

GERMANY'S MORAL
DOWNFALL

ALEXANDER W. CRAWFORD

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Germany's moral downfall

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GERMANY'S MORAL DOWNFALL

THE TRAGEDY OF ACADEMIC MATERIALISM

BY

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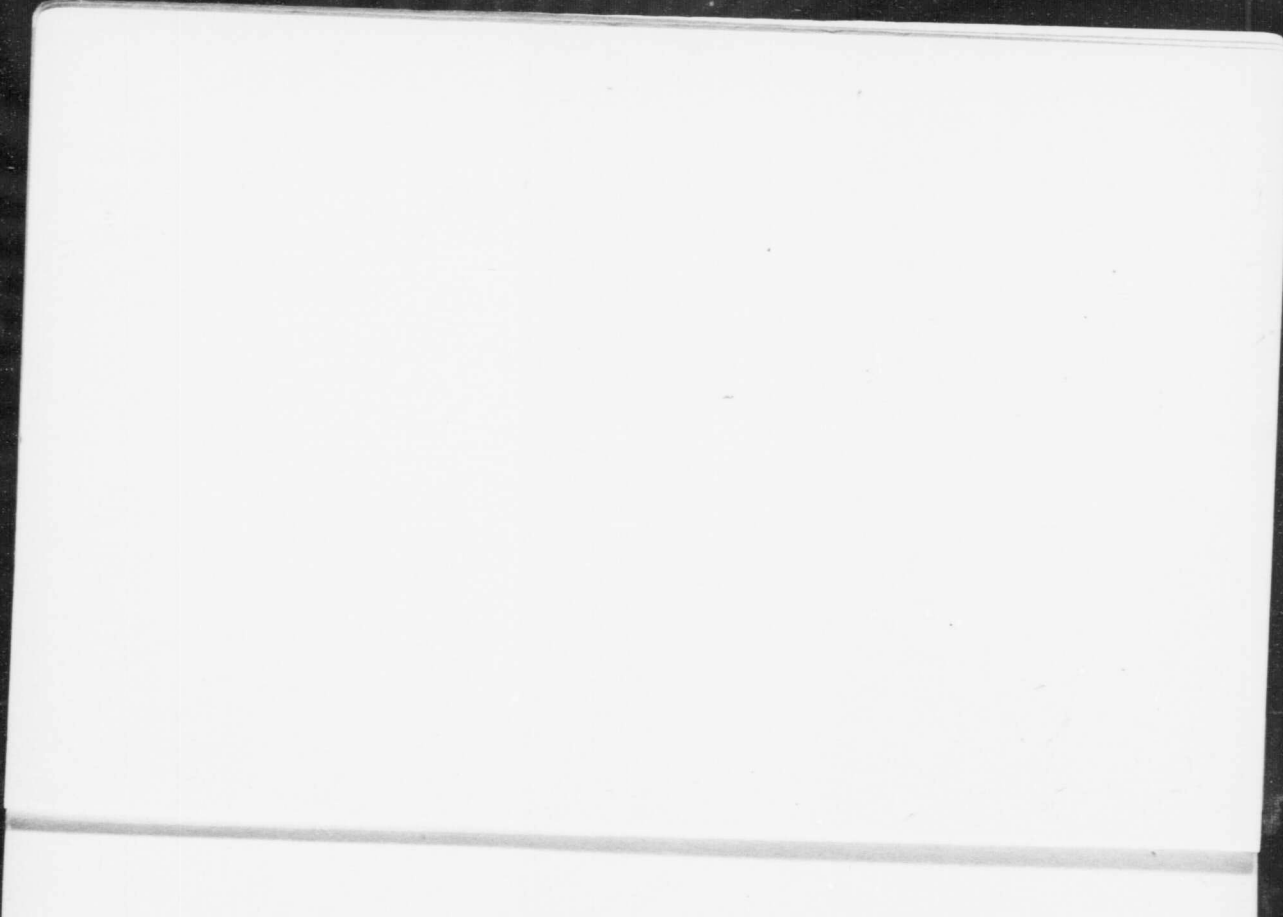
TO
THE BOYS FROM THE FRONT
IN THE HOPE THAT THIS WORK OF THE PEN
MAY HELP A LITTLE
TO COMPLETE THEIR WORK OF THE SWORD
IN DESTROYING GERMAN KULTUR

So th' one for wrong, the other strives for right:
As when a gryfon, seized of his pray,
A dragon fiers encountreth in his flight,
Through widest ayre making his ydle way,
That would his rightfull ravine rend away;
With hideous horror both together smight,
And souce so sore, that they the heavens affray:
The wise soothsayer, seeing so sad sight,
Th' amazed vulgar tels of warres and mortal fight.

—*Spenser.*

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PREFACE

THE purpose of the following chapters is to try to interpret those ideas and ideals of Germany that issued in the unparalleled war. No attempt is made to furnish a record of the events of the war, either military or political, nor to recount the misdeeds of Germany. The sole task undertaken is to try to understand the dark mind and the immoral soul of Germany, and to offer an explanation of her downfall. There is now abundant reason for believing that it is a materialistic philosophy of life and of the world that has eaten out the moral life of the German people. The reader will be the final judge of the correctness of this interpretation.

The prevalence of materialism in Germany can be seen in the deliverances of German leaders in all branches of national activity, from statesmen to historians, and from scientists to philosophers. This philosophy seems to have cast its malignant

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spell over the entire nation and to have become the view of life of the whole German people. It has found expression in many quarters, but there is reason to believe that Bernhardt's infamous book, *Germany and the Next War*, is its best exponent. This book and the conduct of the war reveal how completely brutality and diabolism have taken possession of the nation, and how thoroughly the national morality has been undermined.

The conduct of the Germans since the armistice has been further evidence that as a nation they have lost any moral character they may have had, and are now devoid of honor or of shame. Exposed as no nation ever was in their perfidious lies and treachery, they show no signs of national contrition. Base and brutal in war, they are ignoble and craven in peace. Nothing could better disclose the canker that has eaten away their national character. Their cruelty when they thought themselves victorious has been more than matched by their cowardice when they found themselves vanquished. Their heartlessness to the peoples they enslaved and starved has been out-

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done by their cringing and whining when they are faced with the penalties of their crimes.

And yet there are other sides to the German character. There are many admirable features in German life and thought. The war seems to have brought out all that is worst and basest. The Germany of the Hohenzollerns seems to have lost its moral character in its lust for war. But this is not the time or place to treat of the nobler Germany—the Germany of great idealism, of noble poetry, and of divine music. This is the Germany of the past; and it remains to be seen whether it will be again the Germany of the future. The way they have chosen is the way of national destruction, but there may yet be enough moral character in them to lead them back into the way of life.

A few of the following chapters have already been published as articles in *The Christian Guardian* (Toronto), but have been completely rewritten, and now appear for the first time in their proper sequence.

I have to thank my colleague, Professor

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Frank Allen, of the University of Manitoba,
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CHAPTER I—INTRODUCTORY

THE BREAKDOWN OF GERMAN MORALITY

I

THE outbreak of the great war, as we can now see, was but the culmination of a condition that marked the greatest crisis in the history of the German people. The whole-hearted manner in which the entire nation entered upon a brutal war of conquest and plunder, with the attendant breaking of treaties and the scorn of all the rights of others, marked a serious breakdown in German national morality. The inception and conduct of the war reveal Germany as totally indifferent to all moral considerations, firm in their belief in the right of the strong to trample on the weak, and callous to the moral condemnation of the world. Never before has a great nation been revealed as so reprobate. And the cruelty and inhumanity and faithlessness that have so shocked the world have been outdone by her cynicism and shamelessness, and the

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world stands aghast at such moral depravity.

There is now increasing evidence that the war is but part of the general breaking-down of moral standards in the entire nation, and the failure of their whole social system. The present outbreak seems to be but the culmination of a considerable period of moral perversity that has only now reached the stage of catastrophe. The diabolism of their army in Belgium and France seems only a little worse than the appalling iniquities of the civilian classes at home. Numerous writers have presented accumulating evidence that during a period of years covering the beginning and the continuation of the war Germany has become the most immoral and criminal nation among all the more enlightened nations of the world. They tell of a general breaking-down of the moral life of the nation and a dissolution of the entire social fabric.¹ And this is not

¹See *The Iron Ration: Three Years in Warring Central Europe*, by George Abel Schreiner. New York, Harper & Brothers, 1918.

The German Myth: The Falsity of Germany's Social Progress Claims, by Gustavus Myers. New York, Boni & Liveright, 1918.

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difficult to believe when we know the misdeeds of their armies and the carnival of cruelty and lust and murder in which they indulged in their career of conquest.

The outbreak of the war seems to have been a welcome signal not only to the German army, but also to all classes of civilian Germans, to throw aside all moral restraints, and to indulge themselves in all manner of wickedness. While to France and Britain and the other allied countries the war acted as a moral tonic and stimulus, and brought out all their noblest natures, to Germany it meant moral dissolution and the all but total collapse of national morality.

This seems at first thought all the more strange when we recall the fact that Germany more than any other nation within recent times has attempted the moral education of her people. There seems to have been something radically wrong that her elaborate system should have proven so entirely futile. The conclusion seems inevitable that the Germans either have failed completely in the adoption of the right means to the desired end, or that they have had a totally inadequate conception of the

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real nature of morality. In view of the fact that the theories of war that they have been instilling into themselves for generations are so wholly immoral, it is not hard to believe that their entire system of morals has been perverse. Even without any direct moral teaching the preparation for this unholy war has been so thorough and so persistent that it was bound to sap the moral vigor of the people and to impair greatly the national morality. The demoralization they are now suffering is but the just penalty of their wrong ideals and of their perverse education, and has brought them to the greatest national and moral catastrophe in the history of the human race.

The moral decline of Germany has been going on for about half a century. Up to that time the moral character of the German people was not so distinctively inferior to that of the other nations of western Europe. The German army that conquered France in 1870 was not so cruel and inhuman as that of 1914 and after. Residents of northern France were not greatly afraid of the German army of 1914, and as an American woman resident in a French

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village relates, some of the older inhabitants declined to flee before the on-coming Germans, because, as they said, "We shall be perfectly safe. The Germans won't hurt us. We *know*, because we have been through this before." All the evidence available seems to indicate that the German army of 1914 was much more inhuman than that of 1870. But there is also reason for believing that the German army of 1870 was more cruel and brutal than any other European army of that period. It has been said, moreover, that not only has the German army of 1914 been more cruel than that of 1870, but that for wanton wickedness and calculated bestiality the army of 1914 has excelled anything known in European warfare for a century or two. The progress of humanity since 1870 has had no effect for good upon the German army. On the contrary, both German army and people seem to have become more brutal and diabolical than before. Some sinister influence has apparently brought about a very pronounced and unmistakable decline in German national morality.

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II

Various explanations have been offered for the terrible conduct of the German army of conquest. Some writers, aware of the traditional barbarism of the German armies, and forgetful of the decline in morality since 1870, attribute all the savagery to the German temperament, which, as a distinguished Frenchman, M. Journelle, has recently said, displays a "weakness of conscience and latent criminality." The same writer goes on to say that "all the brutality, perfidy, and savagery manifested by Germany from day to day is not to be explained by any philosophic theory, or as a systematic policy. Temperament is an essential part of it. Moreover, there must be a special lack of the moral sense, an inherent deficiency of the sentiments of justice, honor, and charity. There must be an hereditary perversity."

These strictures on the German temperament, no doubt, can be made with much justification. The Germans as a people, and especially the Prussians, are cruel and brutal, and less amenable to refinement and morality than the other peoples of western

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Europe. Their national temperament is more deficient in the virtues of "justice, honor, and charity." They are more selfish and envious, and more egotistical than their neighbors. They are less courteous, and less considerate of the feelings and rights of others than the French, and less inspired by the principles of fair play and justice than the British. But this is not the whole truth. This will not account for the very noticeable decline in German morality during the past few generations.

It seems necessary, therefore, to admit that what the author of *I Accuse* euphemistically calls an "intellectual perversion" has come over the German people. It is really a "moral" perversion that has affected the German character. And this has come about through the new political ambition to dominate the world that has taken the malignant form of Pan-Germanism. This heresy, at once political and moral, has been the undoing of the Germans. It is very true, as M. Journelle says, that "Grafted on a sound trunk, the Pan-Germanist heresy would never have sprouted." But on the unsound trunk of the German temperament

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Pan-Germanism has brought forth the legitimate fruit of wars and devastations and atrocities that has made the German name a reproach in the world.

The present-day demoralization of Germany has been brought about to a large extent by the influences that have centered in the Prussian state. Ever since Germany began to develop her modern conception of war and her vast political ambitions, and especially since the Prussian domination, her moral standards have been on the decline. The Prussian state has always been a thoroughly prosaic state, with purely materialistic ideas and aims, and with utter indifference to moral considerations. Its history is that of a mediæval robber state. It has elevated robbery and pillage into virtues, and has regarded fair-dealing among nations as a form of weakness, and even a national sin. The militarism of Prussia is nothing but materialism in politics, and materialism knows nothing of morality. Prussia knows nothing but material force, and recognizes nothing but might as a means of government. It believes that there are no moral or spiritual factors in politics, but

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only material forces. Government in Prussia, and in Germany, is reduced to the domination of might and power. Every Hohenzollern ruler has believed that his army was the chief support of his government. And this is pure materialism in politics, and the denial of morality.

This political heresy has been so completely accepted by Germany that it has tainted the entire national life. Pan-Germanism is at once a political fallacy and a moral heresy. As a political philosophy it boasts of its *Realpolitik* and its materialistic aims, and frankly leaves out of account all those moral factors that Bismarck called "the imponderables," and which even he recognized as possibly the chief factors in government. This materialism has contaminated the modern German mind, and has produced the vaunted *Kultur*, which is nothing but organized materialism with its inevitable repudiation of morality. Added to the brutal German temperament the Prussian materialistic political ideal has worked its evil way through all the channels of the national life and has brought Germany to her present moral catastrophe.

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III

It was scarcely expected by their teachers that the German people would learn their lesson so well. But they are a very logical people, and see clearly that if there is nothing but force in the affairs of nations, there is also nothing but force in the affairs of men. If political materialism is true, if there is nothing in the world but might, then all the relations of men are determined by a conflict of physical forces. If materialism is true, then morality is false, both for nations and men, and might makes right both for the army and the people. If force is the one law of the universe, then morality is nothing but might and religion nothing but valor. On this basis everything that assists the German will-to-power is good, and everything that hinders it is evil. If humanity and compassion would interfere with the progress of German arms, then they are evil; and if frightfulness and terrorism will assist them to win, then they are good. And if the destruction of churches and hospitals and civilians is considered the best way for the army to win, then deceit and

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burglary and murder may be regarded as the best way also for civilians to attain the ends they desire. The whole train of military and civilian crimes follows directly from the belief that there is nothing in the world but material force.

It is not strange that this has been clearly seen by the logical German mind, and that their armies have acted and their leaders have spoken accordingly. Their armies have recognized no moral law in their invasions, and their statesmen have admitted none in their deliverances. The crimes of their armies and the words of their official spokesmen, with their fallacious excuses for the war and their cynical disregard for treaties and conventions, all reveal a system frankly and brutally immoral. Professor Kuno Meyer, one of the agents of Germanism abroad, professor of Celtic and German in the University of Liverpool, voiced what seems to be the German conception when he said that "we Germans, when we are at war, mobilize all our forces, moral and intellectual as well as physical; in fact, morals and intellect joyfully own themselves the servants of the ultimate reality,

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force." And he adds: "There is no more truth or morals; there is only a trial of strength."

This German conception of the nature of ultimate reality governs their conduct in all the affairs of life. It has often been observed that the Germans are the most doctrinaire people in Europe. Prince von Buelow records in his *Imperial Germany* that "an English friend once said to me that it struck him how often the words 'conception of the universe' occurred in the German parliamentary speeches. Over and over again he found, 'From the point of view of my conception of the universe I cannot approve of this, and I must demand that.'" Bernhardt says that "the policy of a statesman is indissolubly connected with his conception of the universe." And it is their conception of the universe as ultimately force, and not right, that has governed their national life and the conduct of their armies in Belgium and France.

The Germans are, in fact, the most thorough but the least original, the most logical but the most unreasonable, the most consistent but the most narrow and ruthless

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thinkers among European peoples. They are never afraid of carrying out an idea to its logical conclusions, and are not frightened by the most appalling consequences. As Von Buelow says of his countrymen: "Our passion for logic amounts to fanaticism." German thoroughness delights in this cold logic, and ruthlessly pushes an idea to its most extreme issue. Where the natural feelings and humanity of other minds would be horrified at the conclusions reached, and be led to criticize and abandon the original idea, the Germans pass on delighted with their logic and unafraid at its consequences.

Accordingly, when the Germans adopt materialism they carry it out logically, as only Germans can. The brutal German temperament together with the logical German mind have led them to carry their doctrine of force to the fullest and most appalling limits. They have given the world its greatest and most horrifying example of the infinite dangers that lie in materialism as a philosophy of life and the world. No other nation could have shown so clearly the enormous danger of a false doctrine. They have

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made a direct defiance of all law and right and a direct challenge of the world's morality. They exalt every evil device into a virtue, if only it can be made to help the German cause. They have inverted the moral law, and have turned good into evil and evil into good. They have deified material force and worshiped military power. Their law is their own will and their god is their own political ambition.

Germany set out to rule the world by force. Bernhardt said the alternative was "World Power or Downfall." But it really was "German World Power or the World's Downfall." Germany meant to dominate the world or to destroy it. Thinking herself the most powerful, and therefore the rightful ruler of the world, she staked everything on her success. Her ideals reveal her as a moral apostate, and the worst enemy of law and right that the world ever encountered. Equipped with all the tools of civilization, she turned them against civilization itself, and nothing saved the world from the domination of brute force but the moral might of the allied nations.

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IV

It is doubtful if Prussianism, with all its military ambitions and materialistic ideals, could have conquered the German mind without the support of the materialistic theories of the German universities. As a doctrinaire people, the Germans have implicitly believed whatever theories have been presented by their professors. Germany is the example of a nation that has tried to govern its life by the theories of the naturalistic and humanistic sciences. Unlike the British, whose practical sense governs their lives, the Germans are controlled by their theories of life. And the German professors have furnished the theories of that materialism that has always been the practice of the Prussian state. As fast as Prussia succeeded in extending her might, academic Germany has been ready with a theory to establish her right. What the Prussian state did the German universities thought. And the universities have extended their materialistic theories far beyond politics into all other branches of learning and research. These have apparently affected all Ger-

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many with their poison, and materialism has dominated all the departments of the national life. The war, then, is the product of the purely militaristic ambitions of the Prussian state, supported by the materialistic theories of the German universities. It is the joint tragedy of Prussian militarism and German academic materialism.

This is not all of to-day nor of yesterday. For nearly a century Germany has been drifting toward a materialistic view of life and of the world, though the more dangerous political aspects of this tendency have been reached only in the past generation or two, chiefly under Bismarck and Wilhelm II. The great flowering of idealism at the end of the eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth did not long hold sway over the German mind. Even before Kant was dead the reaction had set in, and it was not long before one branch of the followers of Hegel was definitely materialistic. Then the rise of the biological and other sciences gave further impetus to materialism. The militarism of Prussia and the material successes of German arms and industry were only the final influences that

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completely engulfed the whole nation in materialism.

If the wars of 1866 and 1870 can be treated, as Professor Cramb has suggested, as the work of German professors of history, then this war may likewise be regarded as the work of the professors of economics, of biology, and of philosophy. It is the materialistic theories that have been developed in these departments that have chiefly furnished the justification and the vindication of the warlike ambitions of the Prussian state. It is doubtful if even Prussia could have led the entire German nation astray, but for the support and warrant of these materialistic doctrines developed and disseminated by the German universities.

