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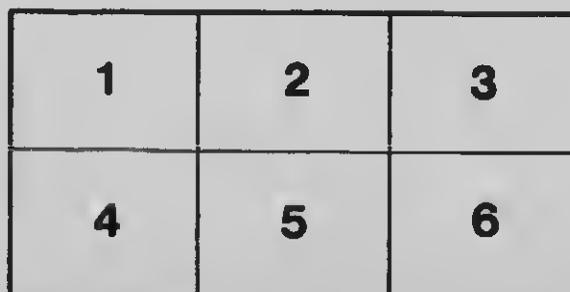
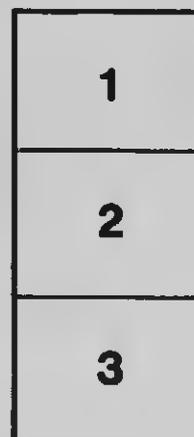
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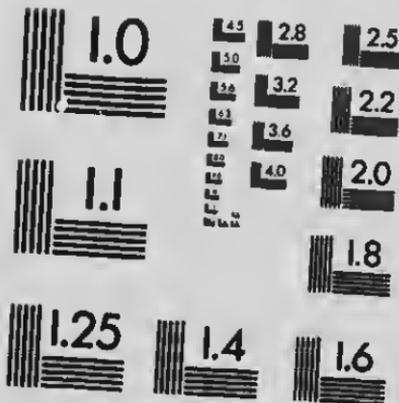
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WHAT THE PRESENT WAR MEANS.

BY

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WHAT THE PRESENT WAR MEANS.

MR. Carnegie's Temple of Peace at the Hague has been opened just in time to look out on a general European war. To add to the irony of the situation Mr. Carnegie, casting about in his inaugural speech for a possible guardian of permanent peace, fixed upon the German Kaiser as its main hope and stay. The great ironmaster's appeal was natural enough, of course, and a well-timed use of a good opportunity, for the Kaiser was then the strong man in Europe, and it is only the strong that can keep peace or do much towards it. But the question is always, has the strong man got all that he wants?

If the Kaiser has not quite got all he wanted he has certainly got a very great deal in the five and twenty years during which he has ruled Germany. He has succeeded in spite of some democratic opposition in building up the great German military machine to the utmost extent that the nation can bear. Even the Socialists in the Reichstag voted for the extension of the conscription last year, being pacified partly by the fact that the additional expense was to be laid only on the wealthy classes. Within 12 years or so he has raised the German navy from a position of insignificance to the second place after Great Britain's. He has seen a great German mercantile navy grow up whose oversea commerce is already about three-fourths of that of the world-wide British Empire. German bankers and syndicates under his protection have extended their operations and planted their agencies all over the Near and the Far East. German industries have risen rapidly to a commanding position in the markets of the world. Germany has been getting her slices of the globe, too, naval stations and points of vantage; she has got slices of territory in Africa, part of New Guinea, with many adjacent and outlying islands in the Pacific; she has got a port and two hundred square miles of territory in China; she has got (from Britain, by exchange), Heligoland, a rock fortress, which now protects the German coast instead of threatening it, as formerly.

Naturally she has encountered keen competition, and some opposition in this expansion, and it is true her holdings are

still not much compared with those of old established empires and colonial powers, but Germany came late into the field and cannot expect in a few years to rival the work of generations and centuries. There is only one way of doing that and the others all know it. Best of all for him, the Kaiser could sit back and reflect comfortably on the fact that the population of Germany was increasing at a greater rate than that of Britain or France. Why, then, should he go to war and stake all these gains in a mortal conflict with three great Powers, even if he had Austria-Hungary to help him? There is every reason to believe that he knew Italy would not join him in such a venture. It is months now since the Austrian Premier gave a very plain intimation of his opinion on that point.

The security of Germany from attack was unquestionable. No nation in the world would have sought war with her unless forced into it by her aggressions. Even Austria-Hungary, as her firm ally, would have had "peace in our time," as the Prayer Book says, by simply abstaining from stretching out further a despotic hand over the young nationalities of the Balkans.

But the truth is that Germany has been so confident in her military strength, so arrogantly confident, that she has not hesitated to challenge at one and the same time during the last eight or ten years three great European powers by an openly aggressive policy. Not to speak of the feud with France, the Germanic policy in the Balkans has been not only a menace to Russia but a steady series of humiliations, and at the same time it has been just as openly challenging British power on the sea and forcing a very burdensome competition in naval armaments on England.

