss were flung across the Rhine. By the 19th of August Pau was master of Upper Alsace, with Dubail master of the Vosges. But Castelnau's swift victories in Lorraine to the north drew the German host in vast numbers upon him—they saw too, that, whilst their whole line of communications was threatened, they could, by smashing Castelnau, pierce through the fortified zone into France. They leaped at it. They were convinced that, for moral effect, Joffre would never dare to withdraw from Alsace a second time. And as Castelnau struck to pierce the German line between

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Metz and Strasburg, the German hosts were pouring down on him. Joffre's plan had now been accomplished, and he withdrew troops from Castelnau's already weak forces and sent them to Lanrezac's already very large Vth army near the British. Castelnau, however, flushed with victory, instead of falling back, believing that the Germans were demoralized, struck and suffered reverse in the heavily entangled defences from the fresh masses now hurled upon him. The bloody battle of Morhange or Saarburg on the 20th of August, in spite of French heroism, might have been an utter disaster but for the French "Ironsides," the famous 20th Division, which covered the French retreat—the Germans' gigantic efforts to break them only met with fearful slaughter. Castelnau with consummate skill withdrew to the Grand Couronné, baffling the German, who was unable to pierce the French fortified zone. Pau and Dubail at once withdrew from the Vosges and Alsace and reinforced Castelnau. The genius of Castelnau in battle now shone in all its splendour. He simply slaughtered the Germans at Luneville, and by two fresh attacks from Nancy drove them back on the defensive. The superhuman efforts of the Crown Prince of Bavaria were in vain.

Again the tactical victory of the Germans was a strategic defeat—they had been drawn down to Alsace-Lorraine; and had discovered their dangerous strength to Joffre. Their one hope still lay in their Belgian trap for the French and British onrush into Belgium.

The German was befooled; and by the 20th of August he knew that the French strength lay by

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Belgium. It was to lead the German to strike too soon in Belgium and to strike his blow into empty space. Joffre knew he would strike; and he took good care that it should be into space, not into the French.

To make the German reveal his plans was precisely what Joffre wanted; and Joffre now forged a trap of steel to cut off and ring in the launched German stroke when it had missed.

The French, so far, were drawing the Germans on to their positions—that is keeping the initiative. The strategic student does not much care what the public call it. It deceived the German as it deceived the world, and was meant to deceive him. But the German was rushing madly about, hitting wherever Joffre drew him to hit, and failing strategically all the while.

Let us get back to Belgium on the day of the Second French stroke into Alsace-Lorraine, the 14th of August.

The German II<sup>nd</sup> army under Bulow, masking Liège (then near its fall under the heroic Leman) leaving Liège behind it, was in Belgium, in touch with the Belgian army at Louvain.

Kluck (I<sup>st</sup> army) was away in Belgium slowly feeling towards Antwerp.

Hausen (III<sup>rd</sup> army, Saxon), Würtemberg (IV<sup>th</sup>), and the Crown Prince (V<sup>th</sup>) were not fighting—except that Longwy was besieged, and did not matter. They were, on the contrary entrenching hard. Weakened by the moves into Alsace-Lorraine, they were, even so, still very powerful for smashing the French if the French rushed into the Belgian trap. And they were convinced that the French were in that trap. The French hammered large German forces at

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Dinant on the 15th August. The French must be in Namur. On the 17th the French hammered the Germans at Gembloux. The French *must* be near Brussels. They must be rushing in to get touch with the Belgian army.

Kluck (Ist army) struck, followed by Bulow (IIInd army) and Hausen (IIIrd Saxon).

Kluck was to pin the Belgians; Bulow to drive a wedge between the Belgians and the imagined French and British army; Bulow at the same time to assist Hausen (IIIrd) in a swift attack on Namur. The French central armies, rushing to help their left, were at once to be struck by Würtemberg (IVth) and the Crown Prince (Vth), whilst Bulow (IIInd) and Hausen (IIIrd) were to cut off the retreat of this French centre at the Meuse. And the moment the French left, with the British, was surrounded and destroyed, the Crown Prince (Vth) was to strike through Verdun to Rheims and there join the Bavarian Crown Prince who was by this time to have crashed through the Gap of Mirecourt and to have reached Châlons; whence the two Crown Princes were to march in triumph to Paris.

Now, do not let us make any mistake about it. If Joffre had rushed into Belgium, this strategic would have succeeded absolutely.

On the 19th of August, the general retreat of the Belgian army began.

Kluck's army, failing to cut the Belgian army from Antwerp, was more severely handled than he expected; 40,000 of his fresh troops under Armin made their peaceful entry into Brussels with great pomp and triumph on the 20th of August, whilst Kluck's right wing wheeled to cover Antwerp. *But they found no French or British armies in or near Brussels!*

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Bulow, badly harassed, could find no French army north of the Sambre! Worse still, he began to doubt whether there were any French even in Namur.

On the 20th of August, whilst Kluck's Germans goose-stepped it through Brussels, Bulow's and Hausen's men attacked Namur, under the delusion that the French left stretched west from Namur north of the Sambre. So Hausen's (IIIrd) armies moved rapidly to Givet and Dinant; and the hidden German central armies could then advance out of the forests of the Ardennes and attack the French central armies.

The German blow in Belgium was in the air. The trap closed on empty space.

What was worse, Kluck's and Bulow's armies were well into Belgium.

On the 20th, as the German troops did the goose-step through Brussels, and Bulow attacked Namur, *Joffre swung the French and British armies on the Belgian frontiers forward into line*—the British from Maubeuge swiftly to Mons.

The German armies in Belgium were at once in a most dangerous position—they had lurched blindly forward into space, cut off by the Meuse behind them; and their enemies were on both their flanks.

To do the German commanders justice, utterly baffled as they were by the whereabouts of the British, they realised the danger of disaster when they found themselves deployed against nothing. Kluck, a man of rare tactical skill and swift in resource, with Bulow, quickly decided that they must continue westward and prevent the enemy seizing a strong position there. But Kluck's and Bulow's Uhlans fumbled for the British in vain. Kluck, leaving Brussels behind him,



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was bent on driving a wedge between an imaginary British force and the French left. Fortunately so; for, had Kluck, instead of wasting precious hours in the west, come straight down south on Mons, it would have gone hard with the British army as events turned out. One wonders whether Kluck, in the days that followed, cursed the tomfoolery of that goose-stepping to a bad business through Brussels.

As Joffre's armies swung forward, and the central German armies came pouring out of the Ardennes, they advanced together, and so it came about that they met in the tremendous collision of what is called "encounter battle."

The French armies of Ruffey (IIIrd) and Langle de Cary (IVth) met part of Hausen's (IIIrd) and Württemberg's (IVth) and half of the Crown Prince's (Vth) armies in full career. They met on the day of Castelnau's defeat at Morhange in Lorraine; and it was taken for granted by the German Staff that the Bavarian Crown Prince was launched to the piercing of the French fortified zone at the Gap of Mirecourt. In this clash, the French commanders, especially in Ruffey's command, got into confusion, and the Germans had the best of it. But one French commander in particular came to the front that day—Sarrail, who was later given Ruffey's command (IIIrd French army); and was to be entrusted with the defence of Verdun in the Great Retreat which was about to begin. We shall see how magnificently he was to fulfil his trust.

When the German closed his trap in Belgium on empty space, Joffre, leaping at opportunity, had swiftly seized the moment to make his Belgian trap for the over-extended German armies in Belgium.

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Lanrezac (Vth) with the largest French army, thrusting through Charleroi, was to cut Bulow and Kluck off from the Meuse, and, encircled by the British and Belgian armies, Kluck and Bulow would have been lost. Joffre came within an ace of destroying the German right wing and smashing the whole German invasion.

But the Russian Staff was tricked, and tricked by consequence the French Staff. Instead of there being six German armies in the West, there were seven—the Saxon army instead of going to Poland, had been deftly sent to the West, and slipped into the Forest of the Ardennes besides Würtemberg's army, under von Hausen, Würtemberg's Chief of Staff, alongside the Prussian Guards. Joffre only knew this when the central German armies now broke cover in their leap forward to cut off and destroy the French left in Belgium. How well the German secret had been kept is proved by all the despatches of this period, French and British, confounding the position of the Guards and ignoring Hausen's command—a confusion increased by the fact that Hausen had been Würtemberg's Chief of Staff.

Even so, however, Joffre came within an ace of ringing the German armies of Kluck and Bulow in steel.

The day after Ruffey and Langle de Cary fell back on the defensive in the Ardennes, and Castelnau was falling back on the Grand Couronné, on the 22nd of August Joffre gave battle to the Germans at Charleroi, the spear-head behind which lay the large and magnificent army of Lanrezac, whereby to break the German line and cut off the German armies in Belgium from retreat. Kluck was still groping for the British

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army away west by the Scheldt; Bulow groping his way in a haze south of Brussels.

The German had walked straight into Joffre's trap.

Unfortunately Lanrezac did not even occupy in force, far less entrench, both sides of the Sambre at Charleroi. Not only did he not occupy Charleroi in great force, but, failing to hold the far side, he forgot to destroy the bridges. Nor did he make the line of the Meuse on his right secure either. *Had he done so, the Germans in Belgium were doomed.* Namur would have become a German death-trap: and the British army would have destroyed Kluck's army in detail.

Charleroi, held but by a small detachment of light troops and a few machine-guns, fell to the Germans; and by its loss now placed the French centre in the very greatest peril. The Germans realized at once the terrible disaster they had escaped. They knew full well that if the French recovered, that disaster might still fall upon them. And with all their might—knowing what defeat meant for them—they struck at the French centre. Lanrezac now fought hard to recover Charleroi, but it was too late. The slaughter was fearful. And Hausen, with the Prussian Guards, was swinging in on his Meuse flank; but the African troops on the Meuse were holding him. However, Lanrezac got alarmed about his Meuse flank, and instead of doggedly denying the Meuse to Hausen withdrew the victorious Africans and *allowed Hausen to cross the Meuse!*

Joffre now saw that the very disadvantage of the overshot German armies of Kluck and Bulow in Belgium at once turned as greatly to their advantage;

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and that the British above all were placed in a terribly perilous state. He had lost the superiority in numbers over the German armies in Belgium, and he must now fall back and lure them on to a line on which he could fight them to their disadvantage.

Joffre ordered the Great Retreat.

Do not let us get into any muddle-headed idea that Joffre meant this retreat from the outbreak of the war. He did not. Do not let us have any muddle-headed idea that Joffre at the beginning of the retreat planned to swing back to the Marne. He swung back in order to strike the moment that the German delivered himself into his hands.

Lanrezac's defeat put the British troops on the left flank at once in the most deadly peril.

As fortunate for the arms of France that France had upon its sea-flank this bastion of tempered British steel as that Castelnau had had with him in Lorraine the immortal "Ironsides" of France. The "band of brothers" were to save France and the world.

The French line from the Sambre (Lanrezac's Vth Army) was flanked from near the Sambre, through Binche and Mons to Condé, towards the Scheldt, by the British. The Commander, Sir John French, had two army corps, the 1st at Binche under Sir Douglas Haig, nearest Lanrezac's Vth French army; and the 2nd at Mons, under Sir Horace Smith-Dorrien. The cavalry was under General Allenby.

Lanrezac's loss of the crossing of the Sambre on the 22nd of August to Bulow, brought Bulow's right swinging down on Haig's (Ist) army corps at Binche at noon on the next day, the 23rd. The German corps which struck Haig was making for Maubeuge in rear of the 1st British corps. It was, however, badly mauled

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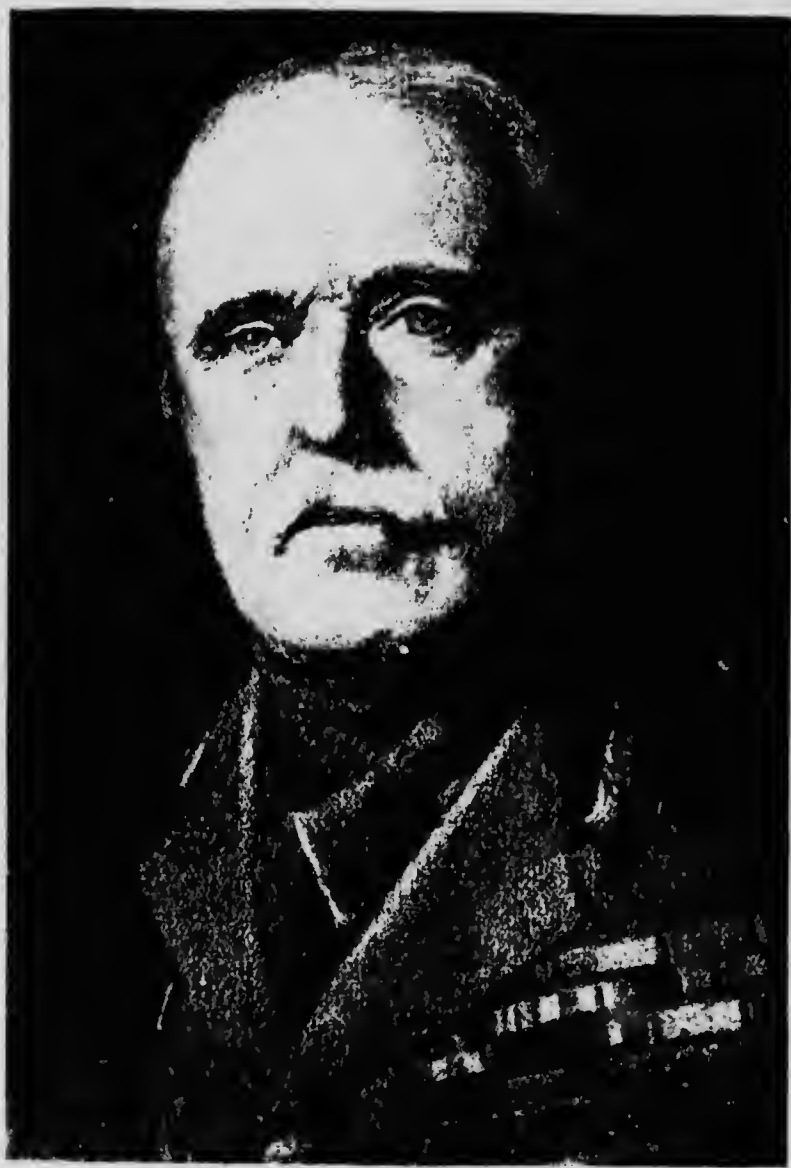
on its Sambre flank as it came on by the French from Thuin on the Sambre. The mauling it got from Haig soon afterwards would have annihilated it if Charleroi had held; but Charleroi was gone. The 2nd British corps (Smith-Dorrien) had loose fighting with advanced bodies.

Haig's infantry rifle-fire was playing such havoc with the German masses that the men were in fine fettle when—late in the afternoon of the 23rd—Sir John French suddenly got a message from Joffre telling him of Lanrezac's (Vth) retirement and that there were a large number of German corps west of Charleroi.

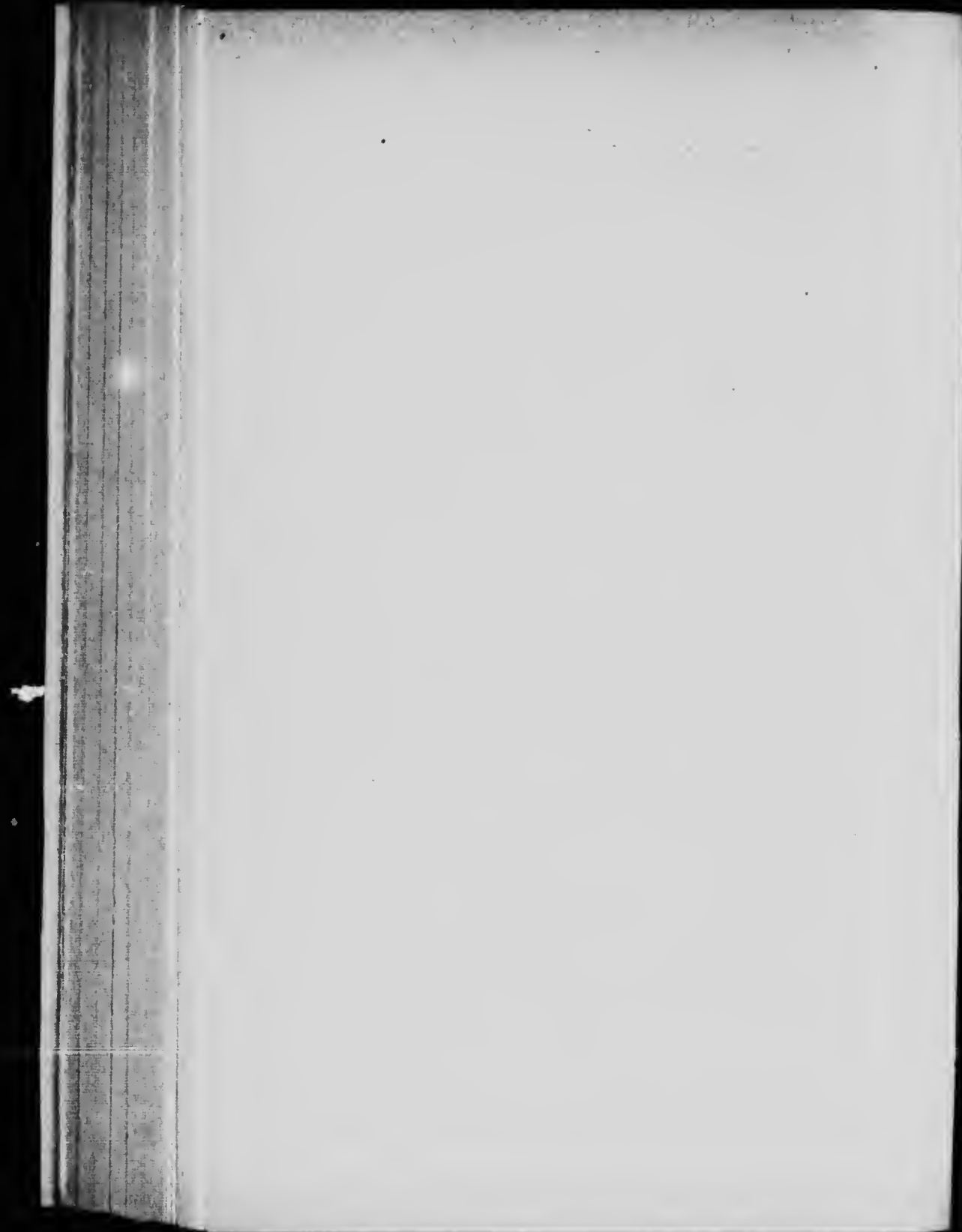
French must have been astounded at this intelligence, as he was expecting to advance to Joffre's trapping of the German right wing. He did not break off action, but made ready to do so if necessary; and sent up his airmen to report. About what had happened in general he must have been utterly in the dark. And on came the Germans.

The overshot German strength in the west, to which Joffre had looked with hope before Lanrezac failed him at Charleroi, was now as great a danger to the British whose flank they might turn and envelop. No man knew that better than Sir John French. And when Sir John French's airmen reported to him, although he was in the dark as to what had happened at Charleroi, he at once realised the danger. Joffre must now have been in the greatest anxiety for his bastion of British steel on his flank—for, if it went, he was turned. He brought every effort to bear to stave off the peril.

The German commanders had now "placed" the British Army, and rushed to close in on it—Bulow



**VISCOUNT FRENCH**  
*(By the Author)*



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from the east, Kluck from north and west. The French Territorials at Tournay, away on the British left, with great gallantry delayed Kluck's onslaught on Smith-Dorrien; and Kluck only found out that his alarm for his flank was needless on the 24th, and by that time, Sir John French having made sure, acted swiftly, and had begun his retreat from Mons. Kluck, bitterly regretting his delay at Tournay, and hotly urged to it by the other German commanders, gave his troops no rest, but pressed forward his cavalry towards Bouchain and Cambrai to cut off the British, believing the British pinned at Mons and that Bulow's men had passed Binche and would reach Maubeuge before Haig's men.

There is a widely accepted story that the Kaiser issued an order to the German armies to let everything else go and walk over "French's contemptible little army." I hold no brief for the Kaiser. He may quite well have been fool enough to have written such an order—he is given to melodramatic rhetoric and his people like it,—but as the German staff click their heels together and make obeisance to the All-Highest, they are soldiers enough to know that it would be sheer madness to take the slightest notice, far less to act upon, the All-Highest's strategic conceptions; the Kaiser's strategy has little repute with the German Staff. After all, they are soldiers. Sir John French had a far more terrible task before him than smashing the Kaiser's fatuous pomposities or strategic. In peace-time there was widespread contempt of the size of the British Army in German military writings and German gutter-talk, and the German professors never tired of lecturing the German youth upon the paid mercenaries of British



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valour. But, as a matter of fact, the German Staff had a pretty holy dread of the British Army. They have never been able to understand the splendour of its achievements—those achievements that upset every theory of the German strategic. It puzzled them. When therefore the British stood in battle-array against them, the German was impelled to their destruction by a far more overwhelming consideration than that with which any bombastic tomfoolery of rhetoric from the Kaiser could have infected him; they knew what the finest fighting men in the world on the French flank meant for the moral of France. They knew the colossal moral effect on their own arms and on the enemy and the whole world that a defeat of the British Army, however small that army, by the Germans would mean. Quite apart from the collapse of the French flank, the destruction of the British Army alone would mean the gates flung wide open to World Dominion for Germany. The task that was put upon Sir John French's shoulders was now the heaviest of the war. If he broke, France broke—and the world. No man knew that better than Sir John French.

But there was one man that saw all this quite as clearly as the German Staff or Sir John French—that man was Joffre. Joffre knew the value of the British in battle—knew that his flank was made of sternest metal—and he and Sir John French knew as well that now on the British was to fall the most terrible task of the Retreat. The British being on the outer flank of the swinging line, their retreat would have to be the most rapid end of that swing back, and it would be assailed by every ounce of strength and bitter resolution that the German War-Machine could put into it,

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for, upon its envelopment now depended the whole success of the German strategic

During the night of the 23rd, Joffre ordered the Vth French army to stop its retirement and counter-attack fiercely to prevent Bulow's Germans getting through between them and the British. It was now that Franchet d'Esperey made his mark. Counter-attacking he drove the Germans back almost into Charleroi. D'Esperey was soon thereafter to be given command of the Vth French army in place of Lanrezac. The Algerian division at the same time mauled the Prussian Guards badly.

It was now that the swift resource and skill of Sir John French and his lieutenants shone out, and revealed the superb stuff of which the British Expeditionary Force was made.

Sir John French, seeing the German cavalry menace from the west, swung his own cavalry from right to left, and Allenby's squadrons fought off the German threat to Smith-Dorrien as he fell back from Mons. To prevent the two army corps from being pressed together in retreat, Sir John French then launched a couple of cross-counter-attacks by Haig's division as though to retake Binche, held up Bulow, and freed Smith-Dorrien's retirement. So on the evening of the 24th the British were on the line from Jenlain to Maubeuge, with comparatively light losses, but with a heavy toll of German dead.

Now the Germans had begun this parallel fight amidst great confusion. Crossing the Meuse and the Sambre into the salient of Namur made by the junction of these two rivers, vast masses of Germans got jammed and could not deploy to strike, they could not come into action. Their losses were fearful. Had

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it not been for the danger to the British on the western flank, Joffre might have destroyed them.

The reluctance of the British to fall back from Binche and Mons, after mauling the Germans, gave the German Commanders a false idea of Sir John French's swiftness to act. Kluck made desperate efforts to get round the British and swing them into Maubeuge. So it came about that even whilst the German Commanders were penning victorious reports to Berlin that they had driven the British into Maubeuge, Sir John French, now in full possession of facts which he had so urgently demanded, was giving them the slip.

D'Amade, acting from Arras, made a swift stroke to relieve French on his left, overwhelming the German cavalry at Bouchain on the 25th.

The skill with which both of Sir John French's commanders evaded the persistent and closely pressed attacks by the Germans to surround their weary troops was near to a miracle. The British had lost touch with the Vth French army in their retreat from the Sambre; and on the 25th the German did his hardest to get between them. The French and British (Haig) got touch again on the night of the 25th at Maroilles. Sir John French, reinforced on the 25th, had to meet a formidable attack of seven German divisions with but three divisions and a brigade on the 26th of August. The enormous German artillery development at Le Cateau was terrible for Smith-Dorrien's division. Out-numbered by 2 to 1 in men and 3 to 1 in guns, the British musketry did wonders; but Sir John French broke off the fight in good time, and retired behind the Somme to keep closer touch with the French.

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After their strategic retreat to cut off the British at Cambrai on the 25th, the German Staff turned to envelopment in the west.

Their high hope of a swift and decisive triumph was going; the German Staff had now only one hope of restoring it—the flail-like swing on Paris which they had advertised for a generation, and which the public thought they had been trying to do all along.

This rush from the Belgian plains was in plan somewhat thus: keeping the German armies opposite the French fortified frontier to hold that position, with Verdun as the pivot, the other armies were to line out like a flail and swing downwards by Paris, the free end of the flail turning and enveloping the British and French outer flank. So the German armies kept pushing down and outwards—on Kluck falling the master job of outflanking.

Joffre knew this would happen to a nicety.

He decided to lure the German to a position where he could be halted and smashed. He did it with a skill and mastery that place the Great Retreat amongst the supreme triumphs of human endeavour; it was the well-planned high-road to one of the decisive battles of the ages. And he had now, as commanders, men of genius on whom he could rely—and above all on his sea flank, to bear the most terrible strain of the ordeal of their trust in him, the genius of Sir John French and the valour of the superb fighting men of the British army.

Into the tactical details of the Great Retreat we need not here enter, lest we fail to see the wood for the trees.

So far, every German strategic had failed. But

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the Germans rushed at their long advertised sweep to Paris with enthusiasm and the wildest hope, as Joffre foresaw; and their vast superiority in men and metal seemed to be crushing everything before it. A panic set in over this country which proved that they had impressed the public mind.

But to the strategic student the picture was a far different one.

The British, on the outer flank, were not only having the hardest fight and the longest retreat to cover, but against them the end of the German flail was being continually strengthened. Kluck made the most frantic efforts to turn this flank; but in Sir John French he found his master, with a skill and resource that continually baffled his own remarkable skill and resource. In the Great Retreat the master part had to be played by the British.

As a matter of fact this grandiose German scheme, the joy of the German journalists, was against the whole German desire. They were *compelled* to a parallel fight by the French and British retirement. But Joffre, knowing the German psychology, knew that they would pursue it if he handled them aright. He determined to lead them so to do in his own way. He knew the German dream, and that its crown was the march through Paris. He knew that they would keep trying to turn him—but he kept a constant eye on the pivot by Verdun the while. And he decided to draw them down to a favourable position in their breakneck sweep, and to smash them upon it. Where that position would be, he could not be sure until he saw how things developed. But as you follow the Great Retreat you find the centre sagging and the German line in it becoming dangerously self-

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enveloped, the longer its lines of communication become.

You notice that the French and British armies remain behind in no fortresses to be besieged.

You notice that when the German pressure at any particular point becomes dangerous to that retreating curve, Joffre orders the French commander to stand and smash it; he stands and smashes it and then—falls back into the curved retreat.

Joffre, yielding to circumstances, yielding to overwhelming superiority in numbers and artillery, swings his sagging curve back and back, his pivot on Verdun.

Joffre had balked every effort of the Germans, since the day that war began, to get an overwhelming concentration and force enough to get a decision on any point. Plan after plan against Joffre had failed. Joffre had seized the initiative from the beginning, and had never let go of it. The marching German soldiery, at any rate as they rushed into France, may have thought their commanders had the initiative. During the Great Retreat the German Staff deluded themselves into the idea that they held it—it was Joffre's whole intention and hope that they should. But it was a false initiative. The man who shaped all their immense superiority in men and metal to his design and watered their strength and will, was Joffre. He led and they followed.

Joffre, behind his retreating armies, was preparing for the Day. He had punished the great enveloping move of Kluck at Cambrai by a blow from d'Amade out of the west; but d'Amade was not strong and withdrew to Amiens. In their breakneck onrush to ruin, the Germans left the seaports of Calais, Boulogne, and Havre open.

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The anniversary of Sedan was nearly due. The Germans frantically panted for another Sedan. Suddenly great counter strokes by Joffre with his centre armies on the 28th, 29th, and 30th of August convinced the German Staff that Joffre was going to make a stand at last in the north.

But Joffre's counter-attacks were for a far different purpose than standing where the Germans wanted him to make his stand.

Joffre in fact was making his French troops realize that he could make the Germans feel his will wherever and whenever he chose. So it came about that when he found the German Staff slipping strength down the long line to their hammer-head against the British on the sea-flank, and that corps were being slipped out west from the German pivot along the Oise, Joffre swung forward and hammered them at Guise and Mézières.

The Prussian Guards on Hausen's left wing, slipped to his right, and so increased the weight of Bulow and Kluck on Joffre's left between Amiens and St. Quentin. Here at Guise on the Oise, on August 29th, the French crashed into their flank and drove them back in confusion with heavy losses.

Langle de Cary (IVth) fought Würtemberg (IVth) to a standstill on the 29th at Mézières, rolled up his columns on the 30th, and on the last day of August drove him back across the Meuse in wild disorder.

Sarrail (IIIrd) kept hammering the Crown Prince into a state of nerves before Verdun.

Kluck and Bulow became more cautious.

These actions which misled the German into the idea that Joffre was now going to make his stand were

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only launched by Joffre to keep the enemy in the order that suited him best.

So the Germans, vastly superior in men and artillery all along the line, pushed on, hoping for a break through or an envelopment.

Joffre as he retreated, adjusting his plans to facts as they arose, outnumbered everywhere, swung farther and farther back. The strain he put upon the confidence of his men was prodigious, but by now they had begun to know their Chief. Their great commanders understood him and acted like brothers. Sir John French had discovered the genius of the man and worked for him like a French commander.

Joffre cared nothing where he smashed the German—near Paris or near Berlin. Joffre knew full well, as did Sir John French, that the "offensive" is not necessarily the "initiative." Knowing that the vast German War-Machine depended on rush and hacking through, knowing therefore that he was bound to get both, he deliberately set to work to plan how *he* could use it to his own advantage.