V

Germany, then, stands to-day as the most materialistic nation in Europe, and the one whose theories of life and of the world have been most influenced by scientific materialism. Every branch of inquiry and research has come under its baneful influence. Politics, history, economics, biology, ethics, and even religion, under the spell of German

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academic thinking, have degenerated into materialism. During the past few decades, especially, this German type of thought has left scarcely any kind of science or literature untouched, and has touched nothing it has not cursed. Even the Scriptures have been made of none effect by its traditions, and the supernatural has been reduced to the natural and the natural to the material. Spiritual elements in every department of life have been reduced to the material; morality has been leveled to psychology; psychology is made nothing but physics; and the blight of German *Kultur* has fallen on everything. The damnation that is now overtaking Germany is but the logical and moral consequence of her lapse into materialism.

It is within the truth to say that materialism is the prevailing character of academic thinking in Germany, though not all German professors have become materialists. But in nearly every field the materialists are the popular leaders. The chapters that follow will show how prevalent this type of thinking has become. The analysis makes no pretense of being [complete, but deals chiefly with those branches that have a more

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or less direct bearing upon political and national ideals. These are especially politics, history, biology, economics, ethics, and law, and in all these spheres it is evident that materialism prevails. It would not be difficult to show that it also guides the thought in other branches like literary criticism, and even in theology. The spiritual leaders of Germany, like Harnack and Eucken, have shown themselves involved in the materialism of politics and statecraft, and it may be questioned if, after all, this is not the type of their thought in all things.

VI

The world is only slowly waking up to the dangers and potentialities of materialism. No other people but the Germans are sufficiently logical and brutal to attempt to put its implications into practice. Some of the fruits of materialism have been gathered by the world before, but never its full harvest. In the eighteenth century materialism disclosed some of its true nature in the brutalizing of the English people, as never before in their history, and in some of the worst terrors of the French Revolution.

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Much of the excess and terrorism of the Revolution can be traced directly to the doctrines of the French school of philosophers, the encyclopædists, whose theory was a bold and logical materialism. Everywhere and on every occasion that materialism gets possession of men's minds it works irreparable injury to the higher life of men. As a philosophy it is the implacable foe of morality and religion, and like the German war policy, it sets out to destroy all the spiritual resources of a people it attacks.

The catastrophe of the war, then, compels us not only to rethink German politics, and science, and philosophy, but also to rethink our own. The English-speaking peoples may have been innocent of the ambitions and the *Realpolitik* of the Prussian state, but they have not been entirely innocent of the materialism and mammonism that have been the motive and inspiration of these things. It is not only the German historians, but the English as well, who have entertained materialistic ideas of the state and of history. It is not only the German scientists, but English and American, who have been disseminating materialistic views

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of the world. It is not only German philosophers, but likewise English and American, who have been undermining morality and religion by their materialistic ethics and metaphysics.

An astounding revelation of the mental, and, one might say, of the moral state of a large number of American university professors has recently been made by Professor J. H. Leuba, in his book, *The Belief in God and Immortality* (Boston, 1916). Although presented for an entirely different purpose and used in an entirely different argument, this book makes it clear that to an extent little dreamed of by the public, the higher education of American youth is passing into the hands of materialists and atheists. This is a state of affairs where such matters cease to be the harmless diversion of academic minds and become the vital concern of the state. If materialism is fatal to morality, it is a matter of gravest importance that we as well as Germany should rid ourselves of these doctrines. Our brave armies in the field will have suffered and died in vain if meanwhile we at home are not purging ourselves of the theories that have de-

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stroyed Germany, and that will destroy us if allowed to do their deadly work.

There is no question about the falseness and the danger of materialism. This has been made clear by the whole history of philosophy and by its influence upon men's minds and conduct. All theories of politics or science, of history or ethics, are finally theories of philosophy, and their truth or falsehood are in the end determined as philosophies. And nothing is clearer than the verdict of philosophy upon materialism. It is, in fact, one of the few certain conclusions of philosophy that materialism cannot explain the course of life and of the world. A hundred books on philosophy and all the great philosophical systems put that beyond doubt. Mr. Balfour, in his recent Gifford Lectures (1914), speaks for all philosophers when he says that we "know too much about matter nowadays to be materialists." But materialism is persistent in its appeal to certain types of mind, for it is easy thinking, and seems to dispose of morality and religion. It is this that makes it a matter of public danger, and, therefore, a matter of public interest.

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Germany, then, has thrust a twofold task upon the world. The first has fortunately been accomplished by our brave troops who have defeated the armed forces of Germany in their attempt to batter down the world's civilization. In this heroic task only the youthful and the strong have had the honor of an active part. The other task, equally important to the world, is to expose the falseness of the doctrines that have actuated the German mind. As has been said, "To protect civilization, the world does not need bigger guns, it needs bigger ideas." To furnish these bigger and truer ideas, and thereby drive out the false, is a task for the devotion of those who, like Milton, could not "court the labors of a camp," but who, like him, feel "that the truth which has been defended by arms, should also be defended by reason." The pen must be made to supplement the sword in order to defeat falsehood, until victory is achieved in both the field of arms and of reason.

Now that the sword has driven back the barbarism of Berlin, it remains for the pen

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to attack their organized heresies. Not only must we fight might by greater might, but false views of the world must be overcome by truth, and materialism must be dethroned by morality. The victory will not be complete merely by the defeat of the German armies, but only when we have also saved the world from the corrupting influences of German doctrines and theories. Militarism must not only give way before the armies of freedom, but organized materialism must be overthrown by morality before the world can be made safe for civilization.

CHAPTER II

THE STATE AS POWER

I

THE great divergence between the political and moral standards and ideals of Germany and the rest of the world has been developing ever since the rise of the Hohenzollern dynasty, and has become very pronounced with the later Hohenzollerns and Bismarck. Under the blighting influence of this dynasty and their chosen statesmen Prussia has been a purely military state, and has always had policies and aims at variance with civilization and incompatible with the rights of other nations. Modern Germany has inherited these reactionary principles and practices of Prussia, and has endeavored to put them into execution in Europe. Under these baneful influences the entire German state has become the embodiment of these principles, and has attempted to dominate the world as Prussia has dominated the other German states. For the past forty years, and especially dur-

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ing the reign of Wilhelm II, these Prussian ideas have more and more determined the character of all German national and international policy.

The Prussian state has always been a military despotism with force as its one weapon and power as its one idea. It has placed its entire dependence upon material force, and has totally disregarded all moral and spiritual elements in government. It knows no right but its own military aims and ambitions, and no law but its own will. It recognizes nothing higher than itself, and makes no pretense to derive its power from the consent of the governed or from the will of the people. It derives its right and authority solely from itself and from the weapons of the conqueror. War has been its one business, and it has admitted no rights but the power of the sword. The German people have trusted only in their "Gott" and "the German sword," and have completely followed their Kaiser in his conception of the state. As one writer says, "The emperor is convinced, as Bismarck was convinced, that in the first and last resort, a society, a people, a nation,

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is based on force, and by force alone can prosper, or even be held together."

It is this principle of coercion that actuates all German national and international policies. Everything is done by force, and nothing by public opinion. The Germans believe in the right of the strong to trample on the weak, whether individuals or nations, and they further believe it to be the will of God. With the fullest consciousness the German people grant their government the dominion of force, and without any protest permit it to trample on their own civilian class. The war is but an extension of this same power over other sovereign states, in total disregard of all treaties and all international law and right. The German state, as a military despotism, entered upon the war with the conscious purpose of imposing its will upon other nations, on the vicious principle of Bernhardt that "might gives the right to occupy and to conquer."

II

In accordance with this conception, Prussia has never hesitated to make war whenever it saw an opportunity to magnify itself,

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and to plunder successfully any of its neighbors. No excuse was needed but the desire to aggrandize themselves. Bismarck shamelessly confessed in his Memoirs that "during the time I was in office I advised three wars, the Danish, the Bohemian, and the French; but every time I have first made clear to myself whether the war, if successful, would bring a prize of victory worth the sacrifices which every war requires, and which now are so much greater than in the last century." The story of such aggressive, premeditated, and shameless wars is the history of Prussia and of Germany for the past century. Hence it has been well said that Bismarck, with this policy of "blood and iron," was the chief agency in the "transformation of the Germany of Goethe into the Germany of today."

Prince von Buelow refers to this imperial policy of Germany as "the unflinching purpose of the Hohenzollern dynasty for centuries," and further asserts that "the Hohenzollerns were the political teachers and taskmasters" of Germany. He discloses a full consciousness of the character of Prussia

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as a military despotism when he speaks of it as "this rude and thoroughly prosaic state of soldiers and officials." He admits, however, that the other Germans have not been without some misgivings in regard to Prussian leadership when he says that "the representative of German intellectual life is still sometimes inclined to regard the Prussian state as a hostile power." But he urges that the south German makes a mistake "if he exclaims in horror at the antiquated politics of Prussian state life," and advocates the full acceptance by Germany of the political leadership of Prussia.

Under this leadership of Prussia, and especially in the reign of Wilhelm II, Germany developed into a great national state, and became inspired by the idea of her own greatness and her rights as a world empire. The founding of Pan-Germanism marked the culmination of this national ambition for world empire, and the Navy League marked the full acceptance of the idea of world domination. The inception and conduct of the war have disclosed at last the full significance of these organizations, and the uncompromising acceptance on the part

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of Germany of the ruthless and aggressive but "antiquated politics" of Prussia, as spoken of by Von Buelow. The war removed at one stroke all doubt of the dominance of Prussian ideas and policies in the councils of Germany. The only hope of Germany is a renunciation of such piratical and diabolical state politics.

III

It is only within the past few generations, however, that this Prussian practice has been reduced to a clear and explicit political theory. From the beginning the Prussian system has endeavored to enlist in its service not only all the material, but likewise all the intellectual, resources of the empire. Militarism tries to utilize everything for its own ends, and entirely disregards all individual and personal ends of the people. It was said at the opening of the war "that when the armies were mobilized for the 'defense' of the Fatherland, every German tongue and pen was mobilized for the same purpose." But the truth is that they had been so mobilized for more than half a century. The rôle of the professors was stated

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by Frederick the Great when he said, "First I take; then make my pedants find the justification." All classes, professors and peasants, were mobilized into the service of war. The war machine of Germany was not only equipped with the millions of drilled soldiers and the product of the scientific laboratories, but also with the accumulation of many decades of political sophistries. As Dr. E. J. Dillon very truly says, "Pan-Germanism, then, is become a racial religion, and to historical and other sciences has been confided the task of demonstrating its truth."

The greatest and most influential of all the professorial apologists for Prussianism was Doctor Heinrich von Treitschke, professor of history in the University of Berlin, the most popular and probably the most authoritative exponent of the German idea in his generation. The outstanding feature of his politics is that he takes a purely materialistic view of the state. Treitschke, therefore, frankly explains the functions of the state as "war and the administration of justice." In true accord with the military despotism of Prussia, he naturally regards

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the army, or the material force of the state, as the mainstay of its existence. He says, "The state is the public power of offense and defense," and adds that "the state is no Academy of Arts; if it neglects its power in favor of the ideal strivings of mankind, it renounces its nature and goes to ruin." He lauds Machiavelli as "the first to set in the center of all politics the great thought, 'The state is power.'" With this idea of the state as material power, and with war as its chief function, it is only consistent when he affirms "that of all political sins that of weakness is the most reprehensible and the most contemptible; it is in politics the sin against the Holy Ghost."

IV

This idea of the relation of military and civil functions, or, the idea that "war," and not "law," is the primary function of the state, is what constitutes "militarism," which, as Maximilian Harden recognizes, is not so much a condition as an attitude. Militarism is not so much in the mere armament, for some democratic states like Switzerland have full military equipment, as in

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the idea of the state that elevates the military above the civil function. The now famous Zabern incident, with many others of a similar nature, and the confession of the German chancellor to Ambassador Gerard in the matter of the treatment of British prisoners "that he was powerless where the military were concerned," show the absolute domination of the military over the civil power. The reverse of this is the case in democratic countries.

Germany is, indeed, the only survival in western Europe of this "antiquated" mediæval conception of the state. Militarism means autocracy, and creates a caste in political and social life. As a consequence the workers in Germany are a lower class than the military, and many incidents are given by various writers to show the haughty and overbearing attitude of the military caste. The people have become mere tools of the autocracy, and the workers the supporters of the army. This condition finds its apologist in Treitschke, who says "that military affairs stand higher than economic interests." He gives it as his opinion that "it was an error in ancient

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statecraft that the army was regarded only as the instrument of diplomacy, and that it was given a subordinate position in the system in the department of foreign affairs."

This may remind us that it was Plato's conception that not "power" but "justice" was the primary function of the state, or that the military should be under the authority of the civil power. He regarded the state as composed of three parts or three functions, the rulers, the soldiers, and the workers. But even this is a greater concession to the military function than any progressive modern state can make. Though giving the soldiers a higher caste than the laborers, he did not regard "power" as the chief element in the functions of the state. Plato was an idealist, and gave the highest function to "justice," which is a spiritual principle. In somewhat the same manner even the Roman empire, though founded upon force, recognized that "law" rather than "force" was the chief function in the administration of the state. Likewise, the British empire depends more upon the moral force of "British justice" than upon material "power." In the same way, the

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United States administers its affairs more by the exercise of "moral" than of "material" power. Germany alone of the great nations knows nothing but brute force, and in theory at least totally ignores all moral elements in the state.

V

The modern German conception of the state, however, is not the old Teutonic idea. It is a recent thing, and was imposed upon Germany by the evil influence of Prussia. The history of the idea does not go back beyond Hegel, though the practice is as old as the Hohenzollerns. It draws much of its inspiration from Machiavelli, and Treitschke developed it into its present vicious and immoral form.

Professor McElroy has reminded us that the old Teutonic form of government was built on the "consent" of the people in a primitive kind of democracy. Government was by representation and by the will of the people. In "the struggle between the Roman idea of empire by force and the German idea of empire by representation . . . gradually the Teutonic idea was beaten

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upon the Continent." But our Saxon forefathers carried it over to Britain, where it has since flourished, and where it produced Magna Charta, the earliest expression and the first charter of political liberty in Europe. Germany then ceased to be the home of representative government, and had forfeited that proud place to England and the English-speaking peoples.

The present German state, then, is an apostate to the old Teutonic idea, and a development of the "antiquated" despotism of Prussia. In all other states there is a distinct movement toward popular government, but Germany alone has definitely set her face against progress and democracy. In some nations changes have come quietly and steadily; in others only by violent revolutions; but in Germany alone the spirit of progress evident in 1848 has been completely crushed, and all political movement since that time has been distinctly reactionary. The German mind has not been deeply moved by the great modern impulse toward political liberty and popular government. The people seem well satisfied with military despotism. They have been cap-

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tivated, apparently, by the promises of world-power and national aggrandizement at the expense of free peoples.

VI

It goes without saying in these days of enlightenment and in this Christian era that the German state as a brutal and barbaric survival is a persistent challenge to all the world's higher interests. It is a great Moloch that not only sacrifices all the spiritual interests of its own people to its material aims and ambitions, but sets out, as their War Book states, to destroy the entire spiritual resources of the peoples they attack. By its attempt to impose its *Kultur* upon free peoples by force of arms it has made itself the greatest enemy of civilization. As one of their papers states, "Germany has been forced to destroy whole states, as if they were castles constructed of cards." And in this spirit it sets itself against the accumulated progress of the world.

The danger of Germanism is that it is a very vicious form of state materialism, or, as they call it, *Realpolitik*. As such it takes

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no account of moral and spiritual factors, and frankly avows the nonmorality and materialism of its aims. If there were any spiritual elements in their state, or if it had any spiritual ends to attain, it would be recognized that these cannot be achieved by force of arms and atrocities. The materialistic aims of the German state have made it an outlaw among civilized nations, and not only a menace to all other sovereign states, but also a challenge to the spiritual welfare of the entire human race.

CHAPTER III

GOVERNMENT BY VIOLENCE

I

THE principles of the German government rest upon the Prussian idea of the state, as developed in practice by Frederick and Bismarck, and in theory by Treitschke. The government depends solely upon its power and authority, and does not look in any way to the will of the people. From the beginning Bismarck tried to make this the character of the German government. A German writer, whose book appeared since the war but was probably written before, has said that "six days after Bismarck became minister in 1862, he said in the budget committee of the Prussian Chamber of Deputies, 'Not by orations and majority decisions are the great questions of the age decided—this was the great mistake of 1848 and 1849—but by iron and blood.'" The same writer adds that "he took the 'Iron-and-blood' policy as the keynote of his dip-

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lomacy, unaffected by the clamor and criticism of his opponents."¹

The meaning of all this is that government in Germany is by coercion, by force, by violence, and not by public opinion, by reason, or by any moral or spiritual power. The government rests frankly and completely on the sole basis of its might, or its material force. In theory at least the German government have paid no heed to the wishes of the people, whatever deference they have felt obliged to pay in fact. And there is no doubt, as many instances give evidence, that in any real clash between government and people, the government by a quick and ruthless exercise of its material (military) power could cope successfully with any semblance of public opinion. The unsuccessful attempt at a formulation of the popular will in 1848-9, and the fact that no other attempt has since been made, seems to speak for the complete dominance of the government.

¹ Government and Politics of the German Empire, by Fritz Konrad Krueger, pp. 17-18. New York, World Book Company, 1915.

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II

? The German people have had no part in the government of Germany. There has been no organized public opinion, and no politics in the Anglo-Saxon sense of the term. A distinguished Frenchman has reported a prominent German as saying: "As for us, Herr August Stein said, 'We have no politics. Everyone confines himself strictly to his own private concerns. The policy of the government is everybody's policy.'"¹

German believe
in assertion of
their individuality
and resent
predetermined
forms
and chains.

Thoughtful and frank German writers admit that in Germany there has been no real parliamentary government. There has been no government of the people, by the people, and for the people. The German writer already quoted says freely that "the Constitution of the German empire does not establish the parliamentary form of government. . . . The parties of the Left in the Reichstag are pleading for it. But until now, no real tendency towards the parliamentary form of government can be observed."²

The trend of political development in

¹ The German Enigma, by M. Georges Bourdon, p. 113.

² Krueger, *op. cit.*, p. 29.

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Germany has been away from democracy and toward greater autocracy. While government in other countries is becoming more the government of the people, in Germany it has become more the government by an autocracy. The author of *I Accuse* says of the German government that "they know that the Prussian people are politically without rights, and that they are governed by a small clique of Junkers who have taken in fee all the high offices in the government and in the army." The wiser Germans are themselves fully cognizant that Bismarck's system of franchise insures complete control by the Junkers, and that the Reichstag is parliamentary only in appearance, while in reality they have no portion of the substance of democratic government.

None

III

Popular government and political freedom the German people have not demanded and have not had. They seem to have no conception of popular rights, and appear satisfied with despotism. As Collier says in his *Germany and the Germans*: "Such constitution and such rights as the German citi-

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zens have were granted them by their rulers." There seems, indeed, to be in them no capacity for popular or self-government. The ablest exponents of Germany, like Von Buelow, freely acknowledge that the Germans are not a political people, and make this a plea for autocracy. These writers say that the Germans need strong leadership, which is tantamount to saying that they are not capable of self-government. Von Buelow says that "the German, of whatever stock he be, has always accomplished his greatest works under strong, steady and firm guidance, and has seldom done well without such guidance."

The Germans have seemed as a people to be devoted to material ends, and have had no interest in the spiritual advantages of free, self-government. They have seemed to regard the state as a corporate business, and have been satisfied with large material returns. These having come in ever fuller measure during the past generation, they have not been concerned that despotism has also grown in strength and in self-assurance and that it has oppressed the spirits of men. It may be that defeat will bring them to

just the
opposite; only
they sought
spiritual ends
in vain that
cannot be control-
led by parliament
as you would
have it.

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realize that not only have they not gained the world but that they have, moreover, lost their souls. It cannot be conceived that any people is permanently incapable of an appreciation of the moral and spiritual aims of life.

The sole aim of the German people has been to maintain a strong nation, and they could not conceive of self-government as affording a strong national bond. The only strength they knew was physical, and the only strong bond material power. They could not understand how the British empire could hold together in a crisis, because there was no bond of material power. It has been one of their greatest surprises of the war to see Britishers coming voluntarily from all parts of the homeland and the dominions in response to the call of an endangered empire. They seem totally unable to understand the spiritual bonds of empire, for their government appears only as the organization of their selfish and material aims. The strange thing to us is that in these brutal and military aims the German people have stood back of their leaders as loyally as any free people behind their government.

