though Sigyn is steadfast,

Still she listens and watches, lone Sigyn,
That Goddess of Sorrows; and her face
Is alight with a passion of pity,
Transfigured by self-abnegation
And unthanked devotion—the steadfast!

But who shall say it is thankless?
And who shall say it is useless?
Still Weird will go as it will.

until Ragnarok and Doom.

Surely Mercy is better than Vengeance,
Mayhap Love will prove stronger than Justice
And Sigyn win Loke from Hel.

DEMOCRACY AND REACTION.

(A BOOK REVIEW.)

BY HENDRICK MARTIN PELS.

YOU have had the experience, possibly, of groping along a long dim hall in search of a door, and then suddenly finding the knob and entering a well-lighted room. The light brings relief, even if you have been unafraid in the dark. It has been with a similar feeling of relief that I have read *Democracy and Reaction*, by L. T. Hobhouse. Here I find what I have been groping for, a matter of some importance, nothing short, indeed, of the intellectual and ethical background of the world war.

To find this background in *Democracy and Reaction* one is compelled, I admit, to read something into this little volume of 250 pages. It was published in London in 1904, some thirteen years ago. It contains not so much as a hint, from cover to cover, of the danger of Armageddon. It discusses, at times, foreign policy and international politics, but it does not prophesy war. And this is one of the reasons it holds so clear a value for interpretation,—that it has escaped the color and bias of later discussion.

The thesis of the book is given in the very first sentence: "During some twenty, or it may be thirty years, a wave of reaction has spread over the civilized world and invaded one department after another of thought and action." After the great reforming movement of the nineteenth century a period of lassitude has set in. The ideals of the reform era have lost their efficacy, and its catchwords have ceased to move. The gap has been filled in by

shallow philosophies or sheer materialism. The reaction has threatened to swamp the older conceptions of humanitarianism, and of justice and right. Such is the thesis of the book, brilliantly sustained throughout. The writer undertakes to define precisely the nature of the reaction, and to probe its causes.

"It had long been recognized," he says, "that the liberalism of Cobden's day was in a state of disintegration. The old cry of peace, retrenchment and reform had for many years ceased to awaken any response. The ideal of peace had given way to that of extended dominion. Retrenchment was impossible as long as new territories were constantly being acquired and retained by force, and the demand for domestic reform was silenced by the imperative clamor of foreign difficulties or frontier entanglements. The conceptions of personal freedom, of national rights, of international peace, had been relegated by practical men to the lumber-room of disused ideas. The whole set of conceptions which group themselves about the idea of liberty appeared to be outworn and unsuited to the needs of a generation bent on material progress and impatient of moral restraint.'

The older liberalism had won sweeping victories. It had put through its reforms, and carried out a program of mutually dependent principles; free trade, peace, economy, self-government for the colonies, democratic and social progress at home. But these principles had lost their charm, and no longer inspired enthusiasm. "And without inspiration liberalism, unlike its opponent, is helpless." Silently but effectively the reactionary element, always pushed on by its economic appetites, had crept back into power. The most conspicuous evidence of the reaction was the revival of the imperial idea.

Imperialism did not boldly announce selfish aims. "It was the older liberalism which made the colonial empire what it was, and it was to that empire as liberalism had made it that imperialist sentiment in the first instance appealed." The imperialist called attention to the fact that where the British flag goes, go British freedom, British justice, an incorruptible civil service, and local self-government. He asked: "Are you insensible to these achievements of your country, and can you not rise above the narrow patriotism—by comparison a 'parochial' view—which is limited to one small island?. . . . You say that Empire means force, aggression, conquest. That may have been so in the past, but we live in an age when Empire is free, tolerant and unaggressive, and if we

still acquire territory we acquire it not for ourselves but for civilization."

But this specious appeal cannot hide the actual trend of events.

