PHILOSOPHY AND WAR

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BY

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PREFACE

Is the *rapprochement* of these two words, philosophy and war, a legitimate one? Do not war and philosophy belong to two entirely different worlds? Should we not regard as artificial and incongruous all attempts to find any relation between the manifestations of force and the serene untrammelled speculations of the spirit?

Assuredly, this is not the point of view of the Germans. The official representatives of German science and art have insisted on declaring before the whole of the civilized world that the present war was entered upon and has been waged by Germany in full conformity with the principles of such men as Kant and Goethe, whilst their generals state that the German officer is nothing else than the visible representative, the incarnation, of the categorical imperative. Open one of those numerous and magnificent tear-off calendars for the year 1916, one of the methods of propagandism employed in Germany, and you will find,

on every page, quotations from German thinkers, intended to explain and justify the conduct of their country in this war.

It is but just, also, to state that the Germans themselves regard the war as the culmination of their philosophy.

It would none the less be wholly out of place to render the German philosophers of the past responsible for the use which is now being made of their doctrines. " The same thoughts," said Pascal, " do not always grow and develop in others as they do in their creator." Though the categorical imperative of Kant is at the present time advanced as proof that cruelty ceases to be cruelty when practised on behalf of German discipline, manifestly a like misinterpretation of his ideas cannot be imputed to Kant himself.

There have been world-wide protests against the assumption of the Germans that their present-day doctrines are to be found in the works of their great philosophers. How, for instance, are we to reconcile the doctrine of a head-nation (*Herrenvolk*), destined by providence to have dominion over all others, with the conclusion reached in the political philosophy of Kant: " International right must be based on a federalism of free States " (*auf*

einen Föderalismus freier Staaten)? It cannot be repeated too often that the masters of German thought were idealists, enamoured of truth and devoted to the cause of the spirit, and that their work offers an anticipatory disavowal of the consequences which present-day Germans claim to deduce from it.

Nevertheless, does it follow that to fall back upon the authority of their great thinkers is purely arbitrary on the part of the Germans, and that there is nothing in the writings of these great men to afford the slightest pretext for the present aberrations?

Assuredly, one of the doctrines which contribute most effectively to foster the unrestrained ambitions of the German nation is the belief in the altogether unique and quasi-divine excellence of the German race, of Germanism (*Deutschheit*). Now, there is no doubt that this doctrine was philosophically deduced by Fichte himself, for, in his *Reden an die deutsche Nation*, he proves that the German people is that very self of the world which is interchangeable with God in his previous writings, and also that nothing but Germanism is capable of producing in this world of ours any real or genuine science or morality at all.

If we examine, along these lines, a number of the great ideas of German philosophy, such as the Hegelian identity of the rational and the real, the Hegelian theory of the State, the Fichtean doctrine of the unreality of a right unprotected by force, the conclusion of Goethe's Faust: "He alone merits life and freedom, who has to win them anew, day by day"; the great Kantian and German principle: the self is constituted only by contrast, the being only realizes itself by struggling against its contrary; or even the doctrine, so general amongst German philosophers, that sin is the first form of activity, that evil is the condition, or even the generator, of good, as night is the mother of light; if we meditate on such principles, we note that whilst, of themselves, they express only metaphysical views, they all the same lend themselves to applications more or less similar to those which the Germans are now making of them.

The Greeks set up the principle that all truth becomes error when exaggerated and not kept within bounds—*i.e.*, when no account is taken of the equally certain truths which limit it. The German mind, however, enamoured of unity and systematization, scorns moderation, and, unchecked, sets forth the

consequences of the principle it has once established as fundamental. The common people believe that, if we would pass from the simple formulæ of theory to the endless complexities of practice, it is always necessary to appeal to good sense. But the German philosopher, who holds the principles of science itself, is superior to good sense; he leaves it to the profane.

It is to be remarked, moreover, that many of the great German theories, such as those just mentioned, are opposed to classic teachings, and have even been established for the very purpose of contradicting them. For instance, the Greeks could never have said that the rational and the real are identical, or that the spirit exists only if realized materially.

Consequently, whilst maintaining that the ideas of the present were not those of the great German philosophers, we are forced to recognize that the theories of these very masters contained germs capable of being developed along the line of these ideas. *Es lag sehr nahe*, according to the familiar expression; it was but a short step, for instance, from the identity of the rational and the real to the justification of the real as such.

Hence, it is both permissible and profitable

to see the connection between the *Kriegsgebrauch im Landkriege* (The German War Book) and German philosophy. Perhaps, in this philosophy, we shall not find the *Kriegsgebrauch* preformed, like a statue represented beforehand in a block of marble, but we shall recognize, in a general and abstract way, the very principles to which appeal is made in the *Kriegsgebrauch*, and shall see that, in some ways, these principles lent themselves to the use now being made of them.

Heine said that Germany was a soul seeking for itself a body. And, indeed, ever since the dissolution of the Holy Roman Empire, of German nationality, Germany has been aspiring after political unity as the indispensable condition of the establishment of her empire throughout the world. Now, the Germans, by persuading themselves, along with their philosophers, that thought is nothing unless it be realized, and that spirit exists only through matter, came first to determine on realization, under the instigation of Prussia, and then forgot that it was spirit which had to be realized. Faust, perceiving that pure idea did not satisfy the deep need he experienced for life, activity, and power, sells his soul in order to realize its aspirations.

The present war has again brought into the foreground the problem of the relations between thought and action. There is no problem that is more difficult, perhaps, though at the same time more important for mankind.

ÉMILE BOUTROUX.

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CONTENTS

PHILOSOPHY AND WAR

GERMAN SCIENCE

GERMAN science is—or, rather, was until quite recently—possessed of the most imposing authority and prestige. Of course it was acknowledged that, outside of Germany, there might exist individuals of the most remarkable learning and intelligence, even men of genius; but science *per se*, impersonal and superior, wide-reaching and profound, was generally recognized as the appanage of Germany.

In vain did certain observers attempt to show that the many qualities of German science were not free from a number of gaps and imperfections; that the Germans excelled rather in the mechanical parts of scientific work than in invention; that their methods of explanation were frequently vague and obscure; that the practical applications of science in Germany were becoming increasingly more important than was disinterested

investigation: the reputation they had obtained seemed indestructible. Germany was the born teacher of the universe.

Will the world in future regard German science with bolder and more untrammelled vision?

When, in 1877, I was engaged on the French translation of Zeller's History of Greek Philosophy, I attempted to show that man was left out of account in that profound and learned study, one of the most original manifestations of human genius; that the theories of Socrates, Plato, or Aristotle, were gradually stripped of all they contained which was personal and living, and were reduced to abstract formulæ, subordinate to an immanent and necessary dialectic. Ever since that date, my impression of German science has become increasingly confirmed.

The general character of scientific work in Germany is organization. They start out with the idea that no investigation has any real value unless it combines the two qualities of *Vollständigkeit* and *Gründlichkeit—i.e.*, unless it is both complete and well grounded. Now, such investigation, by reason of the variety and number of qualifications it presupposes, is generally beyond the compass of a single in-

dividual. And so the normal form of scientific as of industrial work is its distribution amongst many and divers workers, each fitted to the special function that falls to him.

To deny or to depreciate the services rendered by such an organization would be absurd. By this means there is obtained, as far as possible, that complete documentation and critical examination of all the elements of the problem so indispensable to any science that would be far-reaching, firmly established and practical.

To consider this organization, however, as containing within itself all the elements of scientific research, as seems to be done ever more and more in Germany, is to run the risk of fettering, rather than favouring, the activity of the intellect, which remains in any case the supreme condition of this research.

Science consists of two elements: materials and the ideas which transform these materials into expressions of the laws of nature. The collective efforts of specialists are well fitted to supply materials, but will they be adequate to the production of ideas? The theory implied in the German method is that the idea is born by spontaneous generation from the materials themselves, once these

latter have been conveniently collected and arranged.

This doctrine cannot be verified by the history of science. In reality, the idea is the offspring of the human intellect, in so far as this latter is capable, not only of storing up documents, but of reacting, in original fashion, in response to these documents. For, as Claude Bernard said, the idea is above all else a hypothesis—*i.e.*, a view of things which transcends the signification of crude data.

Now, what is the condition best suited, not for creating, but for advancing intellectual fertility?

This condition consists of such an education of the mind as will develop in it the sense of reality, the faculty of generalizing without departing from the real. The scientist attains to this education by meditating, by free and solitary concentration, and even by passing beyond the limits of his speciality to hold converse with minds devoted to different specialities, though ready, like himself, to rise superior to their studies and to think as men, whilst working as specialists.

This is the point of view taught by Descartes, whose *Discours de la Méthode* begins with the words: " Le bon sens." The object

of this famous introduction to scientific research is to prove that the same good sense governs both the practical life of the average man and the loftiest speculations of the mathematician, the physicist and the philosopher; that all science runs the risk of wandering astray unless, all along the line, it is constantly being controlled by good sense, and that this good sense, the link connecting our thought with reality, is the true source of invention and judgment, without which science is no more than an object of instruction and practical application. Descartes adds that good sense should be cultivated, and that the right means of developing it is reflection, fostered alike by the study of science and the experience of life.

German science makes a religion of competence, than which, in a sense, nothing is more deserving of respect. But what is competence? And can the man who deliberately eliminates from scientific research every living and human, personal and rational element, and retains only materially objective data and reasoning that excludes all intuition, be really competent in anything whatsoever?

The critical point in German science is the transition from the fact to the idea. To the

disciples of the Greeks, of Galileo, of Descartes, of Newton, and of Claude Bernard, this transition is nothing else than a restrained play of the intellect, which progressively deduces the general from the particular. The activity of the mind is already an element in the scientific determination of the fact; whilst, on the other hand, it is by constantly dwelling upon facts that the mind rises to the loftiest ideas. An incessant contact of the intellect with the facts, and at the same time the incessant activity of the intellect: such is the classic method. And such a method the Germans consider too simple, too human.

They began by seeking ideas in a transcendental world, one that had no connection with the world of facts. Thus, from the primordial identity A—A, the philosopher Schelling went so far as to deduce the Newtonian law of attraction or the duality of electrical fluids, and actually corrected Nature when she took upon herself to disobey him.

As this method had to be given up, German science replaced it by identifying the idea with the totality of the facts included in one and the same category.

The guiding idea of history, for instance, is that which results, of itself, from the totality

of historical facts. Now, we know that this idea is nothing else, according to the German scientists, than the mission assigned to Prussia by the universal Mind itself, of subjugating the world and organizing it after her own fashion.

In practice, the German scientist, who considers that he alone is in possession of all the facts, is also the only one capable of determining general ideas. And as the whole of the facts in any department of life is something altogether chimerical, the German scientist, alone competent, fills up the gaps as he pleases; and then, regarding his definition of the whole as axiomatic, reveals to the world the meaning of the particular events in question, according to the needs of his case.

Nor must you think of disputing his assertions, in case you consider them strange. Appeal to such or such a fact, and the German scientist proves to you that he knows this same fact better than you do yourself, but that he interprets it in terms of the whole; appeal to good sense, and he pities you, for evidently you do not know that the word scientific means—free from every subjective element!

Such is the behaviour, such the attitude, we too often find nowadays amongst German scientists.

Molière would appear to have pronounced the verdict which humanity will give, sooner or later, on such methods:

> " Raisonner est l'emploi de toute ma maison,
> Et le raisonnement en bannit la raison."

CERTITUDE AND TRUTH

CERTITUDE and truth: are not the terms equivalent? Do we not say almost indifferently: I am certain, this is certain, that is true? Can one really be certain of anything else than truth? And does not truth, once perceived, produce certitude? What is it but philosophical subtilty, after all, to regard as a problem worthy of consideration the relation between these two terms?

Doubtless there have been times when philosophers have created fictitious problems; they would like to understand as well as to know. This need, really a very difficult one to define, torments them greatly. Often, too, the concepts, apparently very similar, which they bring together in this way, are like statues which express no astonishment at finding themselves neighbours in a museum; whilst the originals, in the world of realities, fight and destroy one another. Think of the words: faith and belief; they appear synonymous,

and yet those who, in the world of religion, set faith above beliefs cannot act in concert with those who regard dogmas as more important than faith. Who knows but that it may be the same with the words: certitude and truth, which, judging by the dictionary, would appear to differ only as the convex and the concave side of one and the same curve?

I.