GERMANIC POLICY IN THE BALKANS.

Professor Muensterberg, of Harvard, is trying to persuade the Americans that Russia is to blame for the present war. She was mobilizing, he says, although the Kaiser asked her not to. No one can tell yet how this new constitutional or semi-constitutional Russia is to turn out as an influence in Europe once she gets on her legs again. She appears to be willing to enter upon better courses, but I would not expect miraculous changes. In the present case, however, it is hardly

reasonable to accuse her of aggression because she began to mobilize when a large Austrian army had already advanced on Servia. Consider the previous history of the Balkan peninsula.

A generation ago, what is now the Balkan problem appeared to the British simply as a question of preventing Russia from seizing Constantinople and posting herself on the route to British India. But Britain had no territorial ambitions in the Balkans, and when the young Slav nationalities there sprang into life from the ruins of the Turkish Empire, she left the field to them and to Greece. But though it was Russia that had unclosed the grip of the Turk on them, Russia's own path to the open waters of the Mediterranean was closed by their coming into being. That was the final result of the Crimean war, were John Bright still alive to ask about it. All that was left to Russia was to play the part of the big Slav brother in advising, controlling, protecting.

But now the Germanic powers, who had hitherto stood aside, began to put a finger into the pie. At the Congress of Berlin in 1878 after the Russo-Turkish war, Austria-Hungary supported by Germany, acquired a protectorate over Bosnia and Herzegovina and re-entered the circle of German interests as the ally of that now dominant military power. Russia got Bessarabia, but paid for it with the loss of Roumania's friendship. Since that time the Balkan peninsula has been a hot-bed of diplomatic intrigues, the young nationalities there being jealous competitors for what remained of the inheritance of the "sick man" and almost equally distrustful of Germanic encroachment and Russian control. Russia had an advantage in being the natural standard-bearer of the Pan-Slavic ideal, but the Germanic powers have been scoring the most points in the contest. Roumania, which has a German prince as its ruler, was drawn to their side. Another German prince was planted quite recently in Albania. Russia also had to sit still during the period of her disorganization after the Japanese war and see Austria's final annexation (in 1908), of the Slav peoples of Bosnia and Herzegovina. And what is the ultimate goal of these encroachments and intrigues? Albania is already struggling in the net, and Russia naturally suspects that it is a Germanic control stretching to the Aegean, perhaps to Con-

stantinople, and convertible some day into a great Germanic empire with its subject peoples. What have Germans to do in those old Slavie lands anyway? Before that simple fact Prof. Muensterberg's denials of a German policy of expansion can expect little credit. Nor is it quite fair to represent the conflict, as Prof. Muensterberg does in a recent issue of *The Fatherland*, as an inevitable conflict between "the onrushing Slav world and the German world." He seems to forget that in the Balkans the Slavs are where they belong and have always belonged, at least since the migrations and wanderings of the early centuries, while the Germans are where they can only appear as foreign conquerors.

THE IMMEDIATE AIM IS TO CRIPPLE FRANCE.

Russia is still in a stage of political and economic transformation and was in no good position to become a ready or willing aggressor at present. But she was obliged to mobilize unless she was willing to submit tamely to further Germanic encroachment. In such circumstances Austria-Hungary's attack on Servia could be nothing but the signal-gun for a general European war, and it would be fatuous to suppose that that signal was given except in concert with Germany. Germany began by formally asking Russia's intentions, but hurried at once with a million men to the French frontier and invaded without warning the neutral states of Luxembourg and Belgium.

What kind of a war are we to call this? The best name the Germans themselves can find for it—and they have been discussing it openly enough for some time past—is *Präventiv-Krieg*, that is, Preventive War, only its meaning is not to prevent war but to strike first. And this *Präventiv-Krieg* is really directed against France. To cripple that power is the first step to all further steps for Germany.*

The enmity which has existed between France and Germany since the latter took Alsace-Lorraine in 1870 has had

*"In one way or other we must square our account with France if we wish for a free hand in our international policy. . . . France must be so completely crushed that she can never come across our path."—*von Bernhardt*.

