

## MY OPPONENTS.

BY THE EDITOR.

MY opponents treat me as if I were anti-British. I am not anti-British, although I am pro-German. I have said over and over again that before the war I preached friendship between Germany, England and the United States, and I have denounced the growing hostile spirit among them as Jingoistic.<sup>1</sup> I said in the January number of *The Open Court*, p. 18: "In conclusion I will repeat that I am not anti-British. On the contrary, I am in a sense pro-British." I hope that the hatred between Germany and England will gradually be obliterated, for each of these nations needs the other, and this war is like a civil war, a struggle between brothers. It will be the duty of sensible people to insist on mutual respect and the establishment of a firm and friendly alliance; but this spirit is at present absolutely lacking on both sides. I am regarded as anti-British because I consider it a great misfortune that men like King Edward VII and Sir Edward Grey have guided the destiny of the empire.

I am pro-German, not in the sense that I side with Germany right or wrong; I am pro-German only in the sense that I regard the German cause as righteous. The Allies began the war from unholy motives. Russia was moved by greed, by a hope of expanding her empire and grabbing new possessions. France was animated by a desire for revenge for the loss of Alsace-Lorraine, the two provinces of which in former days she had robbed Germany and which she lost in 1871. England declares that she was in honor bound to stand by her allies, she denounces Germany with specious declamations for her aggressiveness, her militarism and imperialism, all empty phrases, and, in contrast to the causes which

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *Verhandlungen des ersten allgemeinen Kongresses veranstaltet von der Vereinigung alter deutscher Studenten in Amerika*, p. 24. The author's address appears there under the title "Das gemeinsame Interesse aller germanischen Nationen."

prompt the allies, Germany acts in self-defence and therefore I say her cause is just.

This is my verdict from an absolutely neutral standpoint as an American. I am neutral, and as a neutral I wish that our country shall observe a strict neutrality in its attitude toward the belligerents. But neutrality does not mean suppression of opinion, neither does it forbid investigation, nor does it oblige me to suppress my final judgment.

Considering the facts which are well known, I have become convinced that Edward VII cunningly and cleverly prepared for this war by the foundation of the Triple Entente, and that Sir Edward Grey has continued King Edward's policy of isolating Germany. Success seemed to be assured in a war waged by the Triple Entente against the Teutons. Only a miracle could save Germany. Humanly considered, there was no chance for her. First, it was difficult for Germany to withstand such a tremendous superiority of numbers as the combined armies of the Allies. Russia and France—not to speak of the smaller British army—possess enough troops to crush Germany and Austria. But, secondly, even if German strategy could hold in check such large numbers of enemies—which, though not probable, was at least possible—Germany could not fight for any length of time because she would be cut off from the world by the English navy. She needs not only food for her people, wheat, coffee and other colonial products, but also saltpeter for powder and copper for making the brass indispensable for the manufacture of ammunition. Germany has not a sufficient supply of these materials, so there seemed no chance of escape from final defeat.

If the events of the war have not fulfilled Sir Edward's expectation it is due to an item which the allies have overlooked. There is an invisible power in this world which may be called destiny, or, to use a vague anthropomorphic term, Providence, or in religious language, God. Frederick the Great used to say that God is not neutral, he is always on the side of the stronger battalions, and that as a rule is true, but sometimes he sides with the weaker against the stronger, as for instance at Marathon and Salamis.

God favors the weaker side if it is led by intelligence and, as it were, promises to promote by its victory the cause of mankind. In the present war the Germans have proved themselves worthy of victory not only by their indomitable courage in battle, being ready to conquer or to die, but also by remarkable foresight in

making up for their needs by new inventions. In the moment of dire need the busy Bertha appears unexpectedly before the hostile forts, the German submarines accomplish feats of great daring which heretofore could not be accomplished, and agriculture is improved to such a degree as to make Germany practically independent of the importation of cereals.

God is neutral; but I am convinced that, being impartial, he will stand by Germany in spite of the odds that count against her.