It must be acknowledged that the first impulse of human beings is not to set themselves this problem. In ordinary life we trust to our certitude, of which we are quite conscious; and we admit—without too closely asking ourselves if we have the right—that to any firm conviction there corresponds the possession of some truth. As proof of an affirmation we often hear such an argument as—I am intimately persuaded, I am firmly convinced, that the thing is so. In Germany more particularly we are continually hearing in ordinary conversation the formula: *Ich bin fest überzeugt.*

And yet it happens that equally energetic affirmations may, in fact, be contradictory, and consequently cause disputes. Then we

have men endeavouring to justify their certitude by arguments less personal than their simple conviction: they endeavour to prove that it is based on truth. In practical life, more especially in the moral order of things, it is frequently very difficult to induce our opponent to accept our reasons. Beset by arguments from which he cannot escape, and reduced to silence, he will often persist in his opinion, not always from obstinacy, but because he believes, in good faith, that the objections brought against him carry no weight.

Belief in the distinctive value of conviction seems to have been widespread during the last century, at a time when romanticism exalted the interior life, the faith in intuition, as being more certain and penetrating than demonstration. A man was not afraid, in those days, of being the only one of his opinion. He regarded it rather as a sign of superiority, and almost as a duty, to think for himself, after his own fashion, and differently from others. He was proud of having convictions of his own, and prided himself on holding to them, whatever revolutions might take place in society. He also regarded it as quite normal that the utmost diversity should govern the opinions of men, recognizing the right of each to think

for himself and defend his ideas both with the written and with the spoken word.

Humanity, however, cannot be content with a dilettante kind of life. The doctrine of individual conviction which gives rise to brilliant oratorical jousts in lecture-hall or drawing-room is expressed in real life by formidable struggles, by revolutions and upheavals of all kinds. Besides, should we not be forsaking the very idea of truth were we to regard an opinion as legitimate simply because it refuses to give way before contrary opinions?

In the latter half of the nineteenth century a period of individualism was followed by a reaction in favour of unity, of the submission of the human mind and conscience to impersonal truth. Then, as the highest expression of this truth, came science, whose progressive and triumphant march, more than any other intellectual phenomenon, had imposed respect and submission on the minds of men. In it and it alone appeared to dwell the necessary and adequate condition of certitude, of mental coherence, of harmony between mind and heart. There can be no doubt but that the proposition $2+2=4$ is admitted by all men alike. When humanity comes into possession of like truths in everything, then individual

certitude will infallibly give place to a common, a universally identical certitude.

This argument seemed to defy contradiction: all the same, events did not confirm it. In the domain of science, and even in mathematics, it has not been proved that feeling is wholly suppressed by what is called objective truth. Chiefly in the practical order of things, however, an appeal to science does not suffice to bring men into a state of harmony. It is not only between the learned and the ignorant, it is between the learned who study the same science, who are brought up in the same schools and practise the same methods, that an understanding seems impossible, when we are dealing with moral, social and religious questions. And, finally, men of science, in their convictions, fall back like other men upon personal certitude, which has its source in other than scientific evidence. It is impossible to maintain that the present age, so frequently called the age of science, is characterized by a perfect and universal harmony of mind and will.

Thus we are compelled to recognize that truth and certitude are less closely connected than would at first sight appear. Persistently to seek for certitude is not always a good way

of attaining to truth. The need of certitude is impatient; it tends towards a mental state that is absolute and unshakable, that is felt to be personal and even meritorious. Truth, however, as a rule, is very difficult to lay hold upon. It can be won only by degrees, partially and provisionally. So that if we are determined to acquire certitude at whatever cost, we are frequently compelled to regard as known and proved that which in reality is not so. Conversely, the man who, above all else, seeks after truth, the characteristic of which is that it exists *per se* and is imperative on all minds alike, is led to repress his individual desires and impressions and be content with an adhesion somewhat abstract and impersonal, always imperfect and modifiable, bearing upon objects far removed from those that interest our human life; and such an adhesion has but a slight resemblance to what we call conviction and certitude.

Truth and certitude, then, are really two things, not one thing under two aspects. And it is incumbent upon the philosopher to find out if this duality is radical and irreducible, or if these two terms, in spite of their differences, are inseparable from each other and capable of harmonious combination.

II.

One solution of the problem which seems to result from the critical study to which the human mind has devoted itself in modern times is dualism, of which Kant has given a remarkably clear and profound formula. From this point of view, certitude and truth are radically distinct from each other. They depend on two faculties which seem to be in juxtaposition, though really they move in two different worlds: intellect and will.

Intellect deals with the world of phenomena, with the objects presented to us in time or space. It determines the constant and universal relations between these objects. Thus it acquires a sum total of propositions which express the permanent groundwork of the things given, and which thereby are imperative on the minds of all without any possibility of dispute. This sum total of propositions corresponds to what men mean by truth.

The world, however, of which this truth is the essence, does not exhaust the real and the possible. If it supplies the human mind with an object proportionate to its power, it does not satisfy the will, whose ambition it is to

realize an order of things of a moral nature —*i.e.*, one based on duty and liberty. The world of intellect, which implies wholly mechanical and geometrically necessary laws, excludes the kind of beings claimed by the will. The latter, then, will turn to another world; or rather, since it finds that it does not possess the power to see a suprasensible world, it will draw from itself, if not intuitions, at all events certitudes regarding a world which is not, but which ought to be, which deserves to be and which will be if the will itself is sincere and energetic enough to realize it. In this creation there is no given truth, preceding and determining certitude. The latter is primary, like the will, of which it is the perfect form. It is the cause of duty and freedom, of God and the moral order. I will freedom, said Kant, therefore I will duty, the existence of God, immortality. It concerns me but little that the world of sense offers no place for these things; my will opens or creates for me quite another world which my senses cannot cognize, though they cannot dispute its reality.

Thus appears to be justified the juxtaposition, apart from the interaction, of certitude and truth.

A clear and convenient system, to which, in practice, appeal is made more frequently than one would think, though a close examination shows that it offers serious difficulties.

It would undoubtedly be absurd to dispute the highly moral character of Kant's philosophy. The author of the *Critique of Practical Reason* and of the *Metaphysics of Ethics* strongly advocates respect for the human person and the subordination of instinct to reason. But then, as Edward Caird, Master of Balliol, has shown, Kant did not regard dualism as the final word of philosophy. To his mind, all separation was the prelude of a reunion, which he intended to effect by examining more profoundly the nature of things.

Still, investigations of the type of the *Critique of the Judgment* are abstruse, and we prefer to keep to the initial and dualistic formulæ of the system.

Now, the notion of duty as a purely formal categorical imperative—*i.e.*, void of all content and matter—is singularly dangerous of application. In real life one cannot be satisfied with a purely formal act of willing: something must necessarily be willed, some matter must be fitted into this empty mould. The categorical imperative, however, remains dumb

when questioned as to what it commands. Consequently we are led to seek, not in the world of will, but in the other, the visible world, the only one we are able to cognize, for the matter indispensable to the attainment of a real act. The two worlds, however, the physical and the moral, are by hypothesis wholly heterogeneous and unconcerned with each other. Hence we arrive at the following conclusion: any act, provided it is performed under the idea of duty, may assume a moral character. No morality or immorality could be attributed to an act considered in its visible aspect; only the form of will in which we clothe it makes it morally praiseworthy or blamable.

Take, for instance, some action which ordinary morality regards as cruel, such as the massacre, in war, of children, women and old men. If this cruelty is purely animal, it is something indifferent. If it is undisciplined, it is culpable, in so far as it is a violation of discipline. And if it has been ordered by lawful authority, it is disciplined cruelty, *eine zuchtmässige Grausamkeit*, a right and meritorious action. The philosopher himself or the sternest of moralists will give this verdict, for in ethics it is certitude alone that constitutes

truth, and here the sole object of certitude is the form of the action to the exclusion of its matter.

Such is the disastrous consequence of a radical separation between certitude and truth. Nor is the notion of truth less gravely affected. As all modes of existence bearing on the will are here eliminated from the world of objective truth, the visible world in which we live, nature, in the ordinary sense of the word, would seem to have nothing whatever to do with ethics. The moral form is no more than a garment *de luxe*, which, when opportunity offers, is superimposed from without. As the world of the intellect and of the natural laws, in this dualistic doctrine, is self-sufficient and impervious to the world of will, it would be absurd to require that man, in so far as he forms part of the visible world, should practise anything else than obedience to the laws governing this world. Hence we are led to divide human life into two parts. On the one hand, it is a moral life, indifferent to the promptings of nature, or rather arbitrarily exalting them into moral acts, without considering their intrinsic character. On the other hand, it is a wholly physical existence, to which no moral qualification could be applied, and which

is just as legitimate as the first. If, then, a man happens to lack the grace necessary to pierce into the transcendental world of certitude and the categorical imperative, he is no more than a brute, devoid of will, of dignity and of the sense of duty, an inert and irresponsible instrument of mechanical forces. And as moral effort, indeed, cannot be anything else than intermittent, the man finds himself condemned, as he passes alternately from the realm of duty into that of nature, to fluctuate between systematic obedience to a wholly formal law and the unbridled violence of his coarsest instincts and appetites. Fanaticism, or the unrestrained violence of nature: such is the alternative.

The radical distinction, then, between certitude and truth is inadmissible. Each finds itself incapable of being realized in its essence. Dualism, moreover, clashes with the natural tendency of the spirit towards unity. More especially in Germany is the investigation of a point of view from which it is possible to obtain a synthetic conception of the totality of things generally regarded as the mark of the philosophic spirit. This is why numerous attempts have been made in that country to reduce to unity these two principles, which

cannot be separated without compromising both.

The strictest mode of reduction consists in including one of the two terms in the other: certitude in truth, or truth in certitude—*i.e.*, will in intellect or intellect in will.

The evolution of German philosophy, from Kant to Nietzsche, represents in a remarkable way this dual effort of reduction.

Hegel's philosophy is perhaps the culminating point of thought, developed in the former of these two meanings, the intellectualist. Here the concept of truth and rationality is extended *ad infinitum*, as it were, by means of a transcendent logic, in such a way as to embrace the whole of the real and the whole of the possible. The individual, the free, the contingent, and even chance are not denied, but are considered as instruments, which disappear and fall back into a state of nonentity once they have played their part in the realization of the absolute.

In this system, science is the one prominent form of all that is. Not only does everything depend on science; this latter is, at bottom, the first being and the principle of things. To enter into possession of science is, so to speak, to occupy the place of God himself in the universe.

Unless I am mistaken, something of this conception of truth and science is met with in the idea represented by the Academy of Sciences of Berlin. It is called *Akademie der Wissenschaften* and claims to embrace the essence of art and literature as well as of the real sciences; life and action, as well as speculation and theory. Since its motto is, "Apart from science there is nothing solid or substantial," such an institution as the French Academy, for instance, whose function it is to work at the preservation and improvement of our language, confining its activities to the tactful discernment of the use of the language by well-bred people, would be valueless in its eyes; only the opinion of specialists can, and necessarily does, impose respect. The capital distinction we set up between science and literature, between the mathematical and the intuitive mind, is here reduced to a simple specific difference. The genus science, *Wissenschaft*, is subdivided into two species: the sciences of nature, or physical and mathematical sciences; and the sciences of culture, or philosophical and historical sciences.

What are we to think of such a reduction of will to intellect?

Undoubtedly everything, in a sense, may

be an object of science. The human mind actually taxes its ingenuity in inventing methods which will enable it to subject to scientific investigation the very things which, from their nature, would seem as though they must escape such investigation. A science, however determined to see things as they are and not as it desires to depict them, should be moulded on reality, and not impose on this latter its own rules. In setting itself up as a sole and necessary model of all that is, in decreeing that the formulæ of intelligibility are the principles of being, that there is no difference between the scientifically rational and the real, and that the former is the measure of the latter, science declares itself unable faithfully to explain and grasp such parts or aspects of reality as do not come within its scope.

Now, the notions which play a part in our life as human beings include those of individuality, free will, real and effectual action. We conceive of human events, undoubtedly, as connected with one another and dependent on the sum total of natural phenomena, but also as susceptible of manifesting personal initiative, thought and effort, and as therefore possessed of a certain value and influence.