Hence we see him refusing to fight on the lines where the German wanted him to fight, but always putting up a good hammering of the German threat to any dangerous part of his retreating line to deceive him into thinking he *was* going to stand and fight. But steadily back went the retreating curve, unbroken, able to smash back the answering German curve when it grew dangerous—drawing down the German line, shaping it to Joffre's desire.

That is not "losing the initiative."

The very violence and headiness of the German onrush were being steadily employed to exhaust him. He "sang himself out of breath."



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Foch who, as the great commander of the "Iron-sides" had won undying fame with Castelnau, was now moving up to reinforce with a new army—the VIIth (confusingly called the IXth army in official despatches). It slipped in between the IVth and Vth armies along the Aisne.

Still back Joffre swung his ever-increasing curve.

He let the lines of the Somme and Oise go.

Back he swung on Paris and the Marne.

On rushed the German hosts, breakneck.

Knowing the lure of Paris, knowing the German methods and psychology, Joffre encouraged them to believe he was being "borne down." He could calculate precisely upon what the German would do as if he had done it—as if he had sat at their council tables. But he knew full well that they would not do it, if for a moment they began to suspect that they had not the initiative. The extent of their disaster would depend on the length of their delusion.

The German of a surety had the most elaborate War-Machine in creation, but Joffre had discovered that there was no man of genius to use it. Joffre himself was using a far smaller War-Machine with astounding skill, as we have seen, against it.

He kept the French moral firm through his commanders, who told the troops that they were to be ready to turn and stand and smash the German at any moment.

As the German onrush came nearer to Paris, Joffre's withdrawal became stiffer. The German had to fight and pay for every acre. It deceived the German Staff. The pressure was becoming too great, they thought, even for Joffre's calm; it never dawned

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upon the German psychology that Joffre could let France suffer such humiliation on the threshold of Paris only to try to lead them to some disaster—for did not *they* hold the initiative? So they smashed their way into the semicircle of British and French steel that stretched from Paris to Verdun.

The British army, after brilliant rearguard actions at Villers Cotterets and Compiègne (Sept. 1st), had retreated across the Marne, just east of Paris; and to their right the French armies in the curve up to Verdun, fighting, swung steadily back and back, until at last on the 3rd Kluck's men saw the distant haze of Paris.

Now, do not let the Man-in-the-Street blunder over the lure of Paris. This does not mean that the Germans were marching on Paris. They were not. The men and their officers may have thought so—and it would encourage them to allow them to think so. But the German Staff knew that the French armies must first be destroyed. Any siege of Paris, with the French armies unbroken, would have been the act of a madman—or a Crown Prince. After all, the German commanders were trained soldiers. On the contrary, the Germans had suffered heavy losses; had failed strategically in all they had attempted to bring to a decision; and the Staff knew that their hosts were none too strong to break the armies in front of them led by a man of such high strategic gifts that he never let them achieve anything.

But the swiftness of the German rush into France *did* elate the German Staff. They *did* think they were winning at last. They *did* think the War-Machine was invincible after all. Did not even the Press of their enemies think so? They *did* see them-

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selves goose-stepping down the Champs Elysées very soon. But they did *not* think that Kluck was going to rush Paris in his stride. As a matter of fact they knew that Paris was a mighty bastion on the French flank. They wished with all their souls that Paris were not there.

Suddenly—within sight of Paris—the German Staff awoke to the danger to which the German armies were rushing headlong.

But before we can understand why Kluck suddenly acted as he did, we must cast our eyes north to a fierce battle, one of the fiercest and most vital fought in the war—a battle all too little realized by the public watching with breathless anxiety the violent drama near Paris; for it accounts for much in Kluck's mind and the mind of the German strategic staff. Note the dates!

We shall then know what Joffre knew, and what Kluck *thought* he knew.

Whilst the German hosts, lining out and lining out to Kluck for envelopment of the retreating curve, followed headlong, the armies at their pivot were of course marking time. They dare not thin this pivot overmuch, for *they were convinced that Joffre was enormously strong there by Verdun*, not only to protect his own pivot, but as a danger to the German pivot and lines of communication if he pierced and broke through, as it would mean utter annihilation for all the German armies in France.

It was for this reason that they calculated Joffre to be weaker along his line to his swinging flank; and it was for this reason that the German Staff was taking risks to get round that flank.

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Sarrail at Verdun had given the Crown Prince a sore head so often that this belief was absolute.

Joffre utterly deceived them by his tactics. *The French at the pivot were as weak as it was safe to let them be.* As we shall see, Joffre was secretly gathering French armies *in the west.*

To keep Joffre's strength pinned on the German frontier, so as to envelop him in the west—and so get the larger "bag" when that envelopment took place within the German circle—attacks on the French fortified zone were steadily threatened.

Joffre left Castelnau to act strictly on the defensive at Nancy; to hold it to the last man if need be, with the smallest force he could, Nancy being made into a most powerful defence with earthworks and entanglements to make up for the lack of men.

As the German line swung down by Paris, there was fought at Nancy a terrific battle—at the other end of the line—which was intended to carry the Grand Couronné, and smash through the Gap of Mirecourt. It may be called the Second Battle of Nancy. But all eyes were on Paris. What prodigious weight the German Staff attached to Nancy, however, is proved by the fact—it has become an ill-omen now for the German cause—that the Kaiser was present and arrayed as conqueror to march into it. The fight was bitter and hard. The losses of the Germans were fearful. The French fought it with so few men that it comes near to a miracle. For the first time the Kaiser looked on at utter defeat.

The attack on the Grand Couronné began with a stupendous bombardment—400 heavy guns had been brought from Metz to add to the artillery. But the French were dug in, and held their fire for the in-

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fantry attacks. The ground was heavily entangled. The Germans attacked with 350,000 men. The infantry began their assaults on August 31st, issuing in huge masses from the woods, and dashed forward. They were shot down at short range and bayoneted. They did not win an acre of ground; and the slopes of the Grand Couronné were heaped with their dead.

On the 6th of September, under the eyes of the Kaiser, who had hurried from Metz to enter the capital of Lorraine at the head of his white cuirassiers, and watched through his glasses, from the top of a hill, the great assault on the Grand Couronné, in masses of 50,000 men at a time, with flags flying and bands playing, time after time that day the Germans swept up the slopes amongst their dead; and each time they fell back in confusion, smashed by the "seventy-fives" and charged with the bayonets of the "Ironsides."

As the Kaiser rode back to Metz that evening, there came bad news from Paris.

The attacks were renewed by disheartened and weary troops on the next two days, but only heaped up the dead. The German slaughter in that mighty battle of Nancy was terrible. The heroism of the sparse garrison of Nancy should never be forgotten.

But let us get three days back to Paris and the 3rd of September. As Kluck neared Paris, he was soldier enough to know that this mighty bastion stood safeguard over the French flank, which he had been frenziedly trying to turn day after day in vain in the open. He knew he could not go on with that turning movement round this strong fortress of Paris. What was he to do?

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He expected to hear at any moment of the fall of Nancy. He could not halt and wait—he could in any case do only one thing to save disaster to his people. On the 4th of September the Allied airmen reported that Kluck had swung sharply south-eastwards on the 3rd. The German Staff had decided to send Kluck to thrust himself between Paris and the French armies.

He left two army corps on the Ourcq to watch his flank, and throwing out a powerful screen southwards against the British, moving right across the British front, he made straight to pierce between the British and d'Esperey's Vth army.

To talk of Kluck looking upon the British army as "out of action" is babble. Kluck had felt Sir John French's sting too often; and had better reason than any man to know Sir John French's skill in battle and the valour and fighting quality of Sir John French's troops. Kluck was not a fool. He knew that the British had done what was close on a miracle, and his respect for Sir John French must have been profound.

Crossing the Marne at Meaux, Kluck headed straight to crash into the left of d'Esperey's Vth French army.

He did it at fearful risk. He had to break the first law of battle and move across the British front. But he took the risk. He did so in full confidence.

That Kluck did not realise Joffre's secret and ever-increasing strength in the west is proved by his reckless disregard of his flank on the Marne. The whole German Command was entirely deceived as to the new army of Foch, the VIIth, having been slipped into the French line at the centre between the IVth

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and Vth armies. So the German trampled, self-enveloped, into that sagging French curve, thinking that it would be broken at each end—Paris and Nancy. The German staff and Kluck saw that it was sagging, *but they were sure that it was being thinned as it sagged.* The French defence of Nancy against 350,000 Germans in fact convinced them that Joffre *must* be at Nancy in enormous force. Therefore—the whole of the French left wing by Paris *must* be weak.

The hour had come for Joffre for which he had waited since the Great Retreat had begun.

At last Joffre decided that, regardless of inferiority in numbers, he was now in a position to turn upon the German hosts and strike them down in a disaster which would rid for ever the German nightmare of Invincibility from the whole world. He issued his order that the French armies were to turn and attack all along the line on the morning of the 6th of September.

That order sent a thrill through the retreating line. All retreat was at an end.

It proved that this Great Retreat had not been compelled.

On Saturday, the 5th of September, Joffre had met Sir John French and told him that the time for the offensive had come, and wrote his memorable order to the French Army, issued to the French troops on the next morning, the 6th, for the destruction of the German hosts, that immortal order of the day in which he states that the moment had come when the battle is about to begin on which the good of the country depends—no man in France must look backward any more—there is only one object, to attack and over-

## Fall of the German War God 145

throw the enemy—he who cannot advance must stand and hold his ground at all costs, and be slain rather than give way. This is a moment when no faltering will be tolerated.

Joffre knew that he had the German in his grip. But he wanted more than to defeat him, he hoped to destroy him.

He struck now to envelop and destroy Kluck, and Bulow with him. If so, the German army would be destroyed. The war would be at an end.

On the morning of Sunday the 6th, a new French army under Maunoury suddenly appeared before Paris, in Kluck's rear. It appeared out of nowhere at the very moment that the Kaiser on his hill, with his escort of white cuirassiers, was watching the great slaughter of his hosts before Nancy. By noon Kluck knew of this VIth French army.

Unfortunately, from too great eagerness, Maunoury's VIth army was made to strike too soon. It did not give the British army time to leap at Kluck and pin him—it did not give Kluck time to get thoroughly entangled with the French Vth army on the flank. And, in consequence, instead of falling on the rear of Kluck's army when hotly engaged, it alarmed Kluck, who acted with consummate skill.

As Maunoury's right, under Lanaze, struck Kluck near Meaux, Kluck's advanced corps, being not yet engaged, were swiftly withdrawn and brought back over the Marne before they had become entangled with the French and British across the Grand Morin river. Not only so, Kluck at once turned on the troops of Maunoury behind him, and sending on his cavalry in force to delay the British and French south



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of the Marne, he wheeled back and struck at Maunoury along the Ourcq; and he slipped a reserve corps up north to his new right to outflank this new French threat near Betz.

Now, the unfortunate point about Maunoury's stroke being made too soon was that the very withdrawn position in which the British Army had been placed in order to make the German disaster the more complete when the British crashed into its flank, made Sir John French's advance to support Maunoury, when Maunoury was baulked by Kluck's lightning withdrawal from Joffre's trap, into a breakneck affair for the British columns. Instead of the British crashing into the flank of Kluck's pinned hosts east of Paris, with Maunoury hammering Kluck in rear and cutting off the German retreat, and so being well across the Ourcq, whilst d'Esperey flung back Bulow on to Kluck's pinned army, the Germans scrambled out of their Sedan and slipped from the trap. So that, instead of hanging back to Joffre's intention, Sir John French had suddenly to strike up north instead of eastwards in a wholly different direction and with a wholly different intention, against strong rearguards.

The quickness of judgment required amidst such conflicting events displayed by Sir John French saved the day. And so it came about that, by the irony of circumstance, it was to fall to the lot of Kluck and the whole German line that Kluck was to be struck the blow that was to overthrow him and send his hosts flying to cover, by the contemptible little British Army. The British leaped forward with a swing to reach Maunoury's harassed right flank.

And never did British troops rush to the salvation

## Fall of the German War God 147

of a more gallant commander or a more gallant body of men than Maunoury's VIth French Army.

Maunoury and his corps knew what defeat before Paris would mean, and fought with magnificent courage. Gallieni, the Governor of Paris, directed the fight with rare skill. It was the 7th of September, and the British were advancing on Maunoury's right flank, south of the Marne; and Maunoury's hard-pressed left, being reinforced from Paris, took the offensive again, whilst Gallieni sent from Paris a division in motors of any kind that could be gathered together, and they, leaping from their motors, rushed in without artillery support and drove the Germans into Meaux, Maunoury now coming into touch with the British who had fought forward towards Meaux and La Trétoire, which they reached after hard fighting with Kluck's rearguards on the 8th, utterly annihilating the Germans at La Trétoire, and crossing the Marne on the afternoon and night of the 9th.

At the same time, Franchet d'Esperey (Vth French Army) swung up on the British right to force Bulow back on to Kluck, and fought at a tremendous pace to encircle Kluck and Bulow between the Ourcq and the Marne; and, though meeting with heavy resistance, pushed on with astounding valour and skill. Surprising the Germans in bivouac on the night of the 6th near Montmirail with the bayonet, d'Esperey overwhelmed two of Bulow's corps and pursued them in mad route towards Chateau Thierry on the Marne, capturing immense booty of guns, maxims, and ammunition, but few prisoners.

Bulow's Germans saw the trap, and flinging away all impediments, rushed out of its jaws before it closed upon them. D'Esperey began to cross the Marne with

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the British on the afternoon of the 9th and was across on the morning of the 10th.

Now it will be noted that though Sir John French and d'Esperey were getting perilously dangerous to Kluck and Bulow, these two German generals were hanging on sullenly—Kluck and Bulow, for all their punishment, having evaded the trap, and in spite of the peril at their door, hung on during the 9th, or appeared to hang on. They were clearly waiting and hoping for something to happen even as they anxiously hesitated about retreat.

But on the afternoon of the 9th the British were crossing the Marne, and Kluck must have realized that all was up. He realized that if he waited too long for the "something to happen," the British army with Maunoury would break him. By midday of the 9th his rearguard commander reported to him that the British would not be denied.

Even so, at the very last, he did a most skilful thing. Fiercely threatening Maunoury's left flank at Betz, he "pulled out" his own left from its perilous position before the British and Maunoury's Paris flank and centre, and secretly began the huge retreat of his hosts nearest to Paris under cover of very strong rearguards—and Bulow followed on the same late afternoon of the 9th.

As a matter of fact, the German Staff knew that that "something to happen" was in a sorry way by that afternoon of September the 9th—they knew also that the British and Vth French army under d'Esperey were crossing the Marne, inflicting heavy losses on the German rearguards—the German flank on Paris was breaking down—the German hosts at the other end of the line by Nancy were cowed by

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terrible defeat and slaughter, and the "something to happen" in the centre was not happening.

Let us turn to Kluck's anxious hours of that 9th of September as he hung on and, late in the afternoon, began to withdraw his hosts, and see what was the "something to happen." The "something to happen" was breaking down; but whether breaking down or not, the British and d'Esperey's Vth Army were crossing the Marne, and there was no time to be lost.

Now, as a matter of fact, whatever hopes the German Staff had in sending Kluck to pierce between Paris and the French Vth Army, it was not in Kluck's action that their chief hope and onslaught lay. It was not near Paris, but at the French centre that the German Staff made its chief bid for victory. For, even if Kluck were held up, as long as he could hang on, if the German pierced the French centre, the Vth French Army under d'Esperey with the British and Maunoury's armies would be isolated near Paris.

It was at Fère Champenoise that the Germans were striking for the decision—Kluck's stroke had but been in support. And it was at Fère Champenoise that they made their most violent and ferocious onslaught. They were utterly tricked by Joffre's trap for their right wing. They neither foresaw it nor provided against it. Kluck's skill alone saved that wing from sheer annihilation. They looked upon the French line as so thinned that they were sure to pierce—roll back the western wing, roll back the eastern wing, and annihilate the French armies in detail. Kluck knew of that intention—knew that if it succeeded even as he stood at bay, with the British and d'Esperey placing him in dire peril, he must

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hang on at all hazards. To Hausen's IIIrd army (Saxon) had been given the task of piercing the French centre; and they fought with the utmost desperation to bring it about. Here the Prussian Guards were again to suffer defeat. Remember that von Hausen was sent at the business in the utmost confidence of the French weakness there.

Hausen began his great thrust on the 7th, the day after Maunoury's army appeared and Kluck turned to meet it on the Ourcq. He struck hard at Foch's left by the Marshes of St. Gond to conceal his massing on Foch's right between Foch and Langle de Cary.

Surprised at the French strength on the Paris flank, but relying on Kluck at any rate to hold it, the Staff sent the two central armies under Hausen (IIIrd) and Württemberg (IVth) at Foch (VIIth) and Langle de Cary (IVth) with greater confidence that the French were even still weaker in their centre by reason of their very strength on their left by Paris.

Hausen struck Foch (VIIth army) on the 7th on its left by the marshes with the utmost vigour, as did Württemberg in his assault on Langle de Cary all along the line. *At 10 o'clock that night the German Staff issued their order to the Army at Vitry le François to rouse the soldiers' enthusiasm.* "The object of our long and arduous marches has been achieved. The French troops have been compelled to accept battle after being continually pushed back. The great decision is at hand. To-morrow the whole strength of the German Army is to be engaged along the whole line from Paris to Verdun. To save the welfare and honour of Germany I expect every officer and man to do his duty unswervingly and to the last

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breath. *Everything depends on the result of to-morrow.*"

This address was issued after Kluck fell back to check Maunoury at the Ourcq, and as Hausen struck at the centre. It clearly could not apply to Kluck on the 8th, the great "to-morrow"!

Now on the 6th, the Sunday that Joffre's famous order of the day reached the French armies, Foch with his small VIIth army, and Langle de Cary (IVth army) had halted, but did not advance—they entrenched.

Joffre was waiting for Maunoury to close the trap behind the Germans. But, as we have seen, Kluck had awakened as he was rushing into the trap, and with consummate address evaded the jaws of that trap; and later Bulow, nearly trapped by d'Esperey, had managed to scramble out of it too.

Hausen's fierce attack of the 7th to pierce the French centre between Foch and Langle de Cary (IVth army), the Prussian Guards beside him, with heavy pressure on Foch's left near the Marshes of St. Gond, changed *on the 8th* to very heavy pressure on Foch's right, his real objective between Foch and Langle de Cary. (See Sketch on p. 153.)

Now note—it was on the 8th, whilst hitting hard at Foch's left by the Marshes of St. Gond still, that Hausen was massing his strength to pierce between Foch's right and the left of Langle de Cary with overwhelming numbers—the "to-morrow" of the Kaiser's order of the day.

Foch, under all this pressure and furious onslaught, whilst fighting very stiffly, had swung back both his right and left, his right near Langle de Cary

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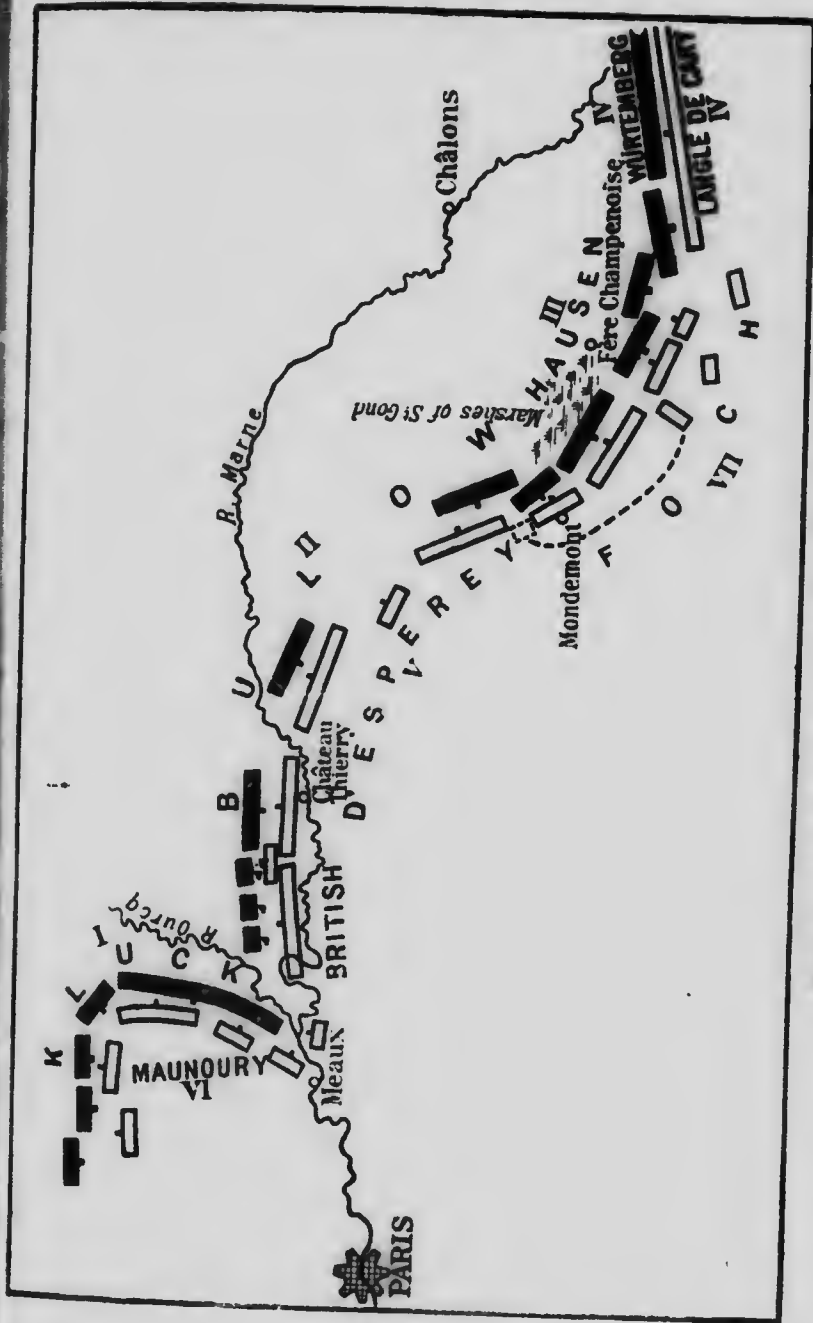
particularly. On the left, in spite of the terrible onslaughts of the German masses, Grossetti's 42nd Division and Humbert's Moroccan Division held. To Humbert's battered division at Mondemont, Foch sent as reinforcement the 77th regiment of hardy Vendéan men from the torn 9th corps at the centre, and this immortal regiment twice charged the Mondemont château fiercely held by the Germans, and twice were beaten back.

Nevertheless, with consummate daring, Foch, during the night of the 8th September, slipped the battle-torn 42nd division from his left into reserve on his right, and concentrated to launch his blow.

Mondemont château, the key to the position, commanding two of the three roads across the wide Marshes of St. Gond, was carried by the heroic remnants of the 77th regiment under the gallant Colonel Lestoquoi at his third onslaught after he had received orders that he was to desist from the terrible effort—the Germans fiercely fighting the defence to the last man. Humbert's Moroccan Division stood the appalling onset of the Prussian Guards, and routed it.

On the 9th, Foch was roughly in the position sketched (*see next page*).

Now whatever hopes of victory may still have remained in the minds of the German Staff on that Wednesday morning, the 9th of September—whatever hope of retrieving his defeat Kluck may even still have nourished on that morning as the victorious British and d'Esperey came swinging up, flushed with success on his and Bulow's armies—whatever belief, if he still had any real belief, Hausen may still have entertained in his capacity to pierce Foch on that morning—(and his stubborn attack on Foch was



SKETCH SHOWING FOCH'S COUNTER-ATTACK  
 Delivered about 4 o'clock in the afternoon of Wednesday, 9th September, 1914



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even then becoming a pretty forlorn hope with the German design smashed at each flank on the long swing from Paris to Nancy)—by the afternoon he must have known that the German dream was ended. That sublime comradeship of Joffre's great commanders, a "band of brothers" such as Nelson relied on as the kernel of all victory, had ennobled every battle of the war—in none did it shine more conspicuously and, by over-riding every other tactic and army order, thereby bring disaster to its enemies with more deadly certainty than in the battle of the Marne. For, just as Sir John French, flinging aside all confusion of design from the ever-changing circumstances before him, had leaped to the aid of Maunoury's hard-pressed battle-array and thereby broke Kluck; just as d'Amade and d'Esperey had aforetime aided Sir John French in the Great Retreat, so the victorious d'Esperey, charging forward on Bulow's retreat, had eyes for Foch's hard-driven burden and had sent back his victorious aid to Foch's left. So now Langle de Cary on Foch's right, on the morning of the 9th as unselfishly weakened his own stout ranks to fling aid to Foch's hard-pressed right, and with gallantry that carried all before it struck the flanking corps of Hausen's strongly thrusting Saxon army and hammered the Saxon extreme left to a standstill.

Whatever hopes, then, the morning of the 9th may have held for the German Staff, or for Kluck on the Paris flank, or for Hausen at the centre, of "something to happen" at the centre, it must have been abundantly clear to them all by noon that that "something" was impossible. To Hausen most of all. The victorious British and d'Esperey were pouring over the Marne, and were in touch at Château Thierry—

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d'Esperey's right, flushed with victory, was therefore dangerously near Hausen's right rear, close on a day's march behind him. Although Hausen gave the dogged order for his armies to continue their thrust and pierce Foch, he must have given that order with an uneasy mind. Such, at any rate, was the state of affairs when, at 4 o'clock on the afternoon of the 9th of September, Foch, having discovered the gap between the Prussians and Saxons, flung the 42nd Division into it, and launched his attack across Hausen's flank. And, in the blood-red sunset of the 9th, Grossetti, "the Bull of the Yser," fell upon the Saxons and scattered them like sheep. The state of panic in the Saxon armies that day is revealed by the fact that a German headquarters, carousing in an hotel away back at Châlons on the evening of this 9th, were startled by a cry that the French were upon them—the hotel was empty as a bladder in a quarter of an hour, and the headquarters flying north. Hausen already must have realized that even if he held Foch, Joffre had only to turn d'Esperey's victorious armies eastward in order to bring about the disaster to Hausen and Würtemberg's armies that Kluck and Bulow's men had only escaped as by a miracle. That night Hausen gave way and started his hurried retreat. But his dogged and determined thrust nearly led to his annihilation. When the dawn of the 10th broke, Foch struck again, and his cross attack went through Hausen's rear columns like a knife. Foch, smashing the rearguards like chaff, turned northwards in pursuit; Hausen falling back in confusion reached the Marne, a broken man.

Würtemberg's IVth army gave way before

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Langle de Cary and made for Châlons, Suippes and Rheims.

On the night of the 9th, then, the German retreat was general all along the line. Hausen at the centre and Kluck and Bulow at the Paris wing, made their threat of offensive during the afternoon until night should fall to cover their defeat. When the morning of the 10th dawned away near Paris, and Maunoury prepared to launch his attack upon Kluck, which would have converted the victory of the French left wing into a disaster for the German right, he found that Kluck and Bulow were flown.

It only remains to add that the German host of the Vth army under the Crown Prince from the beginning had as its first and essential object the taking or isolating of Verdun in order to get the shorter lines of communication into France direct from Germany—that it never ceased from trying to do so—and that Eichorn, its Chief of Staff, was an able commander. Sarrail (IIIrd French army), though vastly outnumbered, hammered it again and again. The Germans, desperately bent on taking Verdun, fought unceasingly to do so from the very first. The Crown Prince's armies acted throughout with a wanton brutality and in an orgy of wreckage and ruin. His acts were in keeping with those of the Crown Prince of Bavaria, who took advantage of a truce after the slaughter at Nancy on the 8th to place guns for the throwing of shells into Nancy—they threw them at midnight of the 9th; at dawn the French guns obliterated them. Sarrail was fighting back to back with the heroic defenders of Nancy. On the glorious 9th of September the Crown Prince, dismayed by the

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news from Paris and Fère Champenoise, flung his troops at the gallant defenders of the fort of Troyon which he had been attacking in the hope of breaking through and cutting off Verdun from the South. This desperate attack of overwhelming numbers and artillery was smashed by the arrival of reinforcements from Toul at daybreak the next morning (the 10th). Sarrail was soon to push the Crown Prince northwards.

A futile controversy has been set up as to whether Maunoury or Foch brought about the great defeat of the Germans at the Marne. What brought about the defeat of the Germans at the Marne was the masterly strategy of Joffre and his commanders and the superior fighting quality of the French and British troops all along the line.

From the beginning of the war the German strategic had been inferior—had failed in everything it tried to achieve—mastered by Joffre. The one fine strategic achievement of the whole German army in the west to their defeat of the Marne was the consummate act of Kluck in the hour of defeat. By swiftly overthrowing the bad strategic of the German Staff, and whipping back and assailing the VIth French Army, he could not hope to save the Germans from defeat, but he did save them from annihilation. It was a masterly act—the sole act by any German commander that countered Joffre's eternal mastery over them in war. But it was only a magnificent forlorn hope, Joffre's strategy had triumphed the day that Kluck came in sight of Paris. Kluck's swift attack on Maunoury was only to prove of what superb stuff the French VIth Army was made—just as the

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VIIth French Army won undying fame through Foch's magnificent skill and the valour of his troops against the appalling central thrust—the fighting of these two armies was an example of gallantry that will live in the memory of generations to come; it will thrill the hearts of French generations as yet unborn. And the old soldiers will tell by French firesides how by some poetic justice on the knees of the Great Unseen, it was granted by the grim irony of circumstance that it should be the British army that was to give the knock-out blow to Kluck's hosts—that as Maunoury held with prodigious gallantry the desperate onslaught of Kluck's and Bulow's hosts with their vast weight of artillery, the British Commander, by a cool judgment amidst conflicting orders and events, let all else go and, with a comrade's inspiration and incentive, swung up the eager British armies to be the Frenchman's right hand and to be the maker of his conquering offensive and the conquering offensive of d'Esperey's genius for war. It was Joffre's genius that prevented his centre from becoming too thin as it sagged for the envelopment of the Germans in France—it was his genius that set the adamant will and genius of Foch thereat to bear the brunt of the main German thrust of which Joffre took advantage and from which he hoped to bring about the German Sedan. It was d'Esperey's fine comradeship on Foch's left, and Langle de Cary's fine comradeship on his right, that smashed the Saxon and allowed Foch to break the Prussian Guards. Joffre closed his trap by Paris too soon; but it was not the armies of Hausen at the centre which saved the German from annihilation—it was Kluck, who kept the jaws of the trap open in his great act of forlorn hope. And it

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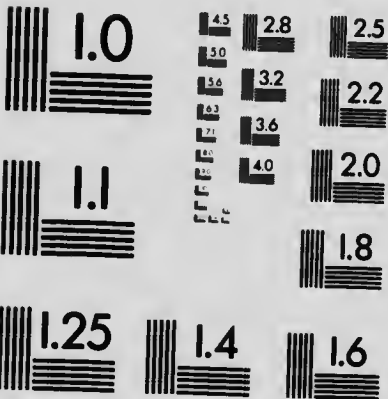
was the German defeat at Nancy, quite as much as Kluck's defeat and the defeat of the German centre, which brought disaster to the German blunder of the long-vaunted "outmarch to Paris."