\* \* \*

Mr. J. M. Robertson, editor of the London *Literary Guide*, censures me severely for the October number of *The Open Court* which he thinks no longer deserves the name. But it pleases me to see Mr. Robertson call the anonymous English view of Great Britain's relation to Germany (republished in *The Open Court* from the London *Saturday Review*) "a Jingo article," for that it is; and I am only sorry to say that the principle which pervades this Jingo article, the Jingo spirit of it, has guided England's statesmen in concluding the Triple Entente and venturing into this terrible war, which was not begun by the Kaiser, and for which, after Nicholas Nicolaivitch, the English government bears the responsibility.

Mr. Robertson's arguments in blaming Germany for the war are such invectives as "militaristic megalomania," "barbaric boasting," etc. He says: "How thin becomes the veneer of civilization and decency over the primal tribal savagery of their race!" He speaks of me as "one who is filling his magazine with bluster and declamation," and calls my arguments "iniquitous pleading." He imputes to me the advocacy of the utmost viciousness, saying literally, "Upon the avowed principles of Dr. Carus there need be no restraint in war upon massacre and incendiarism, whatever may be thought of rape." Mr. Robertson will excuse me from making any further comment on his criticism. I believe it justifies my statement (quoted by Mr. Robertson with disapproval) that the English "have become incapable of arguing calmly and impartially."

An English article on "German Culture" appears in this issue of *The Open Court*. We learn in it that the Germans must take a back seat in the sciences, literature and all other accomplishments. Very well! that is the author's opinion. Other people think otherwise, and I do not deem it necessary to refute British censures of "German culture." There is only one point which I wish to comment upon in this article. We read on page 294: "'The Teutons love the truth,' said Tacitus, but the Teutons of to-day love it not."

This is a sweeping statement, and I will make no attempt to answer it except simply to say that for my part I have not felt able to place confidence in the words of Sir Edward Grey, the mouthpiece of British politics, nor do I think that they can be accepted as true or even as honestly meant misstatements. What excuse for the crafty representative of foreign affairs can be found in the treatment of Sir Roger Casement and the criminal attempt to dispose of this prominent Irish leader by fair means or foul!

Mr. Philip E. B. Jourdain in his article entitled "Note on the European War," published in the January number of *The Open Court*, pp. 7-11, uses as one of his arguments that in modern logic "the Germans have shown an unexampled obtuseness," whereby he obviously means that logistics, the recent English phase of modern logic, has found no echo in Germany. One reader of *The Open Court* comments on Mr. Jourdain's proposition: "When has logic ever been discovered to take her abode in any English brain except Boole's, De Morgan's and Venn's? I have not as yet met any Englishman who could think logically; and logistics must not be identified with logic."

I could make many unfavorable criticisms on both German and English philosophy, but I do not see what that has to do with the war. I have much fault to find with many great Germans, and I know very well that Germany is not the only country where science is cultivated. Moreover I will not deny that I have found much to object to in the Kaiser's speeches, nor do I worship Bismarck in the least, although I think him nevertheless much better than Edward VII and his advisers. Bismarck's *Kulturkampf* with the Roman Catholic church was a great mistake, and his laws against the socialists were a blunder; but King Edward's Triple Entente was a most lamentable step,—one which will endanger England's position as a world-power and may prove positively fatal to her dominion over the seas. I am unfavorably impressed with many features of modern German literature, but I find as much to criticize in the English literature of the present age. I am not an admirer of modern German legislation in favor of the laboring classes, which is so highly valued by many students of social economy, but the English practice of keeping the laboring classes in their present abject state is certainly very reprehensible.

All this disapproval of German learning has nothing to do with placing the blame for the war or even in judging Germany as to her claims to culture or civilization. The word *Kultur* is not of Teutonic origin, but it is still less Saxon. Like so many other words,

it is derived from the Latin and has acquired in German a more intense meaning than in either French or English. Its German counterpart is *Bildung*, that quality which builds up a man's character. We translate *Bildung* by "culture," an equivalent of the Latin *cultura*, because it has not been deemed necessary to coin an indigenous English, i. e., Anglo-Saxon word. It is undeniable that German has incomparably more indigenous words of deep significance than English. It is easy to run down the Germans in character and ability merely for the purpose of discrediting their cause, but that is not argument.