The intellectualist system leaves nothing remaining of this element of the real. It sees only a crude phenomenon which must be properly explained, and its method of explanation consists in proving that this phenomenon is pure illusion. In this system, the science of culture, as well as that of nature, reduces the individual to the universal, the contingent to the necessary. From this standpoint, the individual can be no more than an appearance, devoid of reality. The degree of rationality, perfection and reality of a being is in inverse ratio to the amount of individuality it either contains or seems to contain.

True being, thus crippled by science, might well say to this latter what Goethe's Faust said to the Spirit of the Earth:

> " Du gleichst dem Geist, den du begreifst,
> Nicht mir !"
>
> (Thou art the peer of that spirit thou comprehendest,
> Not of me !)

Science, nevertheless, in its attempt to comprise the totality of being, has had its powers widened and diversified. This very widening is a source of weakness. In vain does it strive to maintain on equal terms two types of science: the mathematico-physical and the historical. This is a quite natural distinction

when science does not claim to see things as they are in themselves and forgoes all claim to lord it over them. Science, then, is like a familiar language into which we are translating something written in a foreign one. If difficulties are encountered, we try to make our own language more flexible so as to model the translation after the text; we do not modify the text so as to make it easier to translate. But if science is regarded as an absolute entity whose laws are imperative upon reality, that is quite a different matter. Depending on itself alone, it aims solely at attaining to the most logical and coherent form possible. Now, the fundamental idea of science is the reduction of the heterogeneous to the homogeneous, of the divergent to the identical. But if, from this point of view, we compare together the mathematico-physical type of scientific knowledge and the historical type, we cannot fail to see that the latter is for more imperfect than the former, far less conformable to the scientific ideal. History considers facts which are never reproduced without some modification, *ἅπαξ γιγνόμενα*; at most it sets up between these facts some particular relations of causality, without being able to claim that it has discovered those

general relations which are called laws. Hence it follows that, from the standpoint of an absolute science, the historical form of science can only be regarded as provisional, and that the physico-mathematical sciences alone are susceptible of perfection. The historical sciences, therefore, cannot claim to retain their distinctive character indefinitely; sooner or later they must be included in the physical sciences.

What does this mean but that the degree of reality guaranteed to the moral world by the supposed irreducibility of history to physics disappears in a philosophy which develops to the uttermost the doctrine of science as a primary and absolute entity? History, as a radically distinct science, was the affirmation of the reality of spirit, at least as a finality, a possible march towards the ideal. The reducibility of history to physics means that finality is declared illusory, that matter with its purely mechanical determinism is announced as the only true reality existing in the universe.

Such is the final word of the philosophy whose self-appointed task is to reduce certitude to truth, will to intellect, ethics to science, the subjective to the objective. It

ends in simply doing away with everything connected with such notions as individuality, liberty, personality, spirit, consciousness, soul, beauty, morality; it leaves remaining only a world that is strictly material.

In his dialogue *Philebus*, Plato long ago warned us how impossible it was to accept the principles of physics as a fitting explanation of the real world. " To understand our universe," he said, " it is not sufficient to regard it as something infinite and something finite—*i.e.*, matter and number; there is also needed the recognition of the existence of a cause which is the governing factor in its ordering. And this cause must be intelligent and wise, consequently living and dowered with a soul. Therefore thou mayst confidently affirm that, in Jupiter's nature *qua* cause, there dwells a royal soul."

In other terms, truth, if it is to possess that excellence we have every right to attribute to it, must not be conceived of as a thing, a purely objective reality, wherein all life and consciousness would become lost. The subjective, also, is a principle. Truth wills to be grasped, comprehended and affirmed by a living spirit which endeavours to regulate its action by that of the first being itself. To

know is to unite oneself in heart and thought with the creator.

It is therefore useless to try to overcome the dualism of intellect and will by reducing will to intellect. But we might succeed better in removing the antimony by attempting to reduce truth to certitude, intellect to will. This path, too, has been pursued by eminent philosophers, mainly Germans, like Fichte, who regards will as the root of the not-self as well as of the self, of perception as well as of effort; Schopenhauer, who sees in the world as idea an illusion and a hindrance, from which the world as will, which is its principle, tends to free itself; Nietzsche, who seeks the ideal form of existence in an omnipotent will, superior to all law.

This doctrine may be interpreted broadly, will being placed in the foreground, since it is the most characteristic element of our conscious life. Speaking generally, then, it is interior activity, *die Innerlichkeit*, as German philosophers say, that is conceived as alone possessing worth and efficacy of its own. From it alone spring certitude, being, and truth itself. The objective does not exist *per se:* it is the form with which intellect clothes the

subjective, so as to construct for itself a mirror wherein its activity may be reflected upon itself in such a way as to exist not only in but for itself. It is reduced to a system of symbols which, to acquire their true significance, must be rethought by a living intellect, and by it retranslated into life, action and will. According to this view, certitude is the mother of truth. The latter is but the intellectual formula of the will's fixed resolve to affirm itself.

A profound doctrine, assuredly, and one calculated to keep in constant tension the spring of the will. In the case of a Fichte, truth is not a fruit hanging from the tree of science and ready to be plucked. We must create it within ourselves, as it were, by personal effort. Only by willing can we think; the very rule of our thoughts is an act of will. Im Anfang war die Tat.

What is the value of this doctrine?

It does not really profess to despise the fixed and determined ideas by which the mind seeks to understand the objective, uniform and stable side of the universe. Fichte himself wrote: " Die Formel ist die grösste Wohltat für den Menschen " (A formula is the greatest of benefits for mankind). All determinate expression of truth, however, in this system,

is a simple stage which the spirit strives to transcend, in an endeavour to consider truth immediately at its source. Truth is strictly itself only within the untrammelled will in which it creates itself. When Goethe's Mephistopheles, in his pact with Faust, asks him for a written and signed engagement, Faust replies:

" Auch was Geschriebnes forderst du, Pedant ?
Hast du noch keinen Mann, nicht Mannes-Wort gekannt ? . . .
Das Wort erstirbt schon in der Feder."

(What ! thou also requirest something written, pedant ? Hast thou never had dealings with a man, a man's word ? . . . No sooner does the word pass into the pen than it expires.)

This theory of Faust is but the application of the doctrine of interiority. Here the visible, tangible, definite expression of the voluntary act is conceived as of value only in the eyes of pedants and dishonourable people. A man of superior mind despises and tears up the written engagements he himself has signed: he expects his word to be sufficient.

A bold claim, assuredly ! Pascal would have regarded it as beyond the power of any human being; it is dangerous for men, he said, to insist on playing the angel: they risk falling

lower than humanity itself. The written formula is clear, lasting and fixed, capable of being interpreted in the same way by everybody. But however strong and sincere, however clear be the innermost decision of the will in the eyes of the one who has made that decision, it could manifest these characteristics to others only if men were capable of direct spiritual communication with one another. As such mystic communication cannot be realized in this world of ours, those men who are recommended not to take written engagements seriously are incapable of gauging the meaning and value of the promise given to them. In practice, an engagement made by a man who refuses to bind himself is regarded as a sign that he despises all engagements.

True, the supreme value of sincerity will be alleged; but, then, there are two ways of being sincere. The man who speaks and acts in conformity with his caprice, his passion, or his arbitrary will, believes himself to be sincere though he is not so in reality, because he has neglected to ask himself if this superficial will conforms with the universal law which his inmost conscience makes imperative upon him. There is no effective sincerity apart from an effort to bring oneself into harmony with one's

best self, with that which bends the knee to truth alone.

However subtle be the reasonings employed to advocate the doctrine of interiority as the sole principle of thought and action, it will never succeed in coming within the category of truth. This latter possesses a determinateness and a fixity, a complete and finite character and a distinctive existence, which are to be met with neither in the symbols by which intellect attempts to picture to itself the action of will, nor in this will itself.

The truth, then, offered us by this doctrine is not the truth which men respect and worship. That deeply hidden and interior will which, from what we are told, seems to be its source, is as obscure as it is profound. It is something essentially mysterious, indefinable, unknowable. There is nothing in common between this will and the formulæ by which we attempt to picture it ourselves. Where would be the resemblance in a portrait if the original had neither form nor colour ?

In practice, then, the manner in which the interior life of the spirit will be expressed is immaterial. Works are nothing; faith is everything. A maxim is good and true if it is accepted with a sense of conviction, if the

will recognizes in it its own tendency. All the rules of the true, the good, and the beautiful which classic reason has attempted to set up are ineffectual. These rules, in the philosophy of interiority, are but the substitution of the letter for the spirit, of inertia for liberty, of death for life. The original creation alone, drawing its principle from the absolute will is beautiful and productive. All works that are original and not imitative, however strange, are true and worthy to be set up for the admiration of men; but every work to the production of which the observance of some rule has contributed is, for that very reason, shallow and lifeless.

Thus deformed and debased is the concept of truth, in the doctrine which reduces intellect to will by making of the former the principle of fixed and objective forms, and of the latter the principle of the interior life. But we may inquire if this doctrine is really a term at which the philosopher's effort at reduction can stop.

Will, in this system, is not conceived in any strict fashion. It is contrasted with intellect, conceived as the form of static and motionless order; it vaguely contains within itself, however, a certain tendency or law of develop-

ment which determines its movement and causes it to become objective in a certain way. Fichte regarded will as containing a transcendental logic and a rhythmic progress which were to supply it with a body. It is from this ill-defined blend of will and intellect that there results the strange property, inherent in Fichtean liberty, of necessarily realizing and developing oneself in a certain way. The reduction of the intellectual to the voluntary, however, is but incompletely effected if will, which we take as principle, remains in some way intellect. Man's natural taste for clarity and simplicity, the general tendency of doctrines to reveal, more and more distinctly, their original principle, have led the philosophy of interiority to assume a simpler and more distinct form which, in truth, Fichte himself would not have recognized.

In the doctrine of interiority, will bears within itself a law of development which, of itself, produces intellect, and which, indeed, is also something intellectual. A genuine will should be free from this foreign element. Strictly speaking, it should will only itself, set itself up as alone absolute and supreme being, and conceive all other beings as instruments of its own activity. Now, thus emanci-

pated and free to become, as fully as possible, what it virtually is, it can offer itself but one object: power. The true voluntarist system is that which reduces both intellect and the so-called moral will to the will turned wholly towards itself—*i.e.*, towards force and nothing else.

This is the final expression of the system which identifies truth with certitude. Against this doctrine there is no longer any valid argument. A certitude which admits no other standard of value than force is, by its very definition, not amenable to reason. It might well take for its motto La Fontaine's famous line:

" La raison du plus fort est toujours la meilleure."

How are we to refute a man who declares: " I believe only in force, and I am the stronger "?

But once a man has reached this point of view, it will be useless for him to attempt to attach any kind of a meaning to the word: truth. In vain will he form an idea of force as something that has to produce, of itself, not only a physical, but a moral order of things: peace, organization, civilization. The whole of this development is, from the

outset, powerless to realize the idea of truth; because, after all, such development is but the multiplication of force, and between force and truth there is a difference of nature. Truth is true, even though misunderstood, scoffed at and prostituted. Its inherent right remains, even though it be devoid of the force necessary to command respect. Instead of taking force for granted and being able to exist only by its means, the culture whose object is the true and the beautiful rises over against force, and consents to make room for it in its own domain only in so far as force has been made tractable in the service of right.

If, then, the doctrine of force defies refutation, it is because it has destroyed everything on its path. *Ubi solitudinem faciunt, pacem appellant.* What remains of that which the world calls civilization, morality, kindness, humanity, once a man has wholly given himself up to elementary forces which destroy indifferently withered leaves and human lives, shapeless stones and the most sacred monuments of history and art?

Hence, what is the worth of this certitude which considers itself to be irreducible because it has an invincible belief in force alone? It is really nothing less than fathomless arro-

gance, a sort of challenge flung at reason and truth. Is it possible that man should renounce his own nature to such an extent as to abdicate in favour of force, however great?

III.

To sum up, neither the separation of certitude from truth, nor the reduction of the one to the other, appears admissible. What do we mean by this? Is it one of those problems which are more readily solved by ignoring than by answering them?

Perhaps the only thing to do would be to confess ourselves beaten in our effort to understand; and, in answering this question, to appeal to the common-sense of practical life, if we had tried all the ways that lie before us. But have we done so?