"A political theory must be judged not only by its profession but by its fruits. What, then, were the fruits of imperialism, i. e., of the actual policy urged by imperialists and defended on the ground of imperial necessity? Did it, for example, give us peace? On the contrary, the perplexed observer, looking vainly for the British peace which was to be, was confronted with an endless succession of frontier wars, some small, some great, but all ending with the annexation of further territory. Under the reign of imperialism the temple of Janus is never closed. Blood never ceases to run. The voice of the mourner is never hushed. Of course, in every case some excellent reason has been forthcoming. We were invariably on the defensive....The naked fact is that we are maintaining a distinct policy of aggressive warfare on a large scale and with great persistence, and the only result of attempting constantly to blink the fact is to have introduced an atmosphere of self-sophistication, or in one syllable, of cant, into our politics which is perhaps more corrupting than the unblushing denial of right. No less than one-third of the present territory of the empire and one-quarter of its population have been acquired since 1870, and the bulk of the increase dates from 1884, i. e., it falls within the period during which imperialism has become a conscious influence. And notwithstanding the disappointments attending on the South African adventure there is as yet no sign of slackening."

The author quotes from Mr. Hobson (*Imperialism*, p. 20) the following list of territories acquired between 1884 and 1900 (inclusive):

British New Guiana	Rhodesia
Nigeria	Zanzibar
Pondoland	British Central Africa
Somaliland	Uganda
Bechuanaland	Ashantee
Upper Burma	Wei-hai-Wei
British East Africa	Kow-lung
Zululand (with Tongaland)	Soudan
Sarawak	Transvaal and Orange River Colony
Pahang (Straits Settlements)	

The total area of these territories amounts to 3,711,957 square miles, and the population is estimated at about 57,000,000.

The policy of retrenchment had been abandoned together with the policy of peace. "Meanwhile, partly through the direct needs of the conquered territories, partly through the dangerous jealousies awakened by the march of empire, but most of all through the mood of nervous suspicion engendered among ourselves by the consciousness of our aggressions, the policy of expansion fastens on us an ever-increasing burden of military and naval expenditure." Mr. Hobhouse goes on to quote figures showing to what extent the naval and military budgets of Great Britain had grown since 1905.

Thus far, as can be seen, there is nothing startlingly new in what Mr. Hobhouse has to say. All well-informed persons (all too few!) had noted the recrudescence of imperialism in Great Britain. And they had seen the same sinister drift in the rest of Europe. France was piecing together the second largest empire overseas, and her policies were being dictated by her financiers and rentiers. The thought of Germany was being hardened and coarsened by the doctrine of *Realpolitik*, and she had entered, a little late, the scramble for colonies. Russia, Italy, Austria, each entertained an unscrupulous program of expansion. The major powers were piling up armaments at an unprecedented rate. All this, I say, was not unknown to those who followed the European situation closely. Mr. Hobhouse gives us the key of interpretation. He enables us to understand how such a deterioration of moral and political purpose was possible.

In his chapter on "The Intellectual Reaction," the author finds three influences at work, each tending to vulgarize current philosophy. The first of these, he says, is—curiously enough—the philosophy of idealism. The vivid and profound religious convictions of an older generation have decayed. For a time the rise of a humanitarian feeling, partly in alliance with the recognized churches, and partly outside of them, promised to take the place of these weakened convictions, and stimulate social endeavor. But that promise has not been fulfilled; humanitarianism has lost its hold. The popular philosophy of our time has become a good-natured skepticism. For thirty years and more English thought has been subject to powerful influences from abroad. "The Rhine has flowed into the Thames," and the stream of German idealism has been diffused over the academical world of Great Britain. "It would be natural to look to an idealistic philosophy for a counterpoise to those crude doctrines of physical force which we shall find associated with the philosophy of science. Yet, in the main,