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IV

There are few traditions of freedom in Germany. They have no Magna Charta, no Great Revolution, no Declaration of Independence, and no history of revolt from despotism. They have no practice and no ideals of political liberty, and seem to have none of the spirit possessed by Englishmen seven hundred years ago when they resisted successfully the tyranny of King John. They have, it is true, the constitutional right of criticism, and this has been all even the Social Democrats have desired. As Collier picturesquely says: "The people do not govern, have nothing to do with the whip and reins, nor have they any constitutional way of changing coachmen, or of getting possession of whip and reins; hooting at the driver and jeering at the tangled whip-lash and awkwardly held reins is poor-spirited business."

They didn't need to be vulgar before they became civilized.

In his lecture on "Freedom" Treitschke, the famous professor, discusses the various aspects of freedom, and refers to the much envied British liberty. Here he seems to show some comprehension of the nature of

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freedom. But in his lectures on politics the cloven foot of militarism tramples on all semblance of political liberty. There he says that "an efficient and powerful equipment of the army is the basis of political freedom, and consequently the states are by no means to be commiserated that have a powerful, well-organized army." Again he says that political freedom rests upon the complete obedience of the army, which he admits all radical talkers decry as reactionary.

The Germans have never shown any instinct for freedom. More than a century ago Wordsworth's French friend, Beaupuy, wrote of them: "I have always tried to tear away the thick veil of blindness from the eyes of these Germans. They are not made for freedom, I know; but, after all, some grains, I hope, will sprout." With all their advanced thought on many lines and their undoubted technical skill, the Germans are a very primitive people. They have made but little progress in the greatest of all the achievements of man, free political government, and have contributed very little to the world's civilization. Their

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lack of this type of national ability denotes a very primitive state of mind and of morals.

There is a certain perversity in the German mind that shows itself in a constant assertion of their national freedom, and in as constant a disclosure of the fact that they have no conception of the true nature of freedom. In a lecture given after the outbreak of the war, Professor Wilhelm Wundt of Leipzig, the most eminent of all the German psychologists, said that "a nation is free and independent. . . . when the whole people is free to place its power at the service of culture for the benefit of universal humanity." But the way the German people have placed their power at the service of *Kultur* in Belgium and northern France seems more like a carnival of diabolism than the progress of freedom, and demonstrates that the German army, and people, are totally devoid of all spiritual restraints. This is slavery of the spirit, and infinitely worse than material bonds.

V

There is nothing that the German gov-

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ernment has so much feared as freedom, or democracy. The Kaiser and his government have shown an uncompromising opposition to every semblance of democratic ideals entertained by the Social Democratic party. This opposition was due undoubtedly to their democracy rather than to their socialism. Prussia is to a large extent a socialistic state, and Germany as a whole has been said to be "the most socialized nation in the world." But the government has shown a quite fanatical hatred to the Social Democrats that can only be explained by their fear of democracy. Von Buelow says quite emphatically that "this organization of the Social Democrats is definitely hostile to our political system." He affirms that "the Social Democratic movement is the antithesis of the Prussian state." He recognizes the fact that "the Social Democratic movement is revolutionary in character," but believes the government can make no terms with its promoters and asserts that "a comparison with other countries which have succeeded, or seem gradually to be succeeding, in making the Socialist party participate in the government of

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the country does not hold good in view of German conditions."

The Socialists have, therefore, been considered as outside the civic life of the nation, and as political outlaws. They have been regarded as a disloyal opposition, not to be treated with but suppressed. They would introduce the principle of self-government, which is a moral principle, and would destroy the old material bonds of government by force or violence. And this the German government could never permit.

The German government has steadfastly maintained itself as a purely despotic and military government, and has ruled its seventy millions only by the strong hand of force. In the conduct of the war it has assumed that it was under no law of God, or man, and has done deeds of murder, and piracy, and destruction on a scale and in a manner that has outrivaled all previous records of cruelty and wickedness. And the obedient Germans of all classes have freely fulfilled its commands, to the utter astonishment and horror of the civilized and even the savage world. But this is the German idea of government. It is com-

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pletely autocratic and materialistic, and as an eminent Serbian writer has said: "Brute force, in the last analysis, they count as master."

CHAPTER IV

HISTORY IN GERMAN EYES

I

THE view of history that has been developing in Germany is in full accord with the Prussian idea of the state. With the conception of the state as primarily "power," whose first and most important function is war, there goes logically the conception that history reveals nothing but contests of physical forces. All the movements of history, according to this theory, are but the play and counter-play of material or military power, and war, therefore, has been the great maker of nations. This is, of course, a thoroughly materialistic view of history, and accords fully with the Prussian materialistic view of the state.

These conceptions of the state and of history seem to have developed together in the German mind. Their idea of the state is logically the basis for their idea of history. The two are but the obverse and converse of each other. Both alike trace their descent

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from the character of the Prussian state as a military despotism, that knows no authority but "power," and recognizes nothing but physical force. This conception, in any case, has obsessed the German mind, and it has gone forth to make history by the employment of its "power," and to conquer the world by force of arms.

To this view of the development of history, the exercise of power, or war, is but the best and completest manifestation of the will of a nation. History is but the story of the conflict of national wills, in which in every case the stronger triumphs. As a consequence of holding this idea of history the Germans have developed their war machine, and have enlisted the entire nation in the belief that their material might would be irresistible. German writers have frequently expressed the conviction that nothing could resist the united might of nearly seventy million people, armed with abundance of all the devices of war that science and industry could contrive. This spirit is reflected in a letter of a German staff officer in Belgium to a British officer who had been his friend, quoted by a writer in the Fort-

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nightly Review (January, 1915). "We must conquer," he said; "anything else is unthinkable of armies which advance, like ours, with a most iron victory-will, resolved to fight to the last drop of German blood. For us it is a settled thing, ordained by God."

II

It was Bismarck who became the chief instrument under the Hohenzollerns of developing this idea and of putting it into ruthless practice. It is he that must be held largely responsible for the transformation of Germany into a military state. He deliberately made war after war for the aggrandizement of Germany, considering only the likely success of his enterprises. The only excuses he needed for war and the spoliation of his neighbors was the "power" to do it with success. He considered only the prospect of the benefit that might accrue to Germany, and never hesitated to exact from the vanquished all he had the power to extort. "Our right," he said, "is the right of the German nation to exist, to breathe, to be united; it is the right and duty of Prussia to give the German nation the

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foundation necessary for its existence." It was in this spirit that Germany took part in the partition of Poland, seized two provinces of Denmark, wrested Silesia from Austria, and filched Alsace-Lorraine from France. The rights of other nations to exist and to be united did not trouble the "iron" chancellor.

This highwayman's successful exploits have led modern Germany to the idea that all history is but the story of the exercise of such power of will and of arms. To this end alone they have developed their resources, and have organized the most powerful military machine the world has ever known. Their confidence in this has been a kind of materialistic fatalism, that has led them to challenge at once the might and the moral power of the world. They have even had a kind of psychological fatalism, in which they thought to overcome the moral sense of the world at the outbreak of the war by a perfect onslaught upon the public opinion of neutral nations. Their press campaign was managed, like their armies, to overwhelm by the superiority of its power. Their arguments, however, hav-

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ing material and not moral power, have signally failed to capture the sympathy of other peoples. Taking all their ideas from the power of the sword, they did not know that the pen needs moral as well as material power.

III

Again, it is the professors of history in the German universities who have elevated this Prussian view into a distinct philosophy of history. To the distinguished Treitschke we must look for its earliest clear statement. He says that "history wears thoroughly masculine features; it is not for sentimental natures or for women. Only brave nations have a secure existence, a future, a development; weak and cowardly nations go to the wall, and rightly so." To him national weakness, or the inability to exercise brute force in war, is sin. It is, he says, the sin against the Holy Ghost that cannot be forgiven.

History, then, is the story of armed conflict, and the successful state is the product of victory in war. Treitschke says: "Without war there would be no state at all. All the states known to us have arisen through

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wars; the protection of its citizens by arms remains the first and essential task of the state. And so war will last till the end of history, as long as there is a plural number of states. That it could ever be otherwise is neither to be deduced from the laws of thought or from human nature, nor is it in any way desirable. The blind worshipers of perpetual peace commit the error of thought, that they isolate the state or dream of a world-state, which we have already recognized as something irrational."

Again he says: "States do not arise out of the people's sovereignty, but they are created against the will of the people; the state is the power of the stronger race which establishes itself." He adds that there is nothing to be regretted in all this, and fully acknowledges that it is a materialistic theory of the state. He says: "In conditions so simple material power must decide, and this power of the victor justifies itself morally, by becoming a protection and thereby working beneficially. . . . In the further course of history also, among all forces that we know, war is the mightiest and most efficient molder of nations. Only in war

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does a nation become a nation, and the expansion of existing states proceeds in most cases by the way of conquest, even if afterward the results of the armed combat are recognized by treaty."

It was in this way, he says, that Germany was created. "Finally," he adds, "the gifted men who recognized the signs of the times appeared, William, Bismarck, Roon; and now begins the critical war of 1866. What did this effect? Against the will of the whole of Germany the Prussian state created by means of its good sword a Constitution which naturally could be nothing else than the subjection of the smaller states—even if that subjection were concealed under lenient and friendly formalities—the conquered under the domination of the conqueror."

This idea of history seems to be that which is generally accepted by the German statesmen and theorists. Professor Delbrück, the successor of Treitschke in the chair of history in the University of Berlin, in discussing the state gives expression likewise to this military view of history. He asks: "By what right, then, do the states

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nowadays subsist? *War* has given Prussia Silesia, Schleswig-Holstein, and Hanover—where did rights leave off and where might begin? Did the German Confederation and the sovereign powers which formed it subsist by right?" Then he adds: "What an extraordinary self-deception to imagine that the obscure questions of destiny which have been raised here could be solved by the decrees of a court of justice! They are not questions of right but questions of might."

IV

This conception of history has apparently been derived from a study of ancient history, and of the modern history and politics of Prussia. The chief materials of this theory are the annals of Prussian history under the Hohenzollerns, and its utterances are as much the expression of Prussian politics as history. A narrow view of this history seems to favor the idea that history is only the conflict of physical forces. The history of Prussia, is, indeed, the history of dominance by might. One by one the weaker nations have fallen under the policy of "blood and iron," and Poland, Denmark,

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Austria, and France have been the victims. Having grown strong by conquest, Prussia finally subjugated and unified the various German states, and made them into one mighty empire, which as a military power has become the most formidable on earth. All this great empire has undoubtedly been consolidated and organized under the might of the Prussian sword, and by the exercise of ruthless "power."

This, however, is a narrow and spectacled view, and overlooks the history of other peoples, and forgets much of its own. It has never entered the Hohenzollern mind that these elements that have made an empire by force may possibly be in the end elements of weakness rather than strength, as similar elements have proved to be among other peoples. It might be that in the end the empire would be stronger if the alien peoples were given freedom and autonomy. But even when, some years ago, the Czar of Russia proposed autonomy for Poland, it met with the refusal of the Kaiser. The present war, and the response of the free dominions to the need of England, may yet teach Germany and the world that "Free-

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dom" is a stronger bond of empire than "Power."

The German idea of history, as can at once be seen, refuses to learn from the politics and history of other nations. The great expansion of the British empire, which is the special envy of Germany, has not been due primarily to conquest or to the exercise of the will-to-power. For centuries the older English kings attempted to treat with Wales and Scotland only by might, but they signally failed. It was only when free and peaceable unions of the three kingdoms could be brought about that they were made into one Great Britain. What "might" failed to achieve was brought to pass under the influence of the spirit of cooperation and confederation.

Though no doubt in some instances the British colonies have been won by war, these wars were not engineered by the British as the Germans have planned their wars. The British empire has been built up, as a recent American writer has said, rather by a series of fortunate accidents than by any predetermined plan of conquest. And in no case are colonies composed of civilized peo-

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ples now maintained by force of arms. Rather are they free dominions with, often, as in Canada, not a single British soldier in garrison. What the British have done and continue to do by freedom the Germans would do by might. This is the difference between the two systems. And now we see their latest gigantic effort to force their rule, their *Kultur*, upon the world, and further to expand their empire.

In a recent lecture (The Huxley Lecture delivered at Birmingham March 10, 1916) Lord Bryce, referring to the Prussian idea of history, said: "Some of the leading races and states have no doubt established their position by war, but the races that have been most engaged in fighting have not been those which have advanced most. Prussia, of which Voltaire said nearly two centuries ago that fighting was its trade, claims to be an instance of success achieved by war chiefly, but it is still too soon to say whether this claim can be supported" (Synopsis prepared by author for New York Times, March 26, 1916). Lord Bryce could to-day say with full assurance that the German trust in "power" has been misplaced, and

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that the nations whose bond is "freedom" have developed the greater strength.

The Germans do not see, and appear incapable of seeing, that not might but freedom has been the greatest factor in the expansion and growth of the British empire. All the great constitutional development of freedom, which is the great strength of the empire, is wasted on the German mind, which sees none of the inner forces, but has an eye only for the outer and material. This inability to see, much less to measure these hidden forces of history, proves more than anything else the essential materialism of the German mind and disproves their much-vaunted idealism.

This time, then, Germany has not proved capable of understanding anything in history but military might, and in the modern world other and greater forces have developed into strength. They now have arrayed against them all the moral force of the growing democracy of the world, and have made fighting enemies of most of the free peoples of Europe as well as the United States and other free nations of America. They have tried to control twentieth-cen-

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ture Europe with the only forces they could see operating in past history, and were totally unaware that forces not material have now become dominant, and they have not learned that in the age-long conflict of might and liberty the victory is no longer with the strong but with the free.

CHAPTER V
THE GERMAN VIEW OF WAR AND
PEACE

I

THE world has not yet reached that ideal stage in which no disputes arise between men and nations. "It must needs be that offenses come." It was hoped, however, that at least among enlightened nations war had given place to arbitration. War, or force, is the method of barbarism; while arbitration, or reason, is the method of civilization. War settles only by the material strength of the two parties, and cannot be the true arbiter of right. Arbitration frankly endeavors to settle the disagreement equitably and justly according to law and right.

In both its home and foreign policy, however, the German government has recognized only force, or war, as the final and inevitable court of appeal. This, of course, is logical, for the Germans. If the state is primarily power, war is the only way to

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settle a dispute with another nation. Politics, to the German idea, is nothing but a relationship of "power," and war becomes, as Clausewitz, the great German authority on war, has said, "nothing but a continuation of political intercourse, with a mixture of other means."

To this way of thinking, war is the one supreme expression of the state's will and power. All disputes between states resolve themselves in essence into conflicts of national wills, and war becomes the only complete and satisfactory test of the strength of the contending wills. Hence, in all international disputes Germany has always stood forth in her shining armor, and has rattled her sword, and has been ready for instant resort to arms. During the years just preceding the war, particularly, Germany has gone armed to every international conference, and has always been a menace to amicable settlements. It was only to be expected that some time she should let slip the dogs of war.

Germany has been consistently opposed to all arbitration, to all agreements, and to all international understandings. Her pro-

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fessorial theorists have always looked with disfavor upon courts of arbitration. These represent appeals to moral and spiritual factors, to law and right, and these Germany has not recognized as having any place in international politics. It is for this reason that she has refused to be bound by the Hague Tribunal, or by any international agreement. Writing long before the Hague Tribunal was organized, Treitschke laid down clearly the German idea of international agreements that still expresses their attitude. He says distinctly that "every treaty is a voluntary limitation of the individual power, and all international treaties are written with the stipulation, *rebus sic stantibus*. A state cannot possibly bind its will for the future in respect to another state, . . . consequently every state is in a position of being able to cancel any treaty which has been concluded. . . . There can be no final international tribunal at all. . . . But to the end of history arms will maintain their rights; and in that very point lies the sacredness of war." Bernhardt, seeing that the Hague Tribunals and arbitration treaties would tend to prevent the exer-

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cise of the state's supreme function of war, and interfere with aggressive ambitions by placing the decision of disputes outside material force, frankly says that "arbitration treaties must be peculiarly detrimental to an aspiring people, which has not yet reached its political and national zenith, and is bent on expanding its power in order to play its part honorably in the civilized world."

II

For a hundred years and more this idea of war has been developing in Germany. Always a warrior nation, and believing that power justified conquest, and that might alone made right, the Prussians have readily adopted all theories of war that harmonized with their national character and ambitions. The military successes of Napoleon became for them the great object-lesson, and while other nations, even Napoleon's own nation, have been developing away from the barbarous ideas and methods of this ruthless conqueror, the Germans have come to take him as their ideal, and have copied his military practice as well as his idea of the state with its disregard of moral principles.

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The outcome of the German study of the Napoleonic wars was General Clausewitz's three-volume work, *On War*, which appeared about a century ago. This man is spoken of as "the father of the German military idea and modern strategy," and it was he that "established the German idea and attitude toward war and the power of might." As Colonel Maude says in the introduction to the English translation, this book "reveals war, stripped of all accessories, as the exercise of force for the attainment of a political object, unrestrained by any law save that of expediency." As he further says: "Step by step, every event since Waterloo follows with logical consistency from the teachings of Napoleon, formulated for the first time, some twenty years afterward by this remarkable thinker."

It was Treitschke, however, who developed not only the military theory of the state, but also the political theory of war. In his *Politics* he says that it was "On Prussian soil that arming of the nation began which was later to become the lot of all Germany." From this, as he says, came the "nation in arms" that has made war such

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a gigantic undertaking: "Germany's example compelled armies to become nations, nations to become armies, and consequently war to be a dangerous experiment." It is only in this war, however, that the other nations have followed the example of Germany as a "nation in arms." It transpires, then, as William Archer says, that "the theory of war, having been perfected in Germany about a century ago, is now for the first time being put to the test of experience on an adequate and really instructive scale." And as the same writer goes on to say, "The result is that Prussia, confronted by half a dozen converts to her own creed, is now learning what a war of 'nations in arms' really means."

A "nation in arms" means, moreover, that all the resources of the nation, both material and spiritual, shall be put into the "dangerous experiment." The people become but "cannon-fodder," and the state develops a cynical contempt for their individual interests and welfare. But, in addition, everything else in the nation comes to be regarded only according to its military and state value. As an able French writer has said:

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"In the Teutonic conception, science, history, philosophy, religion, are national forces like the army, diplomacy, and credit. From this point of view science is no longer a universal and human thing; it belongs primarily to the service of the state." Regarding all their own resources as but so much military material, it was only to be expected that they should treat all the resources of their enemies likewise as their military material and make war upon them. It is in this spirit that the German War Book says that "a war conducted with energy cannot be directed merely against the combatants of the enemy state and the positions they occupy, but it will and must in like manner seek to destroy the total intellectual and material resources of the latter." And the diabolism of this never enters the German mind.

III

It is not surprising, then, that the German leaders have all glorified war, and have endeavored to inculcate the idea that war, not peace, is the normal condition of states, and that war is really the greatest and most glorious manner of expressing the national

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will. Bismarck said that "war is the natural condition of humanity." Treitschke, with his military conception of politics, magnified the moral nobility of war, and said: "It is indeed political idealism which fosters war, whereas materialism rejects it. What a perversion of morality to want to banish heroism from human life! The heroes of a people are the personalities who fill the youthful souls with delight and enthusiasm." Bernhardi, as usual outdoing his master, speaks of "the inevitableness, the idealism, and the blessing of war, as an indispensable and stimulating law of development." Nietzsche said that "war is. . . the true divinity for consecrating and purifying the state." And numerous other writers have echoed and reechoed these sentiments.

Fearing the tendencies to arbitration and peace that were developing in the modern world, the German leaders undertook a regular campaign to eradicate such ideas and to inculcate their conception of war among their people. They relegated the arts of peace to a secondary place by insisting under all conditions that all the activities of the

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state had a final reference to war and conquest. The Kaiser led this propaganda for war in every direction, and was instrumental in introducing into the schools a more thorough teaching of German history, which, as the war-lords understand it, is a history of military operations.