various degrees and phases, but its last phase in Germany seems to be a sullen recognition that the price she has paid for Alsace-Lorraine is mounting up very high. Germany has expansive ambitions and the hostility of France means that there is a powerful voice and vote against her at the council table of the Great Powers and a certain foe in the event of war with any of them. Whether Bismarck meant it deliberately or not, his policy in 1870 has forced the German nation to be a nation under arms, an armed camp with a military autocrat and aristocracy in command of it. No doubt that has its advantages as a training. It has made the German practical, energetic and a shrewd calculator. I think Prof. Mueasterberg is right in his view that their new industrial energy and commercial enterprise have one and the same root as their military discipline and imperialism. What is certain, at any rate, is that they are vigilantly supported and protected by the Government. But, all the same, the strain of this position is making the Germans more sombre than they used to be, less free and genial. In Berlin they all seem to work as if there was something on their minds, as if something were hanging over them. The old geniality and honest simplicity of the German character are disappearing, they have become rudely, almost ruthlessly, practical. You can see the change in their literature also. The old humanitarianism of Lessing and Herder (both Prussians) and the idealism of Schiller have given place to the bitter idealism of Nietzsche and the stern principles of "world policy."

So the Kaiser may have made up his mind to end it. If Germany triumphs, she will take all old Lorraine and something more, perhaps Belgium, as well with its great shipping port of Antwerp, and reduce France to a second-rate Power. There will be no one in Europe to say her nay, no one to raise a voice of power against any methods of subjugation she may choose to employ. And she will perforce be an armed camp for another century, but an armed camp in Roman dignity and ease. If she fails, she will have to surrender some discontented non-Germanic provinces and some oversea possessions: she will lose much of the commerce she has built up largely by means of her military power and prestige. Her dream of domination will have ended, and it is safe to predict that there

will be a constitutional change in the power and prerogatives of the German Emperor.

GERMAN HOSTILITY TO BRITAIN.

It was during the Boer War in 1900 that the deep and general hostility expressed by the Germans first began to arouse John Bull's suspicions. That hostile sentiment was partly perhaps a generous sympathy with the smaller nation, but the Germans keep a watchful eye on oversea and colonial affairs, and it had its roots partly also in the colonial ambitions Germany was cherishing in Africa. When some years later, therefore, the extensive naval programme of Germany began to reveal itself, accompanied every now and then by some significant utterance of the Kaiser's ("Our future lies on the ocean," etc.,) which could only be interpreted as a challenge to Britain, the man on the street began to realize that a conflict was probable. In 1904 Great Britain came out of her "splendid isolation" and entered into an understanding with France, which a few years later took final shape as the Triple Entente. It was not an absolute alliance on the part of Britain and was probably chiefly designed to guard France against an assault from Germany, when Russia's energies had been diverted into a conflict with Japan in the Far East. In the autumn of 1905 a great pacifist, Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, became the head of the British Government and at once proceeded to reduce Britain's naval programme in the hope that Germany would follow suit. The only result was that Germany increased her rate of building and in 1908 was building four ships to Britain's two. Britain's pacifist policy had been a conspicuous failure. Elsewhere also the Germanic policy (as we may call the policy pursued in concert by Germany, Austria and the Hungarian aristocracy) was steadily forcing, with a sort of arrogant confidence, the lines of the Triple Entente closer. In 1908 Austria-Hungary annexed finally Bosnia and Herzegovina. In 1911 Germany made an attempt to seize a port in Morocco and thus secure a strategic position at the entrance of the Mediterranean. It would have been a fine shelter for the Goeben and Breslau the other week, and the Gut of Gibraltar would probably by now have been alive with floating bombs, but the attempt was frustrated by the resolute action of Britain and France.

The Morocco incident served at least to test Britain's attitude. The war party in Germany was eager for war, the Crown Prince applauded publicly von Heydebrand's fiery speech. But the Kaiser held off, as he has done on more than one occasion. For the last two years, however, Great Britain has been figuring in the publications of the Alldeutsch or Pan-Germanic party as the irreconcilable enemy, no less than France or Russia, of German interests. Many of the well-known *Politik* series of pamphlets are directed against "England." In one of them (England's *Weltherrschaft* und *die Deutsche Luxusflotte*), the writer tells his countrymen that to increase their army is not enough, they must also have a navy capable of coping with that of Great Britain in order to secure their "share of the world." (*Welterbe*). Then he proceeds to reassure them as to the ultimate issue of this contest:

"Now some over-anxious souls may think that England will always be able to surpass us in naval construction, so that all our efforts will be in vain—the relative numbers will remain always the same.

