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GERMAN MORAL ABNORMALITY

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DURING the last four years it has been impossible to avoid noticing many surprising utterances, and many still more surprising deeds, which have emanated from German sources. Quite apart from what may be perhaps regarded as political and patriotic prejudices, these words and actions inevitably demand an explanation. We have been accustomed to think of Germany as thoroughly educated and civilized, possessing a respect for the ordinary moral code of humanity, but in the face of many patent violations of civilized ethics an inquiry into the cause of this aberration is at once natural and essential. In this article, care will be taken to limit attention to utterances and acts of the truth of which there is no serious question. They are all based on authority which is sufficient, even if not absolutely undoubted. The words and deeds of military authorities will come first, and then it will be necessary to proceed to the consideration of expressions of opinion by German preachers and teachers. The war has compelled the world to face a moral abnormality which imperatively needs explanation.¹

I

The general military policy of Germany calls for attention first of all. This may be summed up by saying it has included the outrage and murder of women and children, not as the excesses of an army which has become undisciplined, but as part of a definite scheme laid down by the higher command of that army. Then, too, there has been

¹This inquiry has a practical bearing on certain aspects of teaching which are prevalent to-day. The discussion is therefore unaffected by the recent events which have brought about so welcome a cessation of hostilities. The problem is still of pressing and, indeed, of permanent interest and importance.

the destruction of merchant shipping without discrimination; the creation of a new law of the sea in which there is no indication or even profession of equity and justice; the slavery of unoffending civilians in occupied territory; the poisoning of wells; the devastation of evacuated territory without military justification; the torpedoing of hospital ships, notwithstanding moral pledges to regard them as inviolate; the destruction of monuments of great value; and the holding of treaties and promises in supreme contempt. These and other things have been part of the Prussian military policy during this war. An Officer who has had personal experience has suggested that a complete exhibition of the German war-outfit should occupy one of the anterooms of the hall in which the peace negotiations are held. This is how he describes what he has seen and known:—

“ It would begin with the oil-sprayers and incendiary tabloids which proved so useful in the organized burning out of the Belgian towns, and end with the flammenwerfer, which is designed to spray burning oil into the eyes, and the ‘lachrymatory shells’ which are mostly used on the villages in the rear of the fighting line, and therefore find most of their victims among the civil population. The flammenwerfer is designed to spray the face of the soldier with burning oil. But its intention is far more devilish than its performance. Protection against it is a very simple matter; for the spray of the burning oil cannot be got to describe a curve downwards as a jet of water does; the spray curves upward, and, if you ‘lay low’ like Brer Rabbit, it passes harmlessly overhead. The poison gas clouds are discharged from cylinders when the wind is favorable, with the idea of poisoning the combatants on the other side. The German used at first chlorine; then a variety of gases, such as Phosgene. He is very cunning in mixing his gases. With poison gas he will send out a stink gas which is harmless though unpleasant. It goes through the helmet, and brings Germany right home to the nostrils, and, if you have not been fore-warned, makes you think that your gas helmet is leaking. Take it off, though, and you are the next on the casualty list, for the poison gas

gets to the lungs. Stink gas the soldier must learn to put up with."

Another illustration of the same general attitude may be seen from the article published in the Berlin *Tageszeitung* in reference to the confiscation of German ships in Allied ports. The writer said:—

"If we are in a position to destroy the whole of London it would be more humane to do so than to allow one more German to bleed to death on the battlefield. To hesitate or to surrender ourselves to feelings of pity would be unpardonable. More than 400 merchant ships have been stolen from us by Great Britain. Our answer should be that for every German ship at least one English town should be reduced to ruins by our airmen. Far better were it for us, that Great Britain, France and the United States should call us barbarians than that they should bestow on us their pity when we are beaten. Softness and sentimentality are stupid in wartime."