Numerous war-lords joined in this diabolical propaganda of war. Bernhardi deplored the fact that "the value of war for the political and moral development of mankind has been criticised by large sections of the modern civilized world." Von der Goltz exclaimed that "the warlike spirit must not be allowed to die out among the people, neither must the love of peace get the upper hand." These and other prominent generals declaimed in favor of the moral value of war, and characterized the doctrines of peace as "poison" and as "heresies."

The tactics of this campaign was to deride the modern tendencies to arbitration and peace and appeal to the old German love of war and plunder. Having but little power of political thought, and being possessed by great material ambitions, the mass of the

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German people were hypnotized by the glitter of world-power and prestige held out as the prize of successful war, and were particularly captivated by the glare of the great plunder that would come from a successful raid upon other nations, and especially upon the British empire.

Having failed in the "dangerous experiment" of war, it remains to be seen whether or not the German people have it in them to reconstruct their national ideals, and forsake the path of materialism for the highway of idealism. It may be that when they discover the truth about the causes of the war, and when they find themselves condemned before the accusing moral sense of the world at the conclusion of peace, they will discard the false ideals of the war-lords and adopt the better ideals of reason and of peace. The moral fate of the German people depends upon their ability to assert their better natures, and to purge themselves of their materialism with its scorn of all higher values.

CHAPTER VI

EVOLUTION AND WAR

I

THOUGH the German idea of the state is the chief support of Prussian militarism, it is science and a certain philosophy of science that have become its best apologists. It is a notorious fact that much of the science of the past half century or more has been frankly materialistic, and has thus become a strong support for the ambitions of militarism. If the German professors of politics and history have developed the Prussian theory of the state, it has been left to the professors of biological science to lay the theoretical basis for war deep in the processes of nature. That this basis, however, is equally false with the military theory of the state, and that both alike are false because they are materialistic, has been amply demonstrated by science itself. This German theory of war rests only on a "science falsely so called."

The strong materialistic tendency notice-

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able in much recent scientific and philosophical thinking has by no means been confined to Germany. Germany, however, has had the bad preeminence of leading in the frank avowal of materialism, and in the bold attempt to construct a philosophy of life and of the world from certain of the laws and principles of physical nature. On this basis a purely materialistic philosophy of man and of society has grown up and has flourished, and, though starting with the scientists, has spread far and wide throughout the nation. The uncritical character of this view, its blindness to extra-physical facts, its ignorance of psychical phenomena, their laws and principles, its proneness to superficial generalizations, have not prevented, but probably have helped to further, its immense popularity in Germany. And this has been the best of soil in which the war-lords could sow the seeds of international strife and illwill.

This type of thinking is based on Darwin's theory of evolution, and upon his conception of the "struggle for existence" as its formula. It has accepted Spencer's interpretation of the process as working out "the

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survival of the fittest." Though hating England for her political and commercial prosperity, the Germans have not hesitated to enlist and to debase English scientific theories into the service of their militarism. It avails nothing that Darwin himself would scarcely recognize and certainly not accept the crude philosophies that look to his theory of evolution as their warrant. Nor does it matter that the crudities of Spencer and his uninformed generalizations have all but ceased to have any influence in the land of their origin.

This biological view of life has found expression in German thought in several distinct forms that have all contributed to build up the present-day materialism of Germany, and that have prepared the way for the present war. In all of these alike German professors have led the way, and thus have become the abettors, if not the instigators, of the war, and have done much to determine its inhuman and lawless character.

II

In Germany, this evolutionary philosophy

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of war, based on a perverted biology, has found a vigorous, poetic, and popular exponent in Friedrich Nietzsche, another of the German professors who have laid the theoretical foundation for this war. Some of the German writers since the outbreak of the war have protested that Nietzsche has not been one of the teachers of Germany, and that he has had but little influence there. This, however, is of no avail, for if he has not helped to form the present savage mind of Germany, then he is a symptom of the character of that mind. There is no question that Germany has acted upon ideas and has been moved by conceptions that are Nietzschean.

One of Nietzsche's biographers and critics says that he "considered war and struggle as a biological necessity, as a social necessity." The same writer refers to the following words of Nietzsche as an expression of his philosophy: "War and courage have done more great things than charity. What is good? ye ask. To be brave is good. Live your life of obedience and war." Though he disliked and ridiculed the pretensions of Prussia as a *Kultur* state, he,

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nevertheless, has furnished it with much of its doctrine and justification of war.¹

III

Among the scientific materialists whose doctrines have aided the war-lords, Professor Ernst Haeckel, of the University of Jena, takes first place. Perhaps no living writer has done more than Haeckel to popularize and to make plausible, to a certain type of mind, the theories of life and of the world that have been formulated on the basis of evolution. He has been a prolific writer, and his *The Riddle of the Universe*, published in 1902, has had the distinction of ranking for a time with popular novels, and becoming one of the "best sellers." Its very popularity discloses the eagerness of the German mind to grasp materialistic views of life that can be put to the service of militarism.

Perhaps no book of our day that has made any pretense of science and philosophy has aroused so much interest as *The Riddle of*

¹ A fuller discussion of Nietzsche and his relation to the German philosophy of war is to be found in Chapter X on "The New Ethics of Militarism."

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the Universe. In the English translation, however, this was generally the interest of dissent to a bold theory rather than of acceptance. The frank, fearless, but uncritical adoption of materialism, and the cool neglect or ignorance of what is commonplace and axiomatic to all careful thinking, make it a curious example of the easy and careless scientific mind when it touches on the larger problems of philosophy. Even the followers of Herbert Spencer found themselves unable to accept Haeckel's easy conclusions. The "translator" of the book was one of the few who could say that "it seems impossible to follow his broad survey of the psychic [sic] world, from protist to man, without bearing away a conviction of the natural origin of every power and content of the human soul" (Preface, p. xiii, last sentence).

Haeckel freely admits that his theory is materialistic. In his Chapter VI, on "The Nature of the Soul," after boldly declaring that the "soul" is not something distinguishable from the body, and saying that the "spirit world" and the "immortality of the soul" are "purely a product of the poetic

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imagination," he admits that "our conception is, in this sense, materialistic, for our scientific experience has never yet taught us the existence of forces that can dispense with a material substratum or of a spiritual world over and above the realm of nature."

For our present purpose only one phase of Haeckel's thought is of any particular interest. This is his adoption of the concept of evolution, and his acceptance of Darwin's theory of natural selection as the one and sufficient formula for the entire history of the universe. He affirms that Darwin's theory of natural selection, which he conceives as the operation of purely mechanical laws, will account for the entire course of organic evolution. He believes that "it may be said that the struggle for life is the 'survival of the fittest' or the 'victory of the best.' That is correct only when we regard the strongest as the best (in a moral sense)." And he goes on to say that the fate of the human family "is determined by the same 'eternal laws of iron' as the history of the whole organic world."

There have been many effective criticisms

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of this crude philosophy, if such it can be called. Perhaps no other book of such great pretensions ever appeared to philosophers as so shallow and so fallacious. It is no part of our present purpose, however, to examine Haeckel's views as such, for abundant criticism can be found in numerous scientific and philosophical publications. It is sufficient to say that he has added nothing fundamental to the old arguments for materialism that are familiar to every philosopher, and that have been refuted in almost every philosophical treatise.

IV

This conception of the "struggle for life" was eagerly adopted by the war-lords, and enlisted into the service of German militarism. This afforded too good an opportunity to give their ambitions the semblance of scientific justification, and they were fully awake to its possibilities. They have, however, been even more crude than the science professors in their statement of the doctrine, and their eagerness to find in it some support has clearly revealed the cloven foot of political purpose.

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As far back as Treitschke the value of this concept as a vindication of their theory of the state and of war was clearly recognized. They were very quick to discern its possible application to German *Weltpolitik*, and to see in it a warrant for German national ambitions. It was in his capacity as a politician that Treitschke declared: "That the strong should triumph over the weak is an inexorable law of nature."

It is only when we come to the present-day war-lords, however, that we find the crudest but clearest junction of biology and militarism. A certain German naval officer is quoted as saying that "you know that the synonym of life is strife; that a nation which does not strive will not and cannot live; is a decadent and dying one, and that only those nations are vital who are prepared to, who can, and who will fight." Again, the biological law, if such it be, is given the crudest and most war-like interpretation.

But it takes Bernhardt to outdo them all. He says explicitly that "wherever we look in nature we find war is a fundamental law of development. This great verity, which

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has been recognized in past ages, has been convincingly demonstrated in modern times by Charles Darwin. He proved that nature is ruled by an unceasing struggle for existence, by the right of the stronger, and that this struggle, in its apparent cruelty, brings about a selection, eliminating the weak and unwholesome." And he accepts this also as the law of human life, saying that "the law of struggle for existence applies also to man."

Thus Bernhardt takes Darwin's doctrine of a struggle for existence without criticism, and, on the basis of its crude form as a biological law, he applies it at once to human societies and states. The struggle for existence between lower animals becomes "war" when operating between nations. Hence "war," he says, "is a biological necessity of the first importance, a regulative element in the life of mankind which cannot be dispensed with, since without it an unhealthy development will follow, which excludes every advancement of the race, and therefore all real civilization." On this basis, then, as he further says, "might is at once the supreme right, and the dispute as

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to what is right is decided by the arbitrament of war. War gives a biologically just decision since its decisions rest on the very nature of things."

V

These German militarists have not been the first to adduce Darwin's theory as proof of their philosophy of war. But they are probably the first—and the last—to put it in such a crude form, and to apply it in defense of their own national ambitions. For this, of course, they have no authority from Darwin, and show no comprehension of the criticism of more recent times.

There can be no doubt that Darwin stated a great fact of nature when he declared the world of lower animals to be for all a supreme struggle for existence. The animal world discloses a kind of warfare in which one animal seems but to "subserve another's gain." Even before Darwin wrote Tennyson had seen "nature red in tooth and claw," and had tried to understand this great tragedy. Darwin explained that this struggle for existence was nature's way of making a selection by eliminating the weak,

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and Spencer called it "the survival of the fittest."

Science can be adequately refuted only by science or by philosophy. And it is very significant that science itself is not satisfied with these doctrines as a complete formula of evolution. Without disputing Darwin's main statement that nature is an arena of struggle for life, scientists have been calling attention to certain aspects of life that he has overlooked, and are setting limits to the application of his formula. They have been assuring us that there are other factors in life besides the struggle of each individual for its own life, and that other elements enter into the struggle besides mere physical force. Egoism gives way at many points to altruism.

Spencer it was who showed that the principle of "altruism" is operative even in animal life. Henry Drummond has brought out clearly, in his *Ascent of Man*, that not only is there a struggle for one's own life, but an equally important struggle for the life of others. Haeckel himself, when it comes to ethics, affirms both principles of egoism and altruism, and says that, "Hence the

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highest aim of all ethics is very simple—it is the reestablishment of ‘the natural equality of egoism and altruism, of the love of one-self and the love of one’s neighbor.’” In other words, even the scientists recognize in nature not only the principle of selfishness, which is self-preservation, but the principle of love of others, or of self-sacrifice. But militarism closes its eyes to this latter principle and takes the struggle for life, or self-preservation, as the one principle of nature, and warfare as the normal and incessant condition of the animal world and of the human.

VI

It is very noticeable that the scientists of the present day have developed much more adequate conceptions of the application of the concept of organic evolution to man and to human society. This more critical view does not deny the evolution of organic forms but recognizes its inadequacy for the conscious life of man as an individual and as a member of society. Dr. P. Chalmers Mitchell, a noted biologist, in his recent book on *Evolution and the War*, has discussed this question of the application of evolution

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to man, and of the relation of the animal struggle for life to human warfare. He says that "even if the struggle for existence were a scientific law, it does not apply to human affairs." He further says that "the struggle for existence as propounded by Charles Darwin, and as it can be followed in nature, has no resemblance with human warfare." He sums up his views in these words: "Even if the struggle for existence were the sole law that had shaped and trimmed the tree of life, it does not necessarily apply to the political communities of men, for these cohere not because of common descent, but because of bonds that are peculiar to the human race."

In a recent criticism Professor Vernon Kellogg says: "This philosophy seems to take no account of the extent and importance in human life of what may be called man's social evolution as contrasted and often in conflict with his natural evolution." After further criticism he proceeds to call this "a sophisticated, overdriven, biological, dehumanized, mechanistic philosophy of tiger evolution that would put us back five hundred thousand years into the Glacial

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Time conditions of our half-beast, half-man ancestor." And he adds that "that is exactly what the German natural philosophers and the German war philosophy maintain."¹

Science, therefore, is seen to consider it fallacious for the militarists to assume that a condition of nature, in which the struggle is between unconscious individuals, furnishes the model for societies, or nations of human beings. Nations are not entities in the same sense as animals, but are aggregations of individuals, and it is not the whole nation that engages in war, but only the physically strong. Human war, therefore, is not the victory of the strong, but the survival of the weak.

VII

War among nations, however, is not a mere trial of physical strength. On the plane of human society, many factors besides force determine the result. It is no

¹ War and Human Evolution: Germanized, by Professor Vernon Kellogg, North American Review, March, 1918, pp. 364-69.

See also Darwinism and War, by Sir E. Ray Lankester, New York Times Current History, November, 1915, pp. 301-304.

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longer the strongest battalions that are the victors in warfare, but the side that can muster the greatest moral and spiritual forces. Intelligence and moral power go into the battle, as well as physical force, and "might" does not always win in the end. An intelligent commander may be worth an army corps, and a righteous cause may be worth many battalions. But if this is the character of modern warfare, then there is no need of an arbitrament of arms, for force alone cannot determine the right, and the battlefield is not the place to settle moral and intellectual contests. The nation that calls such forces into war reveals thereby its essential materialism and barbarism.

The decisive struggles of nations cannot be waged in the arena of physical force, and war, therefore, cannot settle them. Truth beaten to the earth will rise again. The struggles that determine a nation's fitness to survive occur in the fields of art and science, in invention and industry, in the school and parliament. In other words, it is not always on the plane of physical force, but on that of mental and spiritual power that the decisive struggle takes place. Na-

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tions do not always rise and fall according to their physical force, but, rather, according to their moral power. It is liberty rather than force that has made the British empire, and has unified her world-wide domains. But this the German mind cannot comprehend. It thought to conquer the world with its military machine, admittedly the most powerful on earth, but it now finds arrayed against it all the moral power of the world, all the love of liberty in the world, and these have strengthened the arms that have smitten its "power" to the earth.

The militarists, however, have clearly shown their entire inability to comprehend anything but material forces. They have revealed their ignorance of science as such, and have grasped only at so much of its teachings as seems to favor their war ambitions. They have likewise disclosed a cynical disregard of all moral and spiritual principles. In this, however, they are more logical than Professor Haeckel, and consistently deny everything but physical force, and do not recognize the existence of any principle except "might."

CHAPTER VII

ECONOMICS AND WAR

I

THERE is now no doubt that the reasons for the war were not only political, but also economic. Like everything else in Germany, as has been said, economics has become "a supplement to German political aspirations." It has been said that Germany "is not able to dissociate the idea of commercial and political power." One writer says that German thought "is a union of economic and political tendencies, the fruition of both being in the *Weltpolitik*."

Professor Herrick believes that "commercial rivalry has largely begotten this bloody war, which is essentially a predatory raid by one barbarous tribe against the riches of its neighbors"; and he adds that "to Germany alone, however, has been reserved the distinction of elevating greed and the lust of power to the dignity of a philosophical system, a creed with the religious sanc-

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tion of that 'old German god' to smite the rivals of the Fatherland and take away their wealth." This only bears out the interpretation and prophecy of Professor Usher before the war that the aims of Germany were "to loot the British empire."

The best confirmation, however, comes from one of the Kaiser's subjects, who could not follow his master in his attempt to subjugate the world, and who has had to leave Germany for a safer refuge. Herr August Thyssen, one of the foremost business men of Germany, has revealed some of the Kaiser's schemes. He says that "a large number of business and commercial men were asked to support the Hohenzollern war policy on the ground that it would pay them to do so." The plan was, he says, to exploit Australia, Canada, and other parts of the British empire, and to extract huge indemnities from their conquered neighbors that would relieve German manufacturers of taxation for years after the war. The Kaiser himself closed one of his speeches to the gatherings of business men with these words: "He who refuses to help is a traitor to the Fatherland; he who helps willing-

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ly and generously will have his rich reward."

German ambition no doubt conceived not only the glory of the German empire as a national concern, but the profit of German trade and commerce as a gain for individuals. The Kaiser envied the British empire as a vast and world-wide political concern, and the German people envied British world trade, and the vast dividends to British capital. The Kaiser was probably moved chiefly by dreams of empire and of glory; but the stolid German business men were caught by the promise of very tangible German commerce and German profits. One was moved by glory, and the other by greed. But they were able to unite on a very definite program of war and plunder.

II

On the economic side there seem to be two distinct trends of thought in Germany, and each is represented by a different element of the nation. The large financial interests of Germany, represented by shipping, manufacture, and banking, seem to be completely under the influence of the individual-

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istic theories that trace back to Adam Smith and the early British economists. This school maintained that economic competition was the one and sufficient regulative principle of trade and commerce, and considered the end of statesmanship to be the removal of hindrances to complete competition. This section of the nation it is, chiefly, that made the war.

The other section is the proletariat, whose economic principles, so far as they have any, are to be traced to Karl Marx and his school. This school criticizes the extreme individualism of the older school, and constitutes the Social Democratic party of Germany. Karl Marx, though a German, spent many years in England, and developed his socialistic theories in direct opposition to the school of Adam Smith. Rae in his *Contemporary Socialism* says that "his principal work, 'Das Kapital,' is a criticism of modern industrial development as explained by English economists and exemplified in English society." The roots of this view are to be found in earlier German thought, but were developed chiefly by Marx. Lichtenberger says: "Fichte, Hegel

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. . . and finally Marx and Engels, gradually developed the materialistic theory of history and the doctrine of collectivism."¹

These diverse views represent the two principles that are now commonly recognized as having a place in our economic life. Modern economists recognize the fact that both individualism and collectivism, or competition and cooperation, are to be found working in all economic societies. Free competition is nowhere seen to exist. Many other elements exist that make it impossible. Of these custom, combination, and socialism may be mentioned. Morality itself is seen to be a check on its unlimited operation. As a recent writer says: "In the political life of the world to-day we see the same forces at work as in all life from the very beginning—the forces which we sum up under the terms of the competitive and the cooperative processes, the individualistic and the collective movement."²

These are but the economic forms of the

¹Lichtenberger, *Germany and its Evolution in Modern Times*, English translation by Ludovici, p. 51.

²E. R. A. Seligman, "An Economic Interpretation of the War," in *Problems of Readjustment after the War*. New York, Appleton, 1915.

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biological principles of struggle for one's own life, or egoism, and struggle for the life of others, or altruism. Both principles are seen to be at work in even the most primitive economic group, or the family. It is cooperation, however, that acts as social cohesion, and upon which the very existence of the family depends. It is upon the extension of cooperation, moreover, that the building up of larger economic groups depends. Human progress, then, depends upon economic cooperation, for only by cooperation could the world become one vast workshop and one great economic group.

There is no doubt, then, that the socialists have emphasized a great truth in their insistence upon the principle of cooperation, or collectivism, in economics. In all other lines of human endeavor our greatest progress has been made by cooperation. In art and science and learning the world has become one vast system of cooperation. No longer, for instance, is there a "national" science, for all scientists of all lands cooperate in the extension of knowledge, and the only competition left is in the endeavor to see which can do the most for the world. Every ad-

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vance in science or learning is at once given to the world, and is not used for either personal or national advantage.

The only real competition left in human affairs is in the sphere of trade and commerce, and in the acquisition of property, either individual or national. Germany alone of the great nations has studiously fostered this economic nationalism, and has steadfastly set her face against cooperation. By continually seeking in every way, however subtle and devious, to enlarge her national commerce and territory, she has carried competition to its greatest length and on its largest scale. Then, finally, by resorting to the use of military forces to supplement and give success to the competition of economic forces, she carried national competition over into a deadly war of nations. It seems to be the German idea that war is a weapon to be used for economic as well as for political ends.

