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NOVEMBER, 1915

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The Open Court

A MONTHLY MAGAZINE

Devoted to the Science of Religion, the Religion of Science, and the
Extension of the Religious Parliament Idea

Founded by EDWARD C. HEGELER.



IN THE SWEAT OF HIS BROW.

(See page 671.)

The Open Court Publishing Company

CHICAGO

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CONTENTS:

	PAGE
<i>Frontispiece.</i> The Bronze Doors of the Baptistery at Florence.	
<i>An American's Apology to Germany.</i> ROLAND HUGINS	641
<i>The Origin of Woman</i> (Illustrated). PAUL CARUS	656
<i>The Creation of Eve</i> (Poem). PAUL CARUS	674
<i>Professor Burgess and the War</i>	678
<i>Our Administration.</i> PAUL CARUS	686
<i>Our Knowledge of Christ: A Review.</i> WILLIAM HARPER DAVIS	691
<i>Buddhist Omissions in Hastings's Dictionary of Religion and Ethics.</i> ALBERT J. EDMUNDS	698
<i>We Have Forgotten What We Vowed to Remember</i>	700
<i>A Bahaist Protest</i>	702
<i>America 1915</i> (Poem). WILLIAM ELLERY LEONARD	703
<i>Book Reviews and Notes</i>	703

Economic Aspects of the War

By Professor Edwin J. Clapp

YALE UNIVERSITY PRESS, NEW YORK

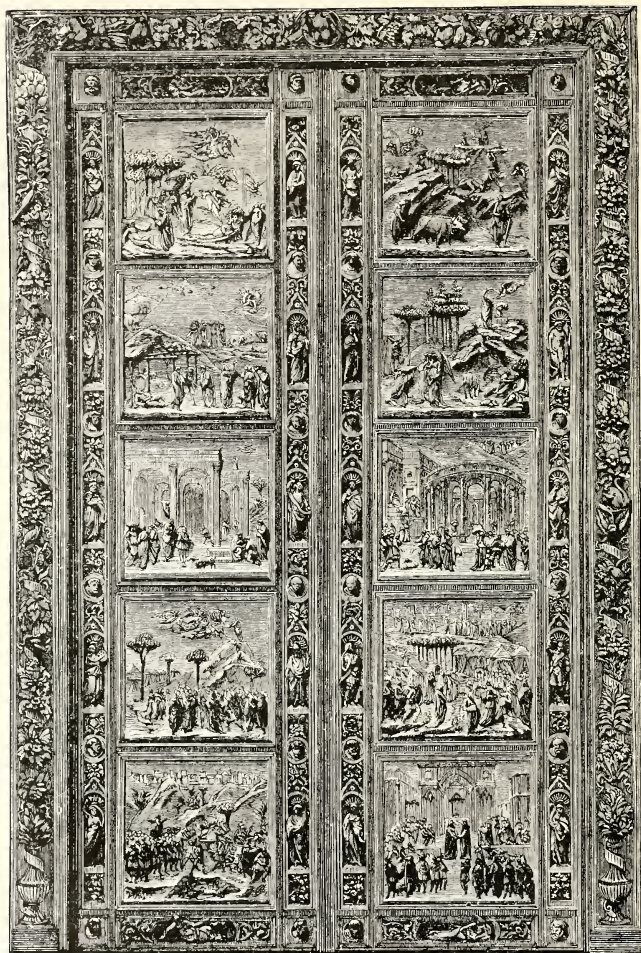
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Neutral rights, belligerent claims, and American commerce in the years 1914-1915 are here viewed in the light of past history and future prosperity in America. During this period, 2000 vessels carrying American cargoes were seized and passenger ships destroyed resulting in the loss of the lives of nearly 1000 American citizens.

Many startling facts are supplied by the author, who has delved into diplomatic correspondence in Washington, bringing out information that is very disquieting to those American citizens who believe that, in the present European War, the United States has an opportunity to capture world commerce, and inaugurate an era of great national prosperity. It is an illuminating record of current history that will richly repay a careful reading.

The author is Professor of Economics in New York University.

OPEN COURT PUBLISHING COMPANY
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THE BRONZE DOORS OF THE BAPTISTERY AT FLORENCE.