Up to this point, in treating the subject, we have mainly examined German philosophy. Now, this philosophy, in its principal representatives, in Kant as in Hegel, in Fichte as in Nietzsche, possesses one very remarkable trait which differentiates it from most of the rest. It eliminates feeling, or at all events reduces it to a subordinate rôle. What Kant inserts between understanding and will, under

the name of judgment (*Urteilskraft*), is no more than a system of categories, an intellectual apparatus. Unquestionably, Fichte regards Rousseau's philosophy as noble and salutary, though only on condition we assign to will the part that Rousseau assigned to feeling. Nietzsche professes to despise sensibility, pity, humanity, which, according to him, enervate the will. In the problem with which we are now dealing, what would happen if, following the example of most men and in conformity with classic traditions, we were to give feeling a place by the side of will and intellect in the production of certitude and the appreciation of truth ?

There is a doctrine called pragmatism in considerable vogue at the present time, and advocated by eminent thinkers, mainly English and American philosophers. It appears to regard feeling as the common principle of certitude and truth. According to this philosophy, the *ultima ratio* which enables us to regard a maxim as true is that this maxim, if put into practice, works satisfactorily, brings to pass events that please us and fulfil our expectation.

The satisfaction we feel, say the pragmatists, is the principle of certitude, since it

gives us confidence in the maxim we have put to the test. Thus, a man's good services induce us to have faith in him, make us certain that he is our friend. At the same time, this satisfaction is the principle of truth itself; for if we seek the common element in all those various propositions we qualify as true, we find nothing but the property of keeping the promise they involve and of affording contentment to the mind. Physical truths are truths because by taking them as guides in our relations with the outer world we find ourselves in harmony with that world. Mathematical truths are truths because their demonstration gives us a sense of the harmonious and free expression of intellect.

There is considerable merit in this theory, since, from the outset, it deals with the world of realities. It must be confessed that intellect, of itself alone, only attains to abstractions. And will is but a lawless force, affirming its resolve to impose itself. Feeling is reality, as it appears at first, before undergoing any artificial elaboration. Now, the philosophy which tries to discover in feeling the principle of certitude and truth has been called radical empiricism.

Since feeling is, in a way, reality itself, it

must be to our advantage to study certitude and truth from the standpoint of feeling. We shall thus succeed in restoring soul and life to feeling, whereas German intellectualism or voluntarism strive to eliminate them from it.

All the same, this system solves the difficulty in too summary a fashion. What exactly is that sense of satisfaction which, according to the pragmatists, should be the sole principle of the notions of truth and certitude?

Taken alone, feeling is but a fact, an indisputable one, assuredly, from the empirical point of view, and more certainly real than any philosophic system, though all the same powerless, in theory, to establish certitude and truth.

If I seek to define the precise kind of satisfaction it is advisable to set up as a fundamental principle, I destroy the system. Indeed, if I say: every proposition which does not deceive our expectation is true, is it not as though I said: every proposition which faithfully states a law of nature, which conforms to truth as conceived by our understanding, is true? And if I say: I declare myself certain when the satisfaction I feel dwells in the loftiest part of my being, do I

not presuppose the intervention of a will which chooses a certain form of existence and is satisfied when it attains its object ?

Lack of precision or a vicious circle: pragmatism finds considerable difficulty in avoiding this dual danger.

It must be recognized that will and intellect are really principles themselves, that they should be considered as existing *per se*, and not as simple modifications of feeling. Intellect seeks truth as something which is, and which is only if it possesses the character of eternity. Will is not something given: it is a power which realizes itself only by creating, and which, if it ceased to act, would also cease to be. Will and intellect, according to this view, are first and irreducible principles, radically distinct from each other.

And yet each of these two faculties needs the other for its fitting development. The certitude, to which will tends, will be but obstinacy and fanaticism unless determined by the possession of truth. And truth, the object of intellect, would be devoid of life and interest, a crude fact, a blind and gloomy necessity, if it were not action, the life of an excellent will. God, said Aristotle, is eternal life: ζωὴ ἀίδιος.

But how will these two heterogeneous principles be able to participate in each other? In proportion as will allows itself to be determined by intellect, does it not abdicate the very liberty which forms its essence? And in proportion as intellect, in giving way to will, accepts the idea of a created truth, does it not prove false to itself? At that rate, intellect and will might repeat to each other Ovid's line:

"Nec sine te nec tecum vivere possum."

Is this antinomy one that cannot be solved? It seems as though it would disappear if, instead of recognizing no other primordial realities than intellect and will, we equally, and on the same grounds, admit the reality and rôle of feeling.

Alone in presence of each other, intellect and will can make no attempt at mingling and interpenetration without mutual diminution and crippling. Undoubtedly, force and science are capable of uniting; but what remains of will in brute force, and how is the life of intellect to be reduced to scientific mechanism? Now, if we admit that intellect and will are linked to each other by feeling, we can conceive that they may grow and

become enriched through their mutual relations without being faithless to their respective principles. Feeling transforms abstract ideas into motives and interests, and the latter influence the will without compromising its personal and living character. By giving a body and a communicable essence to the inner determinations of will, feeling also gives to intellect the fixed centres and the ends it needs for the avoidance of dilettantism and sophistry.

Thus life, soul and feeling being intercalated, as an original and first principle, between certitude and truth, these two meet again without clashing with each other. Truth creates certitude in the will, because, instead of being separated from this latter, it receives from it, through the medium of feeling, life and direction, without which it would be only a chaos of abstract possibilities. And certitude is something more than fanaticism and the infatuation of an arrogant will, because it does not rest on itself, but finds, in truth translated into feeling, the appropriate matter which it needs to be fully realized.

Of themselves alone, will and intellect would be incapable of acting on each other. Each of them, however, acts on feeling and submits

to its influence; it is through feeling, then, that they have communication. Hence, all effective certitude participates in truth, and all concrete truth participates in certitude.

It is interesting to consider the significance of this doctrine in the light both of science and of practical life.

We readily picture to ourselves the sciences as being less and less inadequate expressions of a truth apart from ourselves, ready-made and unchanging, a truth which has only to be exposed, just as one unearths a hidden treasure. And, seen from without, science appears to answer to this definition. It first accumulates facts—*i.e.*, data conceived as purely objective; then it applies itself to reducing these facts to mathematical formulæ—*i.e.*, to quantities exactly transformable into one another. And mathematics in turn seems to resolve itself into logic—*i.e.*, into the art of eliciting from a given proposition all the consequences of which it admits.

It must be recognized that such is the aspect of the science which regards itself as complete, and is transferred from mind to mind by the method of teaching. But in the men of genius who create it, science brings other principles into play. Strictly scientific facts neither are

nor can be given, in the exact meaning of the word. The scientist must build them up by ingeniously combining intuitions which can really never be free from all conceptual admixture, with principles of choice and elaboration which the spirit should seek within itself. The scientist endeavours to apprehend the creative work of nature; consequently, he seeks in nature for thought, life, creation.

Does he ever fully succeed in reducing the data of experience to quantities, the phenomena of nature to mathematical elements? This remains doubtful. Still, even were such reduction possible, there would be good reason to inquire whether mathematics has really for its object an inert thing which need only be analyzed in order to be known. The geometrician who truly advances science is in reality dominated by æsthetic feelings as well as by logical considerations. He tries to translate into formulæ living harmonies, which spring up from the depths of his soul: *ἁρμονίη ἀφανὴς φανερῆς κρείττων**; the truth seen by his intellect is also a certitude, freely included in his will.

And, lastly, logic itself, to which certain philosophers would like to reduce mathe-

* Heraclitus.

matics, rests on postulates whose terms and formation can only be explained by attributing them to the action of a will which affirms its existence and maintains it through all the oppositions with which it meets.

Thus the distinctive form of science is undoubtedly as rigorously intellectual as possible, but the truth which science seeks to know is not exclusively scientific. This truth is being itself, and the observation of the way in which science comes about shows that being is both a given reality and a living power of creation. Science states and formulates the result of universal creation, in so far as this result offers a certain character of fixity, uniformity and unity.

Nor is practical life less enlightened than the philosophy of science by a correct appreciation of the relations between certitude and truth. Neither the idea of duty, nor that of a value inherent in the works which form its composition, can be abandoned. But between these two terms there must be the possibility of the conception of some relation. My conviction must bear upon a truth, and the truth offered me must touch me and prove adaptable by my will.

Now, these conditions are realizable if will

and intellect are linked together by feeling, and these three powers form a kind of trinity in which the whole is both one and multiple, each being at the same time both itself and the others. Ethics, too, without incurring the risk of fanaticism, may raise ever higher the rôle of will, conviction and the idea of duty in human conduct. No longer is will a selfish and brutal despot if its action both can and must be, at the same time, feeling and intellect. In this respect, philosophy justifies common-sense, which declares that it is absurd to trample humanity under foot for the purpose of realizing the human ideal.

The doctrine to which we have been led possesses this advantage above all others: it supplies a solid groundwork for a virtue which people vie with one another in extolling, but cannot justify philosophically: tolerance. If ethics were a science on the same level as physics, how could it admit of tolerance? Should we tolerate the denial of the law governing the fall of bodies? And if ethics were exclusively a matter of personal conviction, how could one require an absolutely convinced man to respect convictions opposed to his own? Should we attempt to force him to deny the principle of contradiction?

But if every deep certitude, linked on to a feeling and an idea, has thereby to some extent its roots in truth and reality, and if every truth, especially every practical truth, offers itself to the adhesion of will through the attraction of feeling, it is manifestly unjust as well as ineffectual to persecute and regard as dishonourable one who thinks differently from ourselves. In the first place, that there may not be some degree of truth in his conviction is unlikely. Then, again, in convincing a contradictor, account should necessarily be taken of the original power which binds will to intellect—*i.e.*, feeling. Μηδενὶ μηδεμίαν εἶναι παίδευσιν παρὰ τοῦ μὴ ἀρέσκοντος (One can learn nothing from a man against whom one has a feeling of antipathy), said Xenophon. The heart has a rôle to play, as well as the intellect and the will in all moral or mental education the object of which is to permeate the whole man and not simply deck him out in a certain costume. If men look upon the heart, as well as the intellect and the will, as an essential and very noble part of our nature, they will not be content to tolerate one another but will sincerely endeavour to unite and work together for the purpose of realizing as widely

as possible their own distinctive work, the work of humanity. And, whilst remaining men, they will not betray the cause of the ideal.

*Ὡς χαρίεν ἐστ' ἄνθρωπος, ὅταν ἄνθρωπος ᾖ,**

(How pleasing a thing is man, when he is truly man!)

* Menander.

THE EVOLUTION OF GERMAN THOUGHT

It is a cruel fate to be reduced to talk and philosophize whilst the destinies of France are being decided on the battle-field. Where, at such a time, are we to obtain the mental detachment necessary for correct analysis, and for the right choice of word or phrase? Still, perhaps the repugnance we feel is misplaced, for the war now being waged is something more than the clash of material forces. The France of the Crusades, of Joan of Arc, and of the Revolution, faithful to her past, is fighting for ideas, for the higher interests of mankind. The armies of the Republic are struggling for justice, the right of nations, the civilization of antiquity and of Christianity, against a Power which recognizes no right but force, and claims to impose its laws and culture on the whole world.

The intimate union of action and thought, valour and reflection, is a dominant char-

acteristic of the mental state of our soldiers. We all notice it. The young men whose studies I have the honour to direct, who but a few months ago were wholly devoted to scientific or literary research, now forward to me, during a halt between two battles, letters in which they philosophize, after the fashion of Plato's characters, on the connection between infantry and artillery, on trench war in general. Let us also reflect and consider the moral aspects of the events taking place. Thus shall we maintain that fellowship of ideas and feelings with our dear combatants for which we ardently long.

German thought: how indispensable it is that we should know and understand it well if we would faithfully interpret the facts of the war, its causes, the way in which our enemies are conducting it, and the results at which we must aim! The task is no easy one, for opinions on the question are strangely divergent.

Because of the extraordinary methods pursued from the outset by our enemies—scorn of treaties, conventions and laws, massacre of women and children, regulated and futile incendiarism, systematic destruction, unreasoning bombardment of the sanctuaries of

religion and science, of art and national life—some have attributed it all to a sudden fit of madness or of collective insanity. How could the Germany of Goethe and Beethoven, except as the result of a pathological aberration, delight in cruelty and barbarism?

Deeper inquiry was made into the history of German thought, and we were amazed to find that, long before the war, German writings and actions showed tendencies quite in conformity with the excesses of to-day. For some time past, German philosophers and historians have been teaching the cult of force. German thinkers deified the Prussian State and the German nation, looking upon other nations as destined, by Providence itself, to be dominated by Germany.