III

The German war-lords seem to be able to utilize both of these ideas, and to enlist both the individualists and the Socialists in

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the furtherance of their political ambitions. The individualists seem to be able to dictate very largely the international economic policy of Germany. The great manufacturing and mercantile interests regard competition as their chief weapon, and their ambition is to wrest from Britain the commercial supremacy that has made them a wealthy nation. They have not hesitated to make use of military power, and have united with the war-lords for the destruction of their economic rivals. They believe, apparently, that war is but the continuation of economic competition, and have enlisted the sword on behalf of economic warfare. It matters not to them that, morally, their principles are those of the robber barons of old who eschewed mere trade competition, and deliberately set out to rob others by force of the fruits of their industry.

The Germans still seem to believe the old and exploded economic doctrine that one nation can gain only what another loses, or, as John Burroughs has recently put it, "that legitimate upbuilding of one nation can only be by the pulling down of another."

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They therefore thought they must destroy British commerce in order to enhance their own. They do not know that a bargain may be profitable to both sides, and do not realize that it was the greatness of British commerce and the freedom of British markets that made possible their own prosperity.

Obsessed as it is with militarism, Germany is the only present-day European nation that would think of making war to extend its commerce. Britain has seen German trade expanding and capturing some of its own business, and has adhered to its own free trade while Germany has maintained a high tariff to exclude British and other goods. Nor has Britain in any way attempted to close the markets of her colonies to the expanding German trade. On the contrary, she has been content to let the economic warfare be conducted with economic forces, taking her chance to win or lose. But Germany, unable to appreciate the real factors in our modern economic life, undertook to gain economic ascendancy by means of military power. Mediæval in all her political ideas, she is scarcely less so in her economic conceptions.

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All the while, as it seems, Germany has apparently been preparing to enlist the sword in behalf of her commerce. The bitter "hate" of Britain by Germany, and their statement that Britain was their one real enemy, would indicate their envy of British commercial supremacy, and their determination to capture this for themselves. An eminent German critic and publicist, Herr Alfred Kerr, as recently as 1912, said to the French journalist, M. Georges Bourdon: "It is not a personal quarrel that we seek with you [France]. Nothing of the kind. But it is interest, profit, do you see? The whole of Germany is hypnotized by the golden calf of profit. . . . You are rich. Therefore your possessions are coveted. . . . The world's peace? For Germany it means the possession of colonies. Yours are desirable. . . . But I must say we gaze more toward England than toward you." Germany is probably the only great nation today that could entertain the thought of a great war for such a cause. Though Prince von Buelow had hopes that such a war might be averted, the war party, as we see, gained control of affairs and made the war.

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IV

As a social and national organization, however, Germany has recognized the value of cooperation, and has become the most socialistic of all modern nations. In her internal affairs she has adopted the principle of collectivism. Her Social Democratic party, which is probably the largest in Europe, is evidence of the trend of the German mind in internal trade and commerce. The violent hostility of the Kaiser to this party was due not to its socialism, but to its democracy. All parties alike seemed to favor the greatest cooperation in national affairs. But the internationalism and brotherhood, that are the fundamental principles of socialism, do not seem to have affected the German socialists. Their collectivism has not extended beyond the bounds of the German empire. Their intense nationalism has set very well-defined limits to their socialism.

Hence the war-lords were able to unite for war both parties in Germany. In a most astonishing manner they unified the nation, and rallied both the capitalist class

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and the socialists to present a united front to their enemies. Their political ambitions, of course, tallied perfectly with the commercial aims of the manufacturing and mercantile class, who saw their economic hopes realized in the dream of German world domination. It is this party that has supported on all occasions the policy of military expansion, and finally of a European war. To them political expansion was but the opportunity for economic expansion.

At the same time the war-lords gained the full support of the Socialists by their claim that they were fighting a defensive war that was forced upon them by the schemes chiefly of Britain. The entire Social Democratic party seems to have answered the call, and has stood shoulder to shoulder with the capitalists. The one was fighting for the destruction of their rivals for world commerce, and the other for the large brotherhood of the German people. The one was caught by the opportunity to enlarge international competition to a trial at arms, and the other by the call to defend national collectivism. For the time, the extreme economic nationalism of the capi-

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talistic class worked with the international collectivism represented by the Social Democrats. Both worked for a common Germanism that knew no economic principles but self-aggrandizement. Both were won over by a skillful appeal to the inherent cupidity of the German character, and its malignant envy of the economic success of their rivals, particularly the British empire. Their conflicting economic ideas were harmonized for the time in the common hope of profiting by a raid upon their economic rivals. In all matters affecting their international relations the Germans are still barbaric and militaristic. They are tribal in their economic, as in their moral and religious conceptions, and seemingly incapable of the international principles of cooperation and brotherhood that move other peoples of Europe and America.

V

In resorting to war to gain their economic and political ends the Germans seemed scarcely to be aware that they were abandoning economic competition entirely. In economic competition the factors that enter

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into the struggle are not material forces, but intellectual and moral powers. The resort to war was a relapse to materialism and to the competition of physical forces. A nation that appeals to warfare to gain its economic ends is simply reverting to barbarism. In times past this method has often achieved success, and more than one European nation has in this manner extended its commerce. Bernhardt coldly says that "the German empire built up its economic success on the basis of its armed force." And he implies that this is the way to extend it further. But it is very doubtful if this can be done to-day in Europe. This would completely destroy confidence, and economic success now depends more than ever upon cooperation and upon confidence. To destroy these is to destroy the very foundation of commerce, and the aggressor is likely to suffer at least as much as his intended victim. It will probably be found, therefore, that in its barbarian attempt to destroy others, Germany will suffer more in the destruction of that cooperation and confidence upon which her own trade depended.

Germany has been called the most ma-

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terialistic nation of Europe. Prussianism, with its Hohenzollerns and Bismarcks, has no appreciation of anything but material objects and physical force. Neither in politics and history, nor in biology and economics, do they discern anything but the struggle of "might." The appeal to biological and economic science displays an appalling blindness for everything but physical forces. The obsession of militarism has destroyed the old-time German idealism, and the endeavor to enlist half-truths, and even falsehoods, in its service only shows the desperate character of its creed of "blood and iron." In politics and history, in biology and economics, militarism is only a half-truth, and as used by the Germans becomes a falsehood. It is only barbarism and destruction, and the greatest of all the foes of modern civilization.

CHAPTER VIII
GERMAN "SUPERIORITY"

I

WITHIN the past few generations the Germans have reached the conclusion that they alone are "the salt of the earth," and that the world is to be saved by the virtues of Germany. Adopting Nietzsche's conception, they have come to believe that they alone are "super-men," and have a right to impose their *Kultur* upon the world. Assured in their own minds of their superiority, they have believed that this constituted them the natural leaders among men, and established their right to enforce even by arms the adoption of *Kultur* by all other peoples. The war to many of them took on the character of a holy mission for the good of the world and the defense of civilization against the decadent influences of other European nations and the barbarism of the rest of the world.

Within recent years numerous Germans have piously declared their ardent desire to

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save the world from the blight of Anglo-Saxon influences, and to confer the blessings of German *Kultur*. This thin veil of altruism, however, has not been sufficient to hide the shining armor that has represented the ulterior political purpose. Among others Herr Rohrbach, in his book, *Der Deutsche Gedanke in der Welt* (The German Idea in the World, English translation by Von Mach), sets forth the great cultural mission of Germany, which a reviewer summarizes as follows: "Fearing that the world is becoming predominantly Anglo-Saxon, he calls upon his people resolutely to assert themselves so that they may not be left out of the reckoning. The motive, it is to be observed, is not economic but political." Men of less intellect but more frankness, like General von Roehle, say explicitly that "only one people has a right to play the leading part in the political world, and that people is the German people." This is only the brutality of Bernhardt over again, and displays the same lack of appreciation of the rights of other nations and of the value of their contributions to civilization.

All this would be pathetic in any case,

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but taken so seriously by the Germans, it has become aggressive, and is assigned as the cause of the war by ex-President C. W. Eliot, of Harvard University. He says that "the real cause of the successive military aggressions on the part of Germany since 1864 lies in the gradual prevalence throughout that nation, and particularly in its educated classes, of an exaggerated estimate of the bodily and spiritual merits of the German people, and of a firm belief that the national greatness and the progress of characteristic German civilization were to be attained through the development of the most tremendous national force that could possibly be contrived and brought into being, and through the gratification of the intense German desire for domination in Europe, and eventually in the world."

II

After the usual German manner, it has been the professors who have been the most eloquent in proclaiming German superiority and who have found scientific reasons for the national pride. Dr. Adolf Lasson, privy councillor and professor of philosophy

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in the University of Berlin, proclaims "the immeasurable superiority of Germany and the Germans in morals and intelligence to all other nations and peoples of the world." Another Professor, Baron von Stengel, of the University of Munich, believes that "the war has demonstrated, throughout its course, that we, the Germans, have been chosen by Providence, from among all earth's peoples, to put ourselves at the head of all the civilized nations and guide them to a sure peace under our protection. For this we possess not only the necessary power and force, but also, in the highest degree, the intellectual gifts requisite, and we are the flower of the entire creation's *Kultur*. Consequently, it has been reserved for us to do what no nation hitherto has been able to do—to give all the world peace."

This obsession has reached a pitiful stage when men, otherwise great as scientists, like Professor Wundt, of Leipzig, declare, as he did in a lecture since the opening of the war, that "the great contribution of our poets and thinkers of the last centuries lies in this, they first won in the realm of the spirit and intellect that position which necessarily for the

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German people leads to supreme command in all those spheres of life where thought and action are united in the same sense as body and soul. Kant and Schiller, and in the depths of his heart, Goethe, greatest of our dead, foresaw this, although history alone could clearly reveal the goal of German culture as we see it to-day."

Even the spiritual teachers of Germany are not free from this racial and spiritual pride of assumed superiority. Eucken says that "to us, as to no other nation, has Providence intrusted the care for the inner, for the individual, worth of human existence." And Harnack bewails that, "if we fall, which may God and our strong arm avert, there sinks with us into the grave all higher culture in our hemisphere, to whose guardianship we were called; for neither with Russia nor against Russia will Great Britain have the power to preserve it in Europe." This kind of boasting has been very well characterized as "the furthest conceivable limits of vanity, arrogance, and bad manners."

III

It is when we turn to the scientific reasons

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advanced by the German professors for this racial superiority that we are appalled by their ability at self-deception. They have appealed to ethnology, to philology, and other sciences, and have constructed a purely fictitious record of the wonderful achievements of Germans in all branches of art, science, and worldly and spiritual endeavor. As one writer says: "The German imagination peopled the past with vague and vast achievements performed by heroes—German, always German—more than mortal."

One of the most notorious in this respect is Professor Ludwig Woltmann, the famous anthropologist. It is one of his favorite pretensions that races of pure stock are superior to those of mixed stock. He maintains that the Aryan race is the greatest of all the races of the earth, and that to them as a pure race can be traced all the real contributions to the world's civilization. Then to clinch the whole argument he attempts to identify the Germans with the pure Aryan stock, and to assert that all other races are mixed and therefore inferior. It is only a step then to the conclusion that "the cul-

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tural value of a nation is measured by the quantity of Teutonism it contains."

He therefore reached the "scientific" result that "the Teutons are the aristocracy of humanity; the Latins, on the contrary, belong to the degenerate mob." He further says that "the Teutonic race is called to circle the earth with its rule, to exploit the treasures of nature and of human labor power, and to make the passive races servient elements in its cultural development."

The extreme form of this is the recent German extension of Nietzsche's theory of master and slave morality. It was Nietzsche's opinion that there were by nature two castes among men, the masters and the slaves, and that it was for the masters to develop themselves into super-men by exploiting and utilizing the services of the slave class. He did not, however, think of the super-men as any particular race, much less the Prussians whom he despised, but as the talented and powerful in the various races. But the Teuton mind, ever ready for any warrant for their racial arrogance, seized upon and adapted his thought and proclaimed themselves as the one race

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of super-men, and other races as their inferiors. They have all too readily taken up the conception that they were destined to dominate other nations, and have thus justified themselves in their enslavement of the inhabitants of Belgium and France.

IV

Though born of arrogance and not of science, some writers have thought best to treat the German claim of superiority based on ethnology seriously and to examine it carefully. It has been shown that there is no ground whatever for maintaining that the Germans are a pure stock any more than the other peoples of Europe. The Prussians, particularly, are a mixture of Teutonic and Slavic elements, and the German nation as a whole is quite as much a mixture of the three primal stocks as the other nations of Western Europe.

Even if these baseless claims that the Germans were of pure stock were true, it would still remain to be demonstrated that such stock possesses any special race genius or produces superior individuals. As Professor Boas says: "The idea of the great

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blond Aryan, the leader of mankind, is the result of self-admiration that emotional thinkers have tried to sustain by imaginative reasoning. It has no foundation in observed fact." The trend of scientific opinion, in fact, is in favor of the view that a mixture of racial stocks is more productive of genius and of national achievements than the more pure stocks.

Nor does the argument from physical types fare any better at the hands of the scientists. Neither the shape of the skull nor the complexion can be used as an argument to support Teutonic superiority. Professor Ripley, author of *The Races of Europe*, says that "Europe offers the best refutation of the statement that the proportions of the head mean anything intellectually." The same types prevail among Germanic and non-Germanic peoples alike. And as for complexions, it is not the blond Teutonic but the dark Latin peoples who have thus far contributed most to the welfare and the advancement of the world. Professor Boas says that "the men to whom we are indebted for the basic advances of civilization belong to the dark-complex-

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ioned human types of the Orient, Greece, and Italy."

V

The German boast of superiority has led many writers to review their national contributions to human welfare, and to try to estimate their value. The world gladly receives and acknowledges their work in the spheres of art, of science, and of learning, but wishes to form its own judgments. The greatest of all contributions a people can make to civilization is not, however, in art or science, but in the development of political government. This is the one thing that in itself is the most valuable, and at the same time is the only guarantee of the stability of all other achievements. This is recognized by Professor Rohrbach, who admits that "of all the creative powers exercised by civilized humanity, the power to fashion living states is the most sublime, for every other national activity is condemned to sterility unless it be inclosed in the durable framework of a well-governed state."

It is here, then, that the Germans have

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signally failed. Instead of fashioning a worthy living state that could foster all the spiritual elements of civilization, they have destroyed all the higher elements of true culture by building them into a state that is now itself destroyed. And only the victorious armies of the allies have saved the world from a like destruction. Wherever they have gone they have destroyed free governments, and have set up the rule of force.

The Germans have not had a high place in creative art, but are, on the other hand, the vandals of the ages. They display no real reverence for the things of the spirit, for they ruthlessly destroy all sacred objects of art and of religion, in the possession of others, and violate all the laws of morality. They are true barbarians who respect not any of the world's objects of art they do not possess, but who are the custodians of some of the treasures of the earth, mostly the productions of others. Their occupation of other countries has been like an earthquake in its destructiveness, and they have ruined the work of centuries of Belgian and French civilization and art. Their lack of the first

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necessity of real culture, sound political institutions, is but the index of their want of any of the higher qualities of civilization.

In science the Germans have had the reputation of excelling. But it has been in patient investigation and in practical applications that they have succeeded. Few of the great discoveries can be attributed to them, and still fewer of the great scientific conceptions that have revolutionized the thoughts of men. Their reputation has been gained largely by a conspiracy of national self-laudation, and now that that has lost its charm, the world is getting a new appraisal of the value of German science.

Whatever greatness they have achieved has been chiefly in the physical sciences and in the mechanical arts and industries. Their one outstanding but very doubtful contribution has been their scientific "method." By this they have secured mechanical accuracy, but have turned themselves into pedants and materialists. Theirs has been a mechanical civilization, and lacks the spirit of true greatness.

Far from being the spiritual leaders of the world, the Germans have done more

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than any others to destroy all spiritual values. It is quite incongruous for a nation to boast superiority that is known as the most agnostic and materialistic in Europe. Spiritual pride smacks too much of pharisaism. Puffed up by their false pride, and barbaric in the character of their minds, they have sacrificed their souls to their material success and have become the outcast among the nations.

CHAPTER IX
THE OLD ETHICS OF IDEALISM

I

To understand the present-day moral collapse of Germany it is only necessary to recall the prevailing thought of a century ago. That was the age of the great German idealists, whose philosophies have been a fruitful subject of study to all the generations of Europeans ever since. In those days German thought had not been wholly brought under the domination of the vast and demoralizing political ambitions of Prussia, and was still absorbed in the things of the spirit. It is to those spacious times that Germans may still point with great national pride, and by virtue of which they still make a boast of idealism.

Of all the great philosophers of that period not one was of true Prussian origin, though all were either native-born or adopted citizens of Prussia. All at some time came under the sinister influence of this prosaic state. Kant, whose grandfather was Scotch,

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was a native of East Prussia, but all his thought was fundamentally and resolutely opposed to the spirit of Prussianism. It would be a profitable but difficult study to determine just how much of his idealism was a direct reaction against the prevailing materialism of the Prussian state. Fichte, though of Swedish descent, was born in Lusatia, where the influence of Prussia was paramount, and passed his later years in Berlin. Though a Kantian in recognizing the supreme authority of the moral life, he came later to develop a philosophy and a politics that have helped to build up the nonmoral Prussian state. Hegel was a native of Württemberg, in south Germany, but later became professor of philosophy in the new Prussian University of Berlin, where he won his chief distinctions. He seems to have become most completely, and to some extent consciously and willingly, an apologist for Prussia in her state system and political theory. He started with a moral principle for his ethics, in accord with the spirit of Kant, but he made a distinct advance in ethical thought. Nevertheless, he seems at the same time to lay the theoretical

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foundation for Prussian politics in his theory of the state. Criticism has not yet reached a conclusion about the consistency of these two aspects of his philosophy, nor of their ultimate value. The fact is that the ethics of Hegel have been interpreted as a lofty idealism, while his politics have been made to contribute to the materialistic system of the actual Prussian state.

II

In view of the condition of mind that has prevailed in Germany for some time, it is perhaps a matter of some significance that Kant was really not a German at all, but a Scotchman. This may account for the fact that in all his philosophical and political thinking he was totally out of sympathy with all that was distinctively Prussian. Though he was born and reared in East Prussia, and never in his life got out of sight of his native town of Koenigsberg, Kant undoubtedly exhibits many traces of the fact that he was the grandson of a certain Scotch settler in East Prussia, named Cant. Though generally very proud of the achievements of their great men, the

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German leaders of to-day make little reference to Kant, and seem to have repudiated entirely his ethical and political philosophy. Even the Kaiser, so boastful of German genius, has seldom referred to Kant, and in none of his many speeches at Koenigsberg has he shown any appreciation of the little Scotch philosopher.

It would scarcely be too much to say that the ancestry of Kant's thought, as of his blood, was more Scotch than German. He himself says it was the skepticism of David Hume, another Scotchman, that wakened him from his dogmatic slumbers, and startled him into dissatisfaction with the traditional German philosophy of the day, that of Leibniz and Wolff. In displacing both Leibniz and Hume with a thorough idealism, Kant accomplished the rehabilitation of philosophy in the manner and spirit attempted by the Scotchmen, Reid and Stewart, but with much more success. He was the fulfillment of Scotch rather than of German philosophy, and hence it is not surprising that some of his greatest exponents are to be found in his grandfather's native land.

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It was another Scotchman, Carlyle, that made Kant popularly known in Scotland and England by enshrining him in Sartor Resartus, in the person of that most interesting but eccentric philosopher, Herr Teufelsdröckh, of the University of Weissenichtwo. There Carlyle, in his own most striking and figurative manner, expounded the essence of Kantianism, by making his hero the great clothes philosopher, who could distinguish between reality, the eternal and essential, and the outer garments or the mere external forms in which reality clothes itself in the long history of the world.