the idealistic movement has swelled the current of retrogression. It is itself, in fact, one expression of the general reaction against the plain, human, rationalistic way of looking at life and its problems. Every institution and every belief is for it alike a manifestation of a spiritual principle, and thus for everything there is an inner and more spiritual interpretation. Hence, vulgar and stupid beliefs can be held with a refined and enlightened meaning, known only to him who holds them.... Indeed, it is scarcely too much to say that the effect of idealism on the world in general has been mainly to sap intellectual and moral sincerity, to excuse men in their consciences for professing beliefs which on the meaning ordinarily attached to them they do not hold, to soften the edges of all hard contrasts between right and wrong, truth and falsity, to throw a gloss over stupidity, and prejudice, and caste.... To judge by the popularity of teaching of this kind, what people who think a little mainly want at the present day is to be told that they need not follow where their own reason takes them." They are glad to be assured that there is no "rational groundwork for morality, in particular for that humanitarian morality which they have found so exacting." In these ways idealism, or rather the popular perversion of idealism, has had a retrograde influence.

Again, the trend of events in the political world has appeared on the surface to justify philosophical doubts of humanitarian duty. "Hegelianism had its political sponsor in Bismarck, and Hegel's teaching....was upon the whole reactionary. For him, the ideals of the eighteenth century on which, say what we may, political liberalism is founded, were merely a phase in the negative movement of thought.... In place of the rights of the individual, Hegel set the state—and for him the state was not to serve humanity, but was an end in itself.... There were no limits to its authority, nor was there any necessary responsibility on the part of its government.... Bismarck's career was a concrete exemplification of the Hegelian state, crushing out popular resistance, and in relation to other states a law to itself. Bismarck first showed the modern world what could be done in the political sphere by the thoroughgoing use of force and fraud. The prestige of so great an apparent success naturally compelled imitation, and to the achievements of Bismarck, as we are dealing with the forces which have molded opinion in our own day, we must add the whole series of trials in which the event has apparently favored the methods of blood and iron, and discredited the cause of liberty and justice. The spectacle of the Turkish Sultan persisting in a long series of massacres with

absolute impunity could not fail to affect opinion. . . . The spectacle of Italy using her regained liberty to build up a great military power upon the sufferings of her people, and to embark upon a policy of aggression utterly unsuited to her genius, was sufficiently chilling to the ardor of men brought up on the teachings of Mazzini. . . . In every direction there was disappointment for those who identified liberty with national self-government, while there was everything to encourage men prone to be impressed by force, order, discipline, and the setting of national efficiency above freedom."

However, Mr. Hobhouse finds that the most potent intellectual support of the reaction has been neither idealism nor contemporary events, but the belief that physical science, particularly biology, had given its verdict in favor of the rule of the strong. "The doctrine that human progress depends upon the forces which condition all biological evolution has in fact been the primary intellectual cause of the reaction. Just as the doctrine of Malthus was the main theoretical obstacle to all schemes of social progress through the first two-thirds of the century, so the doctrine derived in part from Malthus by Darwin has provided a philosophy for the reaction of the last third. . . . Those who have applied Darwin's theories to the science of society have not as a rule troubled themselves to understand Darwin any more than the science of society. What has filtered through into the social and political thought of the time has been the belief that the time-honored doctrine 'Might is Right' has a scientific foundation in the laws of biology. Progress comes about through a conflict in which the fittest survives. It must, therefore, be unwise in the long run—however urgent it seems for the sake of the present generation—to interfere with the struggle. We must not sympathize with the beaten and weak, lest we be tempted to preserve them. . . . . Bagehot, I believe was the first to point out. . . . . that human progress might be thought of as resting on the struggle not of individuals but of communities . . . . Internal peace, harmony, and justice, with all the moral qualities they imply, are readily recognized as necessary to national efficiency, but as between nations these principles cease to apply. If it is the business of the individual to be a loyal and law-abiding subject of the state, it is the business of the state merely to advance itself and trample down all who cross its path. The rule of right, it appears, stops short at the frontier. It hardly seems to need arguing that this is not in the end a tenable view. . . . Not only the central conception of the biological theory of society, but its secondary and consequential doctrines, have militated as though by a

perverse fatality against social justice. The very belief in race and the value of inheritance are hostile in tendency to social reform. . . . The biological conception, working upon an easy confusion of ideas, has led to a distintegration of the painfully reared fabric of humanitarian justice, playing into the hands of what is called the relative, and sometimes the historical, view of right and wrong . . . . The black man, for example, is accustomed to slavery, and the only logical conclusion of the argument is that the white man may justly preserve this institution for the common benefit. The flaw in this argument is first that it lays down an inequality of endowments and proceeds therefrom to a denial of equal rights."