By Ghiberti (15th cent.)

THE OPEN COURT

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the Extension of the Religious Parliament Idea.

VOL. XXIX (No. 11)

NOVEMBER, 1915

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AN AMERICAN'S APOLOGY TO GERMANY.

BY ROLAND HUGINS.

THE United States, my German friends, has maintained relations of amity and good-will with your country for a century and more; and it is to be hoped that this historic friendship will continue undiminished through the world war. At the very outbreak of hostilities, however, menacing undercurrents of unpleasantness were set in motion, and they have grown steadily in volume and strength. As soon as you became definitely aware that sentiment here was running against you, you were amazed; and that amazement gave way after a time to irritation. You could not understand, you said, how this republic should have been misled by British sophistry. Later you learned that our bankers were loaning millions to your enemies, and that our manufacturers were doing a stupendous business in supplying the Allies with explosives and other munitions of war. Then your irritation changed to bitterness and your papers, with Teutonic candor, did not attempt to conceal their resentment towards Germany's "invisible enemy."

There has been a similar growth of antagonistic feeling in America. The bulk of our press took an unfriendly attitude toward you as early as August 1, 1914. Your invasion of Belgium and the subsequent military measures which you employed there greatly intensified the hostility of some sections of American opinion. The current ran against you from that time on. There were intervals, it is true, when your cause here appeared to be gaining ground, particularly during the brilliant championship of Dr. Dernburg. But the sinking of the *Lusitania* by a German submarine caused anti-German feeling to flame out afresh. The official relations of the two nations are now strained; and they may be worse before they are better.

To say that this situation is distressing to many of us in America is to put the matter mildly. The mutual misunderstandings will not easily be cleared away. May I attempt to explain to you why Americans—the majority, that is—have sided against you? It will be hard for you to understand the true reasons. The obvious and usual explanations do not suffice. It was not because your cable was cut, for news from Berlin and Vienna reaches us regularly by wireless. It is not because the German point of view is unknown. We have had no censorship in this country, and you no lack of able defenders. Since the beginning of the war German-Americans have protested vehemently against the prevailing antagonism, and our magazines and newspapers have published many telling arguments from pro-German pens. It is not because Americans dislike Germany and things German. Before the war there may have been prejudice in some quarters against Germany; but there was also prejudice against England and against Russia. If German achievements in art, science and government are now belittled, it is because a recent partisanship has chilled the admiration rightly due you as a great people.

No, the blindness and intolerance now so conspicuous are not the causes of our bias, but rather its symptoms. You will entirely fail to understand the attitude of the typical American of intelligence unless you see that he thinks himself fair and just. He admits to no prejudice; he scoffs at the idea that he is the victim of English lies or sophistry; he believes he has arrived at a reasoned judgment after an impartial examination of the evidence. I think the American errs, but I know that he errs in good faith. He has rendered a decision against you because in his mind certain large charges have been proved against you. These charges may be grouped under the four following heads:

First, that you the people of Germany, or your military caste, started this war, and made Europe a shambles in an attempt to dominate world politics.

Second, that your invasion and devastation of Belgium was a legal and moral crime which nothing can excuse or to appreciable degree palliate.

Third, that you make war with ruthlessness and brutality, and disregard in the pursuit of your military ends the rules of international law and the dictates of humanity.

Fourth, that your victory would be detrimental to civilization, leading to a militaristic domination which would ultimately threaten the peace of all democratic countries, including the United States.

These accusations undoubtedly seem to you exaggerated, absurd, grossly unjust. So they are, considered from any viewpoint which includes knowledge of and sympathy for the German people. But let me assure you that they are held in all seriousness by thousands and thousands of Americans who are quite above the charge of either stupidity or hypocrisy. Their attitude results from a peculiar logic and their previous point of view.

II.

Americans, you should understand, were surprised at this war. Yourselves, like Russians, Frenchmen, Englishmen, who have been living for two decades under the shadow of a possible European conflict, saw in the outbreak of hostilities the clash of deep historical forces. But Americans were literally bowled over with astonishment. They had been listening to the soothing assurances of pacifists, and the insincere professions of statesmen, until they were hypnotized into believing that a world war was "impossible." And when the war did come they hit upon the most obvious explanation: that some nation had conspired in its own interest to upset the sacred *status quo*. America immediately set herself up as judge to determine who was "guilty," and straightway fixed the blame on you.