" . . . These ideas are those of people whose information is decades behind the times. . . . We have steadily and continuously, and with less expenditure of money than England's, been approaching her strength upon the sea. Let us compare the numerical growth of British and German line-of-battleships from 1898 to 1912. At first we stood as 1 to 6, the British fleet being more than six times as strong as we; two years later the ratio was 1 to 4.8; four years later, 1 to 3½; after two years more, 1 to 2½, and today (1912) England is not more than twice as strong as we. It is an almost silent struggle the world significance and greatness of which later centuries will know how to appreciate. . . . England will not always be able to keep up the ratio of 2 to 1. Work is higher paid in England than with us, and once we have got the desired number of sixty great ships-of-the-line she will not be able, from financial reasons, to construct 120 dreadnoughts, and besides she has not the inexhaustible reservoir of men which universal conscription provides."

The failure of Napoleon to master Europe because of his inferiority at sea is then referred to, an illustration which seems to betray the ideal of conquest in the writer's mind. Then he explains why the German fleet must be capable of coping with the British fleet before France can be attacked with the certainty of success:

Like a cavalry division on the right wing of our army, the (German) fleet must undertake the protection of its flank by an

offensive movement in the North Sea. The fleet must make it impossible for the British to land on the coast of France; it must be able to scour all around far in front of our advancing army. . . . It does not matter at what point the 160,000 English attempt to land, wherever the English transport fleet is waiting, the black smokestacks of the German squadrons must rise on the horizon, and the rear German battleships sink it to the bottom of the sea, while the others in a death-grapple with the convoying fleet send them and themselves to Hades."

The writer never seems to doubt for a moment that the German armies can sweep victoriously on to Paris if British reinforcements can be prevented from landing on their flank. Then he concludes his pamphlet (which consists of 47 pages with five more of naval statistics and estimates) with the following stirring appeal:

"In this sense (i.e. the necessity of combining sea-power with land-power) is the once derided saying that "our future is on the sea," now accepted by the conscious will of the whole nation. . . . Germany looks with clear eyes towards the time when German valor will give proof of itself on the rushing seas. To the great days in our history, from Fehrbellin to Sedan . . . there will be added another day which will be named from some bank, or shoal, or spot somewhere in the North Sea, which the unnautical man has never heard of, but which our grandchildren will read of with enthusiasm."

Such is the literature which has been circulated in Germany by the tens of thousands during the last two years. The pamphlet (23th thousand edition, Berlin, 1912) from which I have taken the above extracts is only one of a series printed and published in close connection with *Das Neue Deutschland*, a weekly which publishes on its front page a long list of eminent names as amongst its supporters and contributors: Geh. Justizrat Dr. Revoldt of Berlin, Geh. Admiralitätsrat Paul Koch of Berlin, Hofrat Prof. Dr. von Below of Freiburg, Professor Dr. Bredt of Marburg, Regierungsrat Prof. Dr. Julius Wolff of Charlottenburg, Oberegierungsrat Frh. v. Camp—Massaunen of Berlin and a score more of similarly betitled names. With such literature flooding all Germany, not to speak of more scientific works like that of General von Bernhardi, is it any wonder that Britain no less than France was forced into the most watchful attitude of defence?

It is true that the writer of the pamphlet pretends to demand only that Britains naval superiority shall be reduced to

something with which Germany can more nearly cope. But does anybody believe that Germany would stop there? Naval superiority, like military superiority, must always lie somewhere, but it is evident that it is safer for the world in general when they do not both lie in the same hands. Naval superiority alone, however powerful it may be for defence, is no great weapon for aggression. There could be no worse fate for Europe than that supremacy both on land and on sea should be in the hands of the Kaiser and his military aristocracy.

THE KAISER'S AIM.

That Great Britain would stand by France in this war must have been foreseen by the Kaiser, though perhaps he was surprised by the swift and decisive action of the British Government in sending the fleet to the North Sea. There was the bold promptitude of an aristocracy in that, but an aristocracy of another type than the German, and trained to work with democracy. There can be little doubt that Germany has been preparing for a conflict with Britain as well as France as a necessary step to a kind of world supremacy including a great territorial and commercial expansion. It is the ideal which Treitschke and other German writers have ever since the Franco-German war been holding up to their countrymen as the logical and inevitable development of the German nation. It is the old goal of universal domination, the goal of Rome, the goal of Napoleon, that is once more looming up to menace us. Doubtless the Kaiser would have preferred not to fight both France and Britain at once, but he seems to have judged that no more favorable moment was likely to arrive. Britain appeared to be on the brink of civil war over the Irish question, and the great self-governing colonies were only beginning to work at a defensive organization for the Empire.