This chapter on "The Intellectual Reaction" is summed up in the following paragraph: "Thus in diverse forms and sundry manners the belief that success is its own justification has penetrated the thought of our time. At one time the appeal is to destiny, at another to natural selection, at a third to the inequalities implanted by heredity, at yet another to the demonstrated efficiency of blood and iron. The current of thought has joined that of class interest, and the united stream sweeps onward in full flood to the destruction of the distinctive landmarks of modern civilized progress."

At the root of everything greatly wrong with the world lies a selfish economic interest (a thought expressed more tersely by St. Paul). Mr. Hobhouse knows that the primary impulse behind the reaction he depicts and deplores is greed: and he stresses, here and there, the augmented role played by finance in our modern world. "Our danger is rather that through the development of joint-stock enterprise, the masters of wealth may acquire an ever-extending clientele who will prefer their sectional interest to the common weal." Again: "The corruption has, in fact, spread from above downward. All classes alike give way to Jingoism, and shut their ears to reason and humanity: but the initiative comes from the world of high finance or of high officialdom. In 'society' and among the educated middle class the applause is universal. . . . The artizans and laborers have failed to check the great interests which are forever dragging a nation into schemes of aggression." Speaking of the middle class the author says, "Never, perhaps, has there been material prosperity so widely diffused as in the last three or four years. While the rich have grown richer beyond the dreams of avarice, the poor have by no means grown poorer. . . . Old workmen who still remember the privations of the forties look on the present state of their class as a paradise in comparison. . . . On the other hand whole classes have been won over definitely to the side

of the established order. The great middle class, in particular, which seventy years ago was knocking at the gates of political enfranchisement, now finds all the prizes and privileges of public life open to its sons, the ablest of which crowd into the public services at home and abroad. If this favors conservatism in general, it fosters imperialism in particular. . . . The great middle class has become contented with its lot, and is far more moved by its fear of socialism than by any desire for further instalments of privilege. . . . In particular it applauds the lead given it toward imperialism. It applauds it in its capacity of respectable parent with sons to put out into the world, of merchant with trade to develop, of missionary with religion to push, above all, of investor with capital to seek higher interest than can be gained at home. The true leaders of the middle class are the financiers, who show them how to get more than three per cent on their investments." Once more: "We find the cause of the reaction in the growing concentration of material interests. The power of wealth has increased, and the different interests, for which wealth is a higher consideration than life, have learnt the secret of cooperation."

We see, therefore, that a sordid and callous spirit has become dominant, fostering the sway of expediency, or even of brute force; that selfish economic interests win a constantly increasing clientele, avid of higher dividends; that aggression and imperialism do not openly avow their ends, but work behind a screen of cant and spurious liberalism; and that the dominant social forces find for themselves that justification they need in the prevalent popular philosophy. By this reaction, declares Mr. Hobhouse, "the winnings of our civilization are threatened." The Cobdenist principles of progress have been replaced by "aggrandisement, war, compulsory enlistment, lavish expenditure, protection, arbitrary government, class legislation." Human wrongs and human sufferings do not move people as they did. A significant illustration may be found in the change of the national temper toward slavery. "Thirty years ago the whole empire was anti-slavery. Now, far from putting it down, we have on more than one occasion suffered the introduction of one form or another of servile labor under the British flag. It is difficult to conceive any great white nation waging war in these days on the slavery question. On the contrary, the prevailing, though perhaps veiled, opinion seems to be that the black or the yellow man must pay in meat or in malt for his racial inferiority. The white man is the stronger, and to the strong are the earth and the fruits thereof. If the black man owns land and lives on

its produce, he is an idler. His 'manifest destiny' is to assist in the development of gold mines for the benefit of humanity in general and the shareholders in particular."