I have found indications in all, or almost all, the statements of those who plead for Great Britain, that these writers are biased and side with the British cause, not because they have given it an impartial investigation, but because they are bound to defend it right or wrong. I do not mean to say that they are dishonest, that they go so far as consciously to produce untruths or suppress the truth; but they are as indiscriminate in their belief in the cause of England, as is a faithful believer in accepting his sectarian dogma, or one who advocates the flat-earth theory in spite of Galileo and experiments verified by natural science.

The only arguments used by pro-British writers are Germany's breach of Belgian neutrality and the German atrocities, the former dished up in adroit misrepresentation of the real facts, the latter consisting of unfounded accusations, and it is not worth while refuting fictitious arguments.

Among those who appear to be perfectly honest in their unjust condemnation of Germany I will mention Mr. Samuel Hården Church, president of the Carnegie Institute, Pittsburg, U. S. A., in his *Reply to the German Professors*, which has been reprinted by the *London Times* in great quantities in a penny edition; but it betrays such strange misconceptions as to European conditions that the author's lack of knowledge and judgment is a sufficient excuse for his well-meant errors. A few quotations from Mr. Church's pamphlet may suffice. He says: "This war began potentially twenty-five years ago, when Emperor William II ascended the throne and declared himself Supreme War Lord." What a bugbear is made of the word *Kriegsherr*, "war-lord," which is the official title of the commander-in-chief, and means that the Kaiser is the generalissimo of the German armies in case of war. Further on we read: "Compulsory military service made every man a soldier." True! However, this institution of compulsory service was not introduced by the Kaiser, but is the outcome of necessity, since

it was forced upon Prussia. The German people need it, and it exists with their full consent.

Compulsory military service exists in all continental states, in France, in Belgium, in Russia, in Austria, etc., and it will be introduced into England after the present war. It makes nations peaceable, and if England had had universal military service the war would not have originated, for in that case the English would have been against the war. If the English had been opposed to war Russia would not have ventured to support Servia and attack Austria, and if Russia had kept quiet, France would never have stirred. L. P. Jacks, editor of the *Hibbert Journal*, in a letter to the *New York Nation* of March 25, 1915 (pp. 103-104), describes "Oxford at War," which means the military exercises of the student volunteers; and he suggests the desirability of "universal military service." And it will surely come. It will come, and bring mankind one step nearer to universal peace.

I do not believe that the document of the German professors is wisely written. I am displeased with the way in which they present their case; it proves that the Germans lack diplomacy. They are often blunt in telling the truth. As Mr. Robertson says of the German chancellor, he avows his wrong "with brazen candor." But although the protest of the German professors against England's action is lacking in discretion, it is at least honest in comparison with English denunciations of German brutality and barbarism. Mr. Church seems to know no history, nor does he take pains to learn its lessons.

On pages 29 and 30 Mr. Church addresses the Germans thus: "Your insatiate spirit has terrified us all. Your General Staff has even published a plan for attacking America. If you beat down the British empire, why will not our turn come next?"

The German General Staff has more serious work on hand than to indulge in such pleasantries as publishing plans for attacking the United States. They leave such jollifications to the funny papers, such as *Fliegende Blätter* and *Simplicissimus*. In times of peace the German General Staff works out all possible plans of war. The several schemes are registered under different headings, and if war comes they are taken from their secret recesses and executed in all their details. There is one plan against Russia alone; there are several against both Russia and France, among them one which adopts the passage through Belgium as the main line of attack, while another leads the German army through Alsace. There are many plans, but that there should be among them

a plan for attacking the United States, while not absolutely impossible, appears to me a sheer fiction of unstrung nerves. In any event it is certainly excluded that the German General Staff should *publish* its most secret documents, as Mr. Church claims.