Germany was selected as the culprit because the surface case was against you. You had backed up Austria-Hungary in an attack on the small nation Serbia. You had sent out twenty-four hour ultimatums and made the formal declarations of war on both Russia and France. You had drawn in England by violating the neutrality of a little country England had pledged to support. And so the surface case was complete; and this is precisely the case which your enemies rigged up against you in their White, Orange, Yellow, Gray and Blue Books. America accepted the indictment at almost face value.

Does it seem preposterous that so simple, so naive a view of European politics could seriously be entertained? Does it appear ridiculous to you that the significance of events should be judged by their sequence in time rather than by their causal connections, or that the incidents of a brief crisis should be given more weight than all the antecedent issues out of which the crisis arose? Well, such is the mind of average America. You must remember that we stand outside of the whirl of world politics, and are not accustomed to penetrate the shams of cabinets and the intrigues of diplomats. In particular the editors who control our newspapers and magazines, and who to some extent do "mold" public opinion, are usually with-

out a sound European perspective, and often display, in their quick but cocksure judgments of affairs outside our borders, a schoolboy naïveté and a provincial gullibility. They think of states as Persons, who act on single and sentimental motives.

But that is not all. America is not entirely made up of half-educated journalists and people who follow their opinions. Men of culture and travel, who take a more sophisticated view of international affairs, have joined in your condemnation. They, too, hold you "guilty." And this, I think, traces to one cause: a failure to understand the true nature and policy of Russia. The "bear that walks like a man" has been quite shouldered out of sight by England. You as Germans realize that the controversy which led directly up to the war was a Russo-German quarrel.¹ You comprehend the politics of the Balkans, where bribery, assassination, and savage "exterminations" serve in lieu of diplomacy: You know that it was Russia's unyielding mobilization on two frontiers which precipitated the present struggle. But Americans do not sense these things. From the beginning of the war Russia has been systematically and shamelessly whitewashed. We are being fed with talk about Russia's liberalization at the very time when the Russian government is throwing labor leaders into prison, exiling her Liberals to Siberia, instituting new pogroms against the Jews, and proceeding with a relentless Russification of Finland. We are constantly invited to admire "the soul of the Slav" as exemplified in Tolstoy, Dostoyevsky and Turgenieff, as though the intellectuals of Russia were not a small class among one hundred and seventy millions which suffers a living martyrdom in revolt against the dominant and inhuman autocracy. What G. Lowes Dickinson recently said to Englishmen might be addressed with even more force to Americans: "Since there has been in Russia a class of thinkers and of writers that class has given all its energy to destroy the power and discredit the ideas of the Russian government. Persecuted with a horror of persecution of which Englishmen can form but the palest image (for such experiences lie outside our ken), exiled, imprisoned, tortured, by hundreds and by thousands, they have never ceased to protest, in season and out of season, against the whole conception of the state which animates the soulless bureaucracy of Russia."

And so the American, forgetting Russia, and with his eyes on Germany, France, Belgium and England, declares you the aggressor. May I presume to give you my personal view of the burden of

¹ Brailsford, H. N. *The Origins of the Great War*.

responsibility? In one sense, the ultimate sense, I cannot exempt you from all blame. Your government has, like all the governments of Europe, been concerning itself with the Balance of Power, and with imperialistic projects. It has demanded a voice in world affairs, its place in the sun. The creation of a great army, and especially the building of a big navy, were not wholly unconnected with these ambitions. In this you were merely part of the European system, for the world to-day is a militarist world. You were no deeper in it than England, which spent far more money on its military and naval equipment, nor France, which had a greater proportion of its population under arms. If you were better prepared it was only on account of certain qualities in your character, of thoroughness, of punctuality, of scientific versatility, of genius for organization, which are just as conspicuous in the arts of peace as of war. Each of the chancelleries of Europe plotted for selfish national advantages—advantages which had very little real significance for the masses in any country—and bent its chief efforts to forming alliances which would shift the balance of power in its favor. To that system of rival alliances must be ascribed this collapse of civilization; for fundamentally the conflict on its negative side is a war of mutual fears, and on its positive side a war of imperial ambitions. Thereby the system stands forever condemned, as must any system which causes the slaughter of hundreds of thousands, and brings heartbreak to a million homes. The war itself is the great tragedy. The wreck of any national ambitions is a paltry calamity by the side of it, and the fulfilment of no national hopes can compensate for it.