Joffre won the victory of the Battle of the Marne, one of the decisive victories of the world in that a decisive victory strategically changes the history of the world for better or for worse. But he did not reap the full tactical benefits of his masterly strategy—the annihilation of the German armies in France. Had Joffre ordered Maunoury to strike a few hours later, he and the British and d'Esperey would have destroyed Kluck and Bulow; and their troops, flushed with victory, would have swung towards the fortified zone of France and cut off Hausen's and Würtemberg's flying soldiery from all retreat. But he won one of the greatest victories in all time against enormous odds. He did it by sheer superiority of strategy and the superior strategy of his great commanders, French and British. With that bastion of British valour under Sir John French to hold his left flank, Joffre's Frenchmen won a victory that saved the wide world. He utterly smashed the German tradition of Invincibility as Drake smashed the invincibility of the Spanish Armada. It showed the German War-Machine to be inferior to the French and British War-Machine—the German strategy to be inferior—the German tactic to be inferior—the German soldier to be inferior. So the world, half unbelieving, was to see the host of the vaunted German Might being hunted for its life along its whole battle-array by lesser numbers.



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The German armies were defeated on the Marne and have been in defeat ever since.

As the German commanders rode back towards the Rhine from the Great Defeat, they knew full well that the dream of Prussian World Dominion had spluttered out, and that the Invincibility of the German arms and the star of Prussia had sunk in the waters of the Marne.

It was victory; and there is only one way of undoing the heroic acts of the French and British troops who won it. It *can* be undone by the ignorance and cowardice of the Man-in-the-Street, if he permit a Peace that leaves the German his Pan-German map—if he shrink from fulfilling his debt of endurance to the valour of those who have died for him and been maimed and have suffered for him in the hideous adventure that is called war.

*If the Man-in-the-Street will turn his eye from the guessing competitions of the Press, and will judge facts in a dispassionate calm spirit, he will find what is here set down in the official despatches for him who can read. For him who cannot read, the revelations of the most secret documents but increase futility and are as the beating of alarm drums in an emptiness.*

## CHAPTER XII

### THE SIEGE OF GERMANY

LET us free the War after the great German Defeat on the Marne from small details or a narrow vision, and look at it in a large way, as a whole, not day by day.

As the Germans hurriedly retreated, Joffre's armies, having failed to surround and annihilate them, pursued them on parallel lines—that is to say, pushed them forward all along the line as a broom pushes. Joffre soon knew by the stubbornness of their sudden stand on the line of the Aisne that he had not to deal with a rearguard action, but that the whole defeated German armies had fallen back on a strongly entrenched position. Joffre forthwith swung armies round to their sea-flank in order to get round and behind them and envelop them.

But it was obvious that if the Germans intended to stand on the Aisne, their only hope of doing so was to prevent the French and British getting round their flank; and Joffre's enveloping movement was at once countered by the Germans. We find the Bavarians (VIth army) and Würtemberg's (IVth army) swinging seawards to stave off Castelnau's new French army, rushed round by Joffre from the armies of the fortified frontier. There is no doubt that the Germans,



Rough sketch-map showing the intention of the German strategy after their disastrous defeat on the Marne—the defeated German armies falling back on a strongly fortified line which they intended to make their new frontier; but being defeated by Joffre outflanking them near Compiègne they had to surrender their line to the mouth of the Somme, and tried to pivot on Arras to run out their line to Boulogne, but were again defeated in the four great battles of Arras, La Bassée, the Yser, and Ypres—Sir John French by his great victory of Ypres closing the siege on Germany in the West.

## The Siege of Germany 163

puzzled at the Marne by the numbering of Foch's army as IXth, and having come near to annihilation by the appearance of the VIth French army under Maunoury, went with caution—after all, they had suffered sore defeat and were a very different corps in moral from what they had been when they started on the "outmarch to Paris." Otherwise they might have turned the tables by outflanking Joffre's outflanking. As it was they made a feverish effort to run out the German line to the sea-coast. But one must never forget that the German has a'ways had a terror of Britain from the sea; and he had to go cautiously. The Navy by mere threat was doing its silent work.

Joffre, though he still tried to outflank and envelop the German, was doggedly set on at any rate keeping them from the seaports and thereby cutting the shorter British lines of communication both for the British armies and the French supplies from Britain.

This hard fighting to turn the German sea-flank and in any case to keep it from the sea, was frantically resisted by the Germans who, though they saw the siege closing in on them, had not the initiative to prevent it, but sought to keep that siege as far forward in France as they could, *so that they might secure their future frontier in France.*

This ideal new frontier along the Aisne had been powerfully fortified during the outmarch on Paris as the line they would have to hold, even if France were conquered, when the German hosts should be swiftly withdrawn to crush Russia.

This fighting we may call the Struggle against being besieged except behind their planned frontier of the future.

We shall see, *strategically*, why.



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## I

*The Frantic Effort of the Defeated German hosts to stall off the Siege in the West until they had secured their new position to the French Coast.*

It is well to grasp more fully this frantic struggle of the German to prevent being besieged in the West. The more so as nothing proves so conclusively the superiority of the French and British troops over the German as this great fight which was to end in Sir John French's brilliant victory of the Battle of Ypres which sounded the knell of the German dream in the West, and buried it.

There is one extraordinary fallacy rampant in the minds of the Public and the Press which perhaps is not to be wondered at when we realize the hopeless tangle due to lack of all knowledge of strategy in their thinking or training. But it is most important that this fallacy should be scotched. There is a widespread idea, which the German naturally took every opportunity to encourage, that after their heavy defeat on the Marne the Germans fell back on a good position in order to turn and outflank again and push back the French and British to a disaster that had "squibbed" on the Marne but could still be "brought off." This is childish. The German Staff may blunder, but they are not idiots, and at least they are soldiers.

What the War-Machine at its supreme strength and in the height of its power, utterly failed to do, the broken machine could never do. The Germans were defeated on the Marne and have been a defeated people ever since.

## The Siege of Germany 165

But what they *could* try to do was to secure an ideal line across the north of France to the sea, which would give them the Northern seaports, the industrial regions of France and Belgium, and close contact with Britain. *They had besides a particular reason for this: it was their ideal future frontier with France.*

It was a perilously long line; but they hoped by acting on the defensive to hold it, *if they could, until their second plan of campaign in the East could be accomplished.* We are coming to that. But this ideal line across northern France, whilst it would have great advantages, would require hard winning—and to win it required above all things a resolute and frantic effort *to counter all turning movements of the Allies.* The Germans, however, had the advantage of huge artillery, firing 20 shells to 1 of the British. And they had the greater part of that line already prepared as a most powerful fortress, which would enable the German to free large masses towards the sea in spite of the Russian terror that now loomed on his East. For, remember, in common justice to the German, that the collapse of his Western strategy brought the Russian terror to his very back-door. He dare not now risk any great aggression in the West, even if he had been able.

This counter-flanking of the German towards the sea would naturally muddle the Press and the Public, unable to realize what Germany was driving at, in fact still further hazed by the inability to grasp the Eastern intention of Germany's War, except in a vague way to think that there was going to be some sort of a big struggle out there; in consequence they would at once jump to the conclusion that the German

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was trying to restart the "outmarch on Paris." To accuse the Prussian Staff of such a stupidity is unfair to their intelligence.

What the Public and the Press missed was due to their inability to put themselves into the German state of affairs. In what follows it should be remembered that by the 25th of September when the battles for the sea-flank from Noyon to the Somme may be said to have begun—the Aisne having practically settled down to trench-warfare by about the 18th—in spite of the frantic joy in Berlin over Tannenberg on August 28th, a mad excitement which by its very frenzy showed Germany's anxious state, *affairs in the East were most terribly black for Germany*. The Serbians had smashed the Austrians at Shabatz on August 20th and driven the Austrians out of Serbia; the Austrian invasion of Russia had collapsed in utter disaster; the Austrian had been driven out of Russia; on the 4th of September Ewarts had crushed the Austrians in the slaughter of Lemberg; and on the 12th Brousiloff had smashed the Austrian at Ravaruska; by the 21st September Yaroslav, Tarnopol, and Grudek had fallen to Roussky with 100,000 prisoners and 400 guns. Dankl's and Auffenberg's armies were blotted out. The joybells of Berlin were ringing only in the Wolff Bureau. The German hero, Hindenburg, after his Tannenberg victory, pushing into Russia, had been flung back, and on the 27th, badly defeated, was in full retreat. The prospect of a renewed German "outmarch to Paris" was the dream of dullards. Once the Man-in-the-Street gets it into his head that the Germans were now trying to restart the "rush to Paris" he is lost. It would have been futile—the time for it was gone—its value was

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gone. *The German was playing a far more deadly game.*

The best way to show the Man-in-the-Street the strategy after the Marne is to point out to him how, first of all, the German fought like a wild-cat to avoid being besieged—then how he failed—then how the siege closed upon him. The whole thing then becomes clear. But it must be grasped that when the Germans were fighting desperately against siege in the West, they were suffering appalling defeats on every hand from Russia, from the Baltic in the north down to the uttermost south.

That the German fell back on a strongly entrenched line in France meant two significant things; first and most immediate—admitted defeat and the compulsion of taking the defensive. What it meant in the Press I have never quite been able to discover. Mr. Lloyd George was taken to task for his speech at Dundee in the summer of 1917 by a leading and quite honest and sincere journal for a humorous description of the Kaiser now issuing one of his fatuous Orders of the Day to his invincible warriors to fall back in triumph from one impregnable stronghold of defeat underground to another in rear. As a matter of fact, it wittily put the whole thing in a nutshell, and the strategic student felt a thrill of comfort that at least one Minister of State realised the true situation and knew what he was talking about—War.

The second significant fact of the Germans' falling back on a strongly entrenched line has probably not received the value of its full meaning. Its very fact—the prodigious fortified strength to which it was raised during the rush on Paris—proves that sig-



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nificance. This was the splendid line that creates a magnificent bulwark as a strategic frontier for Germany against France—it was the line intended by Germany as her new frontier. To Germany in defeat it was now a long and dangerous line, this line across Northern France and Belgium, and strategically for victory in battle it was not the best line. Why therefore was it held? For political purposes, to which her battle-strategy was now subordinated, still further drawing Germany to her doom. The simple fact was that invasion would crack the German public opinion like an egg-shell; and, nearly as bad, it might wreck the Second Plan of Campaign, the making of the Pan-German Map, for the perfecting of which it was absolutely essential that Bulgaria and Turkey should not become alarmed or the Pan-German Map was gone. For, be it remembered, neither Bulgaria nor Turkey is a natural ally of Germany. And, if the German fell back on the shorter and more soundly strategic line of the Meuse, her definitely planned French frontier was gone—the whole industrial region of Northern France and Belgium and the French seaports with it.

Moltke gave place to Falkenhayn.

The frantic and feverish energy, and the huge reinforcements poured into France, were aimed wholly at making this line a rigid line of defence—or the Second Plan of Campaign would go too.

The choice of the long line to the sea, instead of the short and very strong line of the Meuse, by the Germans, at once carried with it the urgent need to attack Antwerp from which the Belgian army threatened the line in rear. The Germans had never lost sight of the danger of the mobile Belgian army on

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their flank and rear during their rush into France, and had wisely kept very considerable watch upon it—this care was coupled with a dread of British reinforcements from the sea, a nightmare always to Berlin. The Belgians cheered by the news from the Marne, sallied forth to cut the German communications on the 8th September, but were swiftly assailed by the watching German army corps, which suddenly on the evening of the 12th of September turned both their flanks; but the Belgians dexterously slipped out of the trap during the night and fell back on Antwerp.

But the hands of Germany were now getting pretty full of disasters everywhere; and the German dawdled before Antwerp, hesitant.

The French and British, missing the envelopment and destruction of the German armies on the Marne, pursuing them to the Aisne in a parallel pursuit, sending them to earth in a strongly fortified position from the Verdun pivot to the Eagle Forest, struck them hard, and Maunoury and the British and d'Esperey took several strong positions from them that they had hoped to keep. But the main line of the Germans held fast.

Joffre did not intend to waste life on a parallel fight against superiority of artillery and strong fortifications and, as we have seen, leaving the fortified zone with enough troops to hold them safely on the strict defensive, he whipped round a newly created army under Ca. 'elnau drawn from Castelnau's and Sarrail's and Dubail's men, which he numbered VIIth, towards his western flank to try to turn the German line. The German swiftly countered by sending the Bavarian army (VIth), backed by Württemberg's army (IVth), to prolong the German flank

beyond the fortified quarries of the Eagle Forest, and to guard against attack from the sea. And it was in the steady settling down to keep the German pinned along the front whilst Joffre outflanked him, that Sir John French's men, particularly Haig's corps, took such terrible toll of the massed German counter-attacks with their steady rifle-fire—Sir John French, adjusting his tactics to the French intention, gave the Germans no openings.

Joffre soon saw by the fierce efforts of the Germans to pivot on Eagle Forest and swing out towards the sea-coast that they had received vast reinforcement and were in their turn trying to outflank his outflanking in the West as Castelnau came swinging up to that flank, covered by French corps coming in from seawards. Maunoury had bent his long left flank upwards at a sharp angle at Compiègne, northwards towards Lassigny; and on the 20th of September Castelnau swung in and began to carry on this northwards line still farther north, and pushing rapidly northwards struck heavy German reinforcements on the 25th; for three days Castelnau fought hard to carry his line to the Somme, reaching up to Albert—the 29th of September saw the fierce battle for Albert begin. On the 30th of September a new army under Maud'huy swung in on the Ancre on Castelnau's left and fought its way farther northwards, carrying the French line still more north to Arras and Lens.

Meanwhile, before we follow farther the flanking movement of Joffre northwards, we had better give a glance at what had been taking place along the pinned line from Verdun to Eagle Forest.

The masterly move of Castelnau to the West left

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Verdun very weakly held; and the German, swiftly realizing this, poured reinforcements up towards Verdun to replace the Bavarians, seeing a hope of pushing back the French parallel fight by piercing at St. Mihiel and getting behind them. So in the Woevre, which lies between the Grand Couronné and Verdun, they made a strong effort to isolate Verdun and to get through the French zone. But the Germans had memories of sore heads before the Grand Couronné, and Stranz began his attack on the 20th of September—the day that Castelnau away on the left was swinging up dangerously to outflank by the sea—with a violent bombardment of the French advanced position. There happened to be no Frenchman in it! This extreme caution of Stranz's two army corps, made for a very slow advance on St. Mihiel, and his ponderous attacks on the forts on the 22nd and 23rd gave time to Dubail and Sarrail to send reinforcements to the two Territorial battalions of Frenchmen who alone held St. Mihiel, before Stranz realized the French weakness. Sarrail promptly hammered his flank, whilst Dubail routed him, driving him back to his lines, but leaving St. Mihiel in his hands.

Meantime a prodigious effort of the Germans all along the line, with great reinforcements, to get back the line they had desired and stop Joffre outflanking them, set in; but, after hard fighting, the French and British line remained much as it was—the Germans suffering a terrible blood-letting at Berry-au-Bac from Maud'huy, who now came to the front; and a bad mauling near Rheims at St. Hilaire le Grand where the Kaiser is said to have looked on at the slaughter of the Prussian Guards; and a reverse to the Crown Prince in trying to seize St. Menehould

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and so to complete the circle through St. Mihiel round Verdun.

Joffre, outflanking to try to join up with the Belgians at Antwerp and to shut the sea-coast at the same time to the Germans, employed the railways with astounding skill against the enormous German advantage of reinforcement on interior lines—for it is obvious to the Man-in-the-Street that if one be *inside* a circle one can reach every point in that circle with far greater ease than if one be outside that circle.

September the 28th, which saw Castelnau's left wing swinging up north to try to turn the German flank towards Peronne against huge odds, revealed to the Germans that Joffre was trying to join up with the Belgians from Antwerp to cut the German communications; and the landing of British troops in Belgium confirmed their suspicions.

Puzzled by the number IXth given to Foch's army at the Battle of the Marne—a number which was afterwards changed to VIIth to the confusion of the reader, and which we will avoid by using the name of the generals henceforth—the German was troubled and was now seeing new armies springing out of the earth. Had he only realised his own enormous strength it had been better for him. The French line north from Compiègne by the Eagle Forest now reached some 70 miles and touched close on the Belgian border. At any rate the German forthwith awoke, and launched his attack on Antwerp.

The Germans and the Belgians here both blundered. Had it been that powerful British armies were passing through the seaports of Belgium it would

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have been another affair; but they were not. Had the Belgian army now moved swiftly out of Antwerp and slipped down to the line of the Scheldt, there joining Joffre's left, the German would have been cut off from the sea and his flank dangerously threatened. It was to be a very different Belgian army that later got to the Yser, when the unstrategic decision to hold Antwerp had to be abandoned under pressure. But the German blundered as badly. There was nothing between Calais and Ostend to stop him; yet the landing of British troops for the unstrategic march to Antwerp, and the dread of the mythical armies, made him fear to make a rush on Calais, which was obviously his best strategic.

To understand how this Allied join up with Antwerp was baulked, we must follow each of the two ends of the Allied gap separately awhile. Let us take Antwerp first.

The Germans attacked Antwerp on the 28th of September with such crushing artillery effects, that the Belgians decided to keep the Belgian army mobile, and began to retreat on October 3rd towards the French left flank. Unfortunately, an English mission arrived in Antwerp on the 4th to prevent its evacuation. The troops under General Rawlinson, General Paris (British marines and Naval division), General Capper, and Admiral Ronarch (French marines), were not sufficient for such an enterprise as the relief of the doomed city. The Belgians, however, were persuaded to hang on dangerously for three precious days, and so, with Rawlinson's force, missed the great chance of securing the Scheldt. By the 6th, however, the Belgians realised the peril which the 2,000 British marines and 6,000 Naval division under Paris could

not hope to avert ; and they hurried on the evacuation. By the 9th most of them had slipped past the blundering Germans, who were intent on pressing the siege *on their own right*—however, the Germans awoke in time to strike at the rearguards of the escaping Belgians, and pushed the garrison and the British with them over into Holland, where 30,000 valuable troops were thus put out of the war. The “victory” of Antwerp sent Berlin into mad ecstasies, but was strategically a somewhat empty affair for Germany, as her troops entered it on the 10th of October—the Germans would have been better employed on the Belgian rearguards, and Antwerp would still have been theirs. However, as their reconnaissances struck Ronarch's French marines, and then Rawlinson, they feared a trap, and went over-warily, proceeding to an elaborate attack on what they thought to be the Allied position in Flanders, baffled by lack of knowledge of the real line of the Belgian retreat, in spite of the fact that Antwerp swarmed with their spies. This blunder of the Germans was a fortunate thing for the Allied flank ; and was largely due to the fine fight put up by Capper, Rawlinson, and Ronarch, in covering the Belgians' withdrawal. Capper's handling of the situation was a masterpiece.

Now let us get back to the French flank which was thrusting up north towards the Belgians. Foch was now, on the 8th October, in general control over the left from Compiègne to the Belgian frontier, coordinating the strategic of the mixed troops. The Crown Prince of Bavaria had slipped northwards to get the flank—Bulow dropping into his gaps and suffering severe defeat before Roye on the 3rd of October. At last the Bavarians seem to have decided

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to do what they had been wiser to have done before : determined to prevent the junction of the French and Belgians, the Germans concentrated their cavalry south of Lille to launch them at the seaports of Dunkirk and Calais, followed by infantry in motor 'buses. But instead of drawing down to them the German armies wasted on Antwerp, the Bavarian Crown Prince, having nervous apprehension of Maud'huy; did not dare to risk the advance of his armies on Calais, and the hesitation lost him his chance for ever. Conneau's French cavalry dashed north and spread west of Lille, which led to the cavalry fighting of October 6th to 10th, when a French corps, detrainig near Lille, deployed on the left flank of Maud'huy's army near Annequin, drove the German cavalry across the Lys at Aire, as the Belgian army, escaping from Antwerp, made for the Yser. But the Scheldt was now gone from the Allies.

This was soon followed by the skilful transference of the British troops from the Aisne to Flanders by Sir John French, who wished to be on the French left in order to have the best sea-communications for his troops and prevent his lines confusing the French lines. It added, incidentally, to the German perplexity as to British movements and strength from the sea. Sir John French deployed on Maud'huy's left; pivoting on Givenchy, he swung in his troops, as they arrived along the Lys river, from La Bassée under heavy fighting. Allenby's and Conneau's horsemen drove in the German cavalry north of the canal; and the British infantry carried one position after another and checked the Germans from flanking. The whole of this manœuvre of Sir John French's was most masterly. But his pivoting swing to cut the



German communications found itself against a wall of German masses, hurriedly sent thither to bar the Allied envelopment at all costs.

Deploying northwards, and hammering back the German aggression with incredibly few troops, Sir John French had begun on October 12 his great pivoting movement to cut the German communications as the Belgians, retreating from Antwerp, reached Ostend, Rawlinson falling back on Roulers towards him. First had come Smith-Dorrien's 2nd corps, pushing up the line north of the French from La Bassée to Aubers, fighting against desperate odds; Pulteney with the 3rd corps plunged in by Armentières; French cavalry filling the gap between the fierce fighting of the 2nd and 3rd corps. Allenby's cavalry, sweeping the German horse before him out of Northern France, carried on Pulteney's frail line to where Rawlinson's 4th corps, of the immortal 7th division of infantry and 3rd cavalry division, having covered the Belgian retreat, had come into the thin line by Ypres. Sir John French was now beginning to be convinced that all prospect of turning the German flank was gone, and that the danger lay the rather in the German outflanking him.

But the French Staff had by now realized that the delay in Antwerp had spoilt Joffre's plan of seizing the Scheldt in hopes of cutting the German communications; so they had to let Lille, the Manchester of France go, deciding instead on the La Bassée canal, the Lys river, and the Yser canal. On the other hand, the Germans did not take advantage of their prodigious strength and so had let the Allies reach Ypres, Roulers and Furnes; they thereby let slip their chance of cutting off the Belgian retreat

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and smashing the British and French corps that were covering it. They blundered and lost, and in losing they lost Calais and the high ground from Arras to Cape Gris Nez which was now their whole ambition as the new German frontier.

Foch outgeneralled them. Sir John French outgeneralled them. The fine achievement of Rawlinson and Capper and the French Marines outwitted them. They were about to lose the French seaports for ever. But they bent all their desperate might to recover their blunder in one last stupendous effort to hack their way through to the coast.

Sir John French's pivoting movements to cut the German communications, balked as they were by the huge German armies rushed up against him, first having to drop the Scheldt, then Lille, then Menin, and so eventually to give up all chance of cutting the German communications, at least compelled the German line to reach the sea in Belgium instead of in Northern France by Boulogne. The Cavalry, French and British, had covered Smith-Dorrien's flank with rare skill and valour. Pulteney's advance on the flank had completed the German perplexity. Khaki troops seemed to spring out of the ground. The daring bluff of Allenby's piteously meagre line befooled them. Pulteney seized Bailleul and drove the Germans over the Lys. By the 16th of October, Sir John French's army was master of the left bank of the Lys.

Now, the Germans were pouring in such heavy reinforcements towards the sea flank in their efforts to retrieve their blunder in losing Calais, that when they found themselves at the sea in Belgium instead of in France, both the Crown Prince of Bavaria and

the Duke of Württemberg put out all their strength to try to smash in the steadily concentrated but perilously weak Allied flank.

The British seemed destined always to be in the thick of things.

Joffre knew that the Germans were massed in such force in Belgium as to be capable still of the offensive where they were not pinned down. He had not yet pinned them along his whole line. He therefore concentrated in Flanders. The Belgians were on the sea flank and had suffered terribly. He set to work to join up with the entrenching Belgians on the Yser with all his might. The Scheldt and the turning of the German flank must go. By the 20th of October the Belgians were entrenched behind the Yser; the Germans were moving forward from north and east to attack them. This was a most dangerous period during which the Germans might have pressed back the Allied wing with ease and seized the seaports—the gap between the Belgians at Dixmude and the Allied flank at Menin being very wide and very weak, whilst the Germans were moving against the small Belgian front. The French marines fought with heroic courage. On the 21st the Allies rallied and kept the Germans at bay with severe losses until the 24th, when Dubois came up with his corps, as the French filled in the gap on the Belgian flank, and, swinging forward, the French and British blocked the gap on the 27th, got a footing on the left bank of the Yser under fearful losses, when the Belgians on the 29th, calculating the time with consummate ability, opened the dykes and flooded the country in front of them, playing havoc with the Germans on the 30th of October. The Kaiser had come to watch victory through his field

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glasses, instead he saw his troops drowning. Baulked of their Belgian prey by the opening of the dykes, the German masses were now however turned loose against the dangerously weak line of the British and French in the Ypres salient.

Now to be quite clear, let us realize that the Germans were trying to break through to the sea coast at four places—the Yser, Ypres, La Bassée, and Arras.

Thus, the German armies in the north, whilst they struggled for the French seaports by way of the coast road from the Yser, were at the same time also striking with overwhelming numbers and metal to break through to the seaports by terrible thrusts (1) down the line as far as Arras; (2) they struck at La Bassée from their Lille centre; (3) farther south at Arras; and (4), as we shall see, with terrific onslaught at Ypres. The Bavarian thrust from La Bassée was most ferociously pushed; but, reinforced by the Indians, though pressed back, the British held. Bulow's thrust against Maud'huy at Arras was a most severe effort, which would have brought disaster to the whole left flank, but Maud'huy broke it.

But Foch's strategic genius in carrying out Joffre's design in pinning the German along the whole line to the sea was yet to be put to the severest test. The German, defeated in the three disasters of the Yser, La Bassée, and Arras, struggled with all their concentrated might to prevent the siege closing upon them. The huge German masses were thereupon concentrated and now pressed upon the Ypres salient in what was to become the terrific battle known as the First Battle of Ypres. The German made one

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last frantic bid to break through and get to the French seaports before the siege closed for ever, whilst they were in vast strength and the French and British perilously weak—fortunately the Germans did not know how weak!

But the German Commanders had lost the Invincibility Moral on the Marne, and had learnt caution—they had overlearned it.

The genius of Sir John French in battle was now to shine forth in the great victory over Germany that was to put the crown on the victory at the Marne. By his dogged tenacity, his coolness, and his swift judgment, Sir John French led his heroic troops to immortal fame.

Now the Allied troops about Ypres were perilously few. Whilst the four terrible thrusts by the Germans were being pressed, not the least violent had been that on Ypres. The daring with which Ypres was held by its devoted thin line of khaki almost staggers belief. And as the pitifully thin line became hourly thinner in the hurriedly thrown up earth shelters, the assaulting German masses were being heavily reinforced with men and artillery. The British field-guns at this time were not served with high-explosive shell—their supply of shrapnel was now so low that Sir John French with serene judgment rationed the guns! The heavy German guns were levelling what apologies for entrenchments there were. When, on the 19th of October, Haig's First Corps came up from the Aisne, Sir John French had had to make one of the supreme decisions of the world's history—the wellnigh desperate British line called along all its length for reinforcement, but Sir John French saw that, if he sent Haig to reinforce,

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the German would break through to the sea by the gap between him and the weak French line that fought the ground to the Belgians. With cool daring and swift judgment that take the breath away, he sent Haig's battered corps to fill the gap and saved the war. On the 31st of October—as the dykes were flooding out the German hopes by the sea coast, and reinforcements were pouring into the gap west of Ypres—there was on the other side of Ypres a gap between the British at Ypres and the British to the south on the Lys, covering Armentières—a gap sparsely filled by French and British cavalry alone to guard Ypres from the south. East of Ypres were the British corps under Haig and the 7th division. A huge German thrust on the south, during the 27th, 28th and 29th had driven the troops of this gap back on to St. Eloi with heavy loss. But Sir John French, swiftly sending reinforcements out of his harassed line from north and south—he had no reserves—followed by the French under Balfourier on the critical day, the 31st, and the three following days of bitter fighting, the British not only held on, but between 2 and 3 o'clock on that stormy Saturday afternoon of the 31st of October, amidst the fury of the terrible German onslaught that looked like overwhelming all before it, when Haig's line was breaking and Gheluvelt had fallen, the order was given for the shattered British to attack, and that immortal act, led by the 2nd Worcesters to retake Gheluvelt at the bidding of FitzClarence, fought the Germans to a standstill and drove them back on the defensive.

The rare judgment that dared to reduce the ration of his guns at a time when the prodigious German artillery was smashing the scant earth-cover, such

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as it was, of his meagre battle array, and the heavy German metal and the massed German infantry were being hurled upon that pathetically thin line, where in long lengths in places one man had to hold seventeen yards; the iron nerve and victorious address that sent Haig's corps to prolong the line and fill the gap instead of reinforcing the hard-pressed and terribly battered battle-front; the intrepid skill that ordered the shattered and pressed-back line before Ypres to *attack* in the midst of the very recoil on the critical 31st of October, that attack that brought as by a miracle the German masses to a standstill; above all, the steadfast will that refused to consider defeat against such overwhelming odds of men and artillery at a time, be it added, when his own artillery was without high-explosive shell and each gun was being meagrely rationed at that; the confident belief in the supremacy of the British fighting man over the wide world which serenely relied on the British rifle-fire and bayonet to overthrow the bitter onslaught of the vastly outnumbering German hosts—for, be it remembered that in the British line even machine-guns were rare, whereas they swarmed in the German masses—the calm calculation and astounding dispositions that brought disaster to the vaunted Germans as though they were a host of savages in a frontier scuffle—for, again be it remembered that the British had no reserves, and reinforcement to a dangerous point where all was dangerously thin had to be made by withdrawing shattered troops from assailed positions—this conquering leadership of Sir John French over such heroic troops as the old standing Army, not only raises Ypres into a position among the supreme heroisms of man, but brought about one of

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the greatest and most decisive victories in history. Scant wonder the German commanders concluded that the British had army corps where they had but brigades, and brigades were little more than a battalion strong! So the old Regular Army fought its last and perhaps its grandest victory.