I shall not try to summarize the able arguments of the book in favor of a return to the ideals of liberalism, and to a higher conception of international right. With a merciless logic Mr. Hobhouse cuts to pieces the pseudo-science that attempts to justify fraud and force. He demonstrates that neither sociology nor biology, any more than ethics, gives a verdict against just dealing, both within and without the nation. He is an ardent believer in self-government, but he is by no means blind to its mistakes. Indeed, one of the most illuminating chapters of the book discusses "The Limitations of Democracy." I cannot forbear to quote a paragraph or two from his defensive criticism of self-government, for they hold a peculiar pertinence just at present, when so much attention is being paid to forms of government, and when the words "democracy" and "autocracy" exercise so potent a spell.

"Self-government, it may be said, has in practice broken down. In embracing imperialism it has, as the phrase goes, 'contradicted itself,' for the fundamental idea of democracy is not any particular form of government, but the reconciliation of government with liberty, and imperialism is the negation of liberty....The corruption of opinion and the lowering of the moral standard in public affairs which has so profoundly depressed all thoughtful observers is not by any means especially imputable to the popular element in our government....First, it is not democratic self-government but democratic imperialism that 'contradicts itself,' and secondly, it is not the popular element in our constitution that is primarily responsible for imperialism. The only illusion that is destroyed is the belief, if it ever was definitely held, that a people enjoying self-government could never be imperialist. That was, indeed, a hasty belief, for it implied an expectation that self-government would change human nature. The love of ascendency is not peculiar to any one class or race, nor does it arise from any special form of government. All men, as Mill long ago remarked, love power more than liberty. All nations are, with opportunity, more or less aggressive. All are firmly persuaded that in their most inexcusable aggressions they are acting purely on the defensive. All believe that in conquering others they are acting for the good of the conquered; that the only charge that can be laid at their door is that of undue forbearance; that they are ready to be just and even generous if the others will only submit. All nations believe implicitly in their

own entire rectitude and place the worst construction on the motives of others. All approve of their own civilization and are inclined to think meanly of the personal habits of other people. Savage tribes advance upon the enemy with yells; we hurl defiance at them through a certain portion of the press....The general conditions of pseudo-patriotism which consists in hostility to other nations are permanent and universal. The form in which it appears varies in accordance with varying conditions of national life.

"We in England, through long immunity, had become wholly ignorant of the nature of the passions raised by war. History does not tell us much of these things. It preserves the glory of war, but suppresses its barbarities and its meannesses. It says little of that secondary war of tongues which accompanies the war of weapons and keeps up the flame of passion. It preserves the fair exterior of chivalry, and does not turn its light on the calumnies, the barbarities, the credulity as of savages which luxuriate in the national mind in war time. I remember shortly before the South African War broke out asking one of the ablest and most consistent opponents of the policy of aggression whether he did not think that those who were then shouting for war would, when it came, be revolted by its realities. My friend, who remembered the Crimean War, took a very different view, and gave me clearly to understand that from the very first moment of bloodshed it would be all over with argument. This is precisely what Cobden had found.

"Some of us are inclined to look back on the time of Cobden as the halcyon days of peace and sobriety and justice between nations. We have been led to think the orgy of barbarism which we have witnessed something wholly peculiar to our time, something that points to a real retrogression toward savagery. There is, in fact, as I have pointed out, a real intellectual reaction. The humanitarianism of Cobden's day is no longer popular. But let us not exaggerate. Human nature has not changed in fifty years. Cobden was a peculiarly able and successful apostle of peace, with a peculiarly noble and eloquent brother in arms. He had behind him all the prestige of his great success in the Free Trade movement, and the economic conditions were more favorable to his protest than to that of Mr. Morley and Mr. Courtney. But Cobden had precisely the same forces to fight. There was precisely the same pugnacity, the same callousness to outrageous deeds done in the British name, the same ferocity of vindictiveness fed by the same agencies. 'You must not disguise from yourself,' he writes in 1847, 'that the evil has its root in the pugnacious, energetic,

self-sufficient, foreigner-despising and pitying character of that noble insular creature, John Bull.'