Going farther and farther back into the past, certain minds imagined that the germs of this pride and brutality were to be found even in the most ancient representatives of German mentality. They came to this conclusion: Germany has not changed; she has always been, in tendency if not in actuality, just as we see her to-day. Where we regarded her as different, she was simply prevented by circumstances from showing her true character.

The Germans also declare that they have not changed. They affirm that they are still the idealists, the apostles of duty, the devotees of art, science and metaphysics, the privileged guardians of high culture symbolized by the illustrious names of their thinkers and artistes. "We shall carry through this war," exclaimed the official representatives of German science and art, addressing themselves to the whole world in October 1914, "to the very end, as being the war of a people of culture, to whom the heritage of a Goethe, a Beethoven, a Kant, is as sacred as their home and country." And if it seems to us that the genius of Goethe did not need the support of Prussian militarism for the purpose of winning the world's admiration, or that the way in which the Germans are now carrying on war is unworthy of a civilized nation, then such judgment simply proves that we cannot understand German thought, and that our bad faith is on a level with our ignorance and imbecility.

Even in these days of trial, unique in our history, as we listen to the wounded and the refugees telling us of the horrors they have witnessed, and remember the bombardment of cathedrals and unfortified towns, let us not

forget, in this attempt to define German thought, that France is the country of Descartes, the philosopher who taught us that everything great and progressive in civilization, even all the virtues, are illusory, unless based on inviolable respect for truth.

I.

Let us take a general view and try to unveil the main aspects of German thought in modern times.

In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the general character of German life is particularism, a parcelling out, an absence of national soul. The Treaty of Westphalia was an effect as well as a cause. So persistent was this character that Goethe, in that luminous and far-seeing vision of the German soul concealed beneath the pleasant idyll of *Hermann and Dorothea*, shows us, at the beginning of the wars of the Revolution, the inhabitants of a small town on the right bank of the Rhine bringing succour and help to the fugitives without ever reflecting whether there existed any other bond between themselves and these unhappy beings than that which unites together all human creatures.

" How deserted the town is !" says the innkeeper of the *Golden Lion* to his wife. " How everybody has rushed out to watch the fugitives pass by ! What will not curiosity do !" (*Was die Neugier nicht tut !*). The inhabitants of each town, content with their local occupations, attached to their own customs, disposed to be self-centred and to look upon the inhabitants of neighbouring towns as strangers, know no other fatherland than their own district.

Still, this narrow life is far from being the only one offered us by Germany at this period. By a remarkable contrast, along with a restricted external life there is found an inner life of strange amplitude and profundity. The connection is not easy to grasp between these two existences, the one visible, the other invisible; they seem to be two personalities co-existing in one and the same consciousness.

Such is the religious life of a Luther, so intense and ardent, but the characteristic of which is a veritable breach of continuity between omnipotent faith and works which are wholly ineffective from the point of view of salvation. In the artistic, philosophic and poetic order, great minds, admired even at the present time by the whole world, create

original works, the common feature of which is perhaps the effort to grasp and reveal the divine, primal, and infinite source of things.

"Wo fass' ich dich, unendliche Natur?" (Where can I lay hold on thee, infinite nature?) exclaims Goethe's Faust, stifling in the prison, all crowded with dust-covered pamphlets, and shut out from the light of heaven, in which scholasticism has buried him.

Goethe discerns the ideal hidden away beneath the real, and sees the real gradually mould itself upon this ideal the more it comes under the influence of divine love:

> "Das Ewig-Weibliche
> Zieht uns hinan."
>
> (Self-devoting love, the eternal feminine, draws us away to the heights.)

Thus ends the tragedy of Faust, the German Titan.

"All artistic creation," said Beethoven, "comes from God and relates to man only in so far as it witnesses to the action of the divine within him."

The trend of the German mind during this period is the sense of dependence of the finite on the infinite. Man is capable of transcend-

ing himself by submitting to the influence of absolute being. The German word *Hingebung* well expresses this state of mind.

During this same period the Germans investigate and adopt, without thinking it possible for them to forfeit anything thereby, what they regard as good in the ideas of other people. " There was a time," writes Kant, " when I imagined that science, of itself alone, could sum up the whole of human dignity, and I despised an unscientific people. Rousseau led me back into the right track. The prestige of science faded away; I am learning to honour humanity worthily, and I should regard myself as more useless than the meanest artisan, did I not henceforth use such knowledge as I possess in re-establishing the rights of mankind." Such a sentiment does not stand alone; at that time German thinkers willingly accepted suggestions (*Anregungen*), that came from other countries.

The German soul was still divided in this way between two separate worlds—the world of phenomena as Kant calls it, a shapeless inert mass, and the world of noumena, a transcendent domain of the spiritual and the ideal—when there took place those great events of the end of the eighteenth and the

beginning of the nineteenth centuries: the Revolution and the Empire.

The extreme depression in which Germany found herself after Jena effected a powerful reaction in certain minds which professed admiration for the Prussian State. The famous "Speeches to the German Nation" which Fichte delivered before the University of Berlin during the winter 1807-08, when the capital was still occupied by the French, are the most remarkable expression of this reaction. Luther had said: "What matters it if they take everything from us, property and honour, children and women; these things will not benefit them. The Empire must remain ours." Fichte introduces the revelation which is to turn this prediction into a reality. The thing he announces is that the supreme principle of creation and unity which the German mind sought in some transcendental world without really dwells within itself, that the absolute self, the source of all activity, thought and being in the universe, is none other than the German self, the German genius, the *Deutschheit*, the kingdom of God within.

The character of the German tongue, which alone is pure, primitive and living, as compared with the Latin tongues, made up of dead

residua, is the sign and warrant of the quality of a primitive people, the first-born of God—*Urvolk*. Germany, compared with other nations, is spirit, life, and good, struggling against matter, death, and evil. Let Germany but attain to self-knowledge, and she will rise and overcome the world.

The first thing is to understand that "for the time being the combat of arms is over, and the combat of principles, morals and characters is beginning." It is a moral reform that is to bring about the resurrection of Germany.

The revolution that is to be effected comprises two phases. First, the German people must recover possession of itself—*i.e.*, become aware of the primitive and autonomous power of creation which constitutes its essence. Secondly, it must spread German thought throughout the world—the self, in some way, must absorb the not-self—and thus effect a complete transformation of the human race, which, from being terrestrial and material, will become German, free and divine.

Such is Fichte's teaching. It aroused in the German soul the loftiest ambitions for independence and action, though it supplied few indications as to the concrete ends to pursue

and the means to employ in realizing these ends. These gaps were filled, from the theoretical point of view, by Hegel, the principle of whose philosophy was the radical identity of the rational and the real, the ideal and the positive.

Spirit, to Hegel, is not only an invisible, supernatural power; it has created for itself a world within this world of ours, and attains to supreme realization in a certain force, both material and spiritual, which is none other than what is called the State. The State is the highest of all realities; above it in the world of existence there is nothing. Its function is to organize liberty—*i.e.*, to abolish individual wills and transform them into one common will, which, through its mass and unity of direction, will be capable of making itself inevitable. The State, supreme intermediary between the World and God, spirit being transmuted into force, is the divine instrument for the realization of the ideal.

But how will this immanent God account for his concrete destinies and the precise ends towards which he must tend ? Hegel answers this question by his philosophy of history. History, he teaches, is not the recital of events that have marked out the lives of human

beings; it is a reality which exists *per se*, the work wrought in the world by universal spirit, destroying those creations of the human free will of which it disapproves, and maintaining and causing to triumph those of which it approves. *Weltgeschichte Weltgericht* (The world's history is the world's tribunal). The victors and the powerful of this world are the elect of God. Hegel, having lost his fortune during the wars of the Empire, summed up his impressions regarding this period in the words: " Ich habe die Weltseele reiten sehen " (I have seen the soul of the world ride past)—referring to Napoleon.

Thus there is no obscurity regarding the moral value of the various existing institutions and the divers ends in view. That State is the noblest and the strongest, that policy is the loftiest, which acquires empire.

Imbued with these theories, which became increasingly positive and definite, the Germans, after Leipzig, Waterloo and the treaties of 1815, were anything but satisfied. The Genius of history, in the year 9 B.C., by making Hermann victorious over the three legions of Varus, had inspired in all of German race the idea of eternal vengeance on Roman insolence.

Germany became more and more conscious that her material power was out of all proportion to her spiritual greatness and aspirations. The admiration which the world professed for her philosophers, poets and musicians, the wide-spread influence of her thought in the nineteenth century, was now but a vain delusion; she must have visible force and power, dominion over land and sea. This mental condition was expressed by Heine in the following four lines, which were speedily in everyone's mouth, and which, in a country where maxims possess great influence, still further increased the desire for vengeance and conquest:

> "Franzosen und Russen gehört das Land,
> Das Meer gehört den Britten:
> Wir aber besitzen im Luftreich des Traums
> Die Herrschaft unbestritten."

(The French and the Russians possess the land, the sea belongs to the English. But we Germans in the aerial realm of dreamland hold undisputed sway.)

Now, whilst German ambitions thus became more and more urgent and precise, especially as regards the situation regained by France, it came about that three successful campaigns, those of 1864, 1866, and 1870, suddenly, and as it were miraculously, raised Germany to the

very front rank amongst the military and political powers of the world. What influence was this to have on German thought?

After the reconstitution of the German Empire, or rather the creation of a unified empire, armed more powerfully than ever before against her neighbours, Germany was not content to exist for herself alone; she speedily transformed Fichte's thought along the lines of the change that had taken place within herself. To realize in all its fulness the idea of Germanism, to regenerate the world by bringing it to pass that the divine will should be done amongst the nations as it was in the elect people—such was German thought. No longer, however, as with Fichte, was it a question of substituting a strife of principles and morals for armed combat; actual events, as well as theory, had shown that force alone is practical in realizing things; consequently, it is by force that Germany must Germanize and recreate the world.

More than this, Leibnitz and Kant admitted that different nations, unlike in genius, had equal rights to existence. The cobbler philosopher, Jacob Boehme, had long before this time told men that God delights to hear each

bird of the forest praise him in its own particular melody. A victorious Germany, on the contrary, will regard German thought as exclusive of all other thought. To find room for Germanism, nowadays, means the destruction of that which, along the lines on which other nations think, appears incapable of being brought within the limits of German thought.

To determine these limits would involve an attempt to sketch the main traits of that culture in whose name Germany is now waging war.

The first object of German culture is force. The ideal without the real is but a misty vapour; moral beauty apart from power is but deception. Germany must acquire force so that she may, unhindered, unfold all her possibilities, and impose on the world her own culture, the superiority of which the various nations in their ignorance and conceit cannot of themselves recognize.

Besides, force, *per se*, is a fine and noble thing, which the weak deprecate only because they are afraid of it and cannot enrol it on their own side.

Force is superiority according to nature; this is a supreme and inviolable law. Force

is the principle of everything that exists in reality, and not simply in the abstract. It is the basis of all laws and contracts, and these become nothing when it is no longer there to sanction them.

Force is the basis of German culture. It is vain, declares the famous manifesto of the ninety-three "intellectuals," to claim that, in resisting our militarism, you respect our culture. "Had it not been for German militarism, German culture would long ago have disappeared from the face of the earth."

The second object of German culture is organization, without which there is no effective force. Organization is essentially German. The other nations believe in the efficacy of the solitary effort of a man of genius, or in the duty incumbent on the community to respect the dignity of each of its members. German organization, starting with the idea of the All, sees in each man a *Teilmensch*, a partial man; and, rigorously applying the principle of the division of labour, restricts each worker to the special task assigned to him. From man it eliminates humanity, which it regards as the wheelwork of a machine.

Hence, German education is something

essentially external. It is training and not education in the real meaning of the word—*Drill* not *Erziehung*. It teaches men to act as anonymous parts of ever greater masses. The bond between individuals, which, according to the Greeks and Romans, was reason, regarded as the common essence of all men (*ratio vinculum societatis*), is here purely external; it is the co-ordination of various functions with a view to the realization of a given end.

Organization, thus understood, is the means of acquiring force; it is also, in itself, according to German thought, the highest form of being. Thus it is the mission of Germany, having organized herself after her own ideas, to organize the whole world along similar lines. The kingdom of God on earth is the world organized, in German fashion, by German force.