The battle of Ypres was not yet won, nor the heaviest German assault yet delivered; but the moment of most deadly peril for British arms and for the whole war for civilization was overcome by the heroic remnants of the old Regular Army on that Hallowe'en of 1914. On the 2nd of November, the German Staff started a feint attack north of Ypres on the Yperlee canal, with orders to develop it if it gained the day. But Foch went steadily on with his concentration south of Ypres, disregarding the fierce onslaught of the northern feint. As this feint reached its height on the 10th of November, it found itself unable to debouch from Dixmude owing to a new French division—the famous colonial division under Humbert which had helped to smash the Prussian Guards at Fère Champenoise—and the German Staff, thinking that they had deceived Foch into weakening the south of Ypres, massed against the much harassed corps under Haig and the 9th French corps four whole German army corps, with a division of the Prussian Guards. But Foch and Sir John French were massing south of Ypres behind Haig's right, and concentrating a vast battery of 300 guns. On the 11th of November, the Germans launched their "surprise" attack, the largest and fiercest since Nancy, with the Kaiser looking on as the dense masses of the Guards, setting forth with the goose-step, hurled themselves on the eastern defences of Ypres. They met rifle-fire and steel; and



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as they reeled from it they were counter-attacked and mown down. On the 12th the torn German hosts were brought to a standstill with the bayonet. It was the day that the British Territorials proved themselves amongst the finest soldiers in the world. French and British fought side by side. The 17th of November saw the last violence of Ypres. In a tempest of wind and a blizzard of snow and hail ended the First Battle of Ypres as though the very elements forbade further slaughter—one of the most decisive victories of the war. The German dead encumbered the ground. The German defeat cost them a terrible blood-letting. They failed; and their failure completed their defeat in the West.

Foch had outgeneralled Hausen at Fère Champenoise. Bavaria and Würtemberg found him their master in the west. Sir John French completely outgeneralled the Germans at every hand against appalling odds. The German blundered and botched his strategic and his tactic. From Lille to the sea lay a million German troops. Against that part of the million that assailed them lay 100,000 British who by reinforcement rose to 150,000 men. Round Ypres were in all but three divisions and some cavalry against five whole German army corps. At one time, one British division held eight miles against three German army corps. The 7th Division fought against odds of 8 to 1, with enormous odds in artillery against it—out of its 400 officers and 12,000 men who set out from England, there remained 44 officers and 2,336 men. Ypres cost the Germans a quarter of a million of men—the British 40,000. And as the German masses on the evening of the 12th of November, fought to a standstill, gazed sullenly over the ground

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towards Ypres over their dead, they knew that the siege was complete.

The frantic struggle to keep off the besieging strangle-hold from gripping them had ended in failure. Henceforth the German could but make the sorties of a beleaguered people.

Germany was besieged in the West, and has been a besieged people ever since. Her failure to seize the French seaports is an eternal disgrace to German arms and German strategy—an immortal victory for the Allies.

Within sound of the roar of the guns that told of the great British victory over the German, on the night of the 14th of November, 1914, passed away Lord Roberts, one of the supreme strategists that his age has bred.

By mid-November in 1914, then, Germany was besieged in the West, with a strong bastion in the North Sea, with a strong bastion at Metz, and with a strong outwork running from the Belgian sea-coast to the Eagle Forest and back towards the Metz bastion. If her enemies pierced this line anywhere, and poured in, the whole must go; so that the whole required to be fought with fierce skill. That is what being besieged means. To the East also the German was besieged, his one hope now lay in breaking the Eastern siege. It is true that the German could not now hurl his victorious hosts of the west upon Russia—there were no victorious hosts to hurl. Worse still, he could not even take his defeated hosts to hurl. The dream of all Germany crashing into Russia and overwhelming her was hopelessly gone. But there was

one hope left—if the German could only bring the Russians to Peace and do so with his Pan-German Map complete, then he could strut it as Peace-Maker, and as such could still win his war, if not his whole dream of World Dominion.

If he could *not* get his Peace he was lost.

It is most essential that the Man-in-the-Street should realize this; for, unless he do so, it will be impossible to understand Germany's strategy in the East. To think that it is just a rough-and-tumble out of which something may come, is fatuous. The German war against Russia is a most carefully calculated affair.

But before we come to that, let us be clear about the Western siege that now sets in—and about siege in general.

Let there be no mistake about it. Siege in the West for Germany meant utter ruin and hopeless ruin, and means the more utter and hopeless ruin the longer it lasts, unless she can get Peace to relieve it. From the moment that Germany was defeated on the Marne and smashed at the first Battle of Ypres, it was her supreme strategic—and she knows it well—to play for Peace. From that November she has resolutely desired Peace. In Peace lies her sole salvation. But to get the Peace she wants, it was absolutely necessary first of all to complete her Second Plan of Campaign—the establishment of her Pan-German Map. This Second Plan of Campaign, however, was a far simpler and easier thing to achieve than her Western War or First Plan of Campaign. It was, indeed, so simple a thing that it could easily be achieved even in utter defeat on the West. To begin with, it was almost complete before the War began; and a sharp set-back

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to Russia, not even the overthrow of the Russian armies, would enable her to achieve it. If, of course, she *could* smash the Russian armies, all the better. But Peace there must be, and soon, if Germany was not to bleed to death.

Every month of the western siege, *combined with war with Russia*, meant a stage nearer the abyss. The initiative in the West was with Joffre and the British; and the British could and would increase in strength and power by the very delay that meant ruin for the besieged.

That is the clear strategical truth of this war. There is no getting away from it. The German statesman may lie or fawn or brag to his people or to his enemies or to the world in general; his subservient Press may noise abroad his "splendour," but in their secret conclaves the German General Staff knows the truth.

And it is incumbent on the Man-in-the-Street to realize that strategical hard truth. Let him never mistake Germany's great battles in the West from the November of 1914 as anything else but mighty efforts at sorties by a huge besieged garrison.

When writers talk of the German "initiative" in the West, they talk childishly.

But before we turn to Germany's next great effort—her war against Russia—to stall off utter ruin, let us get rid of certain stupid but plausible fallacies. Strategy cannot hold them. They do not fit in with strategic facts.

One quaint fallacy is that, once pinned down, the German can retire at will to another position. If an army be held along its whole line, it is a most dangerous operation to try to retire from that line, for

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it cannot move parts of that line without the enemy pouring in and smashing the flanks of the unmoved line. And, if a part of his line is rushed, a rout sets in which means annihilation. He has, in other words, lost "initiative"—the power to move as he wills.

Again a siege is not judged by the length of "advance" made—it is judged by the amount to which the garrison is reduced and broken.

Again, if Joffre's outmanœuvring of the German flanking strategy until at last the German was besieged, was done *against enormous superiority of Germans in men and artillery and munitions and preparation, and with the German working at every advantage such as fighting on interior lines at the height of his moral and might*, is the German capable of reversing that decision against his enemies who are *increasing* in strength of men and metal, and have already become superior in these? If his strategy has met with disaster when he was superior in the machinery of battle, will it become victorious when he is inferior in the machinery of battle? For heaven's sake, do let us talk common sense!

Again, if the German on the defensive behind stupendous fortifications, were badly punished by the British and French in lesser numbers, he would have been absolutely annihilated after the retreat from the Marne in open warfare. During the "race for the sea," along the thinly occupied French trench lines from Verdun to Arras, the Germans fought hard all along the line—they made another effort at St. Mihiel, but were smashed on October 2nd and lost their footing on the left bank of the Meuse—they were mauled on the 3rd in the Argonne—they attacked in Lorraine

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only to be driven back to their frontier, losing ground—they lost ground in the Vosges—after five days' battle (October 7th to 12th) they lost Apremont in the Woevre—in the Argonne the French took from them Melzicourt on the 24th of October—in Champagne they were hammered on the plateau of Craonne—on the 30th and 31st of October Castelnau smashed Bulow at Le Quesnoy en Santerre. They had all they could do to save themselves entrenched from the French offensive wherever applied to them. This was not lost on the German Staff. Nor that the Western siege line must be kept *very strong*.

Again, before leaving Germany's strategy utterly defeated in the West, it is unfortunately necessary to disabuse the mind of the Man-in-the-Street of the judgments of many literary men with no grasp of strategy who write for very influential papers. Indeed even a "military" writer of a semi-official volume on the Marne speaks of Sir John French's "severe defeat at Le Cateau!" Now Sir John French's strategy was to retire; the German strategy was to pin him and prevent him from retiring. If Sir John French retire, it is victory for him and defeat for the German. Sir John French, with astounding skill, retired. The German took heavy toll of him, it is true, but failed to prevent his retirement. This is not "defeat." Defeat is not the suffering of heavy losses. . . . The same writer speaks of the "defeat" of Joffre during his Great Retreat! As Joffre's strategy was to retreat, and the Germans were unable to prevent that retreat, though they frantically tried with might and main to do so, and crowed over it, Joffre's Great Retreat was a victorious achievement, not a defeat. It so happens that Joffre's Great Retreat

was one of the supreme military achievements of all time ; the German pursuit one of the supreme blunders of all time. . . .

## II

*Her First Plan of Campaign Wrecked, Germany turns to Her Second Plan of Campaign.*

Hopelessly defeated in the West, the German now looked to success in the East to save him his Second Plan of Campaign—his Pan-German Map. Let us see precisely, then, what Germany has been driving at since her defeat in the West.

In the West the German was absolutely besieged. He could do no more. He had even failed to win his "frontier." His First Plan of Campaign lay in ruins. There was now only one thing for him to do. The obvious strategy of Germany henceforth was to perfect her Second Plan of Campaign and then spring "Peace" upon the world.

To do this needed a vigorous campaign against Russia. The hope of crushing Russia with her whole might was gone, it is true : the peril on the West front of her besieged state was too great even to contemplate it ; but a violent push against the closing Russian wall must be made, and if the Russians could be forced back, or better still severely punished, Russia might be persuaded to peace as soon as it suited the Germans to "offer" peace—that is to say when Germany's Pan-German Map was complete. And the sole barrier to that map was the little kingdom of Serbia, hemmed in by secret enemies who had only to be given the word to strike her down. And the worst of it was that neither Britain nor America realized

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that Serbia meant to both a mighty bulwark in their destiny.

So, leaving the West to be besieged, Germany flung what weight she could against Russia.

Let us now follow her War in the East.

First, how did she stand in the East, when she had to turn to this strategic?

On August the 19th and 20th, as we have seen, the Serbians, having led the Austrians under Potiorek into their mountains, smashed them in the great Serbian victory of Shabatz, and drove them in rout across their frontiers.

Unfortunately, near the Baltic the Russians had a bad set-back. The Russian northern armies under Rennenkampf and Samsonoff, invading East Prussia, had routed the Prussians at Eytkuytten on August 10th and Gumbinnen on August 20th; but became separated by the Masurian Lakes. Hindenburg, an old Prussian general who was the great German student of this region, had been brought out of retirement to command the VIIIth German army. He leaped at the opportunity—concentrating on Samsonoff, who had left his line of communication at Soldau unprotected, which Hindenburg swiftly seized. Samsonoff, instead of retreating on Rennenkampf, tried to retake Soldau, when Hindenburg promptly seized Hohenstein. Thus, Samsonoff, with both flanks gone, and now with the marshes behind him, was smashed in the great German victory of Tannenberg on August the 27th and 28th.

The moral effect of Tannenberg was prodigious.

At sea the Germans received bad punishment in the Battle of the Bight of Heligoland on this same 28th of August which meant a far greater significance

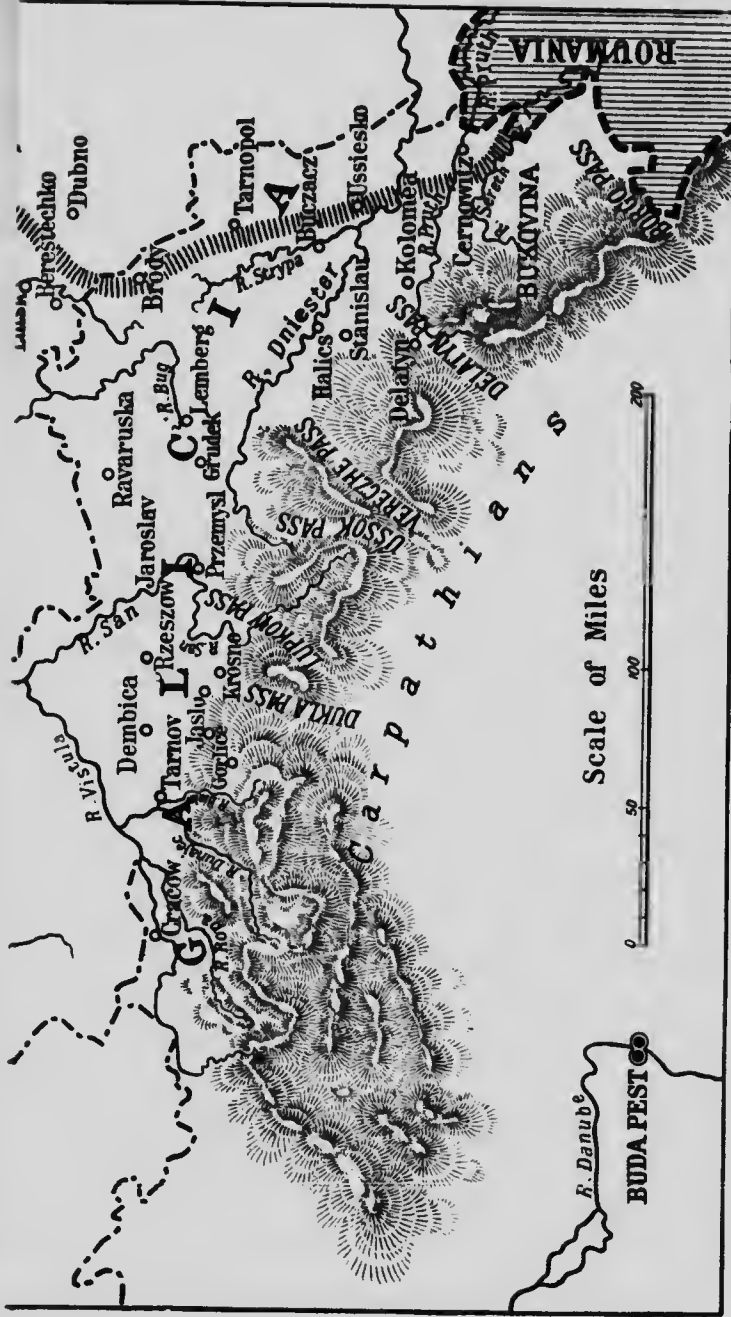


for her than any victory of Tannenberg; and whilst the German public could not be expected to realize the black cloud amidst the frantic delight of Tannenberg, the German Staff were soldiers, and in their secret conclaves they knew that Tyrwhitt and Beatty had made the German fleet valueless to shake off the strangle-hold of blockade if the German strategy did not win swift victory in arms—for the German navy had fought with conspicuous skill, worthy of the British tradition. They decided at once that it would be suicide to engage the British Fleet, and, therefore, a policy of mine-laying and submarines, a defensive policy, reigned. The British Navy had won the sea-war from the first day and the strangle-hold was upon the Germans even as they shouted themselves hoarse over Tannenberg and swung hot-foot into Joffre's great Retreating snare. The raiding of merchantmen by German cruisers was doomed.

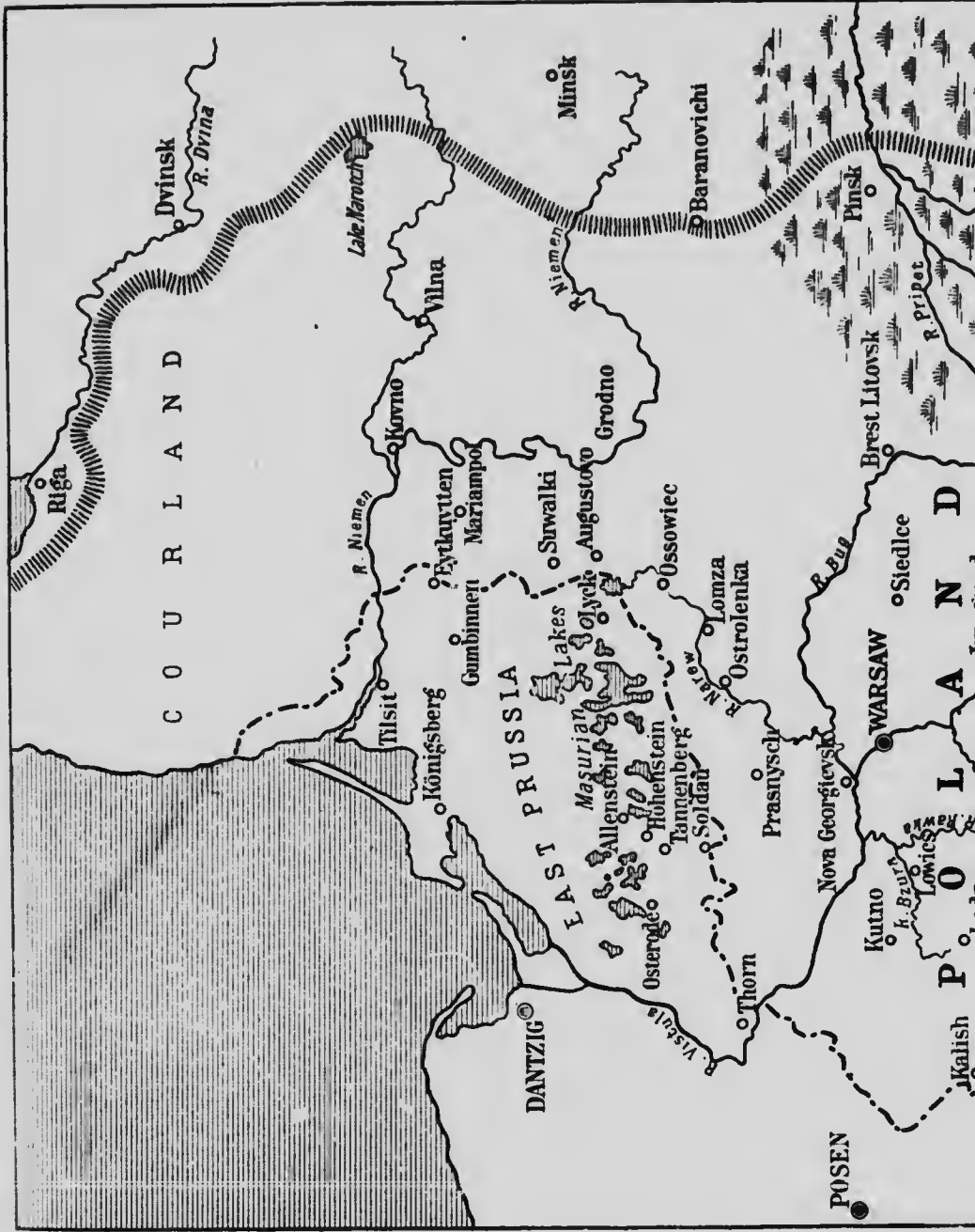
The Russians, knowing that the whole weight of Austria was to be used against them, made Austria their chief object, and concentrated on the conquest of Galicia. The Austrians under Dankl, Auffenberg, and the Archduke, invaded Poland in most botchy fashion on August 20th to 23rd; though through slowness of getting into movement the Russians missed the chance of utterly annihilating them, the Austrians were outgeneralled and driven back across their own frontiers. Then on September 4th Ewarts crushed the Austrians in the slaughter of Lemberg; and eight days later, the 12th, Broussiloff smashed them at Ravaruska. By the 21st of September, Yaroslav, Tarnopol, and Grudek (17th) were in the hands of Roussky, with 100,000 prisoners and 400 guns—Dankl's and Auffenberg's armies were blotted out—

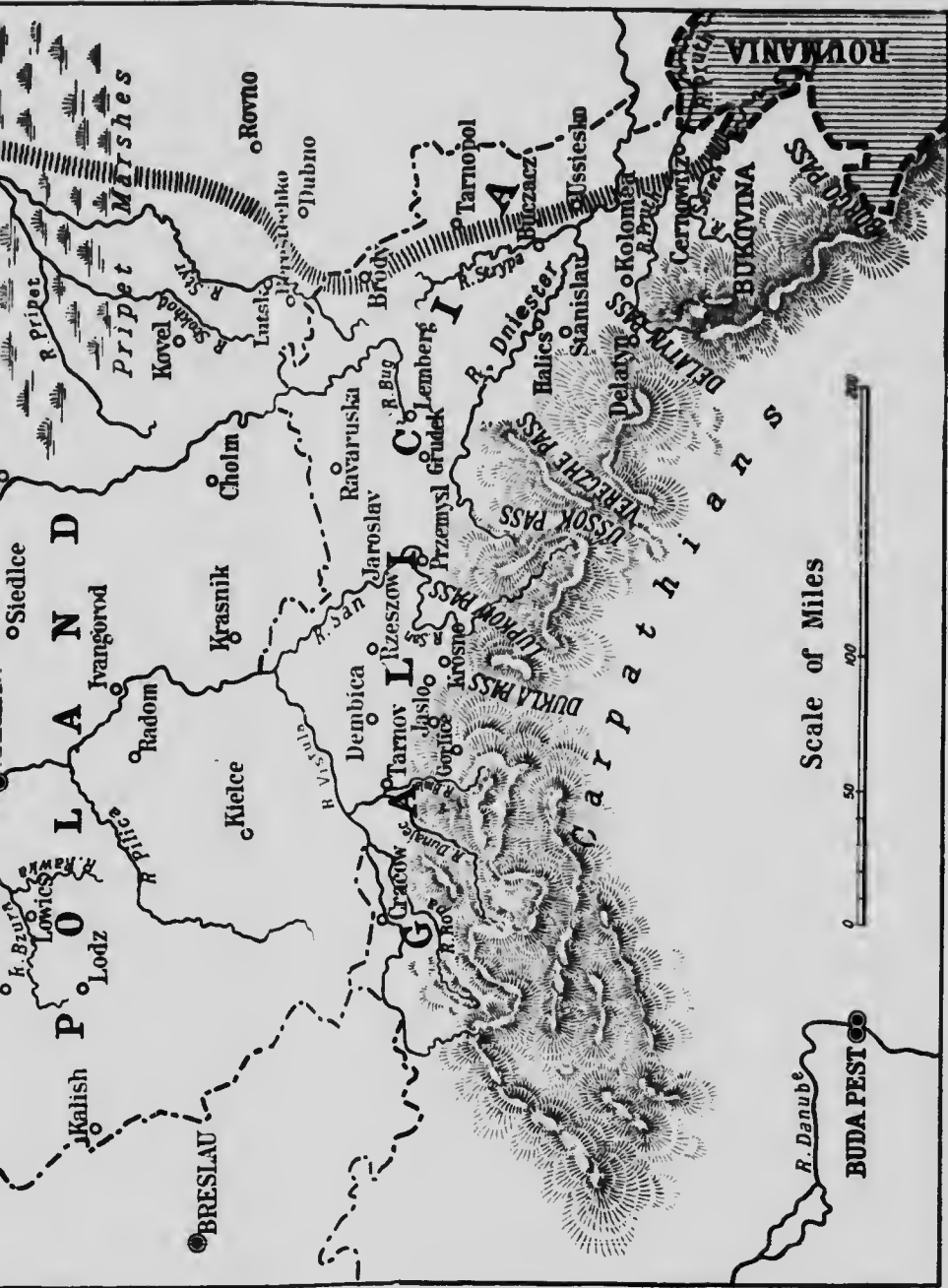
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MAP OF THE FIRST RUSSIAN CAMPAIGN





MAP OF THE FIRST RUSSIAN CAMPAIGN

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and the Archduke shut up in Przemysl, which was besieged.

Such, roughly speaking, was the state of affairs in Russia when, in the West, Joffre was beginning his outflanking movements by the Eagle Forest to envelop the dug-in German line.

Now, the German tried to account for his defeat on the Marne by vowing that he had to thin his ranks for the Russian peril. This is Job's comfort for German gulls. The number of troops withdrawn was of no account, and their place was taken by more. Nor is it possible to whirl whole armies about in this way from one front to another in a few hours. As a matter of fact, the German strength in the West was *increased* after the Marne.

But the Allies were not working on one concerted plan; the Germans on the contrary had this great advantage, and on plans long and carefully matured, and on interior lines with a superb railway service wherewith to move. The Russians, instead of digging in and going on to the defensive against the conquered Austrians, and at once releasing their whole strength to swift smashing of Germany, were elated by their speedy overthrow of the Austrian; and set their eyes on the Carpathians.

On the other hand, Tannenberg had a great moral effect on Germany out of all proportion to its value, which the appalling disasters elsewhere in the East made it absolutely incumbent on Germany to counter at once before worse befell.

But before we start to follow the German attack on Russia, it is well for the Man-in-the-Street to realize that the Russians throughout fought with rare skill;

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and as their war developed, we must make a very liberal allowance for blunders, since the Russian armies, from the Grand Duke Nicholas downwards, had very soon to carry on their strategy baulked by the most sinister corruption at the Russian Court. They were soon fighting, not only at appalling odds against their enemies, but at appalling odds against their own Government, which was early and boldly betraying them. All the Russian difficulties arose from this treachery. And it is wholly unfair to judge the Russian strategy without this terrible burden upon it. Had it not been so, their conquest of Germany in the East would have been certain. But they had to fight against vast artillery preparation to which often they could not reply at all, but went in with the steel and their good right hands.

Another point. It seems to be wondered at that Germany made such a dogged effort on Poland. Not at all. The value of Germany's dangerous long front in the West lay in her control of the Belgian and northern French industrial regions—she held their coal and iron. And in exact degree as these benefited her, the loss of them was dangerous to France. So now, the German deliberately set his war to seize the industrial regions of Poland, and so, in the exact degree whereby she herself benefited, the Russians suffered—indeed in proportion the Russians with their limited industrial fields suffered vastly more. Besides, the conquest of Poland had this advantage over northern France that *it shortened the German line*. In undertaking her Russian adventure, Germany realized quite well that the siege if thrust far beyond her frontiers still further increased the lines she had to hold; and that, as that line increased, her numbers

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decreased; but she did not intend that the Peace dove should be kept caged long enough to allow her to bleed to death.

Also, there seems to be an idea abroad that Germany could pursue Russia to the ends of the earth. It is clear that Germany could not go hunting the Russian armies over Siberia—at any rate whilst her Western armies stood at bay against the victorious and ever-increasing might of Britain and the victorious legions of France.

The long and the short of it was that a bad smash of the Russian armies would free Germany to fly her Peace dove as a magnanimous foe. So, to the smashing of the Russians, Germany now frantically bent the weight of every man and gun that she could put into it. Turkey and Bulgaria were only waiting for German success to declare themselves openly. Serbia stood at the gate alone, but Serbia was a small matter that could wait, and—the Greek king Tino had arranged that Greece should betray her when Bulgaria struck. The Russian was the deciding factor in the Pan-German Map.

That Austria was hopelessly incompetent to stand against Russia—indeed could not even push open the small Serbian gate beyond which the Bulgarian and Turk waited, nervous and apprehensive, witnessing the collapse of vastly superior Austrian armies in Galicia against the finer strategy of Russia—all added to the great moral effect of Tannenberg, all made for the compelling of the German mastery over Austria. Hindenburg became the directing brain thenceforth of the Eastern War. Hindenburg at once organised a great offensive in Poland to overrun the



industrial resources of Russia; and Russia's mistake in not invading the industrial area of Germany was at once felt; Hindenburg had good railways and short communications and the war material of the frontier fortresses on which to develop his strong offensive. Hindenburg had now about  $2\frac{1}{2}$  millions of men on the Russian front. Russia was outnumbered by at least half a million of men; she was utterly outclassed in artillery and munitionment.

The Russians, flushed with victory in Galicia, hesitated as to what to do next and let their eyes rest on the Carpathians—where alas! was no munitionment. Germany's need was urgent.

#### (a) HINDENBURG'S FIRST INVASION OF POLAND ENDS IN DISASTER

Hindenburg swiftly launched his blow at Warsaw and the Middle Vistula, to compel the Russian evacuation of conquered Galicia, and to try to get a great decision on the Bug.

He struck on the 26th of September for Ivangorod, to cut the Russian armies in the south from their main lines of communication; at the same time he sought in East Prussia to pursue Rennenkampf and pin him to the Niemen in order to prevent him from acting against the Germans in Poland.

Hindenburg caught Poland almost denuded of armies, which were all south. But Roussky was at once sent north to take over command of the northern armies—he steadily drew back the weak Russian line in Poland towards the Vistula, the southern Russian armies dropping back to the San before the Austrians. Roussky then hit at the Germans in East Prussia and

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hammered them. Schubert, Hindenburg's general there, failed in his grandiose scheme to seize the fortresses of Kovono, Grodno, and Ossowiec, and to cross the Niemen; the Russians struck and broke him, and, outflanking him to north and south, rolled him back in disaster to the German frontier during the last four days of September.

Schubert misled Hindenburg by reporting his disaster as a "strategic retirement," so that Hindenburg lurched forward at Ivangorod and Warsaw, reaching within striking distance of both places. But meanwhile Schubert's state of disaster in East Prussia began to be revealed, and from Augustovo to Mariampol the Russians crushed the Prussians on the first four days of October—avenging Tannenberg with terrific slaughter. The broken Prussians fled in rout and panic in every direction.

Roussky at once outflanked Hindenburg on the Lower Vistula, and with Rennenkampf and the reinforcements of Warsaw hammered Hindenburg's left. Hindenburg withdrew, falling back on Kalish, Posen, and Breslau, and dragging the Austrians back with him in the south. The Austrians under Dankl, being slower, got the worse punishment; smashed on the left at Kosienica by the Caucasians on October 24th, and driven in flight on Radom, Dankl's right wing was destroyed at Kielce on the 28th of October, losing 12,000 prisoners and 50 guns. This defeat brought the great hero of Bulgaria, Dmitrieff, now in a Russian command, down on the Galician armies, shutting up a couple more Austrian divisions in Przemysl. The Austrians in Galicia fell back.