"Clearly, John Bull was no less warlike in the forties than he is now, no less convinced of the necessary justice of his own cause, or of the service which he rendered humanity by condescending to conquer and to rule it. Nor when incidents occurred to throw a very ugly light on those civilizing influences of which he was wont to boast was he a whit more inclined to listen to the truth about himself and his agents. He received the account of the things done in his name with the same callous indifference which is familiar to us.... Nor is the howl for vengeance anything new.... Then, as in our own time, the non-combatants were the most furious for blood.

"In a word, the moral conditions of the controversy were the same in Cobden's day as now. Jingoism and imperialism were not known by name, but the same pseudo-patriotism which takes the form of hostility to all countries but one's own was there, and was no less powerful.... Now it is imperialism, which is at its best a belief in the 'civilizing mission' of the Anglo-Saxon race, and at its worst what we have seen in South Africa, but in essence the same blind, unreasoning, unimaginative, callous, collective self-assertion. What we have to lament is not that something new in essence, and in essence bad, has been hatched out by the devil that is in humanity, but that the real progress that has been made in other things has left us not one whit better—and perhaps, temporarily and in degree, worse—in this relation. This change must be attributed to the coincidence of those intellectual and political causes which since Cobden's time have fostered the growth of materialism —that is to say, the tendency to over-value physical force and to ignore the subtler and less obvious conditions on which the public welfare rests."

"If our analysis has shown that the ideal of the democratic state is intrinsically sound and necessary to the onward movement of western civilization—upon the other hand, the bare facts prove that that ideal will not, so to say, act automatically or maintain its supremacy without the most jealous watchfulness on the part of its supporters. Self-government is not in itself a solution of all political and social difficulties. It is at best an instrument with which men who hold by the ideal of social justice and human progress can work, but when those ideals grow cold, it may, like other instruments, be turned to base uses. In the immediate future much will doubtless have to be done toward the perfection of the democratic

machine, yet the fundamental reform for which the times call is rather a reconsideration of the ends for which all civilized government exists; in a word, the return to a saner measure of social values."

Here I end the review of *Democracy and Reaction.* I have given, I believe, an impartial, though inadequate, survey of the book's contents. Any one will be compensated by a careful reading of this volume; for no summary can render more than an indication of the vigor, the logical cogency, and the moral earnestness that Mr. Hobhouse brings to his exposition. I venture to say that this book is more enlightening than nine-tenths of the "literature" on the war that has been produced in the last three years. It cannot honestly be turned into propaganda for either set of belligerents; it lifts one definitely "above the battle" and enables one to breathe the clean air of sympathetic understanding.

Two questions arise that may well be briefly considered. First, had the reaction which Mr. Hobhouse explains in 1914 passed its crest before the beginning of the war in 1914, and was the world returning to a saner estimate of social values? Second, was this reaction also felt in the United States, and was its significance perceived here?

The first question cannot be answered dogmatically; yet the answer is undoubtedly, no. The decade preceding 1914 witnessed several of the most shameless episodes in modern diplomacy: Korea, Morocco, the Congo, Persia. Everywhere the small nations and the weaker peoples were despoiled. The great powers continued their policy of snatching everything they could lay their predatory hands on, and of never yielding an inch to their rivals if they could help it. The pace of armed preparation was quickened. Germany increased her army and her navy, Great Britain launched her fleet of dreadnaughts, Russia built her strategic railroads, France passed her Three Year Law. New diplomatic groupings were made, and fear dominated the foreign offices. The English press, under the leadership of the London *Times*, became steadily abusive of Germany. In Germany the national temper was embittered by the empire's ill success in colonial expansion, and the Pan-German movement, proclaiming with brutal candor a policy of national piracy, grew conspicuous. Meanwhile, the materialistic temper of the times had not been altered, and the underlying economic pressures had not been lessened. At the beginning of the war the inhabitants of Great Britain had about fifteen billions of dollars in overseas investments, outside of government bonds, and those of

France and Germany each about eight billions. The conscience of the world had become hardened to long distance sinning. What chiefly interested governments may be seen from the text of the 1907 convention between Russia and England for the partition of Persia: "Concessions for railways, banks, telegraphs, roads, transports, insurances."