II

Acts of cruelty which have been abundantly evident all through the four years of war constitute another moral problem. Lord Bryce's reports on Belgium and Armenia bear their own sad and impressive testimony, and the deplorable treatment meted out to prisoners, especially British and Russian, is beyond doubt or even question. But it will be better for our present purpose to limit attention to specific acts. Harry Lauder, the well-known singer, who has lost a son in the war, says that he heard and saw many examples of German brutality, but he calls special attention to two. The first one refers to sixty Highlanders of the Black Watch Regiment. They were captured by the Germans one night, and neither expected mercy nor wanted it, though to their great surprise, instead of being killed, they were ordered by the Germans to take off every bit of clothing from their bodies. Then the men were left all night shivering, naked, and up to their waist in the mud of the trenches. Towards morning an Officer approached the Highlanders and told them they might go back to their

trenches. The men could not believe the words they heard; but, overjoyed at their unexpected freedom, they started forth across No Man's Land, remarking to one another that after all they must have misjudged the Germans. But unfortunately they had not. For when the Highlanders had gone about fifty yards they heard the Germans laughing and jeering, and the next moment a machine gun was turned on them, mowing them down instantly, to the great enjoyment of the German soldiers in the trenches. Only one man was not killed outright, and when he was brought in by an ambulance he told the Officers what had happened.

The other incident mentioned by Lauder is of a British soldier who noticed a fountain pen lying in a trench which he and the others had taken. Thinking that the pen would be handy for the purpose of writing home to his wife, he picked it up, and the next thing he knew was that he was in a hospital with half of his face off. The Germans had put dynamite in the pen before leaving the trench, and Lauder found the poor fellow in such a state, with one eye and half his face blown away, that it was sickening to gaze at him.

Sir Arthur Yapp told an audience in Toronto, some weeks ago, of similar instances of German cruelty. When the British soldiers had taken Peronne a piano was found in one of the houses, and a soldier who could play went forward to enjoy a tune. An Officer close by warned him to look into the piano before he attempted to play, and on doing so a bomb was found inside, arranged to explode when the piano was played. On another occasion, when the Germans had evacuated a town and the British entered it, a live kitten was found on a door, nailed to the woodwork by its forepaws, and crying piteously in its pain. It was only a matter of a moment for a British soldier to rush to its release, but in pulling the nails out of the kitten's paws an engine of destruction behind the door was loosed, and man and kitten were at once blown across the road in atoms. It is difficult, if not impossible, to under-

stand the state of mind that would at once cause pain to a dumb animal, and make this in turn the means of human destruction.

Lieutenant Coningsby Dawson, who has just returned home to recover from a wound, told a correspondent of the *New York Times* two instances from his own experience. This is one of them:—

“During a drive of one of the Canadian divisions to which I was attached, a young officer in command of a tank was very keen to go ahead. When the enemy counterattacked, he was left high and dry. Afterward, when our division again drove the Huns back, we found that he and the crew of the tank had been taken out, stripped, lashed to the tank and then bombed to death.”

Here is the other:—

“Some Australians who were in the same show with us at the end of August saw a dead German officer on a stretcher which had been left behind. When some of the soldiers went to lift the stretcher with the intention of giving him a decent burial, it exploded a small mine underneath and all of them were killed. It was a booby-trap set by the Huns, knowing full well that the Allies were too decent to pass the body of an enemy by.”

It is not surprising that Lieutenant Dawson remarks that the Germans “trade on the decent feelings of Allies in every way in order to take a mean advantage of them.” But again, there is the problem of the cause of this fiendish barbarity in a people presumably civilized.

III

Actions arising out of the war call for attention. Mr. Kellogg, who was the chief assistant of Mr. Hoover in Belgium, told an incident in *The Atlantic Monthly* which has a definite bearing on our problem. In October, 1917, 680 Belgian children, their ages from four to twelve, were at Evian les Bains on one train, and the poor little creatures were emaciated, sickly, and absolutely alone, without the loving care of mothers and elder sisters. They had been

sent out of Belgium, and had actually been taken down to Switzerland so that they might enter France, through Switzerland, to be cared for. Two thirds of the children belonged to parents whose fathers would not work for the German army and were being starved into submission, and the mothers were willing to let their little ones go rather than see them also starved. As Mr. Kellogg remarks, we have only to think of that line of weak, little motherless things, climbing down from the train and marching along the platform as bravely as they could, into the hands of kindly but unknown foster-mothers and foster-sisters. Nothing could be sadder or more poignant than this episode. It might have been thought that humanity alone would have prevented the Germans from venting on these poor innocent children such unnecessary cruelty.