On the cover of the pamphlet this letter of Mr. Church is called *The American Verdict on the War*, and our author himself claims that he is "uttering the opinion of the great majority of the American people, including hundreds of thousands of our German-American citizens." This is a misstatement. In my opinion it would be difficult to make a fair estimate as to the preponderance of American sympathy, for there are too many who have not as yet made up their minds; but the English are very much mistaken if they regard it as a matter of course that America sides with Great Britain. Mr. Bryan may do so, but he does not in this case represent the American people. The Americans in Germany are certainly not pro-British, judging from the strong pro-German manifesto which they published some time ago in Munich; and such American papers as *The Continental Times* and *American Notes in Munich* show no anti-German tendencies; on the contrary, they are strongly anti-British.

The eastern portions of the United States, especially New York and Boston, are largely pro-British, but the Center and the West are conspicuously pro-German. Chicago is decidedly so, and so are the farmers of Illinois. Our administration will soon enough find that it got out of sympathy with the people and that its attitude is no longer representative.

To prove that there are some men in this country who are neither anti-British nor anti-German and differ from Mr. Church, I will quote Mr. Preserved Smith who, in a controversy with some of his English critics, concludes his *Reply*<sup>2</sup> thus:

"I am perfectly honest in professing friendship to both Germany and England. Apart from the numerous personal ties I have with both peoples, I deeply admire and like them both. But this cannot blind me to the fact that in their foreign policy both of them—and I might add all the other powers now at war, including Belgium—have acted like pirates. The only difference between them is that one freebooter, Capt. Bull, who has been longest at the trade and has procured the most plunder, now puts on the airs of an injured and inoffensive parson, throwing up eyes and hands in holy horror at all Germany's acts. How wicked to crush small

<sup>2</sup> Published in the *New York Nation* of February 11, pp. 168-169.

nations!—witness India, Egypt, the Boer Republics, and Persia. Unheard of to violate neutrality!—except, of course, such trifles as the seizure of the Danish fleet in the Napoleonic wars, rushing troops across Beira in the Boer war and across China by England's ally Japan now, and the attack, as reported in the papers, of an English vessel upon a German one in Spanish territorial waters. Barbarous to burn and bombard towns! Never mind the burning of Washington in 1814, and the bombardment of Alexandria in 1882."

There are people who side against Germany on account of her alleged aggressiveness; but an analysis of this so-called aggressiveness shows that she is guilty only of an unprecedented growth, that her population has increased and along with this her industry, her wealth, her military strength and her navy. So far England has been the sole owner of the world, whereas now the danger arises that Germany may become a rival in exercising an influence upon the international relations of mankind. But Germany does not aspire to world dominion. Even General Bernhardt is opposed to it. He believes that the high seas should be free to all by international agreement. If this were carried out by the universal consent of the nations independence would be assured to all the peoples of the earth.

My views are not more anti-British than those of the highly respected Englishmen who condemn Sir Edward Grey's politics, such as Lord Morley, Sir J. Ramsay Macdonald, the Hon. Bertrand Russell and the Hon. John Burns.

I will quote here the concluding passages of an article by Fred. C. Conybeare,<sup>3</sup> a prominent Oxford scholar, who does not venture to offer his opinion to an English periodical. Mr. Conybeare grants (1) "...that Germany was trying hard in St. Petersburg to find any means whatsoever to avert a general conflict; (2) that Russia was mobilizing;" but the allegation "that at St. Petersburg people were absolutely convinced, nay, had even received assurances to that effect, that England and France would stay by Russia," he regards as doubtful and is inclined to think that "what put the war party into the saddle at St. Petersburg was the news that on the day before, July 29, the German chancellor (English White Book, 85) had intimated to the English ambassador at Berlin that in the event of war the German armies would march through Belgium." He adds: "That rendered English intervention certain, and Sazonoff knew that if the crisis eventuated in war he could rely on English support."

<sup>3</sup> Published in the *New York Nation* of March 25, 1915, pp. 328-329.