The one thing most characteristic of Kant and his philosophy is the great significance he attaches to the moral life, and his absolute insistence on the binding nature of moral obligation. This he regards as a "categorical imperative," and places at the very center of his system, making morality, and morality alone, unconditionally binding on men. Such a strictly ethical interpretation of life, however, was new to Germany, for even the Lutheran Reformation was more a theological and intellectual reorganization than a moral awakening. The pre-

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vailing tone of speculation and of religion in Germany has been intellectual rather than ethical, and in its essence unlike Kantianism. On the other hand, it is quite akin to the course of things in the land of Kant's ancestry, where the Reformation under Knox took on largely the nature of a revival of morality and religion, and where, except in the case of Hume, philosophy was very consciously seized of the great importance of the moral life. Even Hume was not indifferent to the moral problem, and his service to philosophy consists in showing clearly the inevitable negation of morality and religion on the basis of the sensationalism of Locke. Hume showed once and for all that sensationalism, and hence materialism, can have no ethics.

In his survey and examination of the moral life Kant reached the conviction that morality has its meaning only in view of a universal obligation and of a complete unity. This he was able to sum up in one clear and unequivocal principle, which he states thus: "Act upon a maxim at all times fit for law universal." This at once states the unity of all morality in making it binding upon all,

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and exhibits the democracy of the moral life in making it the same for all. It expresses in another way and with almost equal clearness and terseness the Golden Rule of Jesus: "All things whatsoever ye would men should do to you, do ye even so to them." And it is generally considered that the two rules are but different statements of the same principle.

The influence of Kant upon the life of Germany, however, has been intellectual rather than moral. No influence has ever been great enough to make the Germans think morally. Neither their literature nor their philosophy has long possessed a decidedly moral tone. Libraries of books and articles in elucidation and criticism of Kant have been written, and even twenty years ago the bibliography of Kantian writings in German, prepared by Dr. Adickes, was itself a large volume. But the stream of national life has been little affected, and Kant has remained only a subject of academic discussion. His philosophy remains to this day a protest against rather than an expression of the prevailing nonmoral German culture. The nation has gone on, achieving efficiency

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and social organization, but has not developed the moral enthusiasm that has characterized some other peoples. They have not become known, and their literature has not become known, as so distinctly ethical in tone as, for instance, English literature from the days of Langland to Tennyson.

III

Fichte's contribution to German ethical philosophy was largely based on Kant, and maintained to some extent the Kantian tradition of placing moral concepts at the very center of his entire system. He endeavored to find a content for what he regarded as the emptiness of the Kantian moral imperative, and conceived of the ego as going out of itself by the force of its own demands in order to posit the non-ego, and to build up for itself a moral world. He failed, however, to find a term sufficiently comprehensive to serve at the same time as a moral incentive and a restraint upon social and moral action. As a consequence, his ethics was interpreted as egoism, and had much to do with laying the foundation of the modern German doctrine of the will-to-power that has done so

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much to pervert the German practical mind into an egoistic and ruthless conqueror.

IV

Hegel's ethical system, also intended as an extension and a corrective of the Kantian system, manifests a full realization of the great significance of the moral life, and of the fact that ethical phenomena are the starting point of all philosophy. Instead, however, of constructing a formula of ethical duties, after the manner of Kant, he lighted upon the conception of moral rights, and upon this as more fundamental he proceeded to construct his philosophy. He was the first philosopher to comprehend with any degree of adequacy the meaning of personality as a moral concept, and to realize that this was the one term which most fully expressed the character of the self. Hence he developed his ethical formula upon the necessity of preserving and cultivating this ethical personality, not only in oneself, but also in other selves. His formula, then, is exceedingly comprehensive, though very brief: "Be a person and respect others as persons." This seems to be the kernel of Hegel's

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ethics. It is quite clear, then, that the war ethics of Germany is a most striking and calamitous disavowal of the ethical formulas of both Hegel and of Kant, and an unpardonable treason to Germany's greatest idealists.

V

It is only since the beginning of the war that the temper of the German nation and the character of their moral ideals have come to be clearly realized. In spite of abundant expression in their recent philosophy and literature, their national ideals have not been understood by other peoples of different ideals. The ruthless and aggressive form of their ideals seems the most complete contrast to the pacific and categorical morality of Kant and to the reciprocal and spiritual ideals of Hegel. It is a common belief that this is due to the betrayal of Prussia, which has thrust her materialism upon the other German states, crushing and destroying the older idealism. In that case the condemnation of the Prussia that produced Kant and that fostered Hegel must be all the more severe and relentless,

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for then no people have ever more completely and more consciously repudiated the teachings of their greatest men. The vinegar administered to Jesus and the hemlock given to Socrates could not be more bitter nor more poisonous than the Prussian betrayal of Kant and Hegel.

From the very outset of the war Germany announced to the world that they would be a law unto themselves, and that they would utterly disregard everything but "military necessity." When the Chancellor made his famous speech declaring that the German army would pay no respect to the rights and peoples of other nations he utterly repudiated the greatest of the teachers of Germany. No more complete abjuring of Kant and Hegel could be conceived, unless it were the conduct itself of the German armies that followed hard upon, if it did not anticipate, the Chancellor's words. They at once set up a law of frightfulness that was not meant to be reciprocal, and made military necessity a supreme law above all the rights of other persons.

Their complete repudiation of Kant was not meant to lead to a repudiation of the

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moral law by other nations, but was intended only to give them the advantage of such a repudiation. They entered the war ostensibly to aid their ally, Austria, but when Britain acted on the same principle in behalf of France and Belgium they were at once shocked and indignant, and hurled across the Channel such abuse as, "perfidious Albion." They pleaded their "necessity" for the destruction of Belgium, whose neutrality they had pledged themselves to maintain, but when Britain stepped in to defend Belgium as a British necessity, the German indignation knew no bounds. They had no intention of permitting their plea of necessity to be made a law universal. They were outraged that their necessity to destroy was checked by the British necessity to preserve. And it never seemed to occur to them that any other nation might be honorable enough to keep its pledge.

VI

The German conduct of the war has been at every step a violation of the universality of the moral law as understood by Kant, and of the sacredness of persons as enunciated

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by Hegel. The invasion of Belgium, the wanton destruction of towns and cities, the practice of holding hostages, the levying of taxes, the murders of noncombatants, and of women and children, the enslaving of the peoples of conquered territories, not to speak of the fiendish cruelties practiced on all alike, are violations of all moral ideals, and are meant to be adopted only by Germany. No nation not insane would ever commit such savagery if they thought their foes might also adopt this practice. Their contempt for the moral law, their scorn for the rights of other persons, were intended to give them a quick and complete victory, before their opponents could have any chance to retaliate in kind. That these practices were barbarous, and that they were expressly forbidden by the Hague Convention, to which Germany was a party, mattered not to the nation that intended to gain a quick and decisive victory before the enemy would have a chance to use similar barbarities against Germany.

There is now abundant evidence that Germany had no intention of thus forging a weapon that could be used equally well

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by the British kinsmen of their great philosopher. Whenever they have thought they could detect an adoption of their principle by their enemies they have displayed the righteous indignation of the burglar who is confronted with weapons like his own. They sent their Zeppelins to bombard London, and their warships to shell British seaside resorts, but were horrified when British airmen dropped a few bombs on German cities by way of reprisal. They deliberately shelled and drowned British sailors clinging to spars and boats, but were shocked that a British captain should leave a few German sailors to their fate on the seas, when they outnumbered his own men, because, knowing their baseness and treachery, he feared to take them aboard his own vessel. They violated and desecrated and destroyed on all hands in Belgium, in a manner worse than the hordes of Attila, and then wailed out their indignation at the destruction of military objects by the British aviators who crossed the German lines.

Never in all history has a nation shown such studied repudiation of all the rights of other peoples and nations. In their brutal

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and calculated materialism they have completely scorned all human rights, and have spurned all respect for other persons. They have everywhere reduced their own people to the level of a military machine; they have drilled out of them any consciousness of their own individualities, and have taught them to scorn the personalities of others. Their armies in Belgium and France have murdered children, slaughtered old men, and violated women. They have pillaged and destroyed the homes of conquered territories, they have starved their victims into disease and death, and have even driven them by thousands into slavery. They have violated every instinct of humanity in warfare, have killed the wounded, have tortured and starved their prisoners, and have compelled captives to do war work directed against their own nations. Their might made an absolute and total denial of right, and nothing was too immoral or too inhuman if only their military machine had the power to carry it into execution.

Nothing could better reveal the entire repudiation of the ethics of their greatest teachers. The whole German people have

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in reality foresworn the ethics of Kant, and have adopted a principle of conduct that they do not want their foes to adopt. This attitude of the German mind was plainly disclosed in a newspaper report of a German soldier in Belgium who excused the barbarities there as a military necessity, but who went on to say that his heart grew sick and faint to think of the possibility of such things happening to the women and children of the Fatherland. This man, and likewise the entire German nation when at war, seem scarcely to be conscious of themselves as persons and not things, and certainly do not respect either themselves or others as persons.

The German renunciation of the morality of their great idealistic teachers is thus seen to be complete and unequivocal. Nothing, however, could prove more clearly the truth of the idealists and the falseness of the new German ideals. This is the condemnation of Germany, that they have sinned against their own greatest teachers and prophets. Instead of the new morality of might which they planned to set up in place of the old, Germany has simply broken herself to

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pieces on the indestructible rock of the morality of right. Germany has renounced the ethics of idealism in favor of the ethics of militarism, only to find that the old morality of right has smashed to bits the might of militarism. Even now the spirit of the old idealism is rising to plague and to condemn the false teachers of this new German ethics of materialism. It is now left for the other nations to maintain the truth of the older Germany, and to hold inviolate the great principles of these older and greater Germans.

CHAPTER X

THE NEW ETHICS OF MILITARISM

I

THE German adoption of the Prussian idea of the state meant, necessarily, a complete repudiation of the Kantian type of the ethics of duty on the part of the state. A state whose authority and right is its own preeminent power, which is absolute and superior to all individuals and all other states, which recognizes no obligation to anything higher than itself, whose supreme will is its only law, will naturally consider itself above what men know as moral obligation. Individuals have duties to the state, and their morality is determined by their relation to the state. But the state itself has no such relations, and no such duties, either to individuals or to other states. Itself the ground of all obligation, it can have no obligation to anything else.

This idea of state ethics has been developing in Germany ever since the days of Frederick and of Bismarck, and no doubt

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found some support in Hegel's philosophy of the state. Treitschke, however, traces it to Machiavelli, and freely acknowledges the debt by saying that "it will always redound to the glory of Machiavelli that he has placed the state on a solid foundation, and that he has freed the state and its morality from the moral precepts taught by the church." Hence the makers of modern Germany, as has been said, have "accepted without question the doctrine that public affairs were outside the sphere of morals."

This means that the German state has not recognized any obligation to the Christian morality which the Germans as individuals profess. Treitschke says that "the Christian duty of self-sacrifice for something higher has no existence whatever for the state, because there is nothing whatever beyond it in world-history." And he adds: "Thus it follows from this, that we must distinguish between public and private morality." The state's duty, he thinks, is only to itself. It is Bernhardt, however, who declares boldly that the Christian law of love "can claim no significance for the relations of one country to another." And

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again: "The acts of the state cannot be judged by the standard of individual morality."

This, manifestly, has been the view of the German government. The Chancellor's declaration about the invasion of Belgium meant either that they repudiated entirely the ordinary morality of individuals, or on the plea of "necessity" were prepared to make Germany a monstrous international criminal. Their conduct of the war on land and sea, in violating all moral law and all sentiments of humanity, bears out the idea that to their minds the German state had no moral obligations.

Germany is the only nation, however, that has deliberately disavowed the moral laws that bind individuals, and that have slowly built up through the weary centuries the civilization of other modern states. It was the very essence of Kantianism to conceive the moral law as binding upon all individuals and upon all communities of individuals. While Germany has thus been repudiating Kant and attempting to abrogate the moral law, the United States has been leading the world in its contention that

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political and personal morality are the same, and that states are bound by the same moral law as individuals.

In this, as in most other matters affecting the state, Germany is reactionary and barbaric, and the United States progressive and civilized. Professor Usher voices the American condemnation of the German idea in these words: "If we apply to the situation in international politics the ethical and moral tenets, frankly confessed by the community, and as frankly disregarded in everyday life, we shall necessarily conclude that Pan-Germanism is not and never can be justifiable." The more recent deliverances of official Germany, especially over the Lusitania case, convince Americans and others that Germany was endeavoring to establish for herself a new state morality which is wholly unlike that binding upon individuals, and consists chiefly in a disavowal of the reciprocal element of morality.

The German moral code, then, is frankly not the ethics which all men, especially all Christian men, accept as binding upon them as individuals. This ethics of militarism recognizes no moral obligation as resting

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upon the state, and accepts no law but that of military necessity or political ambition. It is necessary, therefore, to understand this new military ethics, and to determine, if possible, its relation to the current ethics, and especially to find its relation to German ethical systems. Militarism knows no master but itself, though it borrows wherever it can, and claims support from all who can help its cause.

II

It has been assumed in much of the literature on the war that German political ethics have been derived largely from Nietzsche. There is no doubt a great deal in common between the ethics of Nietzsche and that of the war-lords, and that Nietzsche has contributed considerable to the ethics of militarism. But there are many antithetical elements. It is probably truer to say that both are the expression of a new spirit that has taken possession of Germany, born of her boundless political jealousy and ambition. The old spirit of idealism seems to have disappeared entirely. The new spirit of materialism and military conquest can be

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seen growing ever since the successful wars of a half-century ago, and especially since the Franco-Prussian war. The new creed is the expression of these uncurbed ambitions, and the ethical writers, like all others of the professorial contingent, have found their task in formulating and justifying this new ideal of military aggression.

The ethics of the war-lords, it is true, have much in common with Nietzsche, but there are many differences to be noted. The war-lords, for instance, are, for the most part, professedly Christian, and claim faithfulness to the Christian ideal, while Nietzsche is avowedly and furiously anti-Christian. Most of the war-lords, from the Kaiser to Treitschke and Bernhardi, profess allegiance to Christianity, and feel called upon to explain the relation of their military creed to the Christian belief and practice.

Nietzsche, however, is the most outspoken foe of Christianity that Germany has produced in the past generation. No language could adequately express his scorn for Christianity. He said: "I condemn Christianity and confront it with the most

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terrible accusation that an accuser has ever had in his mouth. To my mind it is the greatest of all conceivable corruptions. I call Christianity the one great curse, the one enormous and innermost perversion, the one great instinct of revenge for which no means are too venomous, too underhand, too underground, and too petty—I call it the one immortal blemish of mankind.”

Neither was Nietzsche a lover of Germany, but was, on the contrary, the one man of the past generation who was bold enough or who had a will to criticize German *Kultur*, and to call it barbarism. Nietzsche recognized as no one else the limitations and vulgarity of *Kultur*, and unmistakably displayed an appreciation of French culture and the superior refinements of French life.

Again, Nietzsche had none of the narrow nationalism so characteristic of modern Germany. One of his biographers speaks of him as having “inveighed against the last-mentioned stumbling-block—nationalism,” and as advocating “A United Europe.” It might, of course, be said that Germany was also seeking this end, though by the lion-and-lamb process. Nietzsche opposed na-

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tionalism and said: "A little more fresh air, for heaven's sake! This ridiculous condition of Europe must not last any longer. Is there a single idea behind this bovine nationalism?"

Moreover, many of the ideas that the war-lords seem to get directly from Nietzsche, and which are generally credited to him, are really perversions or adaptations, and not borrowings from Nietzsche. One of the cornerstones of Nietzsche's teaching was his infamous doctrine of the super-man of which the war-lords have made such diabolical use. He said: "I teach you the super-man. Man is something that is to be surpassed. What have ye done to surpass man? All beings hitherto have created something beyond themselves, and ye want to be the ebb of that great tide, and would rather go back to the beast than surpass man? . . .

"The super-man is the meaning of the earth. Let your will say: 'I conjure you, my brethren, remain true to the earth, and believe not those who speak unto you of super-earthly hopes.'" At first Nietzsche seems to have thought of Napoleon as an

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example of what he meant by the superman, but later came to think rather of a "super-species," and "instead of a superman like Napoleon a superior type of men is posited." Both of these conceptions, then, find a place in his philosophy.

The war-lords, however, have been able to utilize all such conceptions of an aggressive ethics, and think not only of a super-state, but also of a nation of super-men. Treitschke, no doubt, and some of the leaders of to-day, thought only of Germany as a superior or super-state, and exalted not the rulers but the state. It was the Prussian state that was the object of his adoration, and the Kaiser only as the head of the state. Lesser Germans of to-day, however, have flattered themselves that they are supermen and that they are superior not only politically but morally.

III

If this conception of the state is not to be found in Nietzsche, we can, however, find it in Hegel, a hundred years ago. In his political philosophy Hegel has been known as the advocate and apologist of the Prus-

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sian state. It is a disputed question to what extent his philosophical system favors Prussian politics, but it is beyond dispute that Prussianism regards him as its exponent and looks to him for philosophical support, and finds in him the kind of justification it wants. Von Buelow speaks of him as "the philosopher who called the state the present deity, whose legal philosophy was a glorification of the Prussian state." And there can be no doubt about his great influence upon German thought.

There is undoubtedly much in Hegel that Prussianism could take as support of its system. Even the best friends of Hegel have to admit that in his discussion of "The State" in his *Philosophy of Right* he confuses the actual state with the institution of the state, and paves the way for a justification of absolutism. For this reason he appears as an apologist for the actual Prussian state, and has been, in fact, the stronghold of the ideals of the Hohenzollerns. He says: "The state, which is the realized substantive will, having its reality in the particular self-consciousness raised to the plane of the universal, is absolutely

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rational. This substantive unity is its own motive and absolute end. In this end freedom attains its highest right. This end has the highest right over the individual, whose highest duty in turn is to be a member of the state." Again he gives excuse for the Kaiser's supreme authority when he speaks of "this absolute self-determination, constituting the distinguishing principle of the princely function."

It is of no consequence for our present purpose that Hegel had in mind the institution of the state and not the actual Prussian state of his day or of ours. The Kaiser and his war-lords not only appropriated all the power of the state, but likewise all arguments that could be made to serve their purpose. They apparently found in this philosophy of Hegel the justification they wanted, and the people acquiesced with the usual docility.

The present-day Prussian conception seems to regard the state as aristocratic and not democratic. There is little warrant for this in Hegel, for he thinks of each individual as finding his moral end in the state, and not as subjecting himself to the state. He

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says: "The essence of the modern state binds together the universal and the full freedom of particularity, including the welfare of individuals." Neither is there any warrant in Kant, who especially safeguards the individual in his conception of the "kingdom of ends," in which each individual is an end in himself.

IV

The basis of this conception of the state is rather in Nietzsche with his morality of masters and slaves. Nietzsche distinctly conceives that the super-man is not a moral ideal for all, but for the select few. These few are the masters who use the others, the slaves, for their own ends. Masters are the "great birds of prey," and "nothing is tastier than a tender lamb." Accordingly, Nietzsche has nothing but contempt for democracy. As one of his biographers, Muegge, says: "He considers the democratic movement not only as a degenerating form of political organization, but democrats as equivalent to a degenerating, a waning type of man, as involving his mediocrizing and depreciation." All the war-lords have this same

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contempt for democracy, and consider the common people but "food for cannon," and have always been willing to sacrifice millions of them to attain their autocratic and despotic ambitions.

The moral motive of the Prussian state seems especially to be derived from Nietzsche. This he speaks of as the "will-to-power," and regards as the evolutionary formula of the moral life. Nietzsche consciously bases his ethics on his conception of biology, and, like all biologists since Darwin, was deeply impressed with the struggle for life going on in nature. Darwin's formula of the struggle for existence becomes in man's consciousness the "will-to-live."