In a recent number of *The Outlook* Dr. Joseph H. Odell wrote of his visit to Château Thierry, where the Americans won their first victory. Dr. Odell's words speak for themselves:—

“Why do Americans persist in differentiating between the German military caste and the German people? They were ordinary Boche regiments which held Château Thierry, and when their evacuation of the place became obviously necessary they set about to destroy and pollute everything within reach. Remember, this is not hearsay; I went into Château Thierry on the heels of the American advance and saw things with my own eyes. Every vandalistic, Hunnish, fiendish, filthy thing that men could do these Huns did in Château Thierry just before they left. The streets were littered with the private possessions of the citizens thrown through the windows; every bureau and chiffonier drawer was rifled and its contents destroyed; in the better-class houses the paintings were ripped and the china and porcelain smashed; furniture was broken or hacked; mirrors were shivered into a thousand fragments; mattresses and upholstery were slashed; richly bound books were ripped; in fact, there was hardly a thing in the city left intact. The houses of the poor, in which the German privates had been billeted, were just as badly pillaged and devastated as the homes of the well-to-do. The church,

grand enough for a cathedral, had not been spared. Its paintings and altars and crucifixes and stations of the cross had been ruthlessly battered and defiled. Yet even this does not tell the story — a story which cannot be told to people who respect decency — for the Germans left tokens of physical and mental obscenity in every house I visited, and I entered scores. If all hell had been let loose in a choice suburban town for half a day it could not have put its obscene and diabolical mark on a place more unmistakably than the Germans put theirs on Château Thierry. I stood amazed that there could be so much unrelieved vileness, such organized beastliness, in the world."

Mr. Walter Duranty, one of the correspondents of the *New York Times*, telegraphing to that paper on September 12, speaks of his experience of the evacuation of the city of Ham, and says that for pure wantonness of destruction it offers an example that even the Germans will find it hard to beat. The place was swept with fire, though the town was practically uninjured by shell fire of friend and foe. The German incendiarism was carried out with deliberate thoroughness, notwithstanding the fact that the position of the place, on what was virtually an island, made it unavailable for military purposes when once the bridges were destroyed. Here, again, the action, which is no mere impulse of a few undisciplined individuals but part of a carefully arranged plan, calls for a thorough explanation on moral grounds.

IV

It is impossible to do more than give brief notice to the various political efforts put forth by Germany in connection with the war. One of the worst acts is the tampering with the honor and loyalty of prisoners of war, of which there is ample documentary evidence. A Swiss paper publishes a book of documents, obtained direct from Berlin, under the title of "Documents of Disgrace. The German Government Incites Men to Turn Traitors." It is impossible to go into detail in regard to these efforts, which include the endeavor to seduce Irish, North-African Arab,

Indian, and Ukranian prisoners. In reference to Arabs one military authority says that there must be "no thought of treating them kindly or mildly . . . if kindness be shown to such people without a cause they scent weakness and are never satisfied." A secret order shows that some of the Officers in propaganda camps dared to feel that their work was "incompatible with the sense of duty and honor of a German soldier," but their Commander made short work of such scruples and, as the Swiss paper remarks: "that Prussian Officers should consider the duties assigned to them by the War Office and Foreign Office incompatible with their honor is a criticism of the political morality of these functionaries in the empire which speaks volumes."

A pamphlet has been issued dealing with German intrigues in Persia, giving the diary of a German agent who went through Persia to Afghanistan during the early months of the war. Wherever a strong state could be hampered, or a weak state could be exploited, there German agents made their way and spread intrigues. The diary is published *in extenso* and records eleven months of dastardly work. It is a satisfaction to know that the expedition was an utter failure, but the diary is full of significant interest as a revelation of German methods and of German temper.