Thus ingloriously in disaster after disaster ended Hindenburg's first invasion of Poland, with enormous

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superiority in troops and artillery, defeated along the whole length of his line.

As Hindenburg fell back he left Poland a desert, without roads, or railways, or bridges, or telegraphs.

It is well to note that the German Second Plan of Campaign, having had a bad set-back, and things looking almost as grey for it as for the wrecked First Plan of Campaign in the West, now necessitated Turkey's showing her hand to relieve the pressure all round. Turkey, unlike Bulgaria, was not immediately under Russian threat, and could seriously hamper her old ally Britain in Egypt. So the Enver party decided, by German orders, to fling over the Old Turks and start their own war for the raising of Enver into a Turkish Napoleon. The corrupt party of the Young Turks, led by the half-Pole Enver, the Jews Cavasso and Djavid, the Bulgarian Talaat, and the Magyar-Circassian Achmet Riza, struck for Germany, bought by her gold, and so completed their tyranny over the Turk. Their acts had already been of so suspicious a kind as to reveal their strategic except to embassies. Their jihad for a Holy War having failed ingloriously—as it was bound to do considering the lack of real Turks in the whole gang and their open contempt of the Faith—their deliberate acts of aggression under lying excuses at last made the Allies withdraw their ambassadors on the 1st of November, and declare war four days later. But the German hope of a Mahomedan rising in Egypt and India squibbed. Thus, before the year of 1914 was out, Turkey threw off the mask and revealed her secret share in the Pan-German Map to such as had eyes to see.

The entry of Turkey, though she has not been

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able to play a vital part in the War, had serious consequences in the West as well as in Russia. British troops on their way to France were kept in Egypt—French troops joined them—Russia, victorious in the Carpathians and in Poland and pressing the German troops hard, had to send troops to the Caucasus.

However, though the southern end of the Pan-German Map was complete from Adrianople to the Persian Gulf and Mount Sinai, there was a large gap between still. Bulgaria must not declare for it until she was safe from Russia; and the Serbian gate was still locked. The only way to unlock it was to smash Russia, and the flying of the Peace dove was idle until the Russian was stalled off and the Pan-German Map complete. It was getting near completion. Turkey would relieve the pressure all round, and it was with the knowledge that the great fighting power of Turkey was in, that Hindenburg now proposed to launch his second attack on Poland. He was to launch it under extraordinary advantage, in spite of his defeat which must have filled him with shame; indeed his very defeat had drawn the Russian eyes back to the Carpathian lure—the Russians, as before, massing in the south. Turkey, at the same time, enabled the Germans to pour troops towards the East, with calmer minds as to the West.

So unfortunately the victorious Russians again turned their minds to the Carpathians instead of setting to work on the destruction of Germany in Poland.

### (b) HINDENBURG'S SECOND INVASION OF POLAND ENDS IN DEFEAT

The Grand Duke's mistake in leaving the Russians on the defensive in Poland in order to conquer

## The Siege of Germany

Austria gave Hindenburg his chance; and he leaped at it. The fact that the Russian commanders in Poland were Hindenburg's masters in strategic alone saved the situation. These able men, using their slender means with astounding skill, were to baffle him. It fills the strategic student with wonder as to what the extent of the German disaster in Poland would have been, had these great leaders been given the concentrated strength of Russia now misplaced on the Carpathians. As it was, Germany was only saved as by a miracle.

Roussky had all he could do to stall off the hammer-blow of Hindenburg's invasion, which was launched in mid-November, 1914. Leaving East Prussia on the defensive, and striking from Thorn, Hindenburg won the victory of Kutno on November 15th and 16th. Depressed Berlin went mad with relief; and the Kaiser made Hindenburg a Field-Marshal. Mackensen's blow at Lodz was a more serious business, delivered with skill, but with too great caution; the German was beginning to realize the Russian genius. Massing a tremendous artillery, Mackensen, his left sweeping through Lowicz, his right to Lodz, thrust the weak Russian line back, becoming himself nearly encircled; but Mackensen hesitated, and solidified his gains instead of pushing his advantage. His thinned and over-extended line, exhausted by battle, was suddenly assailed by Ewarts, who struck at his right flank, whilst Roussky leaped at Hindenburg's left flank on the Bzura. Thus Hindenburg was punished exactly by the same manoeuvre that had driven back his first invasion!

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Mackensen, failing to surround the Russians and to break through, found himself nearly surrounded and cut off. He came within an ace of complete annihilation. Two of his army corps were cut off, and were given up for lost in the Russian "pocket," but with desperate skill, recognizing defeat, he fought with all his might to keep open the jaws of the closing pincers, and, in spite of terrible losses, he managed to withdraw the broken masses, thanks to the thinness of the victorious Russian numbers, leaving 20,000 prisoners and 300 guns behind him.

Hindenburg sent Below's northern army to cover Mackensen. Below, greatly reinforced, made a dash on the Lower Vistula to reach Warsaw, only to end in a "pocket" defeat at Przemysl on the 14th and 15th of December, of which Mackensen's disastrous experience at Lodz ought to have warned him to beware. Roussky's defeat of the out-generalled Hindenburg was to be wasted for lack of men.

A siege-war was now set in from the Niemen in the north to the Dunajec in the south.

Thus failed Hindenburg's second invasion of Poland for the seizure of Warsaw.

Things looked grey indeed for the Pan-German Map; and the Austrian assault on Serbia, which was being most bitterly and frantically pressed, was to come to utter disaster. The three Austrian army corps were lured on to the "Battle of the Ridges" from the end of October by the young Crown Prince, Alexander of Serbia, a man of 26, who smashed Potiorek's Austrian masses on the 5th of December and drove the Austrian arms across his borders in mad rout.

When this great War comes to be seen in the

## The Siege of Germany

perspective of time, amidst all its mighty heroisms, there will stand out no more heroic people than the little nation of the Serbians. With the might of Germany against her—with treachery at her side and behind her, this people with their old King and their young Crown Prince did not hesitate to fight for their honour and their race; and when the great day of reward comes, Serbia above all should be raised to a mighty place amongst the peoples. It braces the nerves and adds to one's stature as a man to contemplate the splendour of her achievement. Yet it was this great people whom the dullard embassies would have robbed and still sought to rob in order to win the good will of the treacherous Bulgar, who had already perjured his soul and but waited for the safe moment to stab her in the back and to betray Europe!

From lack of strategic vision in high places as to the real basis of German strategy in her Second Plan of Campaign—the making of the Pan-German Map—and then an arrogant Peace to establish that Map—there was now a widespread fallacy that Germany was about to make a great “offensive” in the West. What on earth could she gain by an offensive in the West, even if she had the power to make it, but the risk of utter destruction of her Pan-German Map? The German Staff knew full well that there would never be another “outmarch to Paris.” There seems to have been some widespread hallucination that Germany, instead of being in defeat everywhere, was triumphant! One looks at the map and wonders where.

The year of 1914 went out on a Germany in defeat everywhere.

## 1915

### (c) HINDENBURG'S THIRD INVASION OF POLAND COMPELS THE GREAT RUSSIAN RETREAT

For the third time the Russians flung away their chance of destroying the German hosts. Again they turned their eyes southwards to the conquest of the futile armies of Austria, and the rich spoil of Vienna and Hungary, perhaps also with their hearts set on the relief of heroic Serbia, as their noble but unstrategic motive. Serbia could have been saved, but not from the Carpathians. It is true that the capture of the Carpathians, the true barrier of Hungary against Russia, would place Austria at the mercy of Russia. But such a campaign was to sacrifice strategic to political ends. The German had been twice pushed back in defeat in Poland; and his repeated defeats led to Russian over-confidence in the Carpathian adventure.

But even as Plehve (IIIrd Russian Army) made for Cracow during the first week of December, 1914, across the Vistula, Biala, and Dunajec; and Dmitrieff invaded northern Hungary; whilst the VIIth army advanced along the Carpathians, and the IXth army moved into Bukovina; and Selivanoff besieged Przemysl—Hindenburg set to work to blot out his two shameful reverses in Poland.

The German, under vast artillery, could hold the West at a minimum of men, dug in amongst vast fortifications. Turkey was troubling the British reinforcement and widening the British war. The whole



## 'The Siege of Germany

German hope lay in punishing Russia with what weight she could spare to the last man. Russia must be pushed out of the siege if the siege were not to grind Germany down; and the Peace talk was laid aside until the Pan-German Map was complete.

It is said that the German mistook Joffre's strategy in saving man-power in the West for exhaustion; and had therefore hopes even of invading France again. The German had no such hopes as the grey days of 1914 ran out with defeat upon him wherever he looked. But this view of Germany is most questionable in any case, and due to lack of grasp of Germany's insistent intention as to her Second Plan of Campaign. Germany knew full well that the British millions were drilling. And Sir John French with a small army had taught Germany what a large British army would mean.

Germany, as a simple matter of fact, aiming to pin the Russians on the Carpathians, spent the winter in heavy concentration for a supreme effort in Poland in 1915.

Hindenburg took the Russian attention to East Prussia and the Carpathians; and the Grand Duke fell into the Carpathian trap. Indeed, his capture of the Carpathians was carried out with consummate skill. By March the Russians were masters of the passes, and Cossacks were riding into Hungary. The 80,000 prisoners taken were enormously increased by the 130,000 who surrendered at the fall of Przemyśl on the 21st of March.

But Hindenburg doggedly concentrated regardless of all defeats to Austria.

As the January of 1915 came to an end, Hindenburg began to move. On the German front along the

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Rawka river south-west of Warsaw, a severe threat of the Germans for a week of ferocious attacks was countered by the Russians. Quickly, on February 7th, came a thrust in East Prussia, with the Kaiser and Crown Prince to give enthusiasm—and trick the Russians. It surprised Rennenkampf at Lyck, his hasty retreat to the Niemen being covered by a Russian corps with great valour and skill in a forest fight. The Germans proceeded to a vague pursuit, invading Courland, attacking Ossowiec, and attacking Prasnysz near Warsaw, which was again to bring disaster to the German arms, for, being nearly surrounded, they fell back, leaving 10,000 prisoners. In the battle of Prasnysz, the Russians so lacked arms and munitions that vast bodies of them fought with two bombs in one hand and a bayonet in the other; and they smashed the Germans who were in far greater numbers! Roussky sent Rennenkampf at the Germans on the Niemen, raised the siege of Ossowiec and drove them back to their frontiers. Whatever its object, clearly the Germans were not massed in the north, and as certainly it was not to cut the communications with Petrograd. Anyway, it could only have one strategic object—to take the Russian eye from the real offensive. At any rate, these heavy feints *did* baffle the Russian Higher Command.

Mackensen, secretly collecting a vast force at Cracow, near the Russian flank on the Carpathians, was covered by a third heavy feint in Bukovina, which retook Stanislau on March 1. This feint, with the dressing of Austrian troops along the Carpathians in German uniforms, induced the Russians to send strength to this front, so that the Russians had their best troops on the Carpathians. But Mackensen was

watching for a stroke at the uncovered communications of the Russians in Galicia and Southern Poland which were life to the Grand Duke's armies in the Carpathians.

This country to the railway junctions of Dembica, Yaslo, and Rzeszow, was easy going. Mackensen broke the weak Russian line between the Biala and the Ropa, and launched his attack at Gorlice. The Battle of Gorlice, so disastrous to the Russians on the 4th to the 9th of May, surprised and pierced the Russians, uncovering a pierced flank on the Dunajec to the north, and a pierced flank on the Carpathians to the south. Mackensen made full tilt for the junctions and for Przemysl in order to reach them before the Russians fell back, and so to surround their armies on these two broken Russian flanks.

Fortunately the Russian commanders kept their heads; and their calm and nerve and valour saved them.

To the north, on Mackensen's left, the Austrian generals struck so hard that their huge bombardment drove the Russians back instead of pinning them; whilst the Austrian generals on his right, to the south, hung back and let the Russians retreat.

By consequence, all that Berlin could ring its joy-bells over were some 30,000 prisoners and 70 guns. The Russian generals saw the trap and swung back out of it with such skill that they slipped from the grip of Mackensen's great surprise, and reached the San and Middle Vistula on a safe line, from which they punished the German advance. After fierce fighting the Austrians entered Lemberg again on the 22nd of June. But neither Przemysl nor Lemberg was to be a surrendered garrison.

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So the Russians swung back their line in the Great Russian Retreat across Poland and the Steppes. But they held, and prevented a break in their line.

The Grand Duke Nicholas retreated with skill, ably backed by his great commanders. He struggled hard to keep Poland; but it was too late. He knew a good commander of men, and gave Plehve's command to Loeshe; made Ivanoff generalissimo of the central armies; and Alexieff, one of the supreme geniuses of the war, was sent to Warsaw. The genius of Alexieff now showed forth superior to the whole German genius for war, as had Joffre's in the West. Loeshe promptly smashed the Austrians at Krasnik in July. Alexieff withdrew from the Bzura with consummate skill as Warsaw became untenable. The German feints in Courland, on the Niemen and Bug, led to their crossing of the Narew; the feint in the south reaped the crossing of the Vistula near Ivanogorod; but the fierce onslaught of Mackensen at Krasnotow did not trap the Central Russian armies, which fell back to Grodno and Brest Litovsk. The triumphant entry of the old Prince Leopold of Bavaria with Hindenburg into Warsaw was thus empty of the great victory and decision aimed at by the Germans. At the eleventh hour it was decided that the Kaiser should not head the procession, but he issued one of his immortal manifestoes, of which more anon. The German found not a soul to admire their parade and triumph but some poor Polish Jews; and the city was wholly empty not only of arms or munitions or booty, but the very printing-presses, having issued their last news-sheets, had gone. Everything was taken as in some vast furniture removal.

But the skill and valour of the German push

robbed the Russians of Poland, with its arsenals and fortresses and industrial regions. They forced back the Russians; and they did so with reckless courage. It was not the decision they had striven so hard to achieve. The Russian line held firm with dogged courage; it was pushed back from its natural strongholds into open country, with the Dvina as a support to its right flank in the north, the vast Pripet Marshes in its centre, and the Sereth and Strypa on its left flank in the south. They were nevertheless in a perilous state when Ivanoff hammered Mackensen and the Germans were checked.

Russia appealed to the Allies; and the Allies answered her, and saved her.

Russia had learnt that the Germans won by their artillery, the German soldier was no match for the Russian soldier. But whilst Alexieff's advice to draw the Germans far into Russia, so that no German should return, was not taken, the German feared it and halted.

As the Russian Retreat continued, a marked Allied artillery aggression, the general Allied bombardment of August and September in the West, was noted by the German Staff. The Man-in-the-Street will recall it better perhaps by the huge national effort to increase munitions in France and Britain. Shell was being heavily used. Batteries were being increased all along the Allied lines, accompanied by air bombardment.

The German Staff undoubtedly took this heavy bombardment for the preparation for a great offensive. It at once diverted to France strong German divisions that were meant for the Russian front—some sixteen divisions or more, whilst troops from Poland were

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also sent to France. This marked a distinct checking of the German onrush in Russia.

Unfortunately, owing to a shortage of shells, due to this tremendous gunnery, this intense bombardment began to slacken, and the Germans, finding no attack following, started upon pressing Russia again towards Riga, Vilna, and the Pripet Marshes. But the rest from pressure had helped the Russians, who had never been broken or disorganized, and they baulked Hindenburg before Riga, frustrated his design to envelop them at Vilna, checked his efforts to drive the armies in the south-west in disorder over the Marshes, and kept their footing on the Dniester against every assault of the Austrians. Still, the Russian line was hard pressed, and the Germans were intent on breaking it and getting a decision, when Joffre decided to launch a great series of attacks in the West and so stop the German reinforcement in the East.

But before we come to Joffre's offensive of 1915, let us glance a few minutes at what Joffre and others had been doing in the West during that Retreat—and what the Germans had been doing—above all, at what the Germans had been doing.

### (d) THE WAR IN FRANCE DURING THE GREAT RUSSIAN RETREAT

The great Russian Retreat is one of the achievements of history. The dogged courage and consummate skill of the whole thing, from commanders to the ranks, make it immortal. The swiftness with which the Russian generals leaped at the slightest blunder of the Germans was astounding. The Tsar

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placed himself at the head of the army on the 5th of September; and Alexieff, as his Chief of Staff, brought his high genius to the leadership of the Russian. But traitors possessed the Court.

Let us see what had been happening in the West whilst the German, settling down to the siege there, had been putting his strength into breaking the Russian.

Into the tactics in France, whilst Germany was pursuing her Second Plan of Campaign in the East, we need not drag the Man-in-the-Street in detail. It is enough to glance at the general strategic. After the first Battle of Ypres, Joffre settled down to the siege. The British were increasing in strength. The blockade was eating into the vitals of the besieged. Joffre initiated a system of "nibbling"—exhaustion of the German, reduction of his man-power with the least possible loss to the Allies. Germany was to be reduced to bankruptcy, ruin, and famine. For France and Britain and America, Germany must be made to cease to be a curse and a threat once and for ever. The "war of attrition"—the fatuous call it a "stalemate"—was set. All this talk of a "stalemate" is futile. A siege is a siege, not a stalemate. And a siege is part of an "offensive." Make no mistake about that! There is, besides, no such thing as a stalemate in war. If it be any comfort to a besieged people to call it a stalemate, let them get what comfort they can out of it—they need it.

Now, this strategy of Joffre was masterly. But as it was not theatrical, the public began to doubt whether it was strategy at all. However, the enormous gunning and munitionment of the Germans made trench warfare a costly affair for such as had it not;

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and it was obviously the astute strategic to wait until they had it. Next, every month's delay was as good for the Allies as it was bad for the Germans.

Joffre simply used his initiative to counter German sorties on the grand scale, which looked like huge manoeuvre battles. The German never had a chance of breaking through.

After Sir John French's great victory of Ypres, which locked the gates of siege upon Germany in the West, the Allied line settled down, then, to trench warfare. The fights that took place were local battles to improve their positions by the Allies, or to thrust them back from such by the besieged. Into all these fights we need not go. It is enough to skim the record of them—the German attack on the Indians at Givenchy in December, countered by Haig; de Mitry's recapture of St. Georges on the Yser a few days later as December came to an end; the taking of Steinbach in Upper Alsace by the French on New Year's Day; the gradual mastering of the Vosges; Maunoury's attack beyond Soissons (the second Battle of Soissons) from January 9th to the 14th, from which emerged the genius of Petain, a fight that came near to disaster owing to the sudden flooding of the river, but ended well—and it proved the growing decay of the German moral which took to lying boasts; the French victory on the Lorette plateau where Petain again distinguished himself—he was to repeat his success in May by storming the famous Labyrinth, taking 5,000 prisoners, 20 field guns, and 60 machine-guns; the British defensive victory over the "Birthday battle of La Bassée" from January 26th to 30th; the bloody British victory in the capture of Neuve Chapelle on March 10th to 14th, covered by



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the fire of 350 guns—a victory at great cost of men owing to the eager troops being led too far and counter-attacked, and a check in reinforcement; d'Esperey's first French offensive in Champagne at the same time, begun at the end of February, to relieve the pressure on the East front against Russia—but as it was meant to relieve Hindenburg's advance in East Prussia, which was only a feint, it naturally did not achieve a strategic result, though it fulfilled a new design of artillery preparation—the German losses were terrible; the Second Battle of Ypres, which opened with a heavy German attack when we were weak in guns which had been sent farther down the line, and the Germans, by using gas on a favourable wind, following the gas against the French on the left British flank near Ypres, threw them back in disorder, which left the British flank uncovered—luckily the gas did not do more than touch the British, and the Canadian division dashed into the German flank and, supported by Sir John French from the south, the French retook part of their positions. In the tough fighting that followed for days the enormous concentration of German guns and machine-guns looked dangerous, but the Allies, using protective respirators for the first time, drove back the enemy and took some of their positions in mid-May. The Germans turned on the British at Ypres and La Bassée, when Haig, after a reverse at Aubers, carried Festubert on the 18th of May, the defeated Germans venting their spite in shelling the beautiful old town of Ypres; these actions about Ypres were fought against odds of 2 to 1, against overwhelming artillery and machine-gun fire *and* gas, but the German infantry were annihilated and their commander began

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to flinch. It was the appalling lack of munitions at Ypres that led to the great movement at home to supply it and made of Britain a vast arsenal; in the Vosges the French were steadily winning back the heights against as heavy odds with great slaughter; as was also the case at Quennevieres on June 7th, 8th, and 9th. These "nibblings" kept the Germans nervous about the West, and prevented heavier concentration against Russia. It is said that in the salient of Ypres there are a hundred thousand Allied dead; and they mark the hallowed ground where the siege "found itself," for there the German knew the end in the West.

The sinking of the *Lusitania* at sea on May 7th was a vile crime that did the German cause no good.

Of what we may call the war of side-issues, for secondary operations are rarely of high strategic value on the main issue, the most tragic was the disastrous Gallipoli campaign. Turkey added to the German strength only to the degree of threatening Egypt; and could well have been left blockaded. Turkey was "in the air." The fatuous scoundrel Enver, 'tis true, saw himself as all-conquering in the Caucasus, but the five Turkish army corps were promptly routed in January (6th to 10th) at Kara Urgan, and the Turk was hammered at Tabriz in Persia. In February the Turk made an attempt in the desert of Sinai against the Suez Canal which was of the type of British Colonial scuffle. The Russians invaded Armenia, threatened Erzeroum, and at sea sank the Turkish reinforcements. But the Naval Demonstration of the Allies in the Straits in the November of 1914 seems to have started the idea later for the Dardanelles Expedition, due to muddled diplomacy which hoped

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to bring Bulgaria and Greece to the Allies, who were blind to Bulgaria's real strategy and to the King of Greece's treachery. The whole business was badly judged, badly timed—opportunity was given the go-by—and when the expedition was launched, the German-led Turks had made the Dardanelles secure. 'Tis true that supplies were badly needed by Russia and that we had need of her corn. But the blundering idea of influencing the Balkan States was the chief motive—and, as we have seen, Bulgaria was long since "influenced." In February, 1915, began the Naval attack on the Narrows. By March it was clear that the Navy could not do the business alone. And in April a large force was assembled in Egypt. On April 25th the landing at Gallipoli was begun. By the end of August the tragedy was about over. In September two divisions went to Salonika. In October Sir Ian Hamilton returned to England. On January 9th, 1916, the last living soldier stepped off the beach, leaving 50,000 graves of Allied dead. . . . The tragedy at least added lustre to the valour of the British and French arms.

The end of 1914 saw the South African Rebellion rise and fall, thanks to the foresight of Campbell-Bannerman in having trusted the Boers.

Italy's entrance into the War on May 23rd, 1915, of enormous value as it was, had unfortunately been thoroughly prepared against by Germany and Austria; and she was balked in consequence from relieving the German pressure on Russia in the May of 1915 which was by then too well in hand. But the danger from Italy made Austria nervous about Serbia, and compelled the throwing off of the mask by Bulgaria, as we shall see. Unless Italy had flung

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troops into Serbia she was tied to her narrow Austrian front.

The defeat of Admiral Cradock on the 1st November, 1914, in the sea-fight off Coronel in the Pacific—which, chronologically, might have been mentioned earlier—was swiftly avenged by the destruction of the German Fleet by Sturdee in his great victory off the Falkland Islands on December the 8th.

### (e) JOFFRE'S OFFENSIVE OF 1915 TO CHECK THE GREAT RUSSIAN RETREAT

The end of September saw what is known as "the Great Offensive of 1915." The summer bombardment against the western German besieged line had brought German armies to reinforce in the West; and the German was inclined to use them. The German strength was set to work to give trouble in the Argonne, when suddenly Joffre struck.

Intense artillery bombardment of the German lines, with heavy concentrations in case of a break, was the tactic. The artillery levelled the German first positions and battered down their second line. On the night of the 25th of September the infantry "went over the top," not in a general offensive but on certain selected stretches.

Haig's command attacked Loos—Gough assailing Hulluch, and Rawlinson thrusting towards Loos. Advancing swiftly on a broad front they carried the German advanced lines. The "impregnable" Hohenzollern redoubt fell. At Loos the success was so great that, had it been realized as possible and been backed by great strength, the German line would have been pierced; but not being the main thrust, it was difficult

to get up sufficient reserves in time for a decision. Under the German counter-attacks some ground was recaptured from the British. But the gains were good, and the Germans were stalled off in their general attacks to recapture. Loos cost the German battalions 80 men in every hundred. In Artois, D'Urbal and the British attacked Lens and succeeded beyond expectation. The complexity of the command balked it of its fruits. At Neuve Chapelle the British Divisions from India carried all before them; but there were no reserves to take over the trenches won, into which the Germans came back behind the victorious advancing British and bombed the victors from the rear, who had thus to fight their way back.

In the centre, Castelnau attacked from Souain to Massiges in the Champagne in the chief stroke. The French artillery had smashed the German defences, and the French attack carried a considerable ground with heavy German losses. But Castelnau could not quite get through. The Champagne battle cost the Germans 100,000 casualties, 23,000 prisoners, and 155 guns.

The German propaganda succeeded in making the public believe that the French losses had been heavier than the German. A Press campaign at home started against the generals. The German propaganda made much of this Allied "failure to pierce."

As a matter of fact, strategically, Joffre's offensive of 1915 *took the pressure off Russia*.

This led to two important German moves almost at once. They first of all tested it. From September 28th to mid-October they tried to win back their lost ground in Champagne and Artois and failed with

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great laughter. Baffled all along the line they launched as a last hope a prodigious assault on Verdun. But before we come to Verdun, let us go back to the Great Russian Retreat for a moment.

*Joffre's great offensive of 1915 was a part of the strategy of the Great Russian Retreat—it was to check it, and it checked it.*

Germany's struggle to raise the siege in the East had failed.

By the 22nd of September the Vilna salient had been safely evacuated by the Russians; and the Germans had wholly failed to force a decision. Worse still, Ivanoff was beginning his counter-offensive in the south. Hindenburg broke down before Riga.

But the Second Plan of Campaign was not yet complete!

### (f) GERMANY WINS HER SECOND PLAN OF CAMPAIGN

Germany, balked on all fronts to keep off the siege, now turned to completing her Pan-German Map at all costs; it must be completed before she could fly the Peace dove. Her losses were by now appalling. In mid-August, Field-Marshal von Mackensen, fresh from several victories against the retreating Russians, was sent to the business—and in the doing Germany revealed that it was a vital act. Mackensen did not command "feints."

Germany pointed out to the Bulgarian King that all danger from Russia was now pushed away from him—undertook to cover any hostile acts against Bulgaria—and with Bulgaria she planned to smash down the Serbian gates which alone barred the way to completion of the Pan-German Map. Serbia shrewdly desired to attack Bulgaria on the 27th of

September before she herself was attacked in flank but the Allied Governments dawdled, and were befooled, and botched the whole sorry business, blind as to the Second Plan of Campaign, blind as to its consequences, blind as to its significance. However Britain had promised 150,000 men for Salonika to support Greece in case of need in coming to the assistance of Serbia. On the 5th of October, Bulgaria's unsatisfactory answers led to the withdrawal of the Allied Ministers. Two days afterwards the landing began in Salonika of 13,000 British and French troops to support Serbia against 200,000 Germanic troops under Mackensen and 250,000 Bulgarians, with Turkish divisions on the move. Bulgaria threw off the mask on the 5th of October 1915, and treacherously struck Serbia in the side whilst Germany struck her in front from the north—the traitorous Greek King duping the Greek people and baulking Greek aid to her sworn little ally.

Now, to go into all the Bulgarian intrigue is strategically valueless after the event. The Allied Embassies were befooled. It was their business to know and to understand the German Second Plan of Campaign and the significance of the Pan-German Map. If they knew it, their actions are beneath contempt. If they did not know it, then it is time that every Embassy employed a strategic staff. Even when German gold, arms, and men, were being imported into Turkey through Bulgaria from the beginning of the war, the Embassies were so blind that they could not and would not see. There was no light to guide—no strategic vision. There is no need to search for abstruse German reasons for the conquest of Serbia—she made her War for it—and if she made

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her war for it, surely it is obvious that Serbia meant something prodigious in her strategic! She made her war for the conquest of Serbia—and she would not leave her war until she got it. Of course her advantages in the East were obvious—and her one great all-absorbing strategic was to win her Pan-German Map. She must go to the Peace table with that map achieved. It is true that Ferdinand *appeared* to be bargaining, but he had long since settled the Bulgarian strategy—as any strategic student knew. The secret Treaty with Turkey in mid-July was a definite contract which Ferdinand could fling down before his people when war was to be declared, to show how much finer a bargain Turkey and the German offered than the Allies—quite apart from the fact that it was not Germany's or Turkey's to give—but it was a mere pawnbroker's trick with the necessitous. He was quite right from his point of view to have Enver's bond whatever that was worth—he knew he had a far more weighty bond, the German interest in giving him as much as they could, since it thereby became a part of the Pan-German Map. The Embassies, like all honest men trying to deal with rogues, were tricked. Venizelos, like all honest men, was duped by his King. Every move of Venizelos and the Allies was at once passed on by Venizelos's treacherous King to Germany. All the diplomatic juggling was futile. It is no use wasting indignation upon it; it was so, and there's an end of it, *strategically speaking*. *We were trying to wring concessions out of Serbia and Greece, on behalf of Bulgaria, whilst Bulgaria was betraying us and had betrayed us before the first shot was fired in the Great War!* The loss of Serbia is our most disgraceful defeat—and the only



disgraceful defeat—in the War. Think for one moment: if the Dardanelles troops had only been in Serbia! If the Press had only been guided by some strategic insight into affairs, instead of abusing the generals who achieved their right strategy in the West, it would have thundered for the support of Serbia and the obliteration of Bulgaria and the Greek King.

The Man-in-the-Street has now a good grip of the strategy of the war up to the winter of 1915. He sees that the war opened with a ferocious onslaught by the German in the West to secure his First Plan of Campaign. He was hopelessly defeated. He then tried to secure his frontier in France to the French sea-ports along an ideal defensive line to Cape Griz Nez—he failed. Besieged in the West, he turned to his Second Plan of Campaign, the defeat of Russia in order to secure his Pan-German Map. We have seen the Russians, after repeatedly defeating him, at last retreating before him and at last pinning him in the East. As part of that campaign we have seen first Turkey then Bulgaria throw off the mask and declare for the Second Plan of Campaign. We have seen the year end with Serbia broken, and Germany's Second Plan of Campaign won. She has achieved her Pan-German Map.