But once granting the fundamental truth that the world of to-day is a militaristic world, the part you Germans have played in it has been a notably inoffensive and honorable one. You have kept the peace for forty years, while every other great nation went to war. You have seen England and France each add, by military aggression or threat of it, four million square miles of colonial territory to their possessions, while you added one million,—mostly worthless land. You saw your legitimate projects for expansion balked again and again by English and French diplomacy, in Africa, in Asia, in the Balkans. You watched the growing menace of Russia, as, financed by French and British gold, she increased her military resources, built strategic railroads, and marshalled her half-barbarous millions. And when Russia threw down the challenge you accepted it. You were fighting for yourselves a preventative war, and for your ally Austria-Hungary a defensive war.

Your statesmen were entirely honest when they said in the German White Paper:

"Had the Servians been allowed, with the help of Russia and France, to endanger the integrity of the neighboring monarchy much longer, the consequence must have been the gradual disruption of Austria, and the subjection of the whole Slav world to the Russian scepter, with the result that the position of the German race in central Europe would have become untenable."

You knew that the Pan-Slav movement, engineered from St. Petersburg, menaced Austria directly and yourself indirectly. What nonsense then to say that Russia entered the war out of sympathy for her little Slav brothers, the Serbs! Russia had recently watched the humiliation of her little Slav brothers, the Bulgars, with composure, and even with satisfaction. For Bulgaria had broken loose from Russian influence, but the Servians were Russian tools. Further—and here is a point ignored in most of the "histories" written by Englishmen and Americans—Austria under pressure from your government modified her demands on Servia before she mobilized on August 1. She conceded the only point on which Russia, even from an imperialistic standpoint, could be interested, the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Servia. But Russia, certain of the cooperation of France, and confident of the support of Great Britain, moved from first to last for war. She was the first of the powers to mobilize. She persisted in that mobilization despite your warning that it could be interpreted in only one way. It was then that you saw parley was futile: you sent your ultimatums, and mobilized to meet the double menace.

There are Americans who, by some freak of reasoning, declare that France was "attacked" by you. France, who had lent herself body and soul to the designs of the Russian autocracy! France, whose answer to your inquiry about her position was to call up her reserves! No nation, however confident of its strength, would prefer to fight Russia and France together rather than Russia alone. You know who made the "attack."

III.

The invasion of Belgium is considered in this country the strongest count in the indictment against you; nothing carries such conviction of German perfidy to the mind of the American as your treatment of a pledge to respect her neutrality as a "scrap of paper"; and many go about declaring that America disgraced herself among the nations by not officially protesting against this act

of unrighteousness. For myself, this hue and cry over Belgium seems one of the least sensible aspects of American discussion. I cannot but admire the bold words of the German Chancellor in the Reichstag:

"Gentlemen, we are now in a state of necessity, and necessity knows no law. Our troops have occupied Luxemburg and perhaps are already on Belgian soil. Gentlemen, that is contrary to the dictates of international law. . . . The wrong—I speak openly—that we are committing we will endeavor to make good as soon as our military goal has been reached. Anybody who is threatened, as we are threatened, and is fighting for his possessions, has only one thought—how he is to hack his way through."

That statement is one of the few sincere utterances heard from any European statesman since the war began. It rings true. You were terribly threatened; you had to strike through Belgium or court ruin. Any nation in your predicament would have done the same thing. G. Bernard Shaw put the matter squarely before Americans early in the war, when he told them: "I think, for example, that if Russia made a descent on your continent under circumstances which made it essential to the maintenance of your national freedom that you should move an army through Canada, you would ask our leave to do so and take it by force if we did not grant it to you. I may reasonably suspect, even if all our statesmen raise a shriek of denial, that we should take a similar liberty under similar circumstances in the teeth of all the scraps of paper in our Foreign Office dustbin."