Perhaps, however, the most remarkable illustration of German political effort was given by Dr. Zwemer in his addresses at various places last summer on Pan-Islamism and the War. He based what he said on documents which are absolutely convincing, and told the story of "a Protestant nation trampling on her own conceptions of world righteousness and turning the Near East into a shambles, or trying to turn it into a shambles, by proclaiming a Holy War." The whole of it can be read in Ambassador Morgenthau's articles in *The World's Work*, soon to appear in book form. It was a Pan-Islamic movement against Christian brethren and, as Dr. Zwemer says, it was "characterized by a deep knowledge of the undercurrents of rest-

lessness and dissatisfaction, political, social, intellectual, religious, all over the world." After preparing the ground for the sowing of this awful seed of intrigue, the work began by press propaganda which took every imaginable form. Huge sums of money were spent and the work was carried on in many different languages. "The centres for mailing this inflammable literature were chosen with consummate cunning. The three centres from which it was sent to avoid the press censorship and to enter without the knowledge of the postal officials, were Barcelona, Spain, San Francisco, California, and Bangkok, Siam. When the time was ripe and Turkey was restless, a Holy War was proclaimed by the leaders of the Mohammedan faith." This is how Dr. Zwerner sums up the project:—

"Can you conceive of any plan, to put it in sober language, can you conceive of any plan that was more devilish in its conception and proposed execution than to set on flame the passions of men from Morocco to Calcutta by such a document? Can you think what would have happened to the million Copts of Egypt had the ten million Mohammedans obeyed that proclamation? Can you imagine what would have happened to the little handfuls of Christians in Morocco, Tunis, Algiers, in Northern Persia, in Southern Persia—aye—what would have happened again in India compared with the days of the Mutiny, if this programme had unrolled from the borders of Afghanistan, down the valleys of the Punjab into Bengal; and India with sixty-seven million Mohammedans, would have had a Holy War on her hands, in these days of universal unrest, in these days when men's hearts long for democracy and thirst with a passion for nationalism? And yet that was Germany's deliberate programme."

v

A more personal question, and yet one that is equally a revelation of morality, concerns the matter of gratitude, and on this some words of Dr. Newell Dwight Hillis in the New York *Evening Sun*, of May 18, 1918, may be adduced. He gives notes of a conversation with an American ambulance driver, who was on duty at Verdun during

most of that great battle. Among other things this man says that on one morning as he was driving along the road he found himself side by side with two Frenchmen, carrying a German Officer lying wounded upon the stretcher. Suddenly a shot rang out, and the Frenchman at the head of the stretcher pitched forward and when the cot fell the German Officer rolled out of it. He had a revolver in his right hand, and while lying on the stretcher he shot in the back the French friend who was carrying him to a place of safety. It is impossible to avoid feeling sympathy, if not gratification, with the sequel. A French Officer who saw the whole event put his revolver against the forehead of the German Officer who had just murdered his friend, and blew the German's brains out.

In the same article by Dr. Hillis, another incident is told by the ambulance driver. One day a German Captain was found lying in No Man's Land. A cartridge had cut an artery in his arm, and with one hand he was trying to stop the bleeding. At the risk of their lives the French stretcher bearers went in and carried the man back to their dressing station. In ten days he was nearly well. Among other kindnesses the Frenchmen shared their luncheon with him, and indeed they may be said to literally have saved his life. One day a French General and his Staff drew up just behind the ambulance car. Evidently the German airmen had been following the General's car, for they dropped a bomb shell that killed three of the men on the General's Staff. Pieces of their clothing were blown literally against this German Captain's arm. The ambulance driver asks how would a gentleman have felt, and remarks that the way the German Captain felt towards his own deliverance was seen in the fact that he flung up his hand and shouted his delight, "Good, good, good." It is probably an exaggeration, but it is easy to understand the American ambulance driver's opinion that he "never once met a German Officer who was a gentleman. . . . They are born cads, they live cads, and cads they will.

die . . . any kindness shown them they interpret as weakness."