INTERNAL CAUSES IMPELLING GERMANY TO WAR.

The internal political situation in Prussia has also no doubt had something to do with the Kaiser's decision at this time. The opponents of elective reform in Prussia, the all powerful Prussian nobility in particular, saw that they were about to face a struggle for the equalization of the franchise.

At a general meeting of the Berlin Social Democrats on 14th June last, it was resolved to accumulate a fund to be employed in a political strike on behalf of an equal franchise. The proposal aroused notes of alarm both in the Upper and Lower Houses. Strong speeches were made calling on the Government to take energetic measures against any political strike as unauthorized by the Prussian constitution. The Prussian nobility, a strong and high spirited body of men who think, justly enough, that they have done much to make the German Empire, are determined not to sink into political insignificance, even if it needs an adventure that staggers the world to prevent it. The speeches made in the Herrenhaus two months ago not only showed a stern determination to resist all change in the peculiarly restricted franchise, but had a tone which hinted that the time had come for the policy of Ruckbildung, (development backwards), that is, the further restriction of the lower class vote. Of course a *coup d'etat* of that kind would be too bold a stroke in time of peace, but it might be done after a great war, were Germany victorious. That this is really part of the Alldeutsch party's programme is stated, not at all obscurely, in a book of 300 pages recently written by Dr. Paul Liman on the character and views of the Crown Prince. "The final form of our political life," writes Dr. Liman, "will be determined on the battle field. The boundaries of future claims and rights will be drawn by the sword, by the capacity to conquer. . . . Not for the first time will democratic demands then be paid back in their own coin by the possibility of obtaining the restriction of popular rights (die Beschränkung des Volksrechts) and of carrying the question of electoral claims into the fiery atmosphere of conflict. . . . then would a *coup d'etat* appear in the milder guise of a necessary measure of defence." That is the policy with which the Crown Prince and the Alldeutsch party are openly credited with by a member of that party. Dr. Liman's book is not a wise or solid book, but it must be admitted that his portrait of the Crown Prince is in accordance with much that is known and heard about him. The Kaiser, on the other hand, is represented as too hesitating in his policy, as one of those drilling, accumulating, grenadier-collecting Hohenzollerns, who leave it to more daring successors to use the resources they collect.

RADICAL PROTESTS.

Of course, such literature does not pass altogether without protest from the democratic camp. I saw a couple of pamphlets on the other side. One was by a Berlin journalist, Hans Leuss, and was a moderate, though very outspoken, protest against the helpless political condition of the German people liable to be hurried into aggressive war at a moment's notice by the will of one man. Herr Leuss also exposes very clearly the danger into which a too ambitious policy is leading the German nation. In this connection he refers to the recently published book by Dr. Liman:

The Crown Prince, according to Dr. Liman, is an admirer of Napoleon I. That world-shaker, to whom Europe was but a molehill, would not have said so of the Europe of to-day. In population, wealth and military resources Europe has made giant strides since Napoleon's time. . . . And even the genius of Napoleon was not equal to the task of establishing the domination of one nation over Europe. What Dr. Liman expects of the Crown Prince comes to this, that he shall involve the German nation in a war for the domination of the world; that is to say, that we shall pit ourselves against France, Russia and Britain for the domination of the earth (um die Herrschaft der Erde). Let us just consider quietly and seriously the fact that this idea fills the minds of our German expansionists. . . . Even Dr. Liman cannot deny that Germany may be beaten in such a war, especially as a man of Napoleonic capacity is not really visible amongst us. . . the programme of our Pan-Germanists and military classes is destruction itself; arm, arm and show the teeth everywhere; first 40,000 more recruits, then quick a three years' service law, and then forward—Präventiv Krieg!

There is liberty of the press, you see, in Berlin, or at least there was two months ago when that pamphlet was freely circulated in the streets. Of course, Herr Leuss, who has already been in conflict with the authorities for his outspoken protests against the absolutism of the German Government, is studiously moderate in his tone and intimates more than once that he does not mean to suggest that the Crown Prince might not prove a capable ruler, if only he were put under constitutional restraints. But his title-page is sufficiently startling. It is "William the Last?" (with a point of interrogation) and something very like a black cross by way of ornament below it. But he is only one of a few voices that dare to raise themselves in an armed camp. The German middle class—he admits is politi-

cally torpid, though many are uneasy, the capitalists are tempted by war armaments and commercial expansion; professors and literati by the Government's command of patronage, of positions and the titles so dear to a German's heart, Hofrat, Geh-Regierungsrat, etc., etc., and by the new historical conceptions of national development to world-supremacy. And all—even the great German students' union—fear and dislike the workingmen movement. That is the reason why the great German middle-class have sunk into resigned followers of the military aristocracy. They are really powerless to control the policy that leads to war; they could only cripple, by refusing supplies, the military force behind it to their own danger.