That is the true British view, not the sniveling cant over the sanctity of treaties. A recent English historian² asked, in speaking of the seizure of the Danish fleet at Copenhagen in 1807, "Would it have been any satisfaction, if we had sunk under the pressure from Bonaparte, to have died with our eyes fixed on Puffendorf and the law of nations?"

You can see, however, why the plea of self-preservation carries little weight here. The American throws aside the whole argument from necessity, to you so conclusive, because, as I have explained, he believes you the aggressor. He regards the invasion of Belgium as a dastardly detail in a sinister campaign to conquer the world. Furthermore England has made all the capital possible out of your breach of law. England's declaration of war followed your violation of Belgian neutrality, and she alleged that as her cause for entry. It was a lucky stroke for the cabal of politicians that con-

²H. W. V. Temperley, *Life of Canning*, 1905.

trolled Britain, for they had committed the naval and military forces of the Empire to France in secret agreements while they had openly denied these arrangements in the House of Commons. They needed an excuse before the country, and Belgium furnished it to them. Sir Edward Grey and his faction did not stage-manage England's negotiations for their influence on neutral opinion, but for their influence on British public opinion and the recruiting campaign. Nevertheless it had its effect here. Curiously enough there exists in England a strong group of protest which is not for a moment taken in by the miserable sham of Grey, Churchill and the rest that this is a "war to preserve international law" or a "war to end war" or anything else on Britain's part but a war of imperialistic jealousy from top to bottom. But America, sentimental, credulous, self-righteous, in the face of the facts, in the face of England's record, believes that England is fighting for the rights of small nations.

It is not reasonable to take tragically the violation of Belgium's neutrality because there was very little neutrality there to violate. She had practically allied herself with France and England. To enter into secret military agreements with two of the guarantors of her neutrality, ostensibly for "defense" but actually to the detriment of a third guarantor, was not playing the game fairly. Roland G. Usher, a writer who has attained prominence in this country by his discussions of European affairs, wrote in the *New Republic*, November 28, 1914:

"The vital difficulty in this question of neutrality was and is that the territory of Belgium was not and is not neutral ground. It is literally the front door to France and the side door to Germany, and its possession by either is so dangerous to the other that the moment war breaks out or even becomes probable, Belgium is either a part of Germany or a part of France, and hostile territory for whichever of the two does not hold it. . . . Whatever the diplomatic facts may be, whatever the technicalities of alliances and treaties eventually prove to have been, Belgium was as clearly an ally of France as England was. The Belgian army and its dispositions, the Belgian forts on the German frontier, were prepared with the advice, at least, of English and French generals. Plans for the cooperation of the three armies were undoubtedly made. Let us not quibble over the question whether this was an infringement of neutrality. The Belgians knew—let us say it once more—that the neutrality of Belgium was a fiction because Belgium was not neutral ground."

Quite so. Belgium was not neutral because she had thrown her sympathies to the French, and because she had connived with your recognized enemies for the employment of her military forces. You had a reasonable suspicion that she would not view a French violation of her neutrality in the same light as a German violation. Few Americans realize what the strategic situation was. They conceive of Belgium merely as an easy road to France, and the sole purpose of your invasion to strike a swift blow at France in order to be able later to turn and deal with Russia. But there was a more vital matter involved. Belgium borders on the most vulnerable portion of Germany, the great industrial district of Westphalia, which includes among other vital centers Essen and the Krupp gun works. Essen, though east of the Rhine, is less than one hundred and fifty miles from Antwerp. Cologne, Düsseldorf and Krefeld are nearer. The empire would be prostrate once this prosperous and thickly populated region of factories, blast furnaces and steel mills fell into hostile hands. It is an open secret that the English military leaders had planned in a war with you to blockade your ports by sea and enter Westphalia by land, and so hold Germany by the throat. As a road to Paris Belgium was an advantage to you; as a gate to Essen it was a warrant of death. Through Belgium you could strike France a blow in the face, but through Belgium France could stab you in the back. That was the nature of the military necessity.