The third element of German culture is science. This comprises all those methods which, by the appropriation of the forces of nature, multiply the force of man *ad infinitum*. Since 1870, applied science has been considerably developed in Germany. Technical institutes have now superseded the Universities in public esteem.

Science, however, as a whole, constitutes that title of honour which Germany specially values. German science is self-sufficient; it is the source from which all other science draws.

Besides, German science has characteristics of its own. German workers in physical sciences aim at co-ordinating the results obtained by workers all over the world. It is their mission to organize scientific research, as they do everything else; to state problems, classify results, and deduce conclusions. Science, in its strict meaning, is German science.

The physical sciences have their counterpart in the historical sciences, whose object it is to set each human event in the place that belongs to it in the whole. This task, also, can be perfectly accomplished only by Germany. She alone, indeed, can strip the individual of his own distinctive value and identify him with the all of which he forms a part. She herself is the great All, the realization of which is the end of this universe.

Such, then, are the characteristics of historical German science. Learned specialists, under the direction of a competent master, first collect documents, criticize texts and

develop their meaning. Then the German genius effects a synthesis—*i.e.*, sets forth each fact in the history of the progress of Germanism, this history being regarded as that of humanity. That the historian's attention may not be diverted to unimportant facts, the Kaiser recommends him to adopt the crab method, *Krebsgang—i.e.*, to proceed backwards, taking the present function of the Hohenzollerns in the world as the culminating fact of history, and going on to those facts which, even as far back as the creation of the world, have prepared and announced that phenomenon.

Force, organization, science: these are the three principles of German culture. The more they develop, the nobler a life do they make possible for the German people and for the world.

After 1870, material life in Germany became transformed to an extraordinary degree. The simple, modest habits of past generations were followed by an effort to live the most modern and luxurious life, to procure the maximum of wealth and enjoyment.

The arts date back to the forms most purely German, or even to the pre-classic forms of a hoary antiquity which, in their primitive

colossal character, are evidently indebted to the genius of Germany. Why, then, pretend to be sorry that masterpieces of French and Flemish art have been ruined, to no purpose, by German shells? To restore—and more than restore—their original beauty, they only need to be restored or rebuilt by German artists.

And, lastly, the *chef d'œuvre* of German culture, that which really, according to the Kaiser's definition, makes it a *Kultur*, and not simply an external polish, such as is found in the Latins, is the moral constitution of man, the total abolition of the idea of right, and its substitution by the sane, virile and religious idea of duty. The German is a man who obeys. He regards the whole of moral life as consisting in obedience to authority. From the German point of view, the man who obeys his superior is free from reproach, and this is so right up to the Emperor, who, as William the Second said in 1897, " is responsible to the Creator alone, without this awful responsibility ever being, in the slightest degree, shared either by ministers, assemblies, or people."

Every order given by a chief, or by a functionary, however inferior, emanates from the

Emperor—*i.e.*, from God. Hence we see how absurd was the use of the word "atrocity," to designate the conduct of German soldiers in the present war, as the Allies have had the audacity to do. The German soldiers are disciplined, above all else; consequently, their acts could never be branded as atrocious; they are deeds of war, the Emperor alone is responsible for them, and that before God alone.

II.

We have endeavoured to reveal some of the main traits of German thought during the three periods of the modern history of Germany. Let us now see what answer we can give to the question which everyone is asking: "What connection is there between the Germany of the present and the Germany of the past?"

We cannot say that Germany has not changed. It is contrary to fact either to claim, as the Germans do, that she remains faithful to the idealism of Kant, Beethoven, and Goethe, or to identify the Germany of these thinkers and artists with the vandalism which present-day Germany glories in exhibiting.

There can be no doubt of it: Germany *has* changed. Ever since 1870, anyone who has observed German life has seen this very clearly. Before that date, and especially before 1864, it was possible for a Frenchman to reside in Germany without his national dignity being assailed; after 1870 this was not so.

The dates 1806-1815 and 1864-1871 are clear demarcations of the new tendencies of German thought. The Germany to which Fichte appealed in 1807 still regarded herself as a nation amongst nations. Fichte taught that she was the " type " nation, the primitive race, the only one free from corruption, and whose mission it was to rule and regenerate the universe. What else can we see but a veritable moral revolution in the claim that Germany henceforth sets up: that she will suffice unto herself, whereas formerly she quietly submitted to foreign influence or obeyed divine inspiration ?

Fichte's speeches marked the advent of a spiritual Germanism; the wars of unification, as the Germans now call the three wars between 1864 and 1870, establish the transformation of this spiritual Germanism into a material Germanism. The war of 1870 ended

in the decisive conquest of Germany by Prussia, and the indefinite postponement of liberty in favour of unity and force.

That the transition from each of these phases to the next was not necessary and inevitable; that, from one to the other, Germany effected a veritable change, is proved by the part which certain external causes played in this unfolding.

Circumstances, assuredly, played at first a considerable part in the evolution that came about. Jena and Sedan are not two logical stages in the inner development of German thought. The influence of these two events was certainly decisive. Jena determined, in Germany, a reaction, of which, left to herself, she was incapable. Sedan made it definitely impossible for Germany to recover her independence.

Certain men, too, by the might of their personality, contributed to the evolution of German thought. Fichte electrified his listeners in 1807-08 by his energetic will even more than by his learned deductions. Bismarck plunged his nation and King into a war to which he gave historical significance by the way in which he provoked it, and the object he had in view. Treitschke, a converted

theorist of Prussian absolutism, was an orator of amazing passion and violence, as I verified for myself when I heard him in the large aula of Heidelberg University in 1869. Napoleon, above all, became a mythical hero substituted for the real man, a genius too great for the little nation to which he thought he belonged, the bearer of the Idea and of the very soul of the world, as Hegel said. Just as the French are the custodians of Latin thought, so the German people is the true heir and executor of the thought of Napoleon, the genius who, directly or indirectly, created German unity and dictated to Europe its task: that of driving back the barbarians of the East and ruining the merchants of the West. The soul of Napoleon is the soul of the German people: his star goes in front of the German armies and is to lead them to victory.

In a word, Germany is now largely the product of an external phenomenon—*i.e.*, of education. Ever since Fichte, education has been employed most methodically and energetically in moulding the human consciousness as well as the human body. Instruction of every kind, religion and history, grammar and geography, dancing and gymnastics, must contribute mainly in the moulding of Germans—

who speak and act, almost by reflex action—along the lines of an increase of German might. The examples given in grammar books inculcate scorn of the "hereditary foe." By playing with colours and the orthography of names, atlases annex countries which ought to belong to Germany. Historical treatises, in conformity with Fichte's theory, set forth the Latins as being Germans corrupted by an admixture of Roman blood. Philosophers still speak, in stereotyped fashion, of internal development, of the awakening of thought and personality. In fact, however, instruction is essentially a mechanical training; it aims at making men serviceable (*brauchbar*), by establishing the principle that the first end at which to aim is the creation of an enormous war-machine in which minds and arms unhesitatingly obey the word of command.

By instruction, collective action, books, speeches, songs and personal influence, attempts are made in Germany to inculcate certain doctrines. Cut-and-dry formulæ and speeches would appear to be more effective in this land than in any other. We are amazed to find exactly identical theories in the words and writings of Germans of every rank and locality.

We have seen that the change apparent in German thought ever since the seventeenth century is not imaginary and superficial, but real and profound. The Germany of to-day is quite a different Germany from that of Leibnitz and Kant, of Goethe and Beethoven.

Does this mean that there is no connection between the two, and that the contingent character of this development implies a complete breach of continuity ?

A profound analysis of Germany's intellectual and moral past proves that this is not so, but that, on the contrary, very characteristic germs of the mental state now manifest have long existed. The phase of thought that has come about has not been a metamorphosis, the substitution for one given being of an entirely new one; it has consisted in the increasingly exclusive unfolding of certain parts of the German character, which, in the past, were tempered by others. What was in the background has passed to the front, or even thrust back all the rest to such an extent that it now appears to exist alone. It is like some characteristic which, present in a child and attracting but little attention because it is of secondary importance, becomes exaggerated in the man under the

influence of circumstances and the will, and finally controls the entire nature.

It is assuredly strange that Germany has passed from worship of God to worship of herself. Scholars, however, have discovered in the German character, as it has revealed itself from the beginning, such a substratum of arrogance as we find few examples of in history. The Germans have a rare propensity for identifying their own interest with that of the universe, and their point of view with that of God. Hence that narrow and insolent dogmatism, which they themselves regard as an important trait in their character. "Do not forget," we read in a collection of poems intended for the German soldiers of 1914, "to put into practice that famous saying: Nur Lumpen sind bescheiden! (Only louts are modest)."

Not only in the German character generally, but also in the teachings of philosophers, is to be discovered a singular tendency to put the self, the German self, in the place of God.

German philosophy, along with Kant and Fichte, tends to regard those things which our simple good sense finds existing apart from ourselves as imaginary processes unconsciously performed by our intellectual powers. The

external world, says Kant, is an object constructed for himself by the subject, that he may become conscious of himself by contrasting himself with it. And Fichte adds that the self creates this object as a whole without borrowing anything from an external world which does not exist. When at Heidelberg in 1869, attending Zeller's lectures, I was amazed to hear the professor once begin with the words: "To-day we will construct God."

Is it any wonder that the mind which attributes to itself the power to construct God should come to regard itself as God; and since Fichte, after Jena, saw his transcendental deduction culminate in the conception of the German genius as a foundation of the absolute self, is it not logical that this philosopher should identify Germanism with Divine Providence?

Thus the present deification of Germanism is connected with the history and philosophy of Germany. It may seem a more difficult matter to discover in the idealistic Germany of the past the mother of the realistic, materialistic and brutal Germany of the present.

And yet it may be remarked that in German

thought the idea of power, force, war, destruction, and evil, has always held an important place. In vain did the old German god Wotan cause the death of Ymir, " the rime-cold giant "; in vain perished the giants of old, drowned in the blood of Ymir; one of them escaped death, and from him was born a new race of giants to fight the gods. On the other hand, it is with the various parts of the wicked giant Ymir's body that Wotan and his brothers built up the world. The powers of evil did not cease to haunt forests and deserted spots. The erlking, hiding in belts of clouds and in dry leaves, snatches away children from their fathers' arms.

Moreover, let us not forget that the Prussians were brought to Christianity only at the end of the thirteenth century, by Teutonic knights, who succeeded in reducing them only after fifty years of warfare. It is not to be wondered at if the pagan element tends to assert itself, and sometimes to represent the God of the Christ in a form that would be more suitable to the Moloch of the Phœnicians.

It would seem as though the teachings of the philosophers form a counterpart to these popular beliefs. In them we find evil occupy-

ing quite another place from that it holds in Greek teachings.

This line of thought starts with the principle, indisputable in itself, that to will the realization of an end is to will the means without which this realization is impossible. In the application of this principle, however, the Germans tended to admit that none but mechanical means, those forces which as a whole constitute matter, are efficacious; and that there is no effective potency in idea as such, in good-will, in justice or in love. Aristotle's god was intelligence and goodness. Apart from himself was material force which, in a wholly spiritual way, he permeated with desire and thought. The principle of being, on the other hand, according to Jacob Boehme, the old "Teuton philosopher," has for its basis non-being, night, endless desire, invading force, contradiction, pain and evil. By the fundamental law of being, he says, nothing can be realized except when contrasted with its opposite; light can be born only from darkness. God can come forth only from the devil.

"Die Finsterniss, die sich das Licht gebahr"

(Darkness, the mother of light), said Mephistopheles.

The optimist Leibnitz himself said that good can be realized only by acknowledging the power of evil. Kant shows us that thought is incapable of being presented unless it is set over against a material object. Whilst seeking for the means of leading men towards a perpetual peace, the first means that he recommends is war. "Away with the Arcadian life, beloved of sensitive souls," he wrote in 1784. "Thanks be to nature for those instincts of discord and malevolent vanity, of insatiable desire after wealth and rule with which she has endowed men. But for these instincts, the nobler mind of humanity would eternally slumber. Man wills concord and harmony, but Nature knows better what is good for him—she wills discord."