As another illustration of the same lack of genuine morality, the case may be mentioned of a German Lieutenant, who commanded the ship which landed Sir Roger Casement in Ireland, and was captured. The Lieutenant gave up twenty dollars, when taken prisoner, saying it was all he had. When his captor asked "On your honor," the man replied, "No, no more." A search revealed twenty-one English bank notes, amounting to over five hundred dollars, concealed in his clothing. The Attorney-General asked him, "Do you think, under the circumstances, you were entitled to give an untruthful answer?" The Lieutenant replied, "There may be different points of view—the point of view of an English Officer, and the point of view of a German Officer." The difference in the English treatment of even unprincipled enemies is indicated by the decision in this case. The Prize Court adjudged the Lieutenant's concealed money forfeited to the Crown, but it granted him out of it a full month's pay (\$130), and returned in full to two other Officers of the ship the money which they had surrendered, because they truthfully stated the amount they possessed.

VI

It is now time to turn to the religious leaders of Germany, and the first example is that of Dr. von Dryander, the well-known Court Preacher, and the Kaiser's confidential spiritual adviser. In a recent sermon in the Berlin Cathedral he said:—

"As I look back into history and regard the attitude of nations passing through the fires of affliction I see no examples of fortitude, lofty and enduring courage, and firm reliance on the Divine Will fit to be compared with ours. When I think of it—and when am I not thinking of it?—I am profoundly touched, and the tears fill my eyes, tears of gratitude to the Almighty that He has created me a German and called me into the fellowship of a nation su-

preme above all others in every quality and endowment of the Christian life. Although we are surrounded by a world of enemies, although we are the objects of the most cruel calumnies, although our noblest qualities are reviled and our simplest words distorted, we bear our burden with the fortitude of Christian knights, and in our inmost hearts the nation says, Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

In view of the preacher's knowledge of the character of the British, French, and American people, it is almost incredible that he should suppose his fellow countrymen are supreme in every element of Christian character.

Another well-known preacher in Berlin, also one of the Kaiser's chaplains, is Dr. Conrad, and among other utterances is the following:—

"When, under the hammer blows of Hindenburg, the audacious spirit of our enemies has been smashed, when their eyes have been opened to see the wrong they are doing to God and man, when they come to us beseeching forgiveness and pardon, we shall not refuse forgiveness, just as we ourselves are thrown on God for His grace. The peace must make an end to all war and all rage. We would plough a new furrow."

At a recent gathering of representatives of all the German missionary societies, several speakers denounced the iniquitous policy which, it was alleged, England was pursuing towards Foreign Missions. Speaker after speaker told of the brutal conduct of the British Government, who, it was actually said, employed Missionaries in India and Africa to do recruiting work, to stir up the natives of these countries to enlist against Germany. At a Conference held at Upsala, German speakers repeatedly condemned the conduct of England towards German and Swiss missionaries, and one German speaker concluded with these words:—

"We know all about British zeal for foreign missions. Our people have had their eyes opened. A nation of hucksters opposes a nation of heroes, and what can you expect

but brutality, vulgarity and cruelty? Where is religion in all that British Empire? I ask where? I get no answer."

Pastor Falck, of Berlin, preaching on "The Power of Christianity," gave expression to this opinion:—

"The great military achievements of the German empire are really the achievements of the Christianity indwelling in the German nation. The intellectual sense of the Germans, hitherto sun-dried and averse from the world, has built the slender airship with which the old dream of mankind has been fulfilled. The German has created the wonderful submarine which bids defiance to the foe, and day by day crumbles off one piece after another of England's sea-power. He places his fabulous guns in position and sends his gigantic shells into the ethereal regions of the air, bringing destruction in their train from a distance of more than sixty miles. The German spirit of action brings order in regions where the misdirected desire for a so-called liberty has beaten into ruins every vestige of law. And it is this German spirit of action which is destined to bring blessing to other nations, not last those nations who are now at war with us."

In the light of the history of the past four years it is difficult to understand the state of mind that could utter these words, unless, of course, the German action in Belgium, Poland, Serbia, and Armenia has been entirely hidden from the preacher.

Lest it should be thought that these are exceptional utterances, and do not represent the average, ordinary German preaching, reference may be made to a book with the curious title, "Hurrah and Hallelujah," which consists of an elaborate examination by a Danish theologian, Professor Bang, of a large number of ordinary pulpit utterances during the war, about which there is no question. The title of the book is borrowed from one of the Pastor-poets of the Fatherland. One writer maintains that the Germans are fighting "for the cause of Jesus within mankind," and that Christianity is revealed in the submarines:—

"When our submarine, in spite of an almost overwhelm-

ing superiority of force, in the course of sixty minutes sends three English cruisers to the bottom, without suffering any hurt itself, this heroic deed, unparalleled in naval history, is for Christian people a testimony from the Lord on high, 'I am with you! Do ye see it?'"