You suspected, with reason, Belgium's good faith. The documents found in the archives of the Belgian general staff in Antwerp merely confirmed in part facts already thoroughly well known to your military authorities. But why, asks the American, didn't Germany wait to see if France or England intended to violate Belgian neutrality? That is the whole point. You couldn't wait. In our Southwest when a man reaches for his gun we do not expect the other disputant to see what use will be made of the gun before he draws his own. He acts on a presumption. Men who refuse to act on that sort of presumption soon have heirs reading their wills. You could not take the chance of having Belgium used as a weapon to crush you.

The destruction which hit Belgium, it is true, was a terrible penalty for her dereliction, or that of her military rulers. We live in a world where, either for the nation or the individual, the punishment rarely fits the crime. When men play with fire they may be frightfully burnt; and war is the only fire that compares with hell. The apologists and mourners for Belgium usually contend that

she was justified in seeking covert aid against the German menace, which proved to be real. But she would have had a thousand times better chance to escape disaster had she practised a real neutrality and not one interpreted to fit her supposed interests. When history makes its final reckoning, I am sure, Belgium will not be found the "black indelible blot" on your name which your enemies would place there. At least you have the satisfaction of knowing that you went about the business like men, openly and frankly, without the subterfuge and hypocrisy practised by the other nations concerned.

IV.

Barbarians! Huns!

From the beginning of the war your foes have carried on against you a campaign of atrocity tales as unscrupulous and mendacious as that conducted by the Greeks against the Bulgars in the Second Balkan War. The Belgians issued an official report of alleged German barbarities, and the French and English followed suit. Viscount Bryce, well and favorably known on this side of the Atlantic, lent his name to the English version. These canards are widely believed in America, but chiefly, I think, by those who wilfully want to believe—those whose prejudice blinds them to impartial evidence. Responsible American newspaper correspondents, returned from the front where they had every opportunity to investigate, have exposed the fraud again and again. Your own official document on the conduct of war by the Belgians more than exonerates you for the reprisal measures you took. But these were not "atrocities" as advertised.

Of course no one will assert that the sweep of your armies through Belgium and France was accomplished without occasional instances of pillage, rape and murder. Such sporadic lapses into crime are to be expected in war time. Business is business, says the American; in far truer sense, war is war. We have reason to believe, however, that the iron discipline of the Prussian armies, unequalled anywhere else, reduces the number of these offenses to a minimum. The stories that seep through from France—of the bayoneting of prisoners, for example, and of German girls shrieking to be killed—make us skeptical of the effectiveness of the restraints in the other armies. And what will turn the stomach of civilization when the final inquest is held are the barbarities of the Russian hordes. You know that in East Prussia the atrocities of the Cossacks in 1812, 1813 and 1814 are still recalled, a century later. And you know what a saturnalia of outrage, cruelty and torture Russian

troops perpetrated last year in Bukowina, Galicia and East Prussia. The official German report of the Russian horrors has been tacitly ignored, although the reports of the "atrocities" in Belgium have been given the widest possible publicity.

There has grown up, in fact, a legend that the Teuton in warfare is brutal, savage and ruthless. This legend has been carefully fostered in England—again to aid the recruiting campaign; and it has gained wide-spread credence in the United States. What has lent color to the legend more than anything else is the occasional slaughter of civilians and non-combatants,—as in the dropping of Zeppelin bombs on London and other English towns, the bombardment of the east coast of England by a German fleet, and the sinking of passenger vessels by submarines. You look upon the killing of these non-combatants as the regrettable concomitants of legitimate military projects, but a mind hostile in opinion to you finds in them proof of your personal depravity. In the fog of war we arrive at a curious mental state. What seems justifiable when done by our side appears intolerable and execrable when practised by the enemy. Thus American sympathizers with the Allies wax hot when German airmen shell open English towns, but watch with composure when the aviators of the Allies drop bombs and kill women and children in the unfortified German towns of Freiburg, Schlettstadt or Karlsruhe. When the French use asphyxiating gas they hear the news with grim satisfaction, but when you use gas they raise a howl of indignation. When you shell a cathedral tower they quote the Hague Conventions, but when the English use dum-dum bullets they shrug their shoulders. Sympathy with a belligerent hardens the heart. To your ill-wishers in America German heart-break and German agony means nothing, and German deaths are a cause for rejoicing.