Nietzsche, however, conceived it rather as the "will-to-power," and thought of this as "an innate will to grow, to expand, to appropriate." With Darwin he conceived life as a continual struggle, but, unlike him, he thought the end was not mere existence, but power. It is a struggle, not merely for life, but for the enhancement of life, for preeminence. It was for this reason that Napoleon was for a time his ideal—a man who could raise himself to power above others. He

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said, in criticism of Darwinism and Spencerism, that life "is not the continuous adjustment of internal relations to external relations, but will-to-power, which, proceeding from inside, subjugates and incorporates an ever-increasing quantity of external phenomena; it is essentially appropriation, injury, conquest of the strange and weak, suppression, severity, obtrusion of its own forms, incorporation, and at least, putting it mild-est, exploitation."

It has been thought that Nietzsche's "will-to-power" was taken from Schopenhauer. But that is scarcely true. It is, rather, his modification of Darwinism. Schopenhauer's conception of the world as "will" was akin to the Buddhistic idea, and involved the annihilation of the individual will, rather than the supremacy of the individual will, as in Nietzsche. The end to Schopenhauer was the extinction of the individual will, for to him the world is evil and nothing is to be hoped for. The end to Nietzsche was the enlargement of the will, for by domination the world may be made to serve the purposes of the individual.

For this reason, therefore, the militarists

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and the little Napoleons of Prussia have found great encouragement in Nietzsche, and abundant warrant for their ambitions. Bernhardt is incapable, however, of appreciating the ethical phases of this evolutionary formula, and leaves his argument on the lower level of biology. He crudely says: "The law of the stronger holds good everywhere. . . . This struggle is regulated and restrained by the unconscious sway of biological laws and by the interplay of opposite forces."

It is only a step, then, to the Bernhardt doctrine that might is right. He says: "Thus the instinct of self-preservation leads inevitably to war, and the conquest of foreign soil. It is not the possessor, but the victor, who then has the right." He easily passes on to the general statement of his principle that "in such cases might gives the right to occupy or to conquer. Might is at once the supreme right, and the dispute as to what is right is decided by the arbitrament of war. War gives a biologically just decision, since its decisions rest on the very nature of things." A conclusion from which the finer sense of Nietzsche and Darwin would probably dissent, as they had some

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appreciation of the intellectual and moral factors of the struggle for existence or for power. But the war-lords know nothing except brute force and physical power. Their theory is a complete and unblushing materialism.

The militarists recognize their ideal as pure egoism, and frankly claim this as the true ideal for the state, as distinct from individuals. The favorite term to express this ideal, however, is "self-assertion," for this is more palatable to the moral sentiments of the people. This term is to be found almost everywhere in the military writers. Treitschke says: "The time . . . has come for the sub-German peoples to begin to awake to self-assertion," and says, further, that "without this self-assertion a nation would lack public spirit." Bernhardi puts it stronger when he says, "The first and paramount law is the assertion of one's own independent existence." This he applies at once to the state, and says, "By self-assertion alone can the state maintain the conditions of life for its citizens, and insure them the legal protection which each man is entitled to claim from it."

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Then he makes it clear that by self-assertion he means that the state must enter upon a career of conquest, and not merely self-defense. He says that "this duty of self-assertion is by no means satisfied by the mere repulse of hostile attacks; it includes the obligation to assure the possibility of life and development to the whole body of the nation embraced by the state." In order to leave no doubt about his meaning he further says that "the right of conquest is universally acknowledged."

V

This appears to be the modern form of the doctrine of self-realization developed by Fichte and his successors. In this war the Germans have been fond of going back to Fichte and the war of liberation to find support for their war of conquest. Even Wundt thinks he finds a parallel in the two wars, though this only shows the painful fact of the collapse of German thinking.

Fichte's doctrine of the positing of the ego and the non-ego seems to be the basis of the ethical theory of self-realization. He said that the ego first posits or comes to a con-

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sciousness of itself, and then posits the non-ego. The ego then proceeds to utilize the non-ego for its own purposes, or in other words begins the realization of its own nature, and the affirmation of its own moral life. This conception was left somewhat individualistic by Fichte, but was enlarged by Hegel.

Hegel at once saw that this realization of the self consisted mainly in the building up of a social life and the establishing of social and political institutions. Hence his treatment of the moral problem of the self became a philosophy of right and of the state. In this way he enlarged Fichte's individualism into a social ethics, and laid the foundation for the subsequent political philosophy of Germany and of Europe.

The development of this self-realization theory into the ethics of an aggressive militarism makes it necessary to revalue the entire conception. The doctrine of Fichte seems to have been an attempt to supplement the obvious lack of subjective value in Kant's ethics of duty. Kant had made the ground of moral obligation to be our relation to an objective Lawgiver, or God. Duty, then, was likely to appear as mere

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abstract conformity to an external law, and it was not easy to see that it had any subjective or personal value. It is true that Kant did not so conceive it, for he quite understood that the highest personal moral ends were attained in the fulfillment of duty. But this subjective value was not a very obvious part of his system, and formally it looked as though it was not provided for. This apparent lack Fichte provided for by his doctrine of the ego and of the positing of the non-ego.

These two conceptions have given rise to the modern forms of the two rival ethical systems, known as the duty ethics and the self-realization ethics. They have assumed many variations, but the two main concepts have remained the same, and neither has driven the other out. The chief modification, as we have seen, has been Hegel's enlargement of the subjective end from a mere personal to a social value. But the two concepts have remained exclusive, and no real synthesis has been made.

VI

The ethics of Nietzsche, then, seems to

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have missed entirely these valuable contributions of Kant and Fichte and Hegel, and to have taken up the crude form of egoism and self-assertion that has developed from the theory of evolution. Nietzsche looks to Darwin and Haeckel, rather than to Kant and Hegel and attempts to formulate an ethics on the basis of biology rather than of philosophy. His view even of evolution has been extremely narrow, for he has apparently not dreamed of the larger aspects that Huxley surveyed in his famous lecture on "Evolution and Ethics."

In this lecture Huxley frankly acknowledged that the mere biological law that Darwin had formulated as "Struggle for Existence" was by no means the only factor in the case. He saw that there are also psychological principles that must be considered. The supposed egoism of nature must be modified by the altruism of the human being. But Nietzsche founds his ethics upon the assumed biological facts alone, and reaches a pure egoism. He says: "I submit that egoism belongs to the essence of a noble soul. Aggressive and defensive egoism are not questions of choice or of

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free will, but they are fatalities of life itself."

Nietzsche thought he alone had the courage to carry out biological laws to their full ethical import, and this he tried to do with German thoroughness. He said that "all modern moralists after and including Darwin are afraid to establish a moral code of life out of their concepts of struggle and the privileges of the strong and fit. Like Kant, when it comes to practical morals they construct systems quite independently of the question, What is your conception of the universe? They are cowards."

In one respect only he supplements the usual concept of evolution. Instead of evolution being a mere "struggle for existence," it appears to him to be a struggle for self-advancement. This is his doctrine of the super-man, and leads him to his conception of self-assertion. He regards war as the normal condition of society; and in Zarathustra says, "You shall love peace as a means to new wars—and the short peace more than the long.

"You I advise not to work, but to fight.
You I advise not to peace, but to victory.

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Let your work be a fight, let your peace be a victory. . . .

“Ye say it is the good cause which halloweth even war? I say unto you: It is the good war which halloweth every cause.”

VII

The political ethics of the war-lords, then, has much in common with Nietzsche. Both look upon the end as self-assertion or self-advancement, though the war-lords give this a state or national, and Nietzsche merely an individual significance. This seems like a heritage of Fichte, though it is equally an outgrowth of their conception of evolution and adapted from Nietzsche and applied to the state. On this basis the state is a law unto itself, having no obligation but to itself, and recognizing no objective moral order outside itself.

It is necessary to see clearly the full significance of this conception. This ethics naturally knows no God, and no objective moral system, in relation to which the individual or the state finds its moral obligation. Nietzsche is frankly atheistic, and distinctly says that “life is amoral.” He

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recognizes no objective standard, and "The criterion of truth lies in the enhancement of the feeling of power." There is, therefore, no law but one's own will, and no standard but one's own advancement.

How completely this ethics has pervaded German thought may be seen in the fact that even such men as Harnack can recognize no wrong in the German devastation of Belgium, as it was necessary for the advancement of the ends and aims of Germany. He said in his reply to the Free Church Theologians: "I am unable to . . . even admit a formal wrong; for we were in a situation in which formulæ no longer exist, but only ethical duties." In other words, Germany committed no wrong in crushing Belgium, for the interests of Germany demanded it. An ethics of pure egoism and self-assertion! Bernhardi could do no better himself.

The ethics of militarism thus seems to look to biology for its warrant, though it strangely combines with this brute morality a belief in an objective Deity who is conceived as above all. The Germans have seemed to combine these two conceptions

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of aggressive egoism and devotion to an objective Deity. They apparently conceive that their God wills what they will, and that the end he aims at is only the advancement of the German state, and not Belgium, or France, or any other nation. But the war-lords can never be accused of clear thinking, and hereafter can never be charged with morality.

VIII

These views and this code of ethics mark the culmination of the Prussian repudiation of Kant, in favor of a doctrine that permits them more completely to work out their military ambitions. They have welcomed a doctrine that would authorize them to aggrandize themselves at the expense of their neighbors, and permit them to prey upon weaker states. They have accepted the conqueror's creed of "Might is Right," and have shamelessly heralded their immorality before the world. They have given up Kant for Haeckel, and have abandoned Fichte for Nietzsche; they have forsaken idealism for materialism; and "Corsica has conquered Galilee."

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The Bryce report sums up very well the new creed of the war-lords: "In the minds of Prussian officers war seems to have become a sort of sacred mission, one of the highest functions of the omnipotent state, which is itself as much an army as a state. Ordinary morality and the ordinary sentiment of pity vanish in its presence, superseded by a new standard which justifies to the soldier every means that he can conduce to success, however shocking to a natural sense of justice and humanity, however revolting to his own feelings."

The utter perversion of the German mind cannot be shown better than in an incident narrated by the late Belgian poet, Emile Verhaeren. He says: "On a recent visit to the Maison du Peuple in Brussels some German socialists were astonished that the Belgian democrats should attach so much importance to the invasion of their territory.

"What binds you to your country?" they asked.

"Honor," we replied.

"Honor! Honor! What a very bourgeois ideal!" interrupted the Germans."

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One thing is now clear, and that is the complete breakdown of German morality. The ruthless logic of the Germans has shown the weakness in some of the ethical systems that have competed for acceptance. If the duty ethics of Kant is inadequate, it is now clear that the self-realization ethics that began with Fichte is likewise inadequate. The greater danger to society lies in the self-realization ethics with its development through evolution into an ethics of self-assertion. If the moral end cannot be conceived as conformity to law, neither can it be conceived as self-realization.

The truth seems to be that both these formulas are only half truths, but self-realization is a very dangerous half-truth. Both elements, apparently, should have place in a true formula of the moral life. There must be conformity to an objective standard in order to avoid egoism, and there must be an end which allows for the development of the individual. A new formula must therefore be found, which will be a synthesis of the objectivity of duty and the subjectivity of self-realization. The Hegelian concept of the state, or of society, was meant to serve

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this purpose, but it has turned out to be only another form of self-realization. The newer term "Perfection" lacks objectivity, and "Common Good" lacks subjectivity. The formula of evolution, as understood by the war-lords and by Nietzsche, is plainly not ethics at all, but only brute force. It is, in fact, the unvarnished ethics of might, which is the negation of any real morality.

The ethics of German militarism is thus seen to be nothing but a gross materialism, and consists of a crude adaptation of the political ethics of Machiavelli and the biological ethics of Nietzsche, and has only the merit of a rough consistency. It has completely repudiated Kant, and has appropriated only some of the more doubtful elements in Fichte and Hegel, violating completely the deeper significance of these great thinkers. It is time for us, now, to recognize this crass materialism as not a new morality at all, nor as an explanation of the old, but as a complete denial of morality. Prussian militarism, and all such materialistic, egoistic schemes are a subversion of morality, and not an ethics at all. It is nothing but a materialistic gospel of might,

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shallow and brutal, and the greatest enemy of morality, as well as of Christianity. It is a cancer that the world must totally eradicate and destroy, or civilization and all community of nations will themselves be destroyed.

CHAPTER XI
THE LAW OF FORCE, OR MIGHT AS
RIGHT

I

WHEN Kant enunciated his principle that morality consists in acting in conformity to "a maxim at all times fit for law universal," he at the same time stated the essential nature of all law, national or international. It is the very nature of law to be universal and not individual. Law is the attempt of society to regulate and to govern the lives of individuals and of communities in accordance with a common plan and on a principle applicable to all. Human advance from barbarism to civilization is, in this respect, nothing but a more or less successful inclusion of all persons within the sway of such a common principle. For any person or any nation to endeavor to repudiate the binding force of this recognized principle is to lapse into barbarism or criminality, and to make of oneself or one's nation an enemy of civilization.

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Yet, in the war, this is just the attitude that Germany has assumed toward international law. There is scarcely a law of warfare or of international relations that she has not repudiated in both word and deed. The German attitude toward international law is well illustrated by an incident that has recently been reported. The Mayor of Lens, when released from internment, says concerning the German general in command of the army occupying Lens, that, "General Klotz had a truly German soul. When I objected that certain demands of his were opposed to the Hague convention he replied, jeeringly, 'The Hague convention is for us, not for you.'" In other words, to the German mind international law is a restraint imposed upon their enemies but not upon them. This repudiation of the reciprocal character of international law amounts to a destruction of the law itself. The Germans as a sovereign people consider themselves above law, but do not grant the same to other peoples. Their attitude is well seen in the words General von Liebert is reported as using as recently as January 8, 1918, at Halle: "For

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us there is only one principle to be followed and we must recognize no other: we hold that might is right: we must know neither sentiment, nor humanity, nor consideration."

The paradoxical character of the German mind is displayed, however, in their frantic efforts to hold their enemies to the law they have themselves repudiated. Their casuistical conscience is horrified at the least suspicion of a violation of law by their enemies. They wish their foes to act from a maxim fit for universal law, while they take advantage of the limitation and restraint thus imposed upon them in order to enhance their own military gains. They think the law is made merely to embarrass their enemies, and to afford them increased opportunities to advance their own unlawful plans and purposes.

No better instance of this German state of mind can be given than their attempted excuse for the atrocities perpetrated in Belgium. After violating the neutrality of Belgium in the most shameless manner, they indignantly protested against the abortive attempt of the outraged Belgian people to

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defend themselves, as a breach of international law. Even the Chancellor, after admitting the violation of international law in the attack on Belgium, protested that "against all international law the entire civil population of Belgium was called out, and these private citizens, after a seemingly friendly reception of our troops, attacked them from the back with concealed weapons in the most cruel fashion." Not satisfied with their invasion of Belgium and their slaughter of innocent civilians, the Chancellor had to frame falsehoods to excuse their crimes.

Another instance of the same thing is the German reply to the Bryce report on the atrocities in Belgium. Not being able longer to deny the facts, they sought to excuse their crimes by saying that "right on the heels of the outbreak of the present war a turbulent insurrection broke forth in Belgium against German troops. This was in flagrant violation of international law, and brought the heaviest penalties on the Belgian land and people." One would expect that a nation that had violated international law to invade Belgium would be

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ashamed to mention any violation of that law by the poor Belgians in their feeble attempt to defend their land and their lives.

This is the climax of hypocrisy and moral infidelity. It is to regard law as entirely a form of restraint rather than as a form of self-expression. It is the criminal's view of law as a repression or limitation upon his freedom of action, a restraint to be evaded as often as possible, if only he can prevent his victim from adopting the same evasion. The moral man's idea of law is that it is a protection of his rights, and a form which enables him to realize his own will. For this view of law and of morality we are indebted largely to the old German idealism, and to state the modern German repudiation of this view is to disclose the tragic decline of militaristic Germany. History can show no analogous case of the decline of a great people under the leadership of an ambitious, mediocre, and egotistical dynasty.

II

This utter disregard of the law of nations seems all the more remarkable when we

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recall that it is out of accord with the older German individual temperament. There has been probably no more law-abiding people than the Germans either in their private or corporate capacity. German citizens have submitted to more legal regulation of their lives than any other people. German business men have been considered as honorable and upright as any. And German manufacturers have gained a well-earned reputation for honest and reliable goods. Respect for business obligations has been characteristic of the Germans, and has won for them the confidence of their world-wide customers.

In their internal affairs too the Germans have no dislike for rules and regulations, and show no general disregard for law. Their government is a kind of modern paternalism, and regulates their affairs in a way no other modern nation would tolerate. And yet the Germans seem not only to submit meekly, but even to regard it as an ideal condition. Almost the least detail of their corporate life is regulated by law. Especially does the government circumscribe their activities, and it is a perpetual

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jest among foreigners that in Germany one meets everywhere the sign, *Verboten*.

Even Russian observers are at once struck with this excess of governmental regulation. Prince Trubetskoy has remarked that "in Germany we Russians are struck by one particular trait, which we notice directly we cross the frontier, namely, the general domination of the state over the individual; his stern control by the state and his reverent and almost devotional attitude toward the state." To the American mind (as to the Anglo-Saxon generally) Germany appears as "the most overgoverned country in the world." But this is entirely in her internal affairs.

III

The strange thing is that such a country recognizes no international law, and cultivates no international good-will. Germany has assumed that she is a law unto herself, and refuses in every way to be amenable to any sort of international opinion or law or court. So excessively national has she become that she seems afraid to submit her ideals and conduct to international tribunals.

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So egotistical is she that she refuses to be determined in any part of her course by international opinion. Her idea of the state as supreme over individuals she tries to carry into international relations, and repudiates all public law. This she does not see is to make of herself only an international criminal, a burglar, an assassin, a pirate, on a scale never before attempted by any nation. As a consequence, she has become an outlaw nation, without friends, but with innumerable foes.

The German refusal to permit the difficulty between Austria and Serbia to be submitted to arbitration was nothing but a refusal to be bound by the opinion of other nations or to recognize any authority of the law of nations. Yet refusing to argue the case before an international tribunal, they proceeded at once to argue it before the United States of America. Even here their tactics of calling the evidence and arguments of their enemies nothing but lies and slanders showed their unwillingness to submit to any form of arbitration. They wished the United States at once to accept their claims and take their word against

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all others. And their unreasonableness is shown in no better way than in their virulent abuse and vituperation of the United States when they finally decided against them. What Germany wanted was not an adjudication of her case but an acceptance of her claims and of her word, without judgment, and against all others. But this displays a lack of faith in processes of law that marks her as an international anarchist.

This attitude toward all laws and treaties could not be better illustrated than in the Chancellor's admission of the violation of Belgium at the opening of the war. He claimed that "Necessity knows no law," and admitted their acts were "contrary to the dictates of international law." This served notice on the world that Germany would recognize no law and no treaties of nations, but would go her way in defiance of all. Henceforth, therefore, it will be impossible for any other nation to treat with Germany on the plane of law, and no German treaty can be regarded as more than "a scrap of paper." German faith is no more, and Germany is an outlaw nation.

The same attitude was taken on the con-

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duct of the war. Knowing that in their atrocities they were violating the laws of nations, they steadfastly denied these, even in the face of a desolated and depopulated Belgium. But any government that is not ashamed of Belgium is beyond all shame, and a people that has no honor cannot be expected to have any respect for truth. Forced upon them by innumerable and unimpeachable witnesses and by indisputable evidence, the great "blonde beast" has simply defied his accusers, and has shamefacedly excused his barbarities. A retired major-general, Von Disfurth, has written to the Hamburg Nachrichten as follows: "No object whatever can be served by taking any notice of the accusations of barbarity leveled against Germany by their foreign critics. We owe no explanations to anyone. Whatever act is committed by our troops for the purpose of discouraging, defeating, and destroying the enemy is a brave act and fully justified. Germany stands the supreme arbiter of her own methods." This is but the savage militarist's way of putting it. Treitschke's words are not so brutal. He says: "It is then legitimate to carry on the

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war in the most drastic manner; the ultimate aim—peace—will thus be attained as speedily as possible.” The doctrine, however, really has its root in Clausewitz, who nearly a hundred years ago taught the Germans that war should be unrestrained by any law that would interfere with the destruction of the enemy. If the Germans of to-day state the principle in a more savage manner, it is because they have learned his lessons with German thoroughness.