### III

#### GERMANY BEGINS HER PEACE STRATEGY

The moment Germany won her Second Plan of Campaign—her Pan-German Map—a wholly new strategy reveals itself. It has had its beginnings even as Warsaw's empty streets resound to the march

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of her legions. It is very significant. And perhaps the most fantastic thing about it is the ponderous "statecraft" and secrecy of Germany, which is so childish that it draws attention to the very thing it would hide; yet so dullard is the world at large that it cannot see the obvious.

In Turkey the Kaiser toyed with the faith of Islam; over Warsaw his flying men dropped leaflets promising freedom to the Poles, asking the Russians why they fought for an autocracy—while the democratic creed was mixed with the religious, and the Star of Islam and high-priest of Luther fluttered down on pamphlets in a coloured cover on which the Virgin and Child sat between medallions of the Pope and the Kaiser!

Next at Warsaw looms a more significant fact. The German is clearing the ground to fly the Peace dove. Just for one moment consider the strain upon the Kaiser that makes him surrender so dramatic a parade as the entry into Warsaw at the head of "my unconquerable armies!" But the Kaiser forgoes this theatrical entry into empty Warsaw—perhaps Moscow appears to the All-Highest in dreams. At any rate there was uneasiness about this silent Warsaw. Instead the Kaiser issues a now-famous manifesto which clearly is meant to be heard in his august all-mighty voice beyond his invincible battalions, and out of it has vanished the Mailed Fist and Kultur and Attila and all the clap-trap of All Highestness!

"Before God and history my conscience is clear. I did not will the war" . . . then the lie about his enemies for ten years conspiring to destroy him . . . "no lust for conquest drove us into war . . . defensive

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war . . . the enemy armies who boasted that they would enter Berlin in a few months . . . the naval battles off near and distant coasts testify what German anger in self-defence and what German strategy can do . . . no violation of international law by our enemies is able to shake the economic foundation of our conduct of war" . . . and all the rest of it.

No. This is not the speech of a felon in the dock, but of the All-Highest of Germany before fallen Warsaw!

Qui s'excuse s'accuse.

But why?

This is not the strut of a conqueror about to lead his victorious legions into a surrendered city. There is now no hint of the Baltic strand, nor the destined overlords of mankind, nor The Day, nor even "My invincible sword." Nay; for a Hohenzollern it is almost humble, modest.

But why?

The Mailed Fist is fumbling with the Peace dove.

Curiously enough there are sealed lips on the Second Plan of Campaign. Not a word.

Berlin echoes.

During August, 1915, the German Chancellor, on the 19th, began his indictment of Britain as having made the war! He forgets that he has already accused Russia and France and the wide world. He vows that in July, 1914, Germany had striven for peace! He even expects to be believed. He glories in a "Poland freed from Russian tyranny"! vows that "Germany must win the freedom of the seas" "not as England did, to rule over them, but that the seas might be at the equal service of all people!" swears that "Germany will in the future be the shield

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of small peoples!" declares that "Germany did not hate the warring peoples, but calls for a terrible retribution for the guilty leaders who had driven them to make war on peaceful Germany!"

This from him who was bitterly indignant that an ambassador should regard a treaty as anything but "a scrap of paper!"

Here was the Peace dove with a vengeance!

Kultur is swallowed like bad physic—or rather thrown to the dogs. The despised and decayed moral of her enemies is set upon the altars of the German Faith with a wink to the scene-shifters to hide Kultur in the cellar awhile!

Yet the world said that Germany was all-conquering! The Press and even our Statesmen could think and indeed could say that "so far Germany had not yet lost a battle!" That the German had been defeated almost consistently since the beginning of her war seemed to be a blank to these dullard brains. That she had won amazingly few battles was a like blank. That France and Britain had defeated her on land and sea, that Russia had defeated her again and again in whole campaigns, that little Serbia had twice crushed her armies in two campaigns, all this seemed as nothing. The Germans had won at Tannenberg. So profoundly lacking in all strategical vision was a vast public that they looked on the siege of Germany by the victorious French and British as being on French soil, therefore something of a German victory. We find the very statesman appointed to check *The Times* and *Daily Mail* saying as excuse for them that "up to this moment the only victory to the credit of the Allies is the Battle of the Falklands!" This was at the end of 1915! An important maga-

zine, the writer having the columns of the Press open to anything he cared to write, betters this by "so far the Germans have won; it would be moral cowardice to deny it." This same writer likewise showed the same deep insight into the German Peace-strategy: "The Germans want peace, not because they are exhausted, but because they have technically won!" Now this means, if it mean anything, that the Germans had smashed the French and British in the West, had put their arms out of all further action, had smashed the Russians, and were dictating peace!

At once America, as the only powerful neutral, was worked upon to suggest Peace.

The German blundered in nothing more profoundly than in his estimate of America. He looks upon America as a hotch-potch of mongrel breeds. There is no living country more absolutely national than America. The German is incapable of plumb-ing such a fact. Nothing deceived the German more profoundly than the American temper.

Now we have just seen how much the public and the Press realized the victorious state of their own arms, and the defeated state of the German arms. How exactly did America appear to the Man-in-the-Street amongst the Allies at this time?

Even to the British the American attitude was perplexing enough. But the Briton looks upon American affairs as their own business. If the American wished to keep out of the war, that was his right. But in his heart the Briton was perplexed. Commerce is a great asset to a people; but a people has that which is higher than commerce—its soul. For the American to put his commercial interests before his soul in his diplomacies and in all his utter-

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ances frankly shocked the Allies in their secret thinking. The Allies knew besides that their war was America's war—that the German had set forth to conquer America quite as much as to conquer them. They knew at the same time that President Wilson had a difficult course to steer. The unstrategic British treatment of Ireland was a nasty snag in his voyage; a large German element in America was difficult to calculate upon; and, above all, Russia was a by-word for tyranny. It was clear from the beginning that the real American was heart and soul with the Allies; and it contented them. It was a moral strength. The refusal of America to be dictated to by Germany as to her traffic with the Allies was practically an alliance with the Allies. Yet the President, who was deeply respected by the Allies as a transparently honest man, spoke and wrote on occasion in a dry academic strain that deeply offended the Briton and Frenchman. The harping on the commercial interests of America, when Britain and France were flinging commerce to the winds and bleeding and dying that the world might be saved, offended the Allies. The tart academic insistence on the Allies' heeding old laws at sea which would have left them a helpless prey to the blatant repudiation of all these same laws of war and of the sea by the enemy who was openly vaunting his own acts of piracy, offended the Allies. But perhaps nothing offended them more than that whilst the Americans kept out of the war, as they had every right to do, and no one blamed them for doing, from self-interest, the American Government took the high moral stand and, instead of frankly admitting self-interest, set up American neutrality as "the guardian of human welfare." This at once struck a note of

cant. It were as though a shopman, a quite honest fellow, went down to do a business deal arrayed in shining armour, vowing that he did not seek profit but the good of mankind, and looked on complacently whilst his neighbour in simple tweeds risked his life to save a drowning woman. The Briton refused to believe America meant it.

Then turn to Germany. When America threatened Germany if her people were slain, and Germany, slaying them by foul breach of international law, found that America only went on threatening instead of smiting, Germany came to the conclusion that America would not fight. And it was in this strange state of affairs that, on the 31st of July, 1915, the German Embassy lost a portfolio in the New York Elevated Railway. Whether the British Secret Service took it or not, the *New York World* published the documents. From that day, war with Germany was inevitable; yet so dense was the German mind that it thought the soul of America incapable of a vast sacrifice. As a fact, America had fretted all the time.

At the end of 1915 the British public were getting restive. But talk of Peace angered the nation. The murder of Nurse Cavell on the 12th of October had raised that anger to fever-pitch. The Armenian massacres cried to heaven for vengeance. The popular unrest, fed on censorship, took the form of blaming our strategy; and there was a clamour for a General Staff in London. A War Council was set up. The want of good strategic direction in London was obvious; but you cannot suddenly create strategists out of "organizers" by a vote of Parliament.

On the 15th of December, Sir John French expressed his wish to return to England and resign the

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Command at the Front—his able lieutenant, Sir Douglas Haig, was appointed in his stead. Sir John French was raised to a Viscounty, and in taking his title from Ypres he knew that he was taking the name of one of the supreme and most decisive battles in the making of modern civilization, which he had won as the crowning achievement of a career through which his stoutness of heart, his indomitable valour, and his swift design had led his troops to mighty victory.

All hope for Germany of breaking her enemies was absolutely gone by the winter of 1915. She was, however, at the height of her best position during the war—she could never hope to reach even this hollow position again, and from it she decided to fly the Peace dove. Remember, she would rather have flown it after the Marne, but dare not—her Second Plan of Campaign was so near and yet so far from completion. She was now besieged, but she was on a front in enemy territory. This impressed the unthinking Press of those countries. *And she had won her Second Plan of Campaign. Her Pan-German Map was in being.* From that moment Germany openly played for Peace.

If the German could only get Peace with that Pan-German Map secure, he would have won his war. He could not win it by war; he *might* win it by Peace!

Peace had been Germany's best strategy from the day the German fell back on the Aisne—if he could barter Belgium arrogantly for Serbia; but he was then in no position to bargain—1914 had gone out with Germany steeped in disasters everywhere. But now, as 1915 went out, she knew that her enemies were increasing whilst she was decreasing; and if she had



failed in her strength, she must go to utter wreckage when she was wholly inferior in men, artillery, and shell. The strangle-hold of siege was upon her. And her enemies were in no hurry—they were bleeding her to death. The vast ring of her siege was now telling to her strategical disadvantage; and she dare not shorten it—dare not go back on to her own soil even if she could, and she could not. She had not even been able to break little Serbia without calling in Bulgaria.

Germany now pushed close her intrigues at the Russian Court. Peace was secretly offered, with hopes of detaching Russia from the War. What passed between the corrupt bureaucracy of Russia and Germany it is not easy to discover. If, as is said, the weak Tsar were nudged to the danger to autocracy if Germany fell to the democracies, it only proved him a dullard—for if the conquering Russians stood for Revolution, how much more bitterly would defeated Russia stand for Revolution? At any rate the German corruption of the Russian Government was now so widespread that the Grand Duke Nicholas is said to have bluntly told the Tsar that, if it were not stopped, the end of the Romanoffs was at hand. Munitions were being diverted, plans given to Germany, and generals debauched. The head of the Government was betraying the people and the armies. The state of the Russian armies became pitiable.

Germany's statesmen were boasting and bragging and telling the world to "look at the map." The Chancellor almost wept to think the Allies would not see that they were beaten. But finance, founded on indemnities, was bringing Germany to bankruptcy. She could pine now only for a "financially favourable

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peace." Her colonies, her foreign investments, her shipping, her overseas commerce, all were gone. The Chancellor was now proclaiming on every occasion Germany's "innocence," and that she had been attacked. Belgium would never be given back to "French tyranny"—nor Poland to reactionary Russia!

*In the February of 1916, Germany boldly posted all over the land a large Map which she openly called the Pan-German Empire. It was its sixth edition!*

Germany straightway made her great bid for the best Peace she could get.

# 1916

THE BESIEGED GERMAN STRUGGLE FOR A PEACE THAT  
WILL ESTABLISH THE FRUITS OF HER SECOND PLAN  
OF CAMPAIGN

VERDUN

"The Germans need a Victory."

JOFFRE'S *Order of the Day*.

Now the German troops, reinforcements and reserves, meant for Russia, diverted to France by "Joffre's offensive of 1915" for the battles of Loos, Artois, and Champagne, kept swelling until the German Staff suddenly bethought them of wiping out their defeats along the line by a concentration of their masses on its flank—the French position of Verdun. They knew by the Allied Press that Verdun was lightly held. They decided on this great sortie against the Western siege. The lying and

bragging of the German propaganda, to the end that France was on the defensive, only took in the public and the politicians. The German Staff knew very differently. The French victory of the Champagne was difficult to explain. Into the death agony of Verdun they were about to pour the manhood of their people with reckless desperation. We have seen that, *strategically*, only such a dullard as the Crown Prince could have shrieked "Nach Verdun—Paris!" The German Staff knew, behind sealed lips, that such was fool's talk—only fit for German Crown Princes.

Britain was daily increasing in strength and munitionment. And the German nightmares were: the Great Offensive from the Sea, and the Russian Peril in the East. Joffre's offensive of 1915 had twice nearly led to a decision. The next—well; it had not been lost on the German General Staff.

The best Peace could only be had at the height of German "success," as the hollow thing could best be advertised as such to gulls; and what did the Allied public understand of strategy? The amount of enemy country held was the impressive thing to them. And fancy Peace offered from the conquered "fortress" of Verdun!

Falkenhayn had succeeded Moltke in the Western Command; and the Crown Prince's Chief of Staff, Eichorn, having gone to Hindenburg early in 1915, had given place to an old general, Haeseler, who had botched Antwerp by attacking the city from his right—and so letting the Belgian army slip out on his left—he had blundered later on the Yser with Würtemberg whereby the flank to the sea had been closed against the German. Falkenhayn, however, knew him as one of the old school of Prussian thrusters—a fighter who

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relied on vast concentration and a vast weight of men and metal. He was an old man; but the new schools had failed; so the old school was given a trial.

Verdun suited him. The French about Verdun were in a salient sufficiently small to have its communications by rail brought under artillery fire—and the Germans were near St. Mihiel. But—as the Germans were about to discover—the French had made their line of communication independent of railways by motors. The Germans had Metz near at hand with its splendid source of supply for the venture. The German position was indeed most powerful. So, concentrating masses of troops, covered by feints during late January and early February in 1916—at Ypres, Armentières, Arras, Vimy, on the Somme, at Frise, in the Argonne, in the Vosges, even towards Belfort—whilst the garrisons in Belgium poured down their quota of Germans with the reserves from Germany, the woods to the east of the Meuse were jammed with armies in early February, with an enormous massing of guns at Spincourt and Gremilly to smash down (from the flank) the positions for the frontal assault of the infantry.

The 1,500 guns opened on the northern section of the French salient with a bombardment of terrific power—it obliterated not only the French defences on their front, but everything else there. The effect on such troops as were in that zone must have been terrible. But, *there were very few troops* round those three sides of Verdun! When the guns had demolished the landscape the massed German infantry were hurled forward for their victorious march into Verdun. The Crown Prince had strutted amongst the waiting masses and gone about promising Paris to the con-

fidant troops with his fatuous: "Nach Verdun—Paris!" The commanders issued magnificent exhortations. It is said that the men were often drugged for the attack. "Four days—Verdun!" The guns "lifted their noses," and opened a barrage to prevent French reinforcement beyond; and forward lurched the masses of field-grey German infantry on the 21st of February, 1916, from Consenvoye on the Meuse to Ornes by the Spincourt Forest—striking south on Verdun—120,000 men (three army corps), their flanks supported across the Meuse and towards the Woëvre by swarming troops. They poured in solid masses over the battered and obliterated advanced French positions, and then met a roaring hell of fire to which they could ill reply and on which their guns dare not now be directed. It was the work of only 12,000 Frenchmen, whose support by reinforcement through the German barrage of 1,500 guns was not even a scant hope. No wonder the Germans continued in their delusion that the French were in enormous strength. For five days these Frenchmen held the vast masses, spite of liquid fire and every devildom—a sublime act of war.

Every precaution had been taken to evacuate Verdun if necessary, rather than suffer great losses in men.

Now, without going into the tactical details of the long fight over Verdun, it is well to understand the main reasons for the crushing German defeat. Their hosts were beaten by superior strategy and valour.

Joffre knew that Verdun would always be heavily massed by the Germans—indeed for the Germans to have their forces weak before Verdun meant death, in fact the piercing of the German line at Verdun

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would mean the annihilation of the whole of her western armies or their surrender. Joffre knew that this massing near Verdun would inevitably lead one day to a vast conflict there, and he forestalled it absolutely. So that when it did come, he meant to make it a fearsome German blood-letting.

How exactly the Germans would attack Verdun it was impossible to tell to a detail beforehand. And when it came, the French Staff naturally had to beware of feints. But the moment it developed, the French acted accordingly, backed by steady preparation.

The French and British Press, of course, began to fling criticism, especially against the neglected and weak state of Verdun; but the French Press promptly got short shrift—the British Press did not matter.

Verdun was *not* weak—as it proved. The Germans trampled into a death-trap.

What had happened was somewhat thus:

Joffre had long prepared for it. The British had steadily taken up a longer and longer stretch of the French Front, relieving French armies which Joffre had concentrated behind Verdun until the country as far back as Revigny and Bar-le-Duc was one vast camp, magnificently munitioned and gunned. Into one or two great strategic reasons for this it would not be wise to go at present; but one strategic reason here concerning us was to make a German attack on Verdun a death-trap. To talk with the Crown Prince of "breaking through" and "Nach Verdun—Paris" is the gibbering of idiots. However, the advanced positions of the French in front of Verdun were very sparsely held; but behind them on strong positions were strong supports most skilfully entrenched, as on

the Talou and Poivre (Pepper) Ridges and the Meuse Heights, their main bodies being at close call at Verdun and west of the Meuse (or left bank, the Meuse river running northwards); whilst farther back, west (or this side the Meuse) vast French armies lay encamped. The troops about Verdun were under the good command of Herr, the right wing commander of Langle de Cary. The French Staff at first troubled by the German gun preparation extending across the Meuse river to the west, quickly realized the main attack of the Germans was on the east side of the river, swiftly took advantage of the old German General's blunder in neglecting the west bank which had really been the danger point, since its seizure would have put the French on the right bank in peril of enfilade, and instead of falling back, when two days of the German infantry attack revealed the full German intention on the right bank, they sent orders to Herr on February 23rd to hold on at all costs, and Joffre on the 25th gave Petain supreme command over the whole region. French troops under Nivelle and Balfourier were poured across the Meuse to support Herr, and the French poured on to the western bank on the 24th and 25th of February, where they at once flanked the German attack from the low heights across the river, and brought to a standstill the Germans who had carried Brabant and Samogneux before Herr's heroic stand, and smashed the German on the Talou Ridge. We shall see Haeseler retired and a new German tactic developed down *both* banks of the river, but it was then too late—the surprise was over. Powerful French reinforcements were pouring in everywhere. On the 26th Balfourier with the famous 20th Division—the Ironsides or “Iron Division”—

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marching across the Meuse, swung in his brigades as they arrived. The Kaiser's famous Brandenburgers had rushed the shell-struck zone, as the German troops staggered forward, fell back, staggered on again, and were held; and with reckless courage some of the Brandenburgers had reached and set foot in the outskirts of the battered blood-stained fort of Douaumont which was the key to Verdun. Balfourier, stopping the gap between Pepper Ridge and Douaumont, flanked and overwhelmed the Germans at Louvemont, and swung on to Douaumont, cutting off and surrounding the Brandenburg regiment. As the crack corps of the Kaiser surrendered to the "Iron Division," the Germans before Verdun knew that the Battle of Verdun was a French victory—80,000 French troops burst into song—the triumphant singing of the *Marseillaise*.

For three days the Germans were launched to assault after assault on Verdun, now against strongly occupied lines; with astounding courage they tried to win back to victory; but the field-grey masses were dashed against the Talou heights, the Pepper Ridge, and Vaux, against the French guns, enduring fearful slaughter from shell, broken by the onset of the French bayonets, and driven back in rout again and again. With a loss of 60,000 men, the broken German columns collapsed and were taken out of the disaster. The French lost 20,000 men; but stood victorious on the heights before Verdun.

Joffre refused to attack. The German was doing what he wanted—bleeding to death. The rest of Joffre's line and the British made no forward move.

After a lull, the Germans altered their plan, tried both sides of the Meuse, and launched on the 4th of



March another attempt on Verdun, flinging fresh armies on a wider front again and again. Joffre counter-attacked and again allowed them to advance until at last the slopes of Verdun became a German slaughter-house. The Germans are said to have lost before Verdun a quarter of a million men. By the 9th of April, 1916, the First Battle of Verdun had ended in the defeat of beleaguered Germany.

And all the while, Britain was growing stronger, Russia recovering.

Before glancing at the Second Battle of Verdun, let us see how the secondary operations were going.

In Mesopotamia, the 3rd of December, 1915, had seen Townshend driven back into Kut, with the Turks closing round his 10,000 men—Ctesiphon had lost him 4,500. Townshend was the victim to a vast blunder which he had pointed out to his chiefs. By the 5th December four Turkish divisions were round about him. The arrival of a new Turkish division from Gallipoli on the 23rd caused the last enemy onrush with heavy Turkish losses; they now settled down to blockade. On April 24th the heroic garrison of 2,070 British and 6,000 Indians surrendered. At any rate it had helped in the fall of Erzeroum and Trebizond. The untold misery of the breakdown of the organization was relieved by the heroism of the siege and the valour of the relieving force that failed within sound of Townshend's guns.

At Salonika, after the landing in October, 1915, in face of the difficult country the Allied line was made into a strong defensive position from whence to prevent treachery in Greece, and to support Serbia if Bulgaria gave the chance. It was a most wise move,

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but should have been made stronger. It was fortunately to be under a great commander, Sarrail. In May, the 100,000 Serbs, refitted at Corfu, joined the Salonika line. Verdun had drawn away the German threat. On the 26th the Greek King allowed the Bulgarians to occupy some forts. The German was using Bulgaria as a kitchen garden; but the Bulgarian had to suffer it—was he not promised a splendid realm?

The state of Constantinople was dreadful. In February, Enver, to strengthen his waning position, murdered the heir to the Turkish throne, Prince Yussuf-ed-din, a dangerous enemy to the Germanized party. Any attack on Egypt was unlikely; and Egypt swarmed with British troops. And a short sharp attack on the Suez put a stop to much intrigue; whilst, across the Canal, May saw the small Turkish efforts smashed.

In Russia Ivanoff attacked Czernowitz at Christmas, 1915, and broke up Mackensen's Balkan plans. Towards Riga the Germans had a set-back, with fearful losses; in the south the Russians hammered the Austrians in March at Uscieszko; in the centre, Ewarts, to relieve Riga, started an offensive against Hindenburg on the 18th of March, attacking until April and winning ground at Lake Narotch; but, having won, he withdrew his artillery to send it elsewhere, and was at once counter-attacked by the Germans and lost his gains. But a far worse evil befell Russia in the spring of 1916—there were political changes and the scoundrel Sturmer became Premier.

Farther East, Erzeroum fell to the Russians on the 16th of February, and Trebizond on the 18th of April.

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With an eye to American neutrality, von Tirpitz was dismissed in March. But the sinking of the *Sussex* on the 24th brought President Wilson's speech on the 19th of April attacking the German submarine policy, and threatening Germany if passenger and merchant ships were not protected. Germany insolently bargained. Wilson declined bargains—he stood for right.

In April occurred the futile Sinn Fein tragedy in Dublin.

France lost her great hero, Gallieni, on the 27th of May.

When Verdun was assailed, the German Staff looked on its fall as a matter of four days. They were nervous the while about the British line and had to keep strong bodies opposite to it; but the British were not out for attack. Haig was simply creating a vast British army. Behind him, France was a huge training school. It must be remembered that Britain now had 5,000,000 men under arms—next to the French the highest rate for its population!

The British line stretched from Ypres to the Somme.

Joffre did not wish them to do anything in collusion with Verdun.

There was much raiding. There was some very stiff fighting about Ypres, for the Germans held all the high ground, and Ypres is a salient. All February the Germans tried to flatten out that salient, particularly in the east at Hooge. To the south they got a footing at the Bluff; but Haldane retook it on the 2nd of March—the men wearing the steel helmets for the first time. So ding-dong went the attacks. The Germans were using gas a great deal; on the

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29th of April the wind veered and the gas caused disaster to themselves. May saw much fighting for the Vimy Ridge. On the 2nd of June the Germans made a terrific effort against Ypres—the bombardment was very great—and they pushed down their slopes but were held by the most heroic efforts—the Canadians retook the positions on the 15th of June.

The death of Moltke on June 18th made Falkenhayn Chief of the German General Staff.

Italy meanwhile, quite apart from the silent but enormous moral loss to Germany, had been fighting a resolute and stern fight for the gateway to the great overthrow of the German might. If her difficulties prove nothing else, they prove that her gates must be given to her, not to her enemies. Italy must possess the Trentino—he who holds the Trentino commands the north of Italy. By mid-June Cadorna had stalled off the Austrian offensive and launched his counter-offensive. Austria had crowded men and guns into this business, when, in Galicia, Broussiloff struck against her with hammering blows (June 4th).

### *The German Makes His Last Throw to Break the Siege*

The May of 1916 was to be a month of bad defeat for the German. On the last day of the month he made his gambler's throw with his Great Fleet.

On Wednesday the 31st the German High Fleet was defeated in the Battle of Jutland.

It was clear that the German Fleet would never fight except at long odds. Beatty with the Battle Cruisers lured him at these long odds at last; and the German Fleet under Scheer was hammered by

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Jellicoe and only by darkness saved itself from annihilation.

It was significant that Germany at once used its propaganda to crow a victory, the Kaiser surpassing himself. It is even more significant that the British Press were impressed and tricked by it!

Unfortunately, on Monday the 5th of June, Lord Kitchener, embarking for Russia to arrange about the coming offensive, on the *Hampshire*, just back from the Jutland victory, was drowned about eight at night by the ship striking a mine; and in Kitchener died the man of vision. He had lived to see the strangle-hold closing on defeated Germany. His supreme loss lay in his not being at the Peace table when the German Kultur plays its last stake—his vision had been then a thing of value.

### *The Second Battle of Verdun*

The First Battle of Verdun had left Germany defeated on the 9th of April; sheer fear of loss of reputation and a hankering to fling Peace at the world from "the fortress of Verdun," alone account for the second slaughter of her badly needed men to which she now used her futile strategy. She knew of no other way to meet the coming Allied offensive which sat upon her like a nightmare.

Pétain was then commander from Soissons to Verdun in place of Langle de Cary, Nivelles taking his place as commander of the II<sup>nd</sup> army.

Into the tactics we need not here go.

It began on the 3rd of May with intense bombardment of 100 guns on Hill 304. It may be described as first of all an overwhelming effort of the German

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right to take Hill 304 and the Mort Homme, so as to thrust back the French on their last positions—it succeeded in taking the hills, but failed to press back the French on their last positions. At the same time, the French counter-attacked on the Douaumont Ridge. The end of the battle was a tremendous German attack from Douaumont on the last French lines covering Verdun, in which the Germans won Fort Vaux, Thiaumont, and Fleury, and were within four miles of Verdun.

The small number of French troops that struck back at the German masses was extraordinary, and their employment was a masterpiece of tactical skill. Had it not been so, the terrific German artillery bombardment must have annihilated them. It is almost incredible that two French regiments defeated assault after assault of a whole German army corps on Hill 304 on May 7th, preceded by intense bombardment that levelled the earth, and accompanied by the German guns lifting to a barrage behind the French that made all reinforcement impossible! Mort Homme cost the Germans appalling losses in the winning—the Bavarians strewing the slopes and raising the ground by several metres high with mounds of dead.

May went out with the French position unbroken; they were not even pushed back on their main defences on the left of the Meuse.

On the right the Germans made their supreme effort from Douaumont with a prodigious bombardment of Vaux. The 2nd and 3rd of June saw wave after wave of Bavarian infantry mown down by the French fire. Major Raynal's defence of Fort Vaux will live for ever in French history—even the Germans honoured it. The Germans carried Thiaumont, but

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Nivelle recovered on the last day of June. Henceforth Nivelle compelled the Germans to his design. Two months later, Falkenhayn fell from power; Germany confessed defeat at the Second Battle of Verdun. It served no strategic purpose but to slay the reserves of German strength. And the German had sore need of them; for the great allied offensive was opening on the Somme.

The British were only waiting to "go over the top."

### *The Russian Summer Offensive of 1916*

Before we follow the great Somme battles, let us see how the other moves were going.

The Russian Summer Offensive of June followed the long pause after the breakdown of the central offensive at Lake Narotch in April, and was to take place at the same time as the British offensive in the West, so soon as the Germans had exhausted themselves on Verdun. But to relieve Italy, a Russian general attack along the whole line was put out as a feeler on the 1st of June. Against the southern end of this German line of about a million men Broussiloff, who had succeeded Ivanoff, called away to Headquarters, now sent forward a hard testing offensive from the Pripet Marshes to Roumania. On Sunday, the 4th of June, the Russian infantry went "over the top."

The Russian line in front of Rovno surprised and smashed the Austrians, and scattered them in disaster, reaching Lutsk and capturing great booty of men and guns on the 6th of June; by the 16th Kaledin was on the Galician frontier, with 70,000 prisoners and 53 captured guns. Hindenburg hurried

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riedly gathered what troops he could to counter-attack, dreading the loss of Kovel which would separate the southern German armies from the central. The German counter-attack under Linsingen was not a great affair, but it kept Kovel, though it scarcely comforted Hindenburg. Rogoza, who was north of the Marshes, attacked the Germans and kept reinforcements tied up there in early July. South of Kaledin's army, Sakharov pushed the Russian line forward towards Brody. Farther south the Russian push was more or less held up. But in the difficult country of the Bukovina which the Hungarians accounted impregnable, Lechitsky blasted them with gunfire and then poured the Russians over on that same devastating Sunday, the 4th of June, that had seen Kaledin's triumphant lunge at Lutsk. By the 9th the Russians had taken 18,000 prisoners and 10 guns. The enemy broke and bolted. On the ninth day, Lechitsky had 38,000 prisoners, 700 odd officers, and 49 guns. On the 17th of June Czernowitz was in Russian hands. Lechitsky did not dawdle; he pursued the flying Austrians, and by the 23rd the Bukovina was Russian. Thus in three weeks, 4,000 officers, 194,000 men, 219 guns, and 644 machine-guns were the Russian capture. It proved that when Russia was gunned and munitioned and well railwayed, she was more than a match for the Germans.

Broussiloff now made for the straightening of his line by threatening Brody. Lesch's army was brought down to Broussiloff's right wing. Ewarts struck to keep reinforcements from being sent against Lesch, who, on the 4th of July, smashed forward through the Austrians, and with Kaledin's right was



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across the Stokhod on the 8th of July, with 12,000 prisoners and 45 guns out of the flying enemy.