This is the reason why America has not shown resentment at the cynical inhumanity of England and France in pitting against you uncivilized yellow, brown and negroid troops. In the name of civilization and the higher culture they have launched on your sons and husbands the Turco, the Sikh, the Ghoorka, the Pathan,—these savages who cut off the heads of prisoners, make necklaces of eyes they have gouged from the wounded, and thrust their knives upward through the bowels. "From Senegambia, Morocco, the Sudan, Afghanistan, every wild band of robber clans, come fighting men to slay the compatriots of Kant, Hegel, Goethe, Schiller, Heine, Beethoven, Wagner, Mozart, Dürer, Helmholtz, Hertz, Haeckel, and a million others, perhaps obscurer, no less noble, men of the

fatherland of music, of philosophy, of science, and of medicine, the land where education is a reality and not a farce, the land of Luther and Melanchthon, the land whose life-blood washed out the ecclesiastical tyranny of the Dark Ages.

“The Huns!”

v.

Quite frankly the American press wants to see you beaten in this war, to have “Prussian militarism” wiped out. If you win, say our sage students of foreign affairs, you will override the world like a tyrannical colossus, threatening the life of every free people. France and England will be annihilated. Who will be next? Naturally the United States. As our sapient editors are fond of phrasing it, the United States “cannot afford” to see the Allies lose.

The desire to see you defeated springs naturally out of the general feeling of antagonism. Some explanation of your supposed aggression had to be found. How was it that you, notoriously a peace-loving people, suddenly reached up and pulled down the pillars of civilization? What was the motive? The answer has been militarism—together with autocracy, lust for expansion, delusion of a world mission—but always first and last, militarism. Nietzsche, Treitschke and Bernhardt have been pictured as your popular authors and national guides. The Prussian drill sergeant has been depicted as your universal educator, who has drilled your minds as well as your bodies. The House of Hohenzollern has been held up as a dynasty of war-lords, afflicted with a Cæsarian itch to rule the world.

In other words, your defamers do their best to make of you a bogey. The non-combatant in modern war loses all touch with fact and comes to paint the enemy as a monster and a demon. No greater libel ever has been uttered against a nation than when Germans are accused of being a race of militarists. A juster description is that you are the most military and the least warlike of people. You had in Germany, of course, as had every other European power, your pro-war party, and it was an insistent and outspoken party, but to picture it as anything but a small minority is to travesty the truth. Your militarists had no more popular support or more effective grip on the government than did the Imperialists of England, or the Chauvinists of France, or the Irridentists of Italy; the proof lies in the event!

If you had not maintained a powerful army, where would you be now? Here is Germany, completely ringed with hate-stung foes,

battling against odds such as no other nation ever has had to face, outnumbered more than two to one—almost three to one, in men, resources and wealth, fighting to preserve her existence and even her right to remain a free and united people,—yet to hear Englishmen and Americans talk one would imagine that the Allies, rather than Germany, were the stag at bay! Of late it has become the fashion in our journals to cite your “preparedness” as a convincing proof of a German conspiracy against the peace of the world. I quote a few phrases from a bitter and rhetorical article³ in a recent issue of the *Saturday Evening Post*: “Germany. . . has hurled calamity on a continent. She has struck to pieces a Europe whose very unpreparedness answers her ridiculous falsehood that she was attacked first;” “Prussia’s long-prepared and malignant assault. . . the deadliest assault ever made on Democracy;” “Her spring at the throat of an unsuspecting, unprepared world.” There you have it! Germany was prepared to meet a dangerous attack (which actually was made), therefore she must have invited the attack, nay, perpetrated it. And such nonsense passes for logic! At the war’s beginning your American enemies predicted that you soon would be crushed and taught the folly of challenging a fore-warned world; now that you are winning, your victories are cited to show how innocent must have been the rest of the world so to have been caught napping. Either way you are blamed. When you stand off a world and deal your enemies staggering blows, you are given no credit for being better generalled, for having superior physical stamina, for meeting with greater ability the complex industrial and technical problems of modern war, or for your intenser moral earnestness,—this passion of conviction which enables you to unlock such marvelous reserves of energy.