The reaction against humanitarianism, it must be remembered, had been going on in Europe for more than a generation; the men who had ridden that reaction were in power; and the poison had eaten so deeply that it was possible at the last to start a war that slaughtered millions, for false values. Of course, there were warnings and protests. Socialists of France and Germany foretold the gathering storm. Small groups of influential men in both England and Germany worked for reconciliation. In England a number of free-lance liberals endeavored—in vain—to arouse the public. E. D. Morel exposed the Congo outrages. H. N. Brailsford ripped the mask from the Moroccan intrigue. The conspiracy that nipped Persian freedom in the bud evoked numerous protests, among them an eloquent poem by Israel Zangwill. This poem, entitled "Lament," was published in 1912, and contains the following stanzas:

"Time was my voice as lightsome rang—
In childish darkness lapped secure,
Self-shut in innocence I sang,
The world was pure as I was pure.

"And now my England I behold,
A Sancho Panza Land, supreme
In naught save land and ships and gold
Security her highest dream.

"I see the sun-lands where the flow
Of black men's blood is harvest rain;
Congo, San Thomè, Mexico,
And many a secret place of pain.

"I see what drives the wheels of state,
How nations hide their blood-stained loot,
Greatness that comes by murder's gate,
And glory by the all-red route."

Yes, many a secret place of pain—in order that the brilliant life of Paris, Brussels, London, Berlin, Vienna and St. Petersburg might be brighter, gayer, more luxurious.

Despite all exposures, however, and despite the signs of the times, this war took many honest men in Europe by surprise. Two

tendencies obscured their vision. One, for want of a better name, may be called the socialistic movement. Up to the very eve of the war there was a growing disposition on the part of the western nations to seek social justice at home. They were passing workmen's compensation acts, old age pensions, better land laws, higher income taxes. As we have seen, Mr. Hobhouse indicated that a policy of domestic reform may be wedded to a policy of national aggression, and that internal harmony is readily recognized as necessary to national efficiency. These concrete advances toward an ideal of social and industrial justice blinded many men to the international immorality of the times. The second obscuring influence was pacifism. The pacifists, noble as their purposes were, sadly misjudged the world they were living in. They went about declaring that a war between the great powers was improbable, in fact, "impossible." Mr. Norman Angell went further in his *Great Illusion*, which attained a great vogue, and attempted to prove that aggression was no longer profitable, ignoring the strength of the sinister economic interests that reap blood-money from colonial exploitation. And thus pacifism aided those influences that lulled men to tranquility, from which they awoke only when the deluge burst.

The United States of America? Intellectual conflicts are not so sharply defined in America as in Europe, but it is safe to say that America did not feel the reaction within herself, and did not know it was going on abroad. American thought flowed in its own channel. The Civil War was followed by a period of industrial expansion and spiritual apathy. Then, under Roosevelt, came muckraking and "the awakening of the national conscience." Humanitarianism took the helm. It manifested itself in social settlements, in the new "social vision" of the churches, in the impatient idealism of the younger generation, in political progressivism. America during the opening years of the twentieth century was in the same mood as England in the Victorian period. It is this belated wave of humanitarianism, mingled with ignorance of the reaction in Europe, that explains why nearly all Americans were astonished to see the European war break out. It explains, further, why the bulk of our cultured classes even now, despite our own entrance into the struggle, have not arrived at a sound interpretation of the causes or the potentialities of the conflict. And it explains the naive and generous assurance with which Americans look for the speedy establishment of a better world order, when in truth the ills of the world are too virulent to be cured in this generation at the best.