Linsingen now projected a counter-blow for the 18th of July to drive back Kaledin and Lesch from Volhynia. But Broussiloff forestalled it; struck hard and swiftly, sent Sakharov at the Austrian flank, cut to pieces three newly arrived Austrian and German divisions on the 16th, taking 13,000 prisoners and 30 guns. He pushed on, and the 20th of July saw Berestechko fall to him, a wedge driven into the Austrian line, and 12,500 prisoners. On the 28th July, Brody was in Sakharov's hands, after a bloody business carefully planned to its minutest detail by the Russians, with 40,000 prisoners and 49 guns. Pushing on, by the 10th of August, he had completely turned Bothmer's flank.

Meanwhile Lesch and Kaledin were striking, and though their advance was short, the Stokhod was in their possession.

Lechitsky, down south in the Bukovina, carried all before him; he had taken Kolomea 29th July, Delatyn 8th July, and Stanislau by the 10th August, cutting Bothmer's supplies from Hungary and compelling him to retreat from his "impregnable" position, leaving Kovel and Lemberg threatened.

Alexieff had achieved his aim in lengthening the Austrian line. Broussiloff's great Summer Offensive had completed it, with 300,000 prisoners, while the dead and badly wounded reached 600,000.

The panic set up in Hindenburg's mind is proved by his calling during June some 73 battalions from the Western Front; and in spite of the danger of further thinning, in July he had to take three divisions and odd battalions here and there, making up so

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37 battalions; and in August and September this drain went on at such a rate that by mid-September the reinforcements from the West had reached sixteen infantry divisions, of which 15 went to the southern end with 16 infantry and 3 cavalry divisions from north to south, and a division from the Balkans, whilst Austria brought 7 divisions from the Italian front just as Cadorna began his counter-offensive, and 2 Turkish divisions were added.

The commands were changed. On the 2nd of August Hindenburg was given command of the whole Eastern Front.

Alexieff and Brousiloff's ten weeks' offensive had taught Hindenburg to take no risks.

The Italian, rid of the Austrian threat in the Trentino by the 3rd of June, began his counter-offensive on Friday, June 16th, and by the end of June had thrust the Austrians back again more than half way to their original lines, with a loss of 130,000 and a strategic failure. Cadorna's communications were now secure, and transferring his heavy artillery from the 27th of July, he began a bombardment all along the Isonzo front, made a feint at Monfalcone, on the 6th of August sent his men over the top, and on August 9th he carried Gorizia; by the 15th of August he was master of the Gorizia plain, the vitals of the Corso, 19,000 prisoners, 30 heavy guns, and a large number of machine-guns. He could move towards Trieste.

The Turks, reinforced from Kut and Gallipoli, put pressure on the Russians in the Caucasus, but the Russians were in Erzinghian by the 25th

of July and on the edge of the Anatolian granary of Turkey.

In Mesopotamia the British were carefully preparing for the winter campaign.

Meantime the Turks were concentrating for an attack on Egypt.

But on the 9th of June the Arabs proclaimed independence of Turkey under the Grand Sherif of Mecca.

The Turkish attack in Egypt with 18,000 men on August 4th was broken by dusk, and they were in rout the next day.

In Greece the King's treachery was drifting from bad to worse; and the Allies stupidly took no steps to rid Greece of him. A tomfoolery of Cabinet mongering went on. In August Sarrail was put in command of the whole Balkan front. And the fighting began about the 10th of August.

Suddenly Roumania entered the war on the 27th of August.

It is true that the moment looked propitious, for Broussiloff had struck his first blow in his Summer Offensive on June 4th, Lechitsky entered Czernowitza on the 18th; on the 1st of July France and Britain went over the top to the great Battle of the Somme. But Hindenburg, at vast risk, had poured armies just north of Roumania; and Roumania's war would now be on two fronts.

As a matter of fact, she had better have been kept neutral.

Her time of declaration suited Germany exceedingly well.

She hoped that Roumania would draw large Allied reserves to Salonika, and Russian armies in

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Roumania. And as it turned out, Roumania did launch her strength at the Hungarian passes, instead of defending them; and did *not* attack Bulgaria and smash her. She went to her own undoing and the increase of the Pan-German Map.

*Remember always that Germany's whole fruit of the war was now the Pan-German Map*—for that she was prepared to make vast sacrifice. And the German concentration against Broussiloff had included the Roumanian danger. The Germans were massed almost at Roumania's doors.

### *Battle of the Somme*

Let us go back a month or so to the 1st of July, 1916.

Pétain at Verdun was fighting Germany to kill Germans and save Frenchmen. Verdun was the slaughterhouse of the Hun. Pétain never used up a unit; directly a division suffered it was hauled out to be reformed and a new one put in. He was ready to yield ground at a heavy price. Territory was not "brilliant" to him—only dead Germans. He won strategically—he won tactically.

Joffre was keeping the French and British for quite another affair—to seize the commanding heights in the western line and kill Germans; and in the doing to relieve Verdun, Russia, and Italy. In June the Russians had swung forward in the Summer Offensive, putting half a million Austrians out of fighting. Hindenburg drew armies to save Austria. Germany was now "milking the line" as the soldiers say—robbing divisions of battalions to make new divisions, but this does not increase man-power.

In the West, Germany was dug in behind prodigious fortifications; but from their very rigidity, a break through the bastion would mean the whole line going. Whilst, to get back and shorten the line, was terribly dangerous.

In the British and French lines the guns and shells were in vast quantities, very different from 1915. There was a network of railways, good roads.

In the middle of June there began bombardments and raids all along the line.

On the 24th of June, bombardment increased. German trenches disappeared.

At half-past seven on the morning of July 1st the guns "lifted their noses" for a barrage to cut off enemy reinforcement, and the Allied infantry went "over the top" and from Gommécourt to Maricourt dashed for the German first positions on better and higher ground. From Gommécourt to Thiepval the advantage of observation served the Germans well, and they checked the assault. But south, Mametz fell, Montauban fell—the 6th Bavarians losing 3,000 out of their 3,500 men—the French carried Danneberg, Becquincourt and Bossu and Fay—with a German toll of 6,000 prisoners, guns, and stores, but above all the German dead lay thick. Then fell Fricourt; and, to the French, Hardecourt, Curlu, and Herbecourt, indeed the French even gained German second positions. By the 3rd of July the southern British attack was making for second positions; then fell La Boisselle, then Mametz Wood. The French took Belloy-en-Santerre in the German third position. By the 5th the French were within three miles of Peronne; by the 9th they had carried Biaches a mile outside Peronne—so that General Fayolle under a

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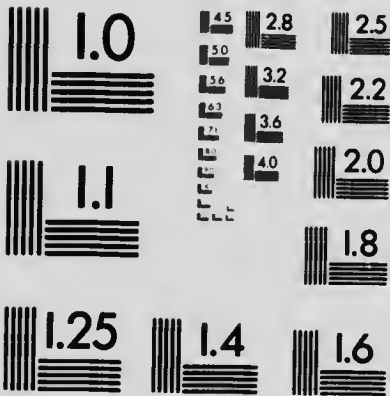
fortnight had carried 50 square miles of dense fortifications and taken 85 guns, 12,000 prisoners. Meantime Contalmaison fell and the German first line was lost for 14,500 yards. The German commander, Blow, at once realized the seriousness of things and, stating to the troops the need for "the victory on the Somme as a decisive" factor in the war, he called on the Germans to counter-attack and recover the lost ground at all costs. They counter-attacked and—failed.

On the great French Fête Day, the 14th of July, began the Second advance. The British carried all before them, and the second line was in their hands—Bazentin-le-Petit and wood, Bazentin-le-Grand and wood, and most of Longueval, Trônes Wood, with 2,000 prisoners, many of them of the Prussian Guards; Ovillers fell on the 16th and Waterlot Farm. The French carried the whole German line from Borleaux to Vermandvillers. On the 23rd the British went over again and soon Pozières fell, and at last the hotly contested observation line at the Windmill; the British were now looking down on the watershed. By mid-August the French had carried the German third positions south of the Somme. On the 18th of August began the next combined attack. The Leipzig Redoubt near Thiepval fell to the British; Maurepas to the French; the British were now on the watershed. On the 3rd of September the British smashed a division of the Guards, and carried Guillemont; the French carried le Forest and Clery, then dashed at and carried the whole German first position from Vermandvillers to Chilly, and on the 6th carried Hôpital Farm, Rainette wood, and Omiecourt. On the 9th Ginchy fell to the Irish By the 10th of



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## 250      **The Siege of Germany**

September the Allies had won their first objective. The British held the German second positions and were on the crest for observation. The French were at the gates of Peronne. From Thiepval to Chaulnes the Germans had lost two years of "impregnable" fortifying.

This was typical of the huge Battle of the Somme that lasted into mid-November with the Battle of the Ancre. Haig and Foch decided that certain things should be—and they were. The whole of the conquered ground had been what the Germans serenely considered one vast impregnable fortress. The officers' dug-outs were luxuriously furnished. The place was a network of wire, machine-guns, and fortified posts. Every acre was counter-attacked by the Kaiser's picked troops in vain.

The fall of Guillemont lost Germany her second position from Thiepval to Estrées. The German had hastily to improvise a third position of defence and a fourth in support. It now ran along the reverse slopes of the main ridge. They had used up 53 divisions and their losses had been very high—the French losses were comparatively light. The German had had to draw heavily in men and guns from before Verdun. The most famous German corps had appeared on the Somme—the Fifth Brandenburgers, all the Guards divisions, the best Bavarians. The British had won observation. Roumania was pouring into Transylvania afar off; Brousiloff was drawing large masses of Germans down against him in the south, too large for Roumania's good, so that she could not have entered the war at a worse time; Sarrail was beginning his offensive in the Balkans.

On the 12th of September the heavy Allied bom-

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bardment for the third German positions began from Thiepval to Ginchy. The "Tanks" were now first used (Machine-Gun Heavies). On the night of the 14th of September the Hohenzollern trench and redoubt were stormed, and on the morning of the 15th our men went over the top, as the guns lengthened their range, preceded by the Tanks. Courcelette fell to the Canadians; the Scots carried Martinpuich (which was *not* in the programme); the London Territorials at last carried the deadly High Wood; the New Zealanders and the New Army carried Flers amidst cheers and loud laughter as the tank waddled up the street unharmed by the hail of German bullets, but on the right the Guards were held up by the famous Quadrilateral near Ginchy. The moral effect on the fine German corps used against the advance was disastrous.

The French had carried Bouchavesnes, then Deniecourt. Meantime bitter counter-attacks failed; and on the 18th the Quadrilateral fell. On the 25th a general attack along the whole line from Thiepval to Combles aimed at driving the German to his fourth position. Soon fell Morval, Gueudecourt, and Combles; whilst to the French fell Fregicourt. Meanwhile the British left carried Thiepval and the Zollern Redoubt—the "impregnable pivot" was gone from Germany. So by the 26th the German was on his fourth position; the British had his heights. The British had 26,000 prisoners; and of the 38 German divisions with which they had engaged the British, 29 had to be withdrawn broken and exhausted. The German with fearful losses could not check the steady pressure even behind "impregnable fortifications." Unfortunately the weather broke—

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the October of 1916 is historic for rain. However, the New Army took Le Sars, and much steady work was pushed forward to the German's disadvantage. Meantime the French pressed on. Foch carried Sailly-Sallisel slopes and steadily increased his gains. By the 1st of November the German losses of half a million men had brought them scant return.

The weather cleared on the 9th of November, and Haig, leaping at opportunity, brought the Somme Battle to its close with a great victory. He determined to smash through the obstinate German resistance to the north of his fighting, in spite of their great strength—in their catacombs here whole battalions could assemble in safety, and the entanglements were incredible. Here were the old two-year-made first German lines of fortifications. Haig's system of a covering-barrage for infantry attack was employed on the "impregnable." The bad weather had put the German off his guard; he thought the battle done. The British guns began on the 11th, destroying the wire and parapets; and in the early hours of the 13th the infantry went over the top into the heavy fog that lay over all. St. Pierre Divion fell at once; and the New Army took more prisoners than there were men in the attacking troops—the Highlanders took the "impregnable" Beaumont Hamel by sheer hand-to-hand fighting, and Beaucourt fell to the Naval Division in the valiant fight in which Colonel Freyberg displayed such conspicuous gallantry and leadership. By mid-November the elements decided that the Somme Battle must end, and rang down the curtain on the Allied victory.

Haig and Foch had won their strategic intention. It relieved Verdun, and allowed Nivelle theraat to

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move to victory. It exhausted large German armies and tied them to the West at a most vital time for Russia. It ate up the German reserves. It broke his moral. It shattered his hopes in his "impregnable defence." It proved that the Allies could tighten the strangle-hold where and when they willed. It showed him the half of all his vaunted armies defeated on the defensive behind the strongest fortifications that mortal man could devise for two years—his artillery outmatched—and his hopes conquered in the air. It at once compelled him to "comb out" every man capable of bearing arms from industries as vital to his war as his fighting. The terror of the "blood-bath of the Somme" is whispered throughout Germany to-day. Compelling every man from 17 to 60 to war-work, feeding her populations on the smallest support for life, she turned like one bereft to submarine piracy as a last hope to starve her enemies.

In that grey November he got what joy he could out of the collapse of Roumania—but the Roumanian armies were in being. The German Staff were not so full of joy-bells as Berlin. For, strangely enough:

On the 12th of December, 1916, Germany arrogantly clamoured for Peace.

# 1 9 1 7

GERMANS BEGINS THEIR SECOND RETREAT IN THE WEST

Of the morrow of the Battle of the Somme, scant need to follow details. Haig's and Foch's strangle-hold was too dangerous; and to the German it threatened overwhelming disaster.

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On Sunday, the 4th of February, six heavy counter-attacks were started by the Germans to retake Grandcourt; they failed. On the night of the 5th Hindenburg began to retire from the front at Grandcourt, and the British at once seized the heights. The German Retreat had begun. The German fell back from Miraumont, Petit Miraumont, Warlencourt, Serre, Prisieux; then sharp came his defeat at Irles; then a wide retirement from Noyon salient, as he fell back after the British seizure of Hill 127 in mid-February. But his defeat at Irles had sent the German back farther than he had intended. By mid-March Bapaume, Peronne, Han, Nesle, Roye, Noyon, Terguier Junction, and Chauny were gone from him; and St. Quentin hears the British guns. On April 9th the vital Vimy Ridge before Arras was carried by the Canadians; Feuchy, Boursies and Hermies were carried, with Fampoux; on the 10th Farbus; on the 11th Monchy fell; on the 12th Wan-court and Herinel; on Friday, the 13th, Givenchy, Vimy, Angres, Foyet, Gouzeaucourt, and Bailleul; on the 14th Lievin by Lens and Gricourt by St. Quentin passed from the German. In the great counter-attack on the Australians, the Germans at first gaining ground were hammered, lost their way, and were shot to pieces against their own wire. The French struck from Missy to Rheims—through Berry au Bac, Craonne, Braye, their line swept up to La Fère. After Bullecourt to the British came the great victory of Wytshaete. The German people had been told that the retirement had been made so skillfully that it had destroyed the British offensive—but the German overlords spoke too soon. They miscalculated Haig's power of pursuit. The German

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Staff also learnt the obvious—that to retire a pinned line is not a very safe manœuvre in battle.

Suddenly, in the March of 1917, the miracle happened.

Russia rose in Revolution and overthrew Kingship and autocracy at the very doors of German Kultur. The German Peace intrigue with the Russian Court went down in the Terror. Yet even from the wild chaos Germany hoped to reap—most of all from the Idealists and Extremists and dreamers—but scarce knew how to act or what to do. It brought Revolution to her very vitals; yet perhaps Peace might ensue—by intrigue might be made to ensue. The German began to coo of Democracy and the Freedom of Nationalities—under her own ægis, of course. But on the 1st of July Broussiloff struck his first blow of the new offensive, and the Eastern front heard the roar of his victorious guns. Then came internal quarrelling, and baulked Russia's own genius in war, robbed her of victory, and confused the Western issue. Russia stands hesitant, racked by discord. If she will but close her ranks and fight her war instead of talking of peace, Germany in the East is doomed. Kerensky and her military genius can save her if she have the will to be saved and stand forth as one of the world's great free people. Her future reels before her. . . .

If the Man-in-the-Street would discover what *strategically* is in the minds of the German Staff, he will see that it is chaos, and despair in the chaos leaps into light through the decision uttered by Hindenburg for whom the defeated troops in the West pined—that he might come to them and bring them

victory. He has brought them none; he can but comfort them by his advice that *the German armies can wait until the Ruthless Submarine Campaign has starved Britain.*

This madness at once brought America into the War, that final world-act which not only meant that the whole English-speaking peoples were arrayed to destroy Prussianism for ever, but which showed the utter narrowness of vision of the German genius for war. Germany played a last desperate card, trusting to maim Britain before her American cousins could be ready; but knowing well that if she could not starve Britain before they were ready, then the German cause was hopelessly lost. Germany's utter incapacity to understand the soul of America is astounding. She treated America as she treated little Balkan States; she intrigued in America as though she had a pawn like Bulgaria to play with; and she offended all that was stern and great in America thereby, and gained nothing. She played to the official American's dry sense of legal precedent in world affairs with consummate skill; and, because it seemed to succeed, she grew daring; thinking that America would not fight, she committed the most appalling breaches of the very laws that were sacred to the official mind. She broke international law against America; and because America was patient and enduring, she concluded that she might dare anything. She even went to war with America, looking on American psychology as likely to help her at the Peace table; for answer, President Wilson took early opportunity to reveal that he, if no other head of a great State, realized the German peril and the German psychology, and had sternly decided that European nationalities

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shall be made free; which, to put it simply, is to say that the *Pan-German Map shall be torn to shreds*—that Germany's Second Plan of Campaign must be defeated.

The Germans have been defeated in their First Plan of Campaign; they have won their Second Plan of Campaign. America has said that she shall lose it. And in so saying America has revealed a strategic instinct that will destroy Prussianism for ever—a strategy that alone can do it.

And Germany knows it. *Germany knows that the American President has put his finger on the conspiracy of her vaunted desire for Peace.* And it is for the Man-in-the-Street, in America, in the British Commonwealth, in France, in Russia, in Italy, wherever valour holds up its head against German Kultur, to see to it that the American President has his will. Otherwise, Germany has won her war.

The way seems long in these hectic days of pushfulness and "get-rich-quick-Beelzebub." But the German lies bleeding to death.

He made the world believe that he was invincible in arms and supreme in War. He created his whole people and all its activities into one vast Machine for War. And what has he achieved?

The German War-Machine depended on the smashing of the enemy by prodigious onslaught of artillery followed by overwhelming onslaught of massed hosts of infantry. It was baffled by "digging in" until his enemy was his superior in artillery. The Allies brought forth better strategy; they have waited patiently, under Joffre's genius for war, until the



weapon was forged for the German blood-letting; and Germany lies bleeding to death.

The German by intense battering of his artillery covered the attack of his massed legions of infantry. Strategically he failed. Tactically he failed. He was lured by a false initiative to disaster. His very superiority in men and metal and readiness for war was employed against him to his disadvantage. He was compelled to take the defensive with immense superiority in numbers of men, of guns, and in metal. His enemies soon achieved superiority in numbers of guns, and metal. His only hope is in numbers of men. Where will he get them? Joffre, with keen foresight and calm imperturbable will, made him slay them. They lie in vast hecatombs, now dust on the slopes of Verdun, of the Grand Couronné, on the plains of Flanders, in the wide spaces of Russia. You may call spirits from the vasty deep, but will they pull a trigger when you do call? The poor sacrificed slaves of Prussian Kultur lie deaf to the summons.

It is said by dullards that Germany has done miraculously well; the wise man knows that she has done miraculously badly.

Old Hindenburg said in 1915, bluntly, that Germany's military state was "brilliant, but without a future." At least it is without a future. Look with straight eyes at her might since two years ago—on vast blood-smear'd futility! Not even enough power to keep the traitorous King of Greece upon his spy throne!

The German overlords know that Germany is beaten. But what terrors lie before them in surrendering Kultur with all its hideous crimes must now stand a

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the bar of justice not with the gods of Ruthlessness as judges, but with judges who speak of punishment for those who make wars. There is strange talk of responsibility for war being as grave a crime as any other felony. And to stand before such judgment with not a shred of honour or nobility wherewith to cover his nakedness! Courage? Yes, in abundance and overflowing. But not even the courage to stand now and say, what he aforesaid vaunted, that he made his war, and for what he made his war; but, instead, the bully's eternal refuge, the "squeal" that he was "innocent," that "he was attacked"! And these were they who had been destined by the gods of battle from the Baltic strand to rule the earth with Ruthless valour, and now have no longer the courage even to say it but, the rather, thrust it timidly into the soiled clothes basket!

Joffre's strategy is bleeding Germany to death.

There is a vast gulf between the "truth" and the "strategic truth." It is no good to have a piano if no one can play it. It is a grey triumph to possess "industrial regions" if the price be dead hosts of men.

It is often heard that the Germans hold the industrial regions of Belgium and France and are therefore masters of metal for guns and shells. That is a half-truth. It is quite true—as far as it goes. A boy buying a railway ticket with ten dry peas in his cap is "under ten." The Germans would give Belgium and Northern France to-day for the million dead who lie on the slopes of Verdun and in front of Ypres and Nancy and elsewhere above the iron and the coal.

The all-important thing for the Man-in-the-Street to remember is that the longer that Peace is delayed,

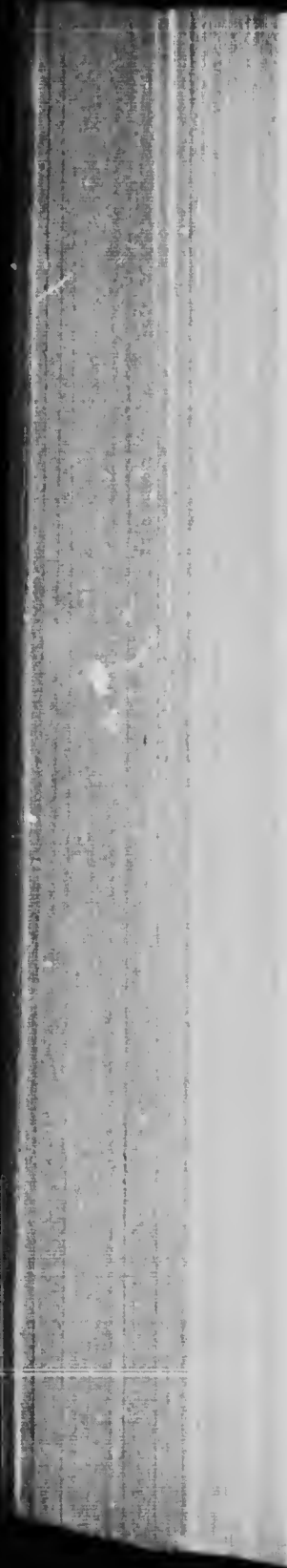
## The Siege of Germany

the worse for Germany. If the Allies are shedding their blood and treasure in the field to destroy the Germans as a fighting force, and their strategy be to exhaust them, it is nothing but the vilest treachery in the Press and the public at home, sheltered from violence and death and self-sacrifice, to fret the strategy of the war and ruin its victory by pressure on the governments to conclude peace for their unheroic comfort. The ruin that threatens Russia from her well-meaning idealists puts a crime upon them that deserves death. And the lesson should not be lost on those at home who advise without strategic vision and dictate with an over-educated ignorance.

Let us see what Peace the German desires, and why, and what Peace he ought to have. For Peace is now Germany's whole hope of victory.

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**Book III**  
**THE PEACE MAP**



## CHAPTER XIII

### LIP-SERVICE REPUDIATION OF KULTUR

THE German set out upon his War, arrogantly proclaiming his own Kultur and his own Moral—insolently kicking down every law and symbol of civilization, which indeed he treated with contempt.

It is the most significant fact of this Great War that the Bully squeals when he is punished—that the Brute Kultur of the German people, vaunted and flung at the world as the new Moral about to be compelled upon it in place of the chivalry and brotherhood and pity of democratic peoples (which marked them as inferior and less valorous folk), at once ceases from vaunting itself and cringes to the Moral of its despised enemies!

If the German were to go down with flag flying, if he, in the day of adversity, still vaunted his Brute Moral, he would at least die with dignity; more, he would give that Moral a weight and authority difficult to blot out of the minds of men. But in the day of adversity he repudiates it with his lips even whilst he continues in its beastlinesses with his hands and brains. Surely a sorry Moral of Ruthless Valour that lacks the courage to vaunt its creed upon the altars of its faith, but hides it in the backyard and sets up its enemy's moral as the court for its appeal, when Adversity knocks at its doors!

## Repudiation of Kultur

This timidity of the people of Ruthless Valour first showed itself in the German sneaking efforts to keep the good opinion of powerful neutrals. It was a crafty and fairly successful strategic at first; but whether so or not, it did not exactly fit the strut of the wonderful and all-conquering race who were marching forth to compel their new Revelation of Ruthless Valour upon inferior peoples!

It must have demanded a rare amount of Ruthless Valour in the German logic to sing hymns of praise to the God of the Christians whilst they were arraying themselves for battle and marching to War, in order to crush the culture of the Man of Galilee under the heel of the Kultur of Ruthless Valour, which in particular was to be put upon the wide world in guttural German as the new Moral that had been granted to their race from the beginning, a Moral that made that race a master race apart!

However, whether it were a dignified part of the new Moral of Ruthless Valour that this elect race for World Dominion should lie and fawn to a great neutral in appeals to that neutral's Moral, the fact is significant. The Blonde Brute's Moral of Ruthless Valour was clearly very like the Bully's boastingness.

But when the Day, to which Germany had clinked glasses for a generation, was arrived, and that Day meant Defeat for her vaunted Invincibility in Arms, the Moral of Ruthless Valour took on a still more significant cowardice. The German, since he openly professed the Moral of Ruthless Valour, was within his moral right to bomb open towns and cities and slay women and children from the skies; but it was a shocking thing for his enemies to meditate such acts upon him!

## Repudiation of Kultur 265

It was within his rights, openly professing the Moral of Ruthless Valour, to sink neutral and merchant shipping with his submarines; but for his enemies to hang the commanders and crews as pirates for the acts which were, in *their* moral, acts of piracy and cowardice, was a scandalous suggestion to come from peoples who did not profess the Moral of Ruthless Valour!

Thus we have Ruthless Valour first objecting to its enemies employing the Moral of Ruthless Valour, then objecting to its enemies carrying out their own Moral against Ruthless Valour!

So we find Ruthless Valour boiled down to this: that the superior breed, the German, is entitled to break all laws that bind inferior breeds, his enemies; and to inflict on him any cowardly or vile treachery or crime; but that if these acts be committed upon *him*, then his enemies are guilty of an enormity which in him is not an enormity but a virtue of Ruthless Valour!

That is called "squealing."

In other words, it is repudiating his Moral of Ruthless Valour when the world practises it until he is master of the world and can compel it upon Creation—by Germans.

What his action against his brother German would be when that brother German launched Ruthless Valour upon him in brotherly fellowship we have fortunately now no chance of discovering.

Ruthless Valour, then, being badly punished and a dire failure against the Brotherhood of Man and Chivalry, the German, at any rate by lip-service, begins to repudiate it.



The next step.

When the German failed in his much-vaunted supremacy in War, with vast superiority of numbers, artillery, munitions and all the engines of war, he took the heroic strut of magnanimous Chivalry, which he had set out to trample down for ever as the quality of inferior races, and he called aloud for Peace—which Ruthless Valour detests—and graciously decided that, though conqueror of Belgium and Northern France and large tracts without his own borders, he was prepared to give back France and Belgium and to go back to a world which otherwise should be as it now was.

Now, mark you, this is not a comic suggestion for the laughter of the inferior races! It is a solemn suggestion by the Statesmen of this valorous and superior breed, the German!

And what is more—and what is vastly more incredible—there are large numbers of quite sincere and rather superior people in this country and other countries so utterly lacking in all common sense, so hopelessly bereft of all strategic thinking, so fatuous a prey to what they believe to be the highest benevolence and humanitarianism, that they are ready to vote their governments into, and urge their Statesmen towards, accepting such a peace!

Far worse than that, there are large numbers of military officers back from the war or who have never been to the war, men who are thoroughly competent for the military duties of a battalion in battle, who are so utterly devoid of all strategic thinking, and so deficient in strategic insight, that they do not hesitate to affirm that the war is a stalemate—that Germany cannot be smashed for years—that in fact peace with

## Repudiation of Kultur 267

Germany will probably come as soon as we can get the Germans out of Belgium and Northern France!

If the German thought for one moment that the Statesmen of the Allies would accept peace to-morrow on condition that Germany withdrew from Belgium and France and gave back Alsace-Lorraine, provided that otherwise things should remain as they are, Germany would leap at Peace.

And she would leap at Peace *because she would have won her War.*

This will be made clear in a minute. Germany would by Peace to-day secure all that she has won by War—and she has lost her War for all time only if she be resolutely denied Peace until she is utterly broken.

Germany is entering upon the most deadly peril to mankind—her Peace Strategy.

From that Peace Strategy the valour of our soldiers unfortunately cannot save us; it rests with one man alone—the Man-in-the-Street. It rests with the Valour of the Democracies; and that Valour is the Valour of the Man-in-the-Street.

Civilization is saved to-day by the Valour of the soldiers of the Democracies; it may be lost to-morrow by the Man-in-the-Street if that man allow his valour to be gulled through ignorance.

Let the Man-in-the-Street surrender his trust to no man; no man can pawn his valour and remain a man.

The German Peace Strategy is the most deadly peril that has loomed upon us since the memory of living man. The Man-in-the-Street and his statesmen and diplomats thought the German's War Strategy the most deadly peril; it has been broken.

## Repudiation of Kultur

And having been broken, the Man-in-the-Street, by the very fact of having broken it, is thereby the greater in danger of the German Peace Strategy.

Let him look to himself !

He slept on an uneasy pillow when the German War Strategy was launched against him ; let him not be caught napping now that the German Peace Strategy is being launched against him with cooing of doves and sweet music of renunciation. The renunciation is a flagrant lie.

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## CHAPTER XIV

### THE GERMAN PEACE STRATEGY

WHAT exactly is the German Peace Strategy?

To the public it seems strangely vague; it happens to be obviously blatant.