No, the explanation is always “preparedness.” Yet in all except the tangible racial factors your opponents were as well prepared as yourselves. The combined standing armies of Russia and France before the war numbered 2,010,000 soldiers as against your 870,000, and the total of their drilled men was 9,500,000 as against your 5,500,000. Austria and Turkey were more than offset by Great Britain, Servia, Portugal, Italy and Japan. On the sea the preparedness of the Allies exceeded yours in the proportion of four to one. The total output of their arms works and munitions factories was greater than yours in the same ratio as their armies, and Creusot rivalled Krupp. The boasts of your enemies last summer, telling what they would do to you, shows how highly they thought of their

³ “The Pentecost of Calamity” by Owen Wister.

armaments. Is it your reproach or theirs that those boasts proved somewhat hollow? Why not rather give you decent credit for the amazing, almost incredible, stand you are making?

The overworked assertion that civilization will suffer if you win is not based on any impartial analysis of German character or purposes, or upon a reasoned forecast of historical probabilities. It is sheer malice. Probably there is no settlement of this conflict which can be entirely satisfactory. For myself I prefer to see you win, and win decisively. If Germany is destroyed, or even greatly hampered in its normal development, one of the world's best hopes will be extinguished. But if Germany is victorious, the international situation may be much improved. The world will be spared an increase in Russia's power, and the forcible Russification of more victim peoples. We shall avoid a dangerous aggrandizement in the position of Japan. A German victory may liberalize the electoral system of Prussia,⁴ but nothing will liberalize Russia except a crushing defeat and the withdrawal of English and French loans to the bureaucracy. France will not be annihilated, any more than she was after 1870, though she may be forced to part with a section of her colonial empire. England will not be wiped out, but she may be forced to forego the arrogant assumption that the sea is British property. The United States can view with composure any changes in titles to colonies in Africa or the Near East. You will never cross our path. For one thing you will be too busy elsewhere!

Most Americans, of course, do not share this view; nothing would please them better than to see Germany brought to her knees. It is this popular desire to see you beaten which so complicates the question of our trade in war munitions. That question has not and cannot be argued on its merits. However neutral the United States has been in its official attitude, it is not neutral in sentiment. Americans are glad to supply your enemies with arms, because in this way they can help avenge the "rape of Belgium" and aid in punishing the "disturber of the world's peace." Technically, of course, our neutrality is not violated, for we have the legal right, by historical usage and by article 7, Convention XIII of the 1907 Hague Conference, to sell arms anywhere in the world. Neither, on the other hand, would our neutrality be violated by placing a complete embargo on the ships carrying munitions. To right-thinking men and women this whole business of dealing in instruments of destruction for profit appears disgusting and abhorrent.

⁴ Professor Henry C. Emery, "German Economics and the War," *Yale Review*, January, 1915.

However, the crux of the question is neither neutrality or ethics. While the Allies control the seas export of arms aids them, embargo on arms aids you. Consequently outside of German-Americans, there is little demand that Congress suppress this new and monstrous billion-dollar industry.

My German friends, there is one last word I would address to you, and this most earnestly of all. Do not allow your bitterness against the United States to increase. Do not regard this country as your confirmed enemy, but as a potential friend. Our nation is much more divided in its sympathy than it appears to be. There are over eight million German-Americans in America,—immigrants or offspring of immigrants. There are nearly three millions from Austria-Hungary. There are four and a half millions from Ireland, of whom a large proportion take a pro-German attitude. Besides these millions there are a vast number of men and women of older American stock who see the justice of your struggle, or at least are lenient in their judgment. The laboring men, the common people everywhere, do not share the rabid intolerance of our pseudo-intellectuals. The anti-German attitude of our press gives a false surface of unanimity to American opinion. We do not know, as a matter of fact, where we should stand if your side had adequate and fair representation in the journals of public discussion. But be assured of this: what is now called "the American attitude" toward Germany will not endure forever. It is, as I have explained to you, based in large part on errors in the interpretation of facts. If that is so, some day these misinterpretations will be refuted and swept away. At bottom America is fair-minded. And you have in the United States loyal friends, whose eyes refuse to be blinded by calumny, who, not unaware of your faults, love you for your lofty virtues, who will fight for you against a world of falsehoods, until the truth prevails. *Dem glücklichen Tag!*