By applying in this way the principle of the conditions of realization, we are led to regard all right as illusory, a pure metaphysical entity, vain material for harangues and recriminations, unless based on a force capable of compelling it. To speak of right when one is devoid of force is impudently and criminally to challenge the one who possesses force. To those who indulge in such bluster, the Germans address the following rebuke: "A policy of force devoid of force is mischievous non-

sense" (Eine Machtpolitik ohne Macht ist ein frevelhafter Unsinn).

The final step consisted in transforming the means into an end, in saying not only that force precedes right, but that force itself *is* right.

This line of progress, in philosophy, has been prepared by the famous doctrine of pre-established harmony, according to which, throughout the universe, the visible is the faithful symbol of the invisible. Here, force is not only a condition, but an external sign, a practical substitute for right.

Accustomed to regard things from the standpoint of the absolute, and convinced that, in the essence of things, force is the first and fundamental principle, German thought has come to deify force *qua* force, to transform it from a means into an end, an essential end, in which all others are included.

Thus, practical materialism, no less than the apotheosis of Germanism, which at present characterizes German thought, shows itself as the development of certain germs which pre-existed both in the German mind and in the teachings of German philosophers.

Perhaps one of the deepest inner causes of the trend of German thought is to be found in

a remarkable trait which seems rooted in the tendency to disparage feeling and attach value to intellect and will alone.

This is an unfamiliar aspect of German mentality, for in many of us the very name of Germany still calls up ideas of romanticism and sentimentality. Present-day Germans affirm that sentimentality, in Germany, has never been more than a passing malady, an infection resulting from inoculation with the Celto-Latin virus. It seems impossible that Frenchmen should in like measure despise the popular *Lieder* of Germany, the music of a Weber, a Schubert, or a Schumann. Still, it appears in conformity with the general history of German thought to maintain that feeling or sentiment, wherever found, is, in Germany, essentially individual, and has no part to play in fulfilling the destinies of the universe, or even of human societies. The horror, as regards feeling, affected by such champions of Prussian thought as Frederick the Second and Bismarck is proverbial. Feeling, said Bismarck, is to cold reason what weeds are to corn; it must be rooted up and burnt. The essential character of the Prussian State is to be, exclusively and despotically, an intelligence and a force, to the exclusion of all moral feel-

ing similar to that existing in the individual. Not that the State knows nothing of ethics and is incapable of virtue; on the contrary, it is itself the very *chef d'œuvre* of ethics. Its mission, however, is to be strong, to recognize nothing but force. Its virtue consists in carrying out its mission in all loyalty. The more the State, like the individual, is what it ought to be, the more moral it is.

Not only in Prussian politicians, but in German philosophers in general, is there noticed a tendency either to intellectualism, to radical voluntarism, or to a union of these two doctrines. The philosophy of Leibnitz, whose main idea is to substitute harmony for unity as the principle of things, gives a wholly intellectual meaning to this harmony; it is the correspondence by virtue of which the various beings of nature, as they are complementary to one another, realize the greatest amount of existence it is possible to conceive without contradiction. Kant's system culminated in a theory of science as well as in one of ethics, from both of which feeling was excluded. And if this philosopher seems to reinstate feeling as the necessary link between science and ethics in his *Critique of the Judgment*, it is but to fling it on to the

Procrustean bed of his categories, and there reduce it to concepts and abstractions. If Fichte admires the philosophy of Rousseau, it is only on condition that feeling be replaced by will. As for German mysticism, this is an intellectual intuition of the absolute or a taking possession of the generating power of things, far more than a communion of persons bound together by love. Both the romantics and the German philosophers of " feeling " retain the spirit of abstraction and system which marks the predominance of understanding over sensibility. And what the youthful generations of Germany seek in Frederick Nietzsche is more especially the religion of brute force, which looks upon goodness as cowardice and hypocrisy, and tolerates the existence of the humble only in so far as they can play the part of good slaves.

Suppose, in a nation, that intellect and will alone are regarded as noble and effectual, feeling being relegated to the individual consciousness, and you can readily imagine that a frame of mind similar to that of present-day Germany will be developed therein.

In the domain of idea and reasoning, the habit of sophistry will be created. Indeed, if you remove feeling, which, joined with

intellect and will, produces good sense, judgment, honesty, justice, and humanity, then intellect and will, in a soul thus mutilated, will be no more than a machine, a sum-total of forces ready to place themselves at the service of any cause, without distinction. The will, in such a conception of life, takes itself as an end, and wills simply in order to will. Science claims to have supplied a peremptory demonstration, because, from the mass of facts which it has piled up, it has elicited or deduced those that proceed to some particular well-defined object. This will, however, in spite of the efforts of dialectics, does not find in itself a law that transcends it. And this intellect, to which the object is indifferent, will be able to deduce from the facts, if the will so dictates, the contrary of what itself had successfully demonstrated. To discover truth, said Pascal, we must combine the mathematical with the intuitive mind. Now, the latter consists of feeling as well as of intellect.

In practice, the elimination of feeling leads to the unrestricted profession of that immoral maxim—the end justifies the means. From this point of view, all that is required of the means is that they should be calculated to

realize the end. It is not our business to inquire whether the means used are *per se* cruel, treacherous, inhuman, shameful, or monstrous; all these appreciations emanate from feeling and so are valueless to an intellect which professes to repudiate feeling. Indeed, it may happen that the most reprehensible means may be capable of producing advantageous, even good results.

Moreover, what, according to this system, is an end that is qualified as good? When ends, like means, depend only on intellect and will, to the exclusion of feeling, then the end best justified is force, absolute and despotic domination, devoid of all admixture of sensibility and humanity. And the final word of culture is the synthesis of power and science, the result of the combination of intellect and will alone.

In a world ruled by such culture, there are only systems of forces: persons have disappeared. Individuals and nations no longer possess any dignity or right, in themselves; to interest oneself in their existence and liberty would be to yield to feeling, to take account of purely subjective tendencies and desires. Intellect and will take cognizance of nothing but the whole, the sole unity to

which power belongs; they consider the parts only in so far as these are identified with the whole.

And the condition of the perfect organization of the world is that there should exist a master-people, *ein Herrenvolk*, which, by its omnipotence, will terrorize or subdue inferior nations and compel them to carry out, in the universal task, the part which itself has imposed on them.

If the comparisons here established between the present and the past of Germany are correct, then we need not labour under any illusion as to the relatively new and contingent element in the conduct of contemporary Germany. External conditions have caused her to fall over on the side to which she was leaning. Certain inclinations which, held in check by others, might have remained pure tendencies and been simply expressed as literary, artistic, and philosophical works, once allowed free play, have become great forces, destructive of moral order and of human civilization.

An attentive study of Germany's past shows that there is nothing in explanations which regard the present madness as merely the sudden and fleeting reaction of a stricken

organism against the enemies that threaten her existence. Germany is pleased to pose as a victim. As a matter of fact, war is her element. "The German Empire is wholly based on war," wrote General von Bernhardi in 1911. The *Pax Germana* is nothing but an artful war, ever ready to break out into open warfare. For it is Germany's policy to be always on bad terms with her neighbours, to be constantly contriving pretexts for picking a quarrel with and afterwards crushing them.

Let us then beware of regarding the present war as but a crisis, an accident, and of thinking that, with the signing of a treaty, we may abandon ourselves to the sweets and delights of an unalterable peace. We have been duly warned that the Germans regard a treaty as but a scrap of paper; and the entire past of which this war is the culmination will not have become blotted out because of the exchange of a few signatures.

For this reason, when the war is over, we must continue watchful and ready for action, for months and years, for centuries even.

Of this we are fully capable. The Germans had spread the rumour—it seemed at times as though they had made us believe it ourselves—that we were an amiable though

frivolous (*leichtfertig*) nation, fickle and noisy children, incapable of being earnest and persevering. Both our army and our youth are now showing, in very simple fashion, that, whilst possessed of the ardour and generosity commonly attributed to us, we are also not lacking in constancy, in a calm and firm courage, a steady and indefatigable determination.

Moreover, the nation has realized, frankly and without any effort, by a patriotism as high-minded as it is warm-hearted, that affectionate harmonious understanding, that open and hearty collaboration in the common task, which is the promise of success in all human endeavour. What weight have differences of opinion, of positions or interests, to men who have been fighting together side by side, each one sacrificing himself for his comrades, without respect of birth or rank, *à la française* ?

Our army and our youth are now setting us an example of the loftiest virtues, human as well as military, virtues which will be necessary for us in the near future, just as, in the present, they are the pledge of victory. All honour to our sons: let us try to show ourselves like them !

WAR AND SOPHISTRY

Is the German method of conducting war the result of that philosophical, artistic and scientific development the idealistic greatness of which has been extolled by the whole world? Are we to declare inadequate the morality taught by Plato and Aristotle, to preach duty for duty's sake, to set up the unconditional supremacy of moral worth, and then officially declare that neither legal nor moral laws count if they prove troublesome and our side happens to be the stronger? What are we to think of a people which gives the world the most wonderful music, wherein we imagined that we discerned the deepest and purest aspirations of the soul, a nation which sets up art and poetry as a kind of religion whereby man holds communion with the Eternal, and then bombards and shells libraries, churches, and cathedrals? Germany has assumed the rôle of the one supreme representative of culture, of civilization in its

highest form, and yet it is her object to enslave the world by the methodical and unbridled exercise of brute force!

What are we to think of the amazing contrast between German culture and the ends aimed at as well as the means employed in the present war? Is it sufficient to state that the Germans, after all, are but partially civilized, that in the sixteenth century they were still rude and uncultured, and that their *Kultur*, confined to specialists and scholars, cannot penetrate into the soul of the nation or affect its character?

In Germany, the scholar and the man are too frequently strangers to each other. But it is not simply because of his rude and violent nature that the German is inhuman in war; it is because he is ordered to be so. When the Kaiser, in 1900, addressed his soldiers as they were starting for China, he recommended them to leave nothing living in their wake—to behave as Huns.

The reason, then, that the Germans, in the way they have prepared and provoked and are now carrying on this war, unscrupulously violate the laws of the civilized world, is not that they do so in spite of the culture of which they are so proud, but rather by virtue of

that very culture. They are barbarians because they have received a superior civilization! How is such a combination of contradictory elements, such a synthesis, possible?

In his famous *Speeches to the German Nation* delivered before the students of Berlin in 1807, Fichte deals with the following subject: the rise of the German nation by making it aware of its pure Germanic essence (*Deutschheit*) and the realization thereof in the outer world. The general idea to be followed in carrying out this task was as follows: Germany is to the foreigner what spirit is to matter, what good is to evil.

A hearing was given to Fichte's appeal. During the century that followed, Germany set up, on the one hand, the theory of Germanism, or *Deutschtum*, and, on the other, prepared for the world-wide domination of Germanism.

This idea of Germanism seems to afford an explanation of the unlooked-for connection between culture and barbarism.

In the first place, how comes it that a people claims for its ideas, its virtues, and its works, not only the right to exist and be respected by other peoples, but also the privilege of being the sole expression of goodness and truth,

whereas whatever emanates from other peoples represents only error and evil ?

In order to infuse new life into the soul of Germany, after the Battle of Jena, Fichte thought he could do nothing better than persuade her that within herself—and herself alone—there existed not only the sense of the ideal, but also the power of realizing this ideal in the world.

Soon this mystical method became confused with a more concrete one, better suited to the positive spirit of modern times. The science which combines such knowledge and ideas as concern human life is called history. Now, the Germans have learnt two lessons of the utmost importance. The first is that history is not only the sequence of events in the life of humanity: it is also the judgment of God on the struggles and rivalries of nations. All that is wills to be and to endure; it makes an effort to impose itself upon things. History informs us who are the men and which are the things chosen by Providence. The mark or token of this choice is success. If some one people seems appointed by history to dominate the rest, this people is God's lieutenant or vicegerent on earth, God himself, visible and tangible to his creatures.

The second lesson the Germans have learnt is that the existence of a people appointed to represent God is no myth, but that such a people does actually exist in the German people itself. Ever since the victory won by Hermann (Arminius) over Varus in the year 9 A.D., the will of God has been manifested. The Middle Ages prove this, and the reason why Germany, in modern times, has appeared to keep in the background, is that she has been gathering herself together, to gain fresh strength and strike with greater vigour.

And not only is Germany the elect of Providence: she is the only elect, and reprobation is cast on all other nations. The proof of such election is the destruction of the legions of Varus, and Germany's task is to take eternal vengeance on the Roman general's insolence.