It is questionable whether even Ministers of State realized its real significance until a very short while ago. Many do not realize it still.

*Victory or Defeat depends on the Peace Map of Europe.*

Nothing else can decide Victory or Defeat.

As the German commanders sadly turned their backs on the Marne and in the soaking rain rode hurriedly for the entrenched and prepared line that had been selected for them in case of disaster and retreat, they realized one very stark fact—*what the War-Machine at its full power and full strength and highest impulse, with the glamour and moral of Invincibility upon it, had wretchedly failed to do, the broken machine, defeated and dishonoured, would certainly never be able to do.* The crushing of France in a swift campaign was beyond any but a fool's thinking.

There was now only one real hope in the secret conclaves at Berlin—Peace must be had at any cost

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and as soon as possible, if Germany were to hold it own and be able to prepare for another "Day." That was now become the whole strategic aim of the War Lords, or even the downtrodden, bullied and subservient folk of Germany herself might rise and say: We have given you our all in the belief of our invincibility in battle, and you have not even given us that!—and there might be casting down of Imperial Eagle from the shop-front.

As we have seen, *there were one or two little businesses that must be put through first*, if the victorious French and British could only be held in Northern France awhile until the doing. If the Pan-German Map were perfected, then Peace at all costs.

Germany was besieged.

They knew it well enough, though lips must be sealed on that grim business. The people could be hoodwinked until Peace was set afoot; and once Peace was arrogantly offered to the world to prove Germany a dove, the world would jump at it, and the repute of the dynasty would rise to heights only next to that of a crushing victory.

The truthfulness of official accounts of the war that went with triumph at once ceased on defeat. Above all things the people must be kept high in hope and self-respect. Defeat had done the Kaiser no good; Hindenburg was a good card to play.

The Pan-German Map at all costs, then the doves could be uncaged and let fly.

Why this sudden desire for Peace—this eager German love of Peace so abominated by the German Kultur and its whole ambition?

After all, they were well settled in their strong trenches on alien soil! Was not there something

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rather magnanimous in their sudden desire for Peace?

And these vulgar British and Americans so dote on Peace—they are sure to want Peace.

Indeed, there seems to be some deep-rooted fallacy amongst us as a people, that in some way there is something holy and final about signing a Peace.

As a matter of experience, the signing of Peace is often the planting of the roots of War. An unstrategic Peace is a lie and a sham.

It is part of that strange paradox of human life and endeavour wherein we see the unutterably horrible thing called War bringing out the finest traits in man, whilst Commerce, which is supposed to be rooted in Peace, only too often produces the foulest growths in the human soul. The dullard promptly argues, therefore, that the world is better for War than for Peace. The German Kultur holds it as its most basic creed. Yet he clamours for Peace when War hurts his skin!

Why?

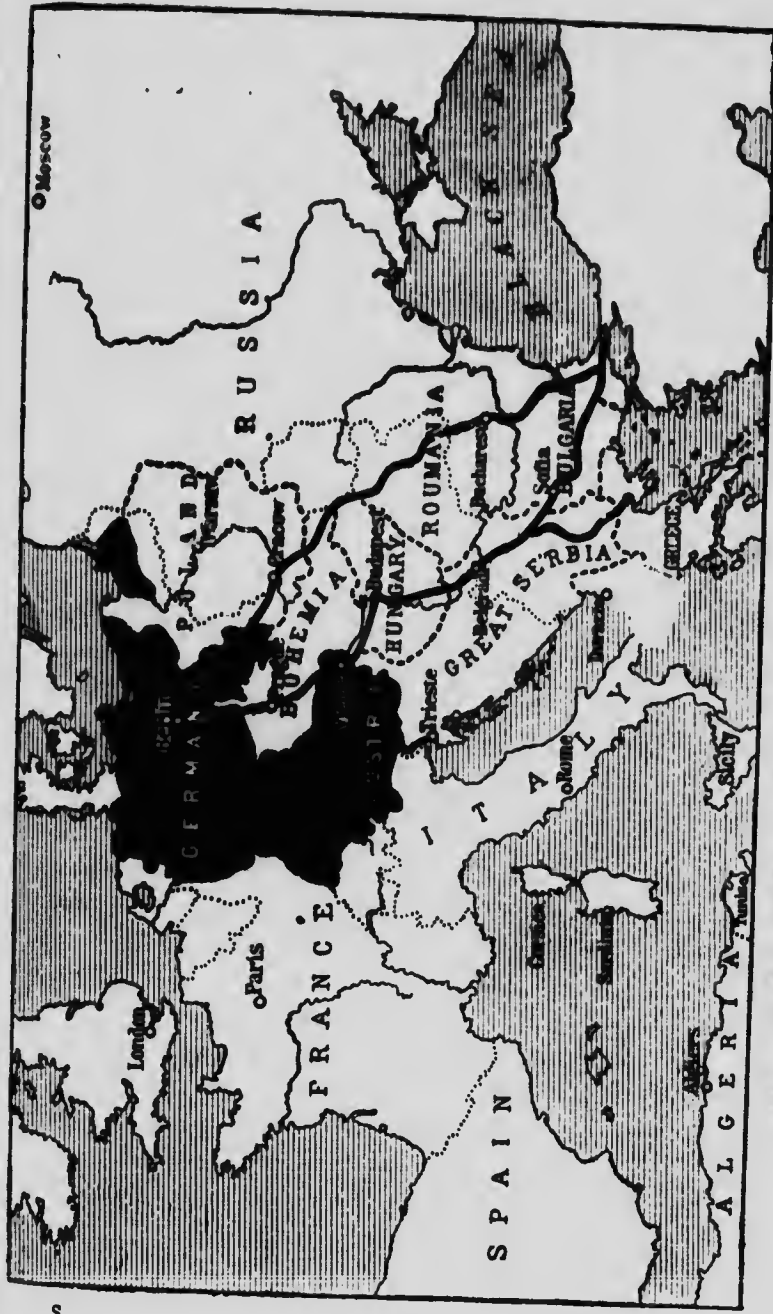
The Man-in-the-Street may think that if the German asks for Peace he has lost his War. There could be no more insane blunder.

I have shown that when a war begins, the strategic student opens his map and that this map tells his trained brain at once what will stand exactly for Victory or what by failing to stand will mean Defeat! The War is always for the making of something on that Map. If that Map is made, then it is Victory for the makers of it. If it fail in the making,



**THE PAN-GERMAN MAP**  
If this map remain at the making of peace, then Germany has won her war

If this map remain at the making of peace, then Germany has won her war



MAP SHOWING THE JUST PLACE FOR GERMANY IN EUROPE

If this map stand at the making of peace, then—and only then—Germany has lost her war



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then it is Defeat. There is no other strategic Victory or Defeat.

That map to the ordinary man, however highly "educated" or badly educated, means just a map, without any particular revelation of strategy—more probably just a vague bewilderment to him. He may buy a few little paper flags on pins to stick into it to show him the ebb and flow of battle; and that is about as far as he gets, and the passion even for this exercise passes in about three to six weeks—if it survive nine days. This intellectual effort bears no relation to strategy.

The map reveals a very different thing to the strategic student.

### THE PEACE MAP OF EUROPE

Let us see what that map tells the strategic student. We have already taken a glance at it. Let us for a moment cast our eyes back over it, and then go a step farther.

Now, we have seen that the Higher Strategy of Germany in the Great War was founded on two plans of campaign, the one the support of the other.

The supreme aim, to conquer Britain and America and step to World Dominion, was to be arrived at by these two plans of campaign. *First*, France must be swiftly crushed, her northern industrial parts and her seaports and the industrial area and seaports of Belgium seized, when Russia was to be attacked and brought to peace; then Britain's turn would come with her sea-power reduced by Germany being at her gates in the Channel, with the French battleships added to the German sea strength and no ally to

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intervene. The *Second Plan* of Campaign, co-ordinating with this, was to create a Pan-German Empire from the North Sea to the Persian Gulf, cutting the world obliquely in two. *As the Second Plan enormously increased the strength of the First Plan* and could be pursued without alarming Britain and America, it was to be completed first, and thoroughly organized, enormously increasing the German fighting strength and baulking her enemies. It was astoundingly valuable in isolating the dreaded Russian and making him of little use as an ally to the West

It onl. required the overthrow of the little State of Serbia to complete this Pan-German Map.

It so happened that in order to complete it, Germany had to go to War and launch herself into the First Plan of Campaign as well.

*The German's strategy failed in his First Plan but succeeded beyond his highest hopes in his Second Plan.* The Pan-German Map is in being.

Let us make no mad mistake about this.

The fall of Serbia made the Pan-German Map a reality. A supine Austria, a treacherous Bulgaria, with a traitorous Turkey and a disloyal King of Greece, by betraying their peoples and putting them under the Prussian's heel, had made that map almost complete. Serbia alone stood in the gate, and with reckless courage tried to save the world. But our diplomats blundered, and she fell. The Pan-German Map was complete.

In the February of 1916, Germany posted a large edition of this Pan-German Map all over the country *as its aim in the War.* To-day that Map is a reality. The only shadow that threatens it is almost fantas-

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tically dramatic. The last thing of which the German ever dreamed was of Revolution in Russia—the fall of the Tsar, and Russia a Republic. Yet Russia, instead of following her great leader Kerensky and her great commanders, is convulsed by vague idealists, who crave to dictate an idealistic peace before they have won their war.

Germany, then, having failed utterly in her strategy in the West, having been defeated and become a besieged people, has one hope of winning her War even yet—that hope is in a Peace which will leave her her Pan-German Map.

If Germany can delude the world into a Peace by juggling with phrases of liberty and humanity or by any misabuse of the Moral of her enemies, so that she is allowed to keep her Pan-German Map, she has won her War.

*Upon the making or unmaking of this Map to-day depends the whole of Civilization.*

No matter what sacrifice Germany makes in the West, no matter what humiliations she eats or is made to eat, if the German hoodwink a world weary of war into a Peace which leaves him his Pan-German Map, he has won his war. The hideous sacrifice of the Allies has been in vain. Britain and America, his ultimate and supreme object of conquest, lie open to his mercy—France is under his eternal threat—Italy is his footstool. Peace will have left the Earth.

If Germany give back Belgium to the Belgians, and Northern France and Alsace-Lorraine to the French, and pay heavy indemnity to Britain, Belgium, and France, for the War—if the Hohenzollern be compelled from his throne—but Peace leave

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the German his Pan-German Map, then Germany has won her war.

Firmly established on that Map, Germany is strategically mistress of the world. With that Map for jumping-off ground, Germany, consolidating her strength and swiftly reorganizing her power, can proceed with enormously increased prospects of success to her dream of World Dominion.

*Now, the one thing that the German dreads at the Peace table is the making of the peoples on the Pan-German Map free. It is the one thing that can unmake that Map. No defeats elsewhere, no other strategy can undo that Map. Yet if that Map stand, Germany has won her war.*

*It is an essential act of a lasting Peace—an act without which Peace is a farce—that the peoples of Europe should be made free.*

There is an extraordinary pedantry to be found in academic minds amongst us—most marked in the type of professor who writes for the Press—that there is some particular drawback to making nationalities free—some particular difficulty—that these nationalities in some way do not want freedom or would be better without it! And Heaven knows what not.

*Strategically, to make the nationalities free is the only way to win the War against Germany.*

The high moral incentive that has guided the world to enter this war rests for success, by a fortunate coincidence, on the strategic necessity of the war—the annihilation of Germany's high road to Pan-Germanism, the destruction of Germany's highway to German domination of the world, by taking that iron highway from him. This destruction of the

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Pan-German Map can only be done by giving freedom and self-government to the races of Europe. The strategic necessity for victory, then, most happily coincides exactly with the moral aim of Germany's enemies.

And what more noble motive could have inspired the world to so vast a sacrifice?

It will be seen at once that Poland, being free, bars the German on his Russian road; Bohemia, being free, shuts his gates on Germany where Germany ceases—Bohemia is a dagger at the Prussians' heart if Prussia plan mischief again; Roumania, being free, blocks his way to world-dominion if Greater Serbia be also made free. The Bulgar has been the spoiled child of Fortune, and foully he has betrayed that Fortune. The Greek has struck against his traitorous king and deserves a democracy. The Turk has betrayed the peoples that have for generations, for lack of strategic thinking, bled for him; he must leave Europe for ever. Give back Denmark to the Danes. Give back Palestine to the Jews—one of the most wonderful races of the earth. Give back Arabia to the Arab, Armenia to the Armenians. And in the doing, not only will this mighty tragedy have helped to achieve a gigantic stride in the wayfaring of the Soul of Man, but it will have sent the hideous nightmare of the Hun tyranny into eternal negation.

The right and proper place for the German is in Germany. God keep our wills firm to do the right without flinching, without weariness, and without slovenly thinking!

The pedants shake solemn heads over the "Partition of Austria" as though this were some fearful crime! But Austria is not German—she is under Ger-

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man tyranny. German and Hungarian bureaucracy have jockeyed Austria out of her heritage. If the peoples of Austria care to confederate as a commonwealth of free peoples, it is for each people to choose. The freed peoples, rid of Pan-German tyranny, will have to ally themselves against Pan-German hate in any case. But it is for them to choose how they shall make their alliance—not for the Austrian German or the bureaucratic Hungarian to choose. Hungary is not free—her people long for freedom.

Republican France, Republican Russia, Republican America, all stand with us to-day for the freeing of the peoples of Europe; and if we do not free them we have lost our War. There is no other victory, nor way to victory.

And it is a melancholy fact that the most dangerous element in the midst of all these mighty democracies to-day is the Idealist. Many hopes and fears I share with the Idealist; but all too often, alas! the Idealist is without strategic in his understanding. He is too often the sport of vague theories. But the only aim in our upward striving that is of value is the aim that will fulfil a strategic end—the raising of the people to be strong enough to strike down any vile aim that assails it. All other nobility is empty. If the nobility of a man's aspirations turn his nerve and will to water, then it is a useless dream—but as the taking of opiates.

“Liberty! what things are done in thy name!”

The rosy dawn of a wondrous future flashes afar over the earth; it rests with the peoples to bring forth the mighty day. Why allow this stupendous sacrifice to splutter away into little futilities in the twilight of ignorance when the democracies have but to put

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forth their strong right arm to make the world free?  
All the Man-in-the-Street has to do is *to know*.

The Prussian sword must be broken to pieces and flung to rust. There is no other way to Peace.

And it all rests with the Man-in-the-Street.

Let the Man-in-the-Street, then, put this upon his will:

If the Pan-German Map hold, the German has won his War.

If the German be sent back into Germany, the German has lost his War.

There is absolutely no other Victory or Defeat.

Yet, in the presence of this obvious fact, there are vague if sincere thinking men who are tender about "humiliating Germany"—this Germany who has mutilated the best of our breed.

There is, for instance, a sort of mild type of mind which is not only piously shocked at the idea of the disruption of the Austrian Empire, as it is fatuously called, but even considers it something of a grave injustice to take the German colonies away from the German. This is flat playing into the German Peace Strategy, and the making of the Pan-German's Map.

This "humanitarian" sentiment—or whatever is at the bottom of the fatuity—concerning Austria has some odd ignorance about it which seems to look upon the Map, as established before the War, as some sacred thing. It was, on the contrary, a scandal to the world. The Austrian and the German could tear it to pieces—and were doing so in order to get world-dominion, mark you—but to prevent it is in some way rather naughty and even tyrannical! Here is where your educated ignorance of strategy is such a danger to civilization to-day. That Austria is not Austria at

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all, but a vile tyranny of the German and Hungarian ruling caste over Austria *and* Hungary, is lost upon such dullards. The step to an even viler lack of strategic insight into what are called "German Colonies" is to such a mind inevitable.

The German colonies will not be given back—thank God; the British Commonwealth across the seas will see to that if no one else does; they at least are not given to suicide for a phrase or a mawkish fatuity.

The "German Colonies" are not colonies at all as civilization understands the word. They hold no relation to such colonies. The German colony is a brutal tyranny, carried out with ruthlessness and organized with conspicuous ability to one end—the creating of vast black armies for the German war towards world-dominion. It is nothing else. All the talk about commercial extension and the like is sheer throwing of dust into the eye of the world. The brutal subjugation of the natives is the cause of the destruction of the labour necessary to commercial enterprise. The German colonies are a deliberate conspiracy to extend the German War-Machine to positions for the destruction of Germany's enemies; and they were in process of an astounding development to this end when the war broke out. General Smuts has warned the country about it—and this, the ablest general in Africa, is not given to panics. The African is one of the most valorous and astounding of all fighting men. Smuts has told us that the African might be made into "one of the most powerful armies the world has ever seen." Germany discovered that years ago; and has addressed herself to the business without delay. It is the deliberate plan of Germany's strategy to create a Central African



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Empire right across Africa. If General Smuts in a great public oration warns the people of this country of what will happen if the German ever get a footing in Africa again, then the Man-in-the-Street deserves defeat and utter ruin if he allow the unstrategic cooings of the Idealists and cranks to lull him into the pretty-sounding ideal of "not humiliating Germany." Why this fatuous tenderness about "humiliating Germany"? Has not Germany sufficiently humiliated the world? In God's name, are we to be tender to Germany's Valour of Ruthlessness lest Germany's *feelings* be hurt? Do these dullards realize that, since this War began, hundreds of thousands of us have been training with rifle and bomb and bayonet throughout the length and breadth of this fair land day and night, in rain and sunshine, in snow and sleet, not only to humiliate the German but to slay him, whilst they sleep in comfortable beds and peruse abstract virtues for our undoing at home?

## CHAPTER XV

### REPARATION AND PUNISHMENT

THERE is some fantastic idea in the hazy mind of the Reactionary that what he calls Reprisals will bring the German to his knees. Reprisals are futile whilst the Ruthless Valour Moral holds hostages in the form of vast numbers of prisoners. And in any case, much depends on what is meant exactly by reprisals.

If the Man-in-the-Street will only try to grasp the war strategically it will be his best defence against the blind splutterings of Mob Law.

If the German brutalities can be brought to naught by "reprisals," then let us have reprisals galore. But can they? Is it going to increase *our* fine Moral to give way to a frantic launching of blind vengeance against an enemy before—to put it crudely—we have that enemy even within our reach on whom to apply blind vengeance?

On the other hand, we have as futile a disposition, quite as unstrategic, and due to the same lack of strategic vision, amongst men of sincere idealism, men of high nobility of aim, to think that Reparation is a rather petty and low form of Vengeance which we ought to be above inflicting—first because it would be kicking a beaten enemy if we beat him, and secondly because it in some way makes the enemy

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fight a stiffer fight if he know that Reparation will be demanded.

This is all sheer lack of strategic sense.

Reparation has nothing to do with mere vengeance.

Reparation is cold pure justice.

What is more, if Reparation be not insisted upon then the Moral of Ruthless Valour has triumphed for Ruthlessness is thereby established by *the Idealism* as a precedent in war that cannot be justly punished.

*Strategically*, that is the sole result of the Idealism demur to Reparation.

Let us put it simply.

It is most vital to the Peace of the world that after the War there shall not begin a bitter vendetta of blind vengeance.

But it is equally vital to Peace that there shall be judicial Punishment and Reparation—it is strategically imperative for the Peace of the World.

It will at once be clear to the Man-in-the-Street that an essential of Victory over German strategy is Reparation and Punishment. It is an arrogant part of the German strategy to show utter contempt for the Law of Nations. The only way to break this ruling is by that punishment of all breaches of the Law of Nations which they insist cannot be meted out. If the breaking of the Law of Nations is allowed to go by unpunished, then the world at once formally establishes the precedent that German Kultur is the Law, and the Law of Nations is futile. There is no other result.

The peace-crank quite honestly consider the

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selves humane by opposing reparation. If they do so, then the Germans have won their war as regards the right to break the Law of Nations.

There is no other way out. From princes to peasants, the only cure for the breaking of the Law of Nations is Punishment. The dogma that nations are not to be subject to law is the foulest doctrine that ever besmirched the honour of man. It is precisely that dogma that raises the crimes of statesmen into the glamour of romance and makes their evil-doing an object for emulation.

The time is ripe to destroy that immunity from vast criminality once and for all.

There is only one thing more sad than punishment for crime—it is the baseness of the mind of man that stoops to crime.

This war is different from all war aforesaid in this mighty fact that we have now the great opportunity to put a rope about the necks of the makers of it.

The very brutality of the German in his arrogant claim to set up, and be subject only to, a Law of Ruthless Valour of his own, thrusts the need for the Law of Nations the more definitely into prominence.

The world has to-day the opportunity to decide whether nations shall be compelled to act in accordance with the laws of civilization or not. If the world let the opportunity go by, it not only confesses to impotence, it not only confesses that the Law of Nations is beneath contempt, but it *establishes for all time the vicious precedent that any strong peoples may be a law to themselves.*

That is a fearful defeat for the Law of Nations.

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Now there is one means, and one alone, whereby this defeat of civilization can be averted.

It can only be stopped by cold judicial punishment of such as have been responsible for all breaches of the Law of Nations. This is absolutely essential to a Lasting Peace, if the German Moral of Ruthless Valour is not to establish precedents. What is more, if the Allies do not punish the breakers of the Law of Nations, they are as responsible as the Germans for the setting up of those precedents and the triumph of the German Moral.

The world has reached a mighty moment in its development. If it treat the present vast struggle merely by precedents, then there can be and will be no Lasting Peace. The world has arrived at a point of stupendous decision. Never was a clear mind applied to the strategic end of its acts, or a firm will insisted upon those ends at all costs, more vital than to-day. If the Law that civilization has formulated and called the Hague Convention—thereby at least making some beginning of universal law—be allowed to be set aside in one single detail, then there will be no Lasting Peace and can be no Lasting Peace. In short, if the world flinch from carrying out its ordering, its law is invalid.

To say so is *not* to stiffen the Germans in their fight. It will stiffen the tyrants who have Germany under their heel; but that is the affair of the Germans alone. If they are ready to suffer more for their gods, so be it. But even if it did stiffen the German in his war, that is a poor reason for surrendering our all to the German Moral.

All acts in the War should lead to a trial and judgment and punishment of the guilty, which are

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acts against the Law of Nations. If the German knew that this would be so, so far from increasing his stiffness in the war, it would compel him to hesitate before he committed such acts. To-day he does not hesitate because he thinks that Peace will still all records against him.

Every man, whether King or Prince or Captain or Common Soldier, whether Chancellor or lackey, who has been guilty of a crime against the Law of Nations should be tried by a tribunal as a common felon, and punished as a common felon, regardless of all rank or precedent. By this means, and by this means alone, can that "romance" of international crime be broken; by this means alone can the guilty escape from that immunity which hedges the acts of the great in war. If he who breaks the Law of Nations by sending a submarine to attack defenceless vessels and to murder innocent women and children be hanged for it according to the law of piracy, the crime will cease; at present he knows that he is immune. If he who orders an airship to bring death and mutilation to an open town know that he will be tried as a common felon, he will hesitate to commit the crime. If the lords of German Ruthlessness know that the murder of Nurse Cavell, Captain Fryatt and others, mean the hangman's rope when Peace is signed, then these crimes will cease. If the battalion commander who placed Belgian women and children in front of his advance know that he will hang for it, his fellows love their skins too well to emulate his vile example.

And by no other means whatsoever may such crimes be stopped.

As it stands to-day, a crown is set on scoundrelism

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in War by the German Kultur and Moral. And a glamour results for which we are all quite as responsible if we flinch from tearing off the "romance of War from the hideous thing that is called War, whereby the guilty are rendered immune and stand in the world's estimation as heroes to be envied, and leaders to be followed. As long as the great and chief instigators of war are allowed to go into an honoured retirement, so long will War be held a fine thing. So long as there is a glamour of a vile romance about such crimes as would be denied to the felon in peace, so long will there be no lasting Peace. Not only so, their acts become precedents for the ages to come. The Hohenzollern and his son, his Ministers, and his Generals, and leaders, have all allowed, if indeed they have not directed, the foulest acts that are boasted by them as "frightfulness." Why should they be immune? As long as Bismarck's Germany was victorious, "frightfulness" was safe. To-day Germany's foul Moral lies in the gutter. Is it to be set up as an immaculate thing for ever?

Britain found her soul two hundred and fifty years ago gone by; France found her soul a hundred years ago after Lafayette had helped the American Colonies in the achieving of their soul, but had shrunk from leading his own mighty people out of the abyss; Russia found her soul yesterday; and these, now being freed and of one soul, are the fit champions of the less fortunate peoples of Europe to deliver them from bondage by sanctifying their sacrifice of blood in the doing of a noble purpose.

The time has come for a world-tribunal to dictate the universal law.

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I have tried to give the Man-in-the-Street a broad view of the strategy of the Great War. I beg the Man-in-the-Street to try always to look at affairs of State in a strategic way. This is not to suggest for one moment that a man should allow his own moral, his own high motives, the nobility of his own people's psychology, to be affected or mitigated one tittle. But it is as futile to run about trying to fix the *blame* of the war on Germany as it is futile of the lying statesmen of Germany to pander to neutral opinion by taking up the air of the much-injured person. The real German, and the only truthful man in Germany, is the German who arrogantly glories in having made the war. From the German psychology the Germans had the right and were quite right to make their war. But, having made their war, it now lies with the world to say: **THIS PSYCHOLOGY IS A CRIME IN CIVILIZATION, AND MUST BE UPROOTED, PUNISHED, AND DESTROYED.**

And what is more, every idealist who through mawkish sentiment, no matter how deeply rooted in nobility, uses his influence to prevent the utter obliteration of that psychology from the face of the world, is as criminally responsible for it as the Prussian. He is no more a benefactor to mankind than is the woman who, when a murderer attacks a man, flings her arms round that man and holds his hands whilst the murderer commits his ruthless design upon him. For the woman to say that the murderer was a naughty man to strike a defenceless and bound man does not add an inch to her innocence, nor mitigate one hair's-breadth from the guilt of her abomination. To come before the world and blame the murderer is futile. It is the business of the



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murderer to murder. And he who does not do all in his power to rid the world of the murderer is in the degree of his deliberate laxity a partaker in the crime.

Let us make no mistake a' at Strategy.

The whole Strategy of the Civilized World is bent to creating Universal Peace. Any peoples that deliberately set themselves to oppose that strategy must be conquered and compelled to Peace. Peace there must and shall be if Man is to reach to the supreme fulfilment of himself and the truest nobility.

Commerce and Industry must be compelled to the Democratic Strategic of a wide Brotherhood quite as sternly as any other activities of the human pilgrimage. To leave Industry or Politics a prey to Prussianism whilst we uproot Prussianism from the Chancellories of the world were as futile as dangerous. War from within is more horrible than War from without; it is more criminal.

And as the millions who have stood eye to eye with death in the trenches return to their homes, these stern-lipped men will not only ask an account of the stewardship of such as stayed behind in safety, protected from harm by their generous valour, but if they find that they and their dearest have been betrayed, the laughter will leave their eyes and they will look upon their people with that threatening gaze that their enemies have learnt to fear and, fearing it have discovered the value of surrender.

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## CHAPTER XVI

### THE FUTURE OF STRATEGIC STUDY

BEFORE the Man-in-the-Street lays down this book, will he bend his mind for a little while to the absolute need of the Education of his people being compelled after the war into what may be called a strategic intention?

The whole wide world talks glibly to-day of Nietzsche and Treitschke and the "Superman" and the rest of it; but how many Englishmen could go into the witness-box and, calling God to witness, swear that they could even spell Treitschke's name a moon before the first gun boomed over doomed Liège? And of these few, how many realized what Treitschke meant for Germany except from the volume put upon the public by the egregious Cramb to try to tune the British to adopt German ideas and methods? Nay, before the day that the German legions poured over the border, how many undergraduates left our universities with even the most shadowy knowledge of the German psychology, far less with any guess that that psychology was the driving force of the whole German people to a strategy that was being woven with overwhelming deliberation to the destroying of Britain and America and to their subjugation? Yet this knowledge was within as easy reach of them as it was of the strategic

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student. Without such education, how could it be expected that men could proceed to the diplomatic service, to Government, to parliament, to the army, except under a hopeless disadvantage?

What good was there in an ignorant panic, as the German legions made their last months of final preparation, to rush about demanding conscription and the uprooting of the British psychology when conscription, led by ignorance of the psychology and strategic of Germany, was about as futile as a defence as using a hundred million peashooters against Austrian howitzers?

The highest and most valuable culture is surely a sound knowledge of Foreign Affairs—of what the wide world is thinking and doing. And at once, without creating a special organization for it on the German model, thousands of the best young brains every year, instead of going forth with stultified minds and a drawing-room education, would be mixing with and guiding the masses to a culture not only worthy the name, but enormously increasing the strength of all that is best and noblest in man.

The canker of Prussianism—German Kultur—must be cut out of civilization ruthlessly. The age of democracy has come. But, above all, Prussianism—the Moral of Ruthlessness—must be cut out of our own psychology and out of our national life as a surgeon cuts with clean knife the cancer from the living body in order to make that body whole. It has crept into our public life, into our business life, into our Press, into every walk and activity. And if it is not cast out, then we shall be conquered by the conquered.

'Tis true that the writings of Nietzsche, and the

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the Superman, the Blonde Beast, the Moral of Ruthlessness, came over to our shores twenty years ago or so; and that they were toyed with by academic minds wholly untrained to gauge their strategic values. Not only were these the playthings of the academic mind; but who can deny that they took a firm hold on commercial minds and habits and were practised even in our public life?

This toying with them was on a footing with an incident of which I was witness not a year ago. Some small children were playing in a drawing-room with a Mills bomb, which had been given to them as a trophy from the trenches. I looked at it and suspected a live bomb. The giver had not the slightest idea whether the charge of high explosive had been withdrawn! If one of the little ones had pulled out the brass ring, that bomb, on the counting of five seconds, would have blown the place to pieces. And we, as a people, have been toying with a vaster bomb, content with laughing at it, or with denying that it was a bomb at all! And the Peace-mongers, with the best intentions, tell us that as long as the pin is left in the bomb, it is quite a good bomb, and that it would be bad taste to draw the charge from it, as it might hurt the feelings of the bomb.

Progress to the heights of a noble wayfaring demands virile vigour and forthright will to fulfil the brotherhood of man; progress is not the timid handmaid to a pallid effeminacy of soul that fears the dark or dreads to strike down an evil thing, any more than it is the excuse for a brutal selfishness which muzzles the humanities whilst it aims only at personal aggrandisement.



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