Another Clergyman opens a prayer with this invocation: "Thou who dwellest high above cherubim, seraphim, and Zeppelins." And a German religious paper thus explains (with curious logic) the duty of bombing London, which, of course, was only put in a state of self-defense by the coming of the Zeppelins:—

"London is no longer by any means an unfortified city. It is armed with such quantities of anti-aircraft guns and aeroplanes, that the Zeppelins, as is well known, only venture to attack the city by night. . . . London is the heart and the hearth of this terrible world-war, there sit the ministers who have precipitated Europe into misery, there is the witch's cauldron, in which fresh misery is ever brewing for the peoples of Europe, already bleeding from a thousand wounds. To attack London is to attack the den of murderers."

Perhaps, however, the strangest utterance is the "war-time paraphrase" of the Lord's Prayer by a Clergyman:—

"Though the warrior's bread be scanty, do Thou work daily death and tenfold woe unto the enemy. Forgive in merciful long-suffering each bullet and each blow which misses its mark! Lead us not into the temptation of letting our wrath be too tame in carrying out Thy divine judgment! Deliver us and our Ally from the infernal Enemy and his servants on earth. Thine is the kingdom, the German land; may we, by aid of Thy steel-clad hand, achieve the power and the glory."

From preachers we turn to professors, and among those best known in England is Professor Herrmann, of Marburg, whose book, "Communion with God," is one of the most familiar and spiritual of German works translated into English, even though it does not measure up to the New Testament idea of our Lord. Herrmann set himself to justify Germany, from a religious point of view, in allying herself with the Turks. This was pretty awkward

because Germany has been in the habit of denouncing the Allies for bringing heathen into the field of battle:—

“It is true that the Mohammedans do not know the Old or the New Testament, and Mohammed did not understand Jesus. Yet they are in some respects superior to us. It is a stupendous feat that this religion should in so short a time have spread from India to Granada. Another point is that the Turks have been unified by their religion; the Germans have not. The main thing, however, is this, that the faith of the Turks assures them that God ordains everything, and is the reality in everything. The word *Islam* means exactly the same as the Biblical word *faith*, that is, complete self-surrender. As Goethe said, when this became clear to him: ‘Then we are all of us, in reality, believers in Islam!’ But Mohammed also maintains that we are free and responsible for what we do, wherefore God will judge us all; and in this, too, we agree with him. On no account must one suppose that the Mohammedan belief in God is only a belief in an inflexible fate. No, it is also a belief in God’s wisdom and goodness. There is certainly this difference, that only by looking to Jesus can we Christians find courage to hold such a faith. Nevertheless, we must maintain that we stand near to the Turks in our faith — only they have not recognized the right foundation of the faith they hold. But we Germans can help them to that.”

One of the German Professors most truly honored before the war was Dr. Deissmann, of Berlin, whose work in connection with the papyri is well known and greatly valued, as is seen in several of his books. For some time during the war, Professor Deissmann wrote a “Weekly Protestant Letter” to neutral countries, and through the kindness of an American friend, I have obtained an almost complete set of these communications. The naïve way in which Dr. Deissmann records everything against the British soldiers and in favor of the Germans without any question, still less examination, is remarkable in view of the Professor’s well-known Christian attitude before the war. But it would seem as if his national prejudices had almost entirely blinded his Christian judgment, for even

when he learnt of the dastardly torpedoing of the vessel in which his personal and close friend, Dr. J. H. Moulton, was traveling from India, Deissmann did not express the slightest regret for the cause which led to Moulton's untimely death. About two years ago Deissmann alluded to the war in the following words:—

“Germany's sons, both at the front and at home, are doing deeds which entitle them to canonization. They are the same stock as that which has produced the noblest saints of all time! Our great reformers of the sixteenth century, our wonderful hymn-writers, our gentle priests, our profound divines have not a higher title to our religious veneration than those magnificent sons of ours who, with unparalleled valour, are defending the Fatherland against the base and greedy attacks of rapacious and dishonorable adversaries. We are profoundly grateful to these men of God in our trenches, men of God because they are doing God's work, and I have no hesitation in proclaiming here openly that when I think of their work, of their sublime self-sacrifice, I am engaged in religious contemplation. These men of ours, these great German men, are the best examples of modern Saints of God.”