POLES, DISAFFECTED, SEEKING INCORPORATION WITH RUSSIA.

Another cause that may have helped to push the Kaiser into the arms of the war party is the situation in Prussian Poland. For some years past the Prussian Government has been carrying out a rigorous policy (the so-called East-mark policy) of uprooting the Polish farmers and breaking up the Polish estates in order to settle German-born farmers there. In no other way, it seems, do they now hope to make that part of old Poland a secure portion of the Empire. In *Neue Deutschland*, of 20th June last, a weekly which is one of the organs of the German Nationalists, I read an article on the Polish question which concluded that "the only means" to extinguish the hopes of the Poles for the restoration of Poland is "to put into decided, unswerving operation, without secret relencings, the German East-mark policy and to employ as its most weighty and effective instrument the development and extension of a strong wall of German farmers."

One result of this policy has been to create a movement amongst the Poles in favor of incorporation with their old enemy Russia, as the best road to a possible future kingdom of Poland. That is, they now fear Russia less than Prussia as a relentless exterminator of their race. This Polish movement, die Russische Orientierung, as the Germans call it—has also its threatening aspect for Austria and is no doubt amongst the causes which have determined the Germanic powers to bring on this war. If Germany is successful, she will proceed to break the Polish spirit more scientifically and effectively than

the old semibarbaric methods of Russia were ever able to do. And she could then do it untrammelled by the public opinion of Europe.

ISSUES OF THE WAR.

There may be some room for doubt and discussion as to the causes of this war, but there can be little as to the great issues it involves. The ideals of Germany at present are those of a military aristocracy. It is to carry out those ideals that the strenuous Prussian discipline has extended its iron hand all over the land. Those ideals involve, just like those of old Rome, the reduction of all possible rivals to a condition of helpless subordination; they involve the practical suppression of the independence of small nationalities; they involve a form of military rule and privilege dangerous to civil freedom. The triumph of the two Germanic Powers with their Magyar comrade would mean the cessation of that kind of democratic progress which gives the peoples a voice in the decision of war and peace and in the making of their own destinies. It would threaten, I think, all that kind of progress which is based on the general public opinion of Europe. Of course, I do not mean to say that such ideals are consciously accepted by the German people as a whole, but only that they lie on the road that Germany is taking. German Liberals would naturally deny this and point to their struggles and the growth of the socialist vote. But there is the experience of thirty years to show that they are practically helpless in the current that is carrying Germany on her course. There is much unreal talk and superficiality in our modern humanitarianism, no doubt, but none of us would like to change it for this new type of military despotism which is seeking supremacy in the world. The present war has many aspects of racial, military and commercial rivalry, but its most fateful aspect is that it is a struggle between humanitarian ideals and those of a military autocracy. The open contempt for international law which Germany has already shown in Belgium and elsewhere merely lifts an edge of the curtain.

Germany has been aggressive enough in a practical sense, but her greatest aggression has been a moral and psychological one on the spirit of Europe, and consists in that universal militarization which turns a nation into an armed camp as ready

for war and conquest as the Hunnish and Gothic hordes of the early centuries. She has forced all Europe, except Britain, into that system, and if she succeeds in the present war, it will be fixed as a model on the world. America will not remain long exempt. A military autocracy is always a dangerous neighbor to free constitutional peoples governed by orators. There is a materialistic reality and truth about it. It is training and preparing while the other is talking party talk. It is the case of Philip of Macedon and Demosthenes over again, only that the world has grown too large to be easily mastered. But all free peoples must band together to destroy such an autocracy, otherwise it will destroy them. My estimate of what the triumph of Germany in the present conflict would involve may seem exaggerated, but I fear it is only too much in accordance with the history of all military supremacies I know of. But it is a good time to remember that the British Empire fought a harder fight a century ago and came out in the end victorious.

JAMES CAPPON.

August 22nd, 1914.