This, of course, is nothing but the law of physical might, the merciless law of the conqueror, and if adopted by all nations would completely destroy the last vestige of the law of nations. The Germans have done their best to insure the truth of the Kaiser's declaration to Ambassador Gerard that there is no longer any international law. The alternative, however, which the Germans have done their best to establish is nothing but the law of the jungle, and would lead the world back to uncontrolled barbarism. If universally adopted, this would mean the total collapse of our civilization, and in Tennyson's phrase the world would “Reel back into the beast.”

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IV

The truth is that the German government, while asserting its own absolute sovereignty over the German people, has refused to admit any sovereign rights to any other government or to any other people. Germany as a nation has not only regarded herself as absolutely supreme within her own boundaries, but equally supreme also in the world. Germany has admitted no rights of other peoples. As the Kaiser's government crushed all Germans who attempted to interfere with his self-appointed task, so the German nation has attempted to crush all other nations whom they chose to regard as in their way. There does not seem to have been the slightest compunction or hesitation in invading the sovereignty of Belgium when they thought the interests of Germany demanded such action. And no doubt Holland would have shared the same fate had they thought German interests could have been promoted. France they would crush, and Britain they would destroy. In all instances alike there was no consideration of right or law, but only of might and of ability.

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This view of the law of nations and of the rights of sovereign peoples the Germans have been developing for a generation or two. But even Treitschke at one time stated the principle of international warfare very adequately when he said: "All noble nations have felt that the letting loose of physical force in war required fixed laws, and therefore an international law of war, based on reciprocity, has developed." This recognizes the necessity of reciprocal restraint in warfare and reveals how far Germany has declined even since Treitschke.

This, however, is not Treitschke's full conception. He goes on to consider the various theories of international law, and develops the German view. He repudiates the so-called naturalistic theory, which, he says, is due to Machiavelli, and also the contrary so-called German-liberal view. He then proceeds to enunciate what he calls "a theory of international law based on historical foundations." Though apparently repudiating Machiavelli, this view, nevertheless, is equally materialistic and regards the state as "physical force," and with "a

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national tendency to grab as many possessions as may seem to be desirable." On this view of the state, as he says, "it follows that all the limitations which states lay on themselves in treaties are merely voluntary; all treaties are concluded with a mental reservation—*rebus sic stantibus*—so long as circumstances remain unchanged." That this has ever since been the view of international law in Germany may be gathered from Von Buelow's declaration that "law must certainly not be considered superior to the needs of the state."

The adoption of this view would, of course, make any nation the supreme and sole arbiter of all its foreign relations, and would thereby separate it from any possible community of nations. In view of this attitude the London Times characterized Germany as "an enemy who affects to place himself above law and outside of law." The Germans have regarded all treaties as mere "scraps of paper" and not as solemn international pledges. Bethmann-Hollweg recognized nothing as binding except force, and knowing that bits of paper had no power to enforce themselves he repudiated all treaties.

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He would not admit any right that had not the power to enforce itself, and he thought that Germany was more powerful than any other state, and could therefore be a law unto herself.

V

This conception of law, national or international, has not been held by any modern civilized state. It was the conception of mediæval autocrats that they were themselves above the law. But this view of national law has not been admitted in England since Magna Charta, or for seven hundred years. The Tudor kings tried to revive it, and the misguided Stuarts made another attempt. But the Bill of Rights of 1688 put it finally beyond question that it was the unalterable conviction of the English people that the sovereign was himself amenable to the laws of the realm.

Germany has tried to establish this old mediæval, autocratic idea in respect to international law. She has tried to carry over toward the law of nations the attitude that she assumes toward the national law. As the maker of law the German govern-

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ment regarded itself as above the law. The Kaiser's will was the law for the people of Germany, but there was no law for the Kaiser. He and his government were sovereign in Germany, and they thought their power would enable them to be sovereign in the world. The war was simply an attempt to dictate in the world at large as they had always dictated in their own country, utterly regardless of the will of the other nations. They intended hereafter to be the sole rulers of the world.

"The German ideal," said Sir Edward Grey, "is that of the Germans as a superior people to whom all things are lawful in the securing of their own power, and against whom resistance of every kind is unlawful and to be savagely put down." The Bryce Report on the atrocities in Belgium speaks in the same strain of the German War Book: "This book is pervaded throughout by the view that whatever military needs suggest becomes thereby lawful." The Germans deny to other peoples even the right to defend themselves against their aggressions. When they go forth to conquer they think other peoples have no rights whatever.

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Germany has refused to admit the binding character of the law of nations. Under the delusion that she was called to rule the world for the world's good she has defied international law and all principles of humanity. Under the fanatical belief that Providence destined her to dominate the world she has tried to set up the sovereignty of might and of brute force. She has endeavored to destroy the conception of international law as the rights and duties of nations, and to establish the materialistic theory of the sovereignty of physical force. This materialistic heresy has brought on one of the greatest crises in the history of the world, and it is vital to the very existence of any community of nations that this German theory of "Might is Right" shall be utterly discredited.

CHAPTER XII

KULTUR AND MATERIALISM

I

LIKE everything else in Germany, *Kultur* is not a personal but a national concern. It is the nationalized product of the abilities and achievements of the people of the nation. Unlike culture, it has no personal, but only a national connotation. As Professor Santayana says, "Culture is a matter of miscellaneous private attainments and refined tastes;" but *Kultur* is, "rather, participation in a national purpose and in the means of executing it." The German idea of culture, then, does not consist in any refinement or cultivation of the individual, but only in the training of the people for a specific national purpose. The boasted superiority of *Kultur*, then, will depend upon the nature of that national ambition which is its end and aim.

Kultur may be said to consist in national organization and efficiency, in education, science and industry, municipal administra-

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tion, conservation of resources, and well-diffused prosperity. It signifies the utilization and ordering of the entire human and material resources of the nation for the purpose of attaining certain concrete political and national ends. It seems to mean an organization of the hands and brains of the nation for the purposes of material and political advancement, or for increased prosperity and power.

The value of *Kultur*, or efficiency, seems to be entirely material and political. To the people it is economic and mechanical, and to the governing class political. It involves the organization of the German workers into an industrial and military system that means at once material prosperity and political servitude. It signifies the complete economic and political subjugation of the individual to the state, until his part is obedience to ends he has not contrived, and in which he may have no interest. The individual becomes but a cog in the great national machine, and the will that directs this machine, or the government, has power to require anything of him, even to the complete sacrifice of himself in war.

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There seems to be in *Kultur*, then, but little of that element that the world associates with culture. To other peoples this noble word still denotes the things of the spirit, rather than of the brain and hand. It stands for what cannot be computed in terms of organization or efficiency. It represents the intangible things of the spirit, which are different from material efficiency, and to which organization may contribute only indirectly. It involves the freedom of man and of the human spirit, not its enslavement to a system, whose only purposes are material.

Culture, then, has a value for the individual, as a moral and spiritual being. It is, indeed, the training of the spirit. It leaves a place for spontaneity, and does not subjugate but exalts the individual. Culture, in fact, is a necessity of the moral and spiritual nature of the individual; while *Kultur* is the demand of the material and political aims of the nation. The ends and aims of *Kultur* and culture, then, are antithetical, and serve to show the great gulf that is fixed between German and non-German ideals. German *Kultur*, in fact,

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has developed forms and ideals incompatible with true culture, and sacrifices the higher interests of men to the goal of mechanical efficiency and material success.

II

Enamored of the efficiency and organization of Germany, many people in other lands had come to have great admiration for their *Kultur*. The perspective of the war, however, has made possible a truer estimate and has corrected some of our impressions. No doubt Germany in a mechanical and industrial sense has been a very efficient nation. Other things being equal, such efficiency may indicate the superiority of a nation and its right to a foremost place in the world. But it is not in material things that a nation's life consists. It is not by bread alone that men or nations live. Material things may form the basis of spiritual achievements, but they do not constitute a nation's greatness. It is intellectual and spiritual power that determines a nation's life.

Civilization is the one word that connotes all the valuable achievements of the

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race, and the one thing that is the true test of the character of national organization and efficiency. And civilization is a property of the spirit of a people. A truly civilized nation will not sacrifice refinement of feeling to mechanical efficiency, nor humanity to national organization. A civilized people will not have less but more of compassion, of sympathy, of altruism. True culture will mean the extinguishing of the base, the envious, the immoral. It will mark the elimination of cruelty, of hardness, of the beast in man; and the exaltation of kindness, benevolence, pity, and goodness. Culture that is Christian and spiritual, not pagan and material, will mean the endowment of the people with all the graces of the spirit, as exemplified in word and deed in the Gospels. If *Kultur* does not achieve at least the beginnings and the enhancement of these things, then it is not civilization but barbarism, and not a blessing but a curse to the world.

The consideration of this phase of the matter makes a sorry tale for Germany. The evidence of the war shows that Germany has sacrificed her soul to her material

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efficiency and her political ambitions. Germany has committed the crime of brutalizing the entire nation in the interests of efficiency; and yet democracy has outdone her in efficiency and has brought all her boasted superiority to humiliation and defeat. And in losing the war they have lost everything. Freedom not only has attained the goal sought by their *Kultur*, but at the same time has been a training in things of the spirit. Freedom and *Kultur* appear in terrible contrast in the armies of the two classes of nations. Freedom went into France and Belgium to save and to build up, while *Kultur* went everywhere to destroy, and to desolate and desecrate, and to enslave. From the Kaiser to the common soldier the Germans have proven themselves not civilized but savage, not more but less cultured than other peoples. The Germans boast that their army is the highest expression of their *Kultur*, and that the army represents the entire nation. In almost every regiment, they say, there are men from all classes. They profess to despise what they call the mercenary army of Britain, because, they claim, it is not

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representative of all the people. Their army, which, as they say, represents the German people and the German nation, must be taken as representing their *Kultur*. By their deeds we shall know them.

The conclusion to be drawn, however, they are not so keen to draw. It means that all classes of Germans took part in the invasion and ravaging of Belgium, in the murder of women and children, in the sacking and burning of the towns, in the violation of women, in the destruction of works of art, and the desecration of places of religion. It was, indeed, a national carnival of *Kultur*, and left its barbaric mark on Louvain, on Malines, and on Rheims. Professors from their universities, lawyers, engineers, and other educated Germans, must have participated with the laborers from the cities and the peasants from the farms in the diabolical outrages. Officers and men alike are included in the unimpeachable testimony of the German diaries. Never before has any nation been so self-judged and so hopelessly condemned. As the late M. Verhaeren very aptly said, "Had the German people been really civil-

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ized, they would never have kept silent when Belgium was assassinated." One is reminded of the indictment Nietzsche made against his countrymen when he said that "every great crime against culture for the last four centuries lies on their conscience."

III

The true character of *Kultur* may be studied in the state of mind of the German people themselves, as revealed in the innumerable outpourings of their statesmen, professors, editors, and writers, since the war began. Nowhere else can the moral madness and the utter savagery of their *Kultur* be seen so well. As early as August 2, 1914, the München-Augsburger Abendzeitung said in defense of the war: "We shall defend the civilization of the world, the culture of the earth, against debased 'unculture,' and the spreading of the roots of decay. This is a lofty and tremendous task." It is a strange state of mind that could call the *Kultur* that was then invading Belgium "the civilization of the world."

As usual, however, it is the German professors who excel as apologists of *Kultur*.

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These men, having done much by their materialistic theories to make the war, show quite unconsciously many distinctive German characteristics. Among them are such men as Professor Adolf Lasson, eighty-four years of age, a successor of Hegel in the chair of philosophy at Berlin; Professor von Harnack, the distinguished biblical scholar; and numerous others, of whom may be mentioned the ninety-three immortals who signed the manifesto of the German scholars. A single citation from Professor Doctor Lenard, professor of physics at Heidelberg, will suffice as an index to this strange German mind. He says: "Down, then, with all consideration for England's so-called culture. The central nest and supreme academy for all hypocrisy in the world, which is on the Thames, must be destroyed if the work is to be done thoroughly. No respect for the tombstones of Shakespeare, Newton, Faraday, etc."

The chancellor, Bethmann-Hollweg, however, may be taken as the best representative of the true spirit of *Kultur*. From this man's ill-tempered harangue to the British minister down to his last utterances as

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chancellor there are displayed an incapacity to understand any moral issues and a faithlessness that exhibited itself best in his famous "scrap-of-paper" speech. Probably never before did any responsible statesman proclaim with such cynicism and affrontery the moral obliquity of himself and his nation. Bethmann-Hollweg will forever stand declared in his own words as ready to break any treaty, to employ any diabolical means, in order that the Germans might win in their war of conquest. Victory to him and to them was more important than humanity, or morality, or civilization. German statesmen stand self-convicted before the world, as falsifiers of dispatches, breakers of treaties, and scorners of the world's moral sense. And they seem to have had the full indorsement of the German people. Burke thought it impossible to indict a whole nation. But the world has indicted Germany, statesmen and people.

IV

Kultur is, in fact, a brutal "cult of force," or "force-worship." Militarism, or material force, is its highest ideal and its sole

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means of propagation. The ex-Kaiser once said that "our own country, by employing its military powers, has attained a degree of *Kultur* which it never could have by methods of peaceful development." It is the worship of militarism, which is materialism, raised to the status of a national religion, and exalted above all the graces of the spirit. *Kultur* is the national worship of might, and the enthronement of efficiency, or the elevation of the mere machinery of civilization to the place assigned by other nations to its spirit.

Nothing about *Kultur* is more conspicuous than its faith in might and its absolute unfaith in right. It is, indeed, as the origin and conduct of the war so clearly disclose, the complete denial of all that the world has regarded as moral and the overthrow of all that has been called civilization. The Germans have convinced themselves that might is stronger than right, and that as an instrument of national progress might could easily triumph over right. They have completely lacked a faith that righteousness exalteth a nation, and have proved their moral skepticism by taking might as their

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ideal. Hence they have resorted to a completely unmoral conduct of the war, and have not hesitated to adopt any atrocity, any falsehood, any deception, that would seem to promise the victory to might.

This, of course, is a frank and shameless materialistic calculation, in accordance with the first principles of *Kultur*. Unable and unwilling to make any calculations of the moral forces of the world, Germany has simply laughed at the world's moral indignation, and has scorned all appeal to civilization, or the moral law. Morality has seemed weak, because it is immaterial, but Germany has found out that it at least commands the material forces of the world in a crisis such as this. It is in this way that materialism and unrighteousness are ultimately weak and powerless, and morality and the things of the spirit the strongest forces in the world.

Kultur, then, as a brutal cult of force, constitutes the greatest menace to civilization the world has ever experienced. Other nations in the past have been brutal because they have been uncultured and uncivilized. They have been cruel and treach-

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erous because they have been savages. But this nation is the one conspicuous instance of an educated people who deliberately and consciously have adopted and developed a *Kultur* of might. They have studied to be cruel, and have cultivated immorality as the highest national good. They have designedly adopted the ideal of "Might makes Right," and have coddled themselves into the notion that they could build up a new morality of force in place of the old morality of right. They were ready to sacrifice all that the world calls civilization on the altar of German victory. They are the true savages of all the world's history, the modern Goths and Vandals who would destroy the world's highest civilization.

V

Such, then, is the nature of German *Kultur*. As the late Belgian poet, M. Verhaeren, has said, "There may be a German *Kultur*, but there is no German civilization." *Kultur* is materialistic, while boasting of its superior spirituality. It is mechanically efficient and organized, while morally inefficient and frightful. It has a

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cruelty unutterable, while professing to desire the good of other nations. It is savage as no nation ever was before, while bragging of its desire to carry blessings to the world. It surpasses the mechanical efficiency of Rome and the savage ferocity of the Turk. It harps on liberty and peace, while carrying slavery to Belgium and threatening the world, like Mohammed, with a conquest by the sword. It cultivates and disseminates hate as never before in the world, while boasting of its Christianity and its worship of the Prince of Peace. It professes the highest idealism and refinement, while endeavoring to set up a savagery beside which that of the primitive tribes seems tame and beneficent. The German idea of culture is nothing but the diabolism and infernalism of an immoral autocracy, and the world never had a more imperative duty than to destroy it root and branch.

The trouble is that Germany has boundless self-conceit, but no self-criticism. It has mentality, but no spirituality. It has piety, but no morality. It has logic, but no humor. It has ambition, but no conscience. It has political aims, but no

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moral ideals. It has all the inevitable vices of autocracy, but no stirrings of the virtues of democracy. Germany is unable to see her faults, and unable to see anything but her own excellences. From Treitschke to the Kaiser, from Bernhardt to Bethmann-Hollweg, Germany has no one to teach her the truth. She has politicians, but no prophets. Her ambition and her covetousness have led her to try to vanquish the world for her own glory and gain. *Kultur* is not culture. It is not civilization. It is the most dangerous outbreaking of materialism and savagery the world has ever seen.

In the early days of the war, the distinguished Italian historian, Guglielmo Ferrero, fearing the worst from the terrors of *Kultur*, said: "The darkest prophecies seem legitimate. Oppressions, new wars, revolutions, a terrible crisis, economic, political, moral, in which a great part of European civilization will perish, this is what one may expect." Many of the world's achievements have already been sacrificed to this Moloch of *Kultur* and its perfidious offspring, and the end is not yet. The military victory of the

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Allies has prevented the worst of these prophecies from becoming true, for the present. But the complete intellectual and moral victory is yet to be won. The menace of materialism, with its denial of morality and its worship of brute force, still hangs over the world, and threatens its higher life. The task of the next generation is to uproot this cult of materialism that has insinuated itself into so many channels of national activity.

CONCLUSION

THE autocracy, the materialism, and the irreligion of Germany have led European civilization to the verge of disaster. The world has been saved only because in other nations there is still a substratum of freedom, of idealism, and of faith. Germany's betrayal of civilization means that the national mind has been dominated by this cult of materialism. But in the history of other countries there have been times when this same baneful influence has been in evidence, and it has always had the most mischievous effects upon individual and national life. The present outbreak in Germany has been by no means confined to that country; but if it has not demoralized other lands it is because they have been less logical than the Germans and have had a truer moral sense.

It ought now to be obvious to all that civilization cannot be built upon force, greed, materialism, the ethics of the jungle, and the religion of war. These are not the

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friends but the foes of civilization. And civilization ought now to begin to know its friends. As civilization consists in the proper moral relations of men, it can be seen that it is Germany's betrayal of morality that is at the bottom of the whole tragedy. Morality is not merely three fourths of life, as Matthew Arnold said, but all of life; and an economic and political system that is professedly immoral has made this crisis. Organized materialism is the most deadly foe of all the higher interests of men and of nations.

This system has gained control of education in Germany, and has drilled several generations of students to materialistic modes of thought. It has got possession of chairs in the universities, and the mechanical methods of German scholarship have almost invariably developed into a veiled or an actual materialism. Materialism always captures some minds in all lands, and in this present age the taint of German materialism has infected the laboratories and the lecture rooms of their own and of other lands.

The seeds of this pest have been scattered

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far and wide over the world, and our own admiration of German scholarship and science has given them lodgment in our own institutions more than is generally recognized. Under the protection of "academic freedom" this pest has established and maintained itself, and no voice has been brave enough to raise a protest. Even the churches have been cowed into a fear to denounce the immorality of such theories and doctrines, and the politicians have not concerned themselves with such matters. But a materialism that denies morality, and that makes wars, is the concern of the state as well as the church.

If the world is to be spared a repetition of this cataclysm and be permitted to work out the peaceable fruits of righteousness, it is indispensable that systems of thought and views of the world that deny morality shall not be allowed in the education of our youth. A system of ethics that denies morality, or explains it in terms of might or materialism, a religion that is nothing but a worship of power or force, and denies the existence of spirit, can result in nothing but a repeated disaster. This new morality, as it pleases

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to call itself, is nothing but the old immorality, and this new religion nothing but the old paganism, and there is no truth in them.

The world is now ready to make another attempt to construct a real civilization. Materialism having all but wrecked the world, there ought to be some hope of laying the new foundations deep in the things of the spirit. War and hate having failed, it is now time to try peace and good-will.

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