Even before these words were uttered there had been ample evidence of action in Belgium that might have been expected to prevent anyone raising the German soldiers in the trenches to the position of Saints.

As a contrast to these academic utterances from Berlin, it may be useful to turn to a village in Swabia, in southern Germany, where the people are shepherded by a Roman Catholic, named Lilienthal. This is how the village preacher teaches the Swabian peasants. After showing that to stand in the trenches and shoot the enemies of Germany is in itself a religious action, and that death met while a German soldier is so engaged, entitles the soul of the departed into immediate entrance into Paradise, the sermon proceeds thus:—

“But you may ask me what about the enemy's soldiers in the trenches? Are they not also doing the work of God in defending their country? Is their death under similar

circumstances not to be rewarded? Beloved, to allow such thoughts even to enter your minds is to be guilty of sin. Bear in mind in the first place that the enemy soldiers are not defending their country, but attacking ours. They are the aggressors, they are transgressors of the law of God. Their death is only the precursor of condign punishment in the next world. None of them can escape the wrath of God. How many of you have heard those perfectly well authenticated stories of visions seen by our brave Swabians? Do you remember the vision of Sebastian Bauer, of Dillingen? He saw hosts in shining raiment hovering over our armies on the Somme, angels with solemn and beautiful faces waiting to bear the souls of the German dead into the loved presence of their Maker. And away beyond, on the other side, hovering over the British, were the dark and sinister forms of demons bearing in their wake the smoke and fire of hell, waiting for the souls of the base English who had forgotten God in their rapacity and lust for power. Beloved, in this war there are not two sides to any question. We are on God's side and God is on ours. Our Kaiser, our King, our armies, are all instruments of the Divine vengeance on a world corrupted by sin. We Germans are the chosen flail with which the chaff is to be divided from the wheat, the husbandman who is to gather up the tares for eternal punishment, the shepherd who is to separate the sheep from the goats."

Very much more could be adduced from preachers and professors in support of the contentions now made, but these will suffice to emphasize the theme of this article, the explanation of all these marvelous aberrations from simple Christian ethics.

It is thought by many that this is due to the insistence on which the power of the State is emphasized throughout Germany. One professor says in plainest language that between States there is only one force of right, the right of the strongest, and that it is impossible for a State to commit a crime. Not all the treaties in the world, he wrote, can alter the fact that the weak is always the prey of the stronger, and as soon as States are considered as intelligent entities difficulties between them are only capable of solution by force. If these are the doctrines on

which Germany has been fed it is not surprising that the leaders should regard treaties as "scraps of paper." But it is still necessary to get behind this doctrine of the State and try to discover why such teaching is regarded as right and justifiable.

On the question of individual action as distinct from academic theory, the American ambulance driver, referred to above, says that after months of observation he has come to the conclusion that "between the degenerate German and the civilized man of England, France and America, there is a gulf of thousands of years." He also remarks that as there is a musical sense, and a color sense, there is also the instinct of the gentleman, who is kind and would rather die than do anything dishonorable; but the average German Officer and soldier, he maintains, are illustrations of an over-developed intellect with the rest of the soul shriveled. One of the Germans themselves, writing from Switzerland, during this war, has frankly said that his countrymen are still "barbarians." On any showing, these exhibitions of savagery in word and deed demand a thorough explanation, especially as coming from a country like Germany which the modern world has regarded as in the van of culture and progress.