The conclusion of the letter reads thus:

"We have in our White Book, 123, Grey's account of the interview in which he laid this memorandum before Lichnowsky. He writes: 'He [Lichnowsky] asked me whether, if Germany gave a promise not to violate Belgium's neutrality, we would engage to remain neutral. I replied that I could not say that; our hands were still free, and we were considering what our attitude should be.'

"So far Grey's answer was correct. We could not make truck and barter of a guarantee which Germany no less than ourselves was pledged to uphold. Grey proceeds: 'The Ambassador pressed me as to whether I could not formulate conditions on which we would remain neutral. He even suggested that the integrity of France and her colonies might be guaranteed. I said that I felt obliged to refuse definitely to remain neutral on similar terms, and I could only say that we must keep our hands free.'

"The conversation could only leave one impression on Lichnowsky's mind, namely, that England would fight, not only if Belgium was touched, but also if France was involved. This was and is an intelligible and, to the minds of most English Tories, a right policy for England to pursue. Yet I regret that Grey did not communicate Lichnowsky's overtures at once to the House of Commons, for I am certain that by a great majority that assembly would have formulated conditions of neutrality satisfactory to England and Germany, sparing Belgium her present agony and avoiding for France the situation she is now in. Russia would have learned in half an hour that we did not, unless Belgium were violated, intend to assail Germany over a dispute that in no way concerned us or any part of our Empire, and would at once have retired over the golden bridge which the Kaiser during the days July 28-31 was building for her.

"I do not say that Russian and German ambitions in the Balkans and Turkey would not later on have clashed afresh and plunged them into war with one another; but the world might have been spared the irreparable calamity of a war between England and Germany, and we might have discovered that our planet was big enough for both of us.

"I owe it to Sir E. Grey to add that in answer to a question put to him on August 27 by Mr. Keir Hardie he excused himself for having ignored Lichnowsky's appeal on August 1 (that he should formulate any conditions on which England would consent to be neutral, etc.), on the plea that his colleague was in this interview not representing the Kaiser, but was speaking *de suo*. In con-

sequence he thought the interview of so little importance that he did not even communicate it to the Cabinet till after two days. 'The German ambassador,' he added, 'worked for peace; but real authority at Berlin did not rest with him and others like him, and that is one reason why our efforts for peace failed.' (Loud cheers.)

"Unfortunately for Sir E. Grey's plea, the German ambassador, immediately the interview was over, wired the substance of it to Berlin, and his account of it, in substantial agreement with Grey's, says not one word of his having spoken merely on his own personal initiative, and in a later advice to Berlin at 8.30 P. M. the same day, he used, apparently referring to this interview, these words: 'As no positive English proposals have been submitted, further steps in connection with the instructions given me are superfluous.'

"That he punctiliously informed the Imperial Chancellor whenever he had addressed Sir E. Grey *de suo* we can infer from the way he reports his answer to Sir Edward's telephone message at 11 A. M. the same day. He says: 'I told him [Grey] I thought I could accept the responsibility for this.' Nor is it likely that the Kaiser would keep an ambassador in London to make such important proposals *de suo*.

"I trust I have said nothing but the truth in the above. It is easier to gain utterance for such matter in a neutral press than in the English, for I fear we are no more exceptions in our island than are the Germans to Flaubert's rule that *La guerre rende bête et méchant*."

Professor Conybeare does not stand alone. There are quite a number of English people who do not support the policy of their country, but they find it difficult to gain an audience. Their warning voice ought to have been heard before it was too late, but they were given no chance. I grant that they are in the minority, but I look upon them as the hope of England, as the promise of a reform, as the promise of a new England which will do away with the strongly entrenched hypocrisy of to-day and drive out the oligarchy which has misled the people by a bold pretense of honesty and the tinsel of false virtue. Says one of these English prophets crying in the wilderness: "our halos have become top-heavy!"

I am not anti-British, but I am against the war. I am against those who are guilty of the war, and I blame the English cabinet for it. I am against the hypocrisy of blaming the Germans for the war. It is my recognition of the top-heaviness of Sir Edward Grey's halo that gives me the appearance of being anti-British.