German civilization grew in antagonism to Græco-Roman civilization. God's adoption of the former meant his rejection of the latter. The German consciousness, then, in its full realization, is nothing less than the divine consciousness. *Deutschtum* = God, and God = *Deutschtum*. In practice, if an idea is authentically German, one must regard it as a duty to affirm that it is true and just, that it must prevail.

What essentially is this truth, which is German because it is true, and true because it is German? It is explained by German metaphysicians with more than their wonted clarity: its first duty is to be opposed to what classic or Græco-Latin thought recognizes as true. This thought has always endeavoured to find out that which, in man, is essentially human, and makes him superior to other beings. It has also tried to discover the means whereby, in human life, the superior element may be enabled to prevail over the inferior element, reason over blind impulse, justice over force, goodness over wickedness. It has assumed the task of creating a moral force capable of governing material forces. To this doctrine, which had man as its centre and was essentially human, German thought is opposed, as the infinite is to the finite, the absolute to the relative, the whole to the part. The disciples of the Greeks had no other light than that of human reason; German genius possesses a transcendental reason which pierces the mysteries of the absolute and the divine. Now, what this superhuman reason discovers is that non-being, matter and evil, have wrongfully been despoiled by classic reason of their dignity and worth, in favour of being, intelligence and good.

Besides, a Græco-Latin, infatuated with his mediocre logic, may find satisfaction in affirming that good is good, and evil, evil. These simple formulæ, however, are contrary to truth *per se*. Good, of itself, is powerless to realize itself; it is a mere abstraction. To evil alone belongs the faculty of creation. Hence good can only be realized through evil, evil wholly unshackled. God cannot be, unless he is created by the devil. Thus, in a way, evil is good and good evil. Evil is good because it creates; good is evil because it arrogates to itself a power which it does not possess. Only by releasing the powers of evil has one the chance of realizing some good.

Starting from these metaphysical principles, the questions raised by the idea of civilization are answered in a remarkable way. What is civilization in the true, the German meaning of the word ?

Nations, more particularly the Latin nations, regard the moral element in life, the refining of human customs and relations, as constituting the very essence of civilization. To those who interpret culture in this way, the masters of German thought would assuredly apply the following words from Ibsen's *Brand*: " You wish to do great things, but you

lack force; you expect success from kindness and gentleness." According to Germanic thought, kindness and gentleness are but weakness and impotence. Force alone is strong, and the one pre-eminent force is science, which, placing at our disposal the powers of nature, multiplies our force *ad infinitum*. From science and the culture of a scientific intelligence will necessarily result moral progress. True civilization is a virile education; it employs force, and has force, as its objective. A civilization which, under the cloak of humanity and politeness, enervates man and makes him effeminate is suitable only for women and slaves.

It is important to understand the relation that exists between the idea of right and that of force. Force is not right. A universally victorious and omnipotent force would form one with divine force; justice and force, then, meet at one point and one point only, where both are absolute.

Moreover, justice and force belong to two different worlds, the natural and the spiritual; The former is the symbol of the latter, and therefore for us the predominant force is the visible equivalent of right.

Consequently, it is childish to admit the

existence of a natural right inherent in individuals and nations, and manifested by their prayers and aspirations, sympathies and wills. The rights of peoples should be determined objectively.

According to this view, peoples are distinguished from one another as *Naturvölker*, *Halbkulturvölker* and *Kulturvölker:* people in a state of nature, people half cultured, and people cultured. Again, there are the simply cultured, *Kulturvölker* and the fully cultured, *Vollkulturvölker*. Now, degree of culture determines measure of right. To the *Kulturvölker*, the *Naturvölker* have no rights, only duties: the duties of docliity, submission, and obedience. If any people exists, deserving the title of *Vollkulturvolk*, to it belongs supremacy on earth.

Logic proves that this head nation must not merely be an abstract type: it must necessarily find its realization in our world. And similarly there must be subordinate nations. There is no effective *yes* without a decided *no*. The self is effort, says Fichte; thus it presupposes matter, something that opposes it. Since the head nation commands, there must be nations to obey it. These nations must even oppose the superior nation, for opposition

is necessary to enable it to develop, to become the whole by enriching itself with the spoils of its enemies.

On the German nation alone, then, falls the task of doing God's work on earth. How is this to be accomplished ?

First, it must become fully conscious of its own superiority. Nothing German can be found elsewhere in like excellence. German women and German fidelity, German wine and German song, are superior to all others. Reciprocally, the best of everything belongs to Germany, *de facto* or *de jure*. Rembrandt, Shakespeare, Ibsen, are German; only a German brain can understand or have the right to admire them. It is even doubtful if Joan of Arc was French; learned works have been written to prove her German nationality. The reason that the inhabitants of Alsace and Lorraine are faithful to France only proves that they must be German subjects, for fidelity is a German virtue.

Germany, therefore, possessing all the virtues, has nothing to learn from other nations, and so owes them neither respect nor good-will. The word humanity has no meaning to a German, who is conscious that he is himself the one supreme human being. When the

Kaiser says: " To my mind, humanity does not exist beyond the Vosges," he imagines that everything outside his empire is valueless until it is annexed thereto.

What must be Germany's attitude towards other nations ?

Some peoples inspire love, consider that politeness is possible between nations as well as individuals, and regard the possibility of justice regulating international relationships as a step forward. The German, however, in dealing with other nations, does not take justice into consideration; he feels but scorn for that feminine sentimentality which characterizes the Latin races more particularly. Sentiment, the solicitude for justice and humanity, is weakness. Germany is, and must be, force.

The German does not ask to be loved; he prefers to be hated, provided only he inspire fear. *Oderint dum metuant.* He finds satisfaction in the fact that certain annexed provinces continually protest against the violence they have been subjected, for he needs enemies in order to maintain himself in that state of tension and strife which is the condition of vigour.

Now, two methods are open for the domina-

tion of other nations. The first is intimidation, which must never slacken. If we forget to remind the feeble of their weakness, they become insolent. Other nations must lie under the ban of dire catastrophe if they oppose Germany. All the same, smooth methods and offers of service, bargains advantageous even to the other side, may prove less troublesome processes than violence for the purpose of reaching the goal. Germany, then, will be in turn—or even simultaneously—threatening and affable.

The thing, therefore, of supreme importance is power. Germany must possess mightier armaments than all other nations, for is not the German Empire the rock of peace—*der Hort des Friedens?* Since Germany is the very incarnation of peace, she may legitimately arm herself to the teeth. Her enemies, however, cannot have the same right; they can only arm themselves in so far as Germany authorizes them to do so.

Far from seeking war, Germany, by inspiring terror, endeavours to make war impossible. But if any nation either benefits or is likely to benefit from its love of peace, and thus asserts rights that incommode Germany, she inflicts punishment on that nation, though

reluctantly. As God's vicegerent she must fulfil her mission, and the nation that refuses to do her will proves thereby its " cultural " inferiority and its culpability.

Though war is a reversion to a state of nature, Germany regards herself as compelled to resort to this temporary retrogression, because she has to deal with nations of inferior culture. Now, it is the untrammelled rule of force that characterizes a state of nature. Why talk of romantic chivalry and introduce sentimentality? *Krieg ist Krieg*—it is no child's game. Why try to reconcile or harmonize barbarism and humanity? Man *qua* man suffers in reverting to the state of a barbarian, but the man who represents God cares nothing for the weakness of the creature.

The first article, then, in the code of war is the suppression of everything akin to pity or to humanity. The more a soldier kills and destroys, the more does war assume an ideal form. Besides, it is the more truly human in proportion as it is inhuman, since the terror inspired by its excesses makes it all the shorter, and so less deadly than if it were prolonged.

In the second place, war necessarily takes no account of moral laws. Respect for

treaties and conventions, loyalty, fidelity, honour, scruples, generosity, nobility of soul are so many shackles; the God-nation will have nothing to do with them. It will, therefore, unhesitatingly violate the rights of neutrals if benefit is to be gained by such a policy; it will employ methods of lying and treachery and will advance futile or false pretexts for committing the most atrocious acts. In short, the object aimed at is to liberate the elementary energies of nature, to expend the maximum of force and obtain the maximum of result.

The aim, too, must be as psychological as it is material. Deeds universally condemned as horrible, spreading terror and dismay everywhere, are to be recommended because they crush the very souls of men, however worthless they may be from a military point of view.

As the agents of divine vengeance, the Germans force their enemies to expiate the crime of resisting them. But if the enemy is so insolent as to recapture a town they have taken, the responsibility for subsequent sacking and the murder of the inhabitants falls entirely on the rebels.

Granted that the problem is to release, as speedily as possible, all the powers of evil,

manifestly a people of superior culture is better able to solve it than any other. Science offers the means of turning to evil and destruction the forces that nature can utilize only in creating light and heat, life and beauty. The God-people, then, combines the maximum of science with the maximum of barbarism.

Such is the final word of Germanism. Now, there is a clear identity between these consequences of the doctrine and the characteristics of the present war, and so our problem is solved, and German culture is vastly different from what mankind generally understands by culture and civilization, which endeavour to humanize even war itself. German culture tends logically, by means of science, to intensify and increase its original brutality indefinitely.

Having reached the amazing conclusion that everything German must be unique, the world anxiously asks itself what are to be its relations with Germany after the war. Every veil is now rent asunder, and German culture is seen to be nothing else than scientific barbarism. With such despotism, the world, which means to shake off every kind of servitude, will never be able to make terms.

And yet what deception and sorrow is

ours! Until the outbreak of war Germany was regarded as a great nation; her praises were sung everywhere. We find that German tradition contained other doctrines than those we have seen growing up beneath the influence of Prussia. Whereas Germanism, as formulated by the Prussians, consists essentially in despising other nations and claiming to dominate them, Leibnitz professed a philosophy which valued unity only as a harmonious blend of free and autonomous powers. Leibnitz exalted the multiple, the diverse, the spontaneous. He endeavoured to set up between rival powers such relations as would reconcile them with each other without diminishing their worth or independence; thus we have his efforts to unite the Protestant and the Catholic churches. After Leibnitz came Kant, who acknowledged that Rousseau had taught him to honour the ordinary man, though ignorant, if he possesses moral worth, rather than the scholar, whose only merit was his science. Starting from the principle that all men are deserving of respect according to their moral worth, he calls upon mankind to create, not a universal and despotic monarchy, but a republic of nations, each with a free and independent personality of its own.

This disposition to set freedom before unity, and consequently to respect and honour the dignity of other nations whilst serving one's own, did not die out in Germany with Leibnitz and Kant. Allow me a few personal remarks on this point.

In 1869 I went to Heidelberg, on a Government mission, for the purpose of studying and acquiring first-hand knowledge of the organization of the German Universities. To me Germany was the land of metaphysics, of music and poetry. Great was my amazement to find that the sole object of conversation, except amongst the so-called lower classes, was the war which Prussia was about to wage on France. At an evening party, I heard someone whisper behind me: "Vielleicht ist er ein französischer Spion" (Perhaps he is a French spy). At a restaurant frequented by students, one of them sat down by my side, and said to me: "We are about to wage war on France; we shall take from you Alsace and Lorraine." At the University itself, Treitschke's classes, attended by a number of excited students, were simply inflammatory harangues against the French, incitements to hatred and war. After a three months' stay, I returned to Paris, convinced that hostilities were on the point of

breaking out. On a subsequent visit, I found that public opinion was torn between two conflicting doctrines. The unity of Germany was the object of general aspiration; there was no agreement, however, as to the manner in which this unity was to be conceived and realized.

Treitschke's theory was: *Freiheit durch Einheit* (Freedom through unity)—*i.e.*, unity first and above all else, freedom afterwards, when circumstances should allow one to think of it; and, for the realization of this unity, the enrolment of Germany under Prussian rule, in view of war with France. Now, against Treitschke's formula stood that of Bluntschli: *Einheit durch Freiheit* (Unity through freedom). This doctrine tended first to safeguard the independence and equality of the German States, and then to establish a sort of federative union between them. And just as it advocated a union without hegemony in the heart of Germany, so did it conceive of German unity as something that must be effected without offending other nations, more especially without threatening France. There was to be a free Germany in a free world.

At this period Germany had come to a parting of the ways. Was she to follow her own tendency and natural trend, as many

noble hearts and minds would have preferred, or was she wholly to give in, and to advance, with bowed head, along the path traced out by Prussia: that was the question. The war party, the party that favoured unity as the means of attacking and plundering France, won the