VII

In the face of all these (let us put it mildly) aberrations from ordinary ethical standards, not much need be added by way of application, but this at least must be said. Germany is the nation which, before the war, was regarded as the source of the latest, truest, and best Biblical scholarship. Yet if "By their fruits ye shall know them" expresses a true principle, then those who refused to bow down to German scholarship have been abundantly vindicated by the events of the past four years. The one thing that is needed beyond all else, for a thorough and proper knowledge of the Bible, is spiritual insight, and this is just the feature most woefully lacking in German

thought and life. It is not too much to demand that those who taught our young men and women to turn to Germany for the most scholarly and reliable information about the Bible, and who scouted and scorned those who opposed this policy, should at least acknowledge their error and inaugurate a new method among students, teaching them to refuse to accept truth on the authority of Germany or any other country, and to insist upon the thorough consideration of every available source of information before arriving at conclusions. Already Dr. Shailer Mathews is quoted (let us hope truly) as admitting that the University of Chicago had been far too much "Germanized" before the war. It is time for others to say the same thing, and henceforward to take a very different line. Those who have read the striking articles in *The Sunday School Times* on the Paganism of certain modern Universities know that much of this attitude is due to Germany. What is still more serious is that the German spirit has dominated our theological seminaries, and has affected, or, rather, infected, very much of our pulpit life and work, with the result that there is abundant spiritual powerlessness in many Churches, by the absence of conversions and the lack of spiritual teaching for Christians. Whatever may be said about conservative scholarship and attitude, it is impossible to question its evangelistic power, as may be seen from the fact that all the great Evangelists of the past and the present are to a man opposed to German Biblical criticism. As the President of the British Wesleyan Methodist Conference for this year said once, "German theology is not much use in a revival." Dr. Orr wrote these solemn words some years ago, and they have been amply confirmed and vindicated by the revelations of the past four years:—

"I dare to say with a full sense of responsibility that if many of the things which are found in our approved text books were openly or undisguisedly preached in our pulpits next Lord's Day throughout the land, there would

be nothing less than a revolution in our Churches. Christian people simply would not stand it."

It is well known that there is not a single critical position adopted by British, American, and Canadian scholars which did not emanate from Germany. English-speaking scholars have only been able to adopt and adapt German ideas, the general trend of which, for nearly a century, has been to deny the supernatural element, first in the Old Testament, then in the New Testament, and now, most serious of all, in the Person of Christ Himself. If British and American scholarship is not so logical as German, it is because many of the men still adhere to a belief in the Divine incarnation of Christ. But, as Dr. Orr pointed out, it is impossible to fit the supernatural into a framework of rationalism. It is probably too much to expect that men who have been brought up on German scholarship should abandon it and confess themselves in the wrong. But at least they should, in the light of our present experiences, keep quiet, and suggest to the younger generation the need of a more thorough independence of outlook and the widest possible induction.

I cannot better close this article, and thereby still further point the moral, than by quoting some words from an American preacher which appeared two years ago in the Boston *Congregationalist*:—

"It is rather the fashion in America just now to think of Germany as a horrible example of militarism, but let us not forget that before the outbreak which is shaking the Old World it was quite the fashion to go to Germany for an up-to-date theology, for the latest conclusions of scholarship and all that; and let us also not forget the numerous accumulations and accretions which had gathered over this theology, the elaborate and learned criticisms, the substitution of alleged historic values for actual facts, the curious and desperate exegesis which resolved solid old texts into mists of meaningless nothings, and the volumes of philosophical stuff which smothered simple belief. The Allies have not yet declared German theology contraband, for they know that a ton of it if loaded into

a cannon would not kill a robin, but there would be no kick coming if they did declare it contraband. The Germans now know as well as the rest of us that the only thing which has historic value is the real stuff. And they also know that history is not made out of philosophical theory set up in a modern study, but out of guns and battalions. The man who thought two years ago that some things could not have happened in the past now knows that much worse things can happen and are happening at present. The war has jarred the world back to a sense of reality. We feel compelled to cut our way through a tangle of theories, speculations and philosophies and sophistries and get down to simpler belief.

“I am not advising any minister to lay off his frock coat, for I know how dear it may be to him and that it may be a support to his sense of responsibility, but I am advising him to lay away the things which have made some preachers look like a baby buried in pillows and cushions, and to cultivate the direct, manly appeal which goes where men actually live. The dreadful convulsion of the Old World may not have made the task of the preacher and moral teacher easier, but it has made the way plainer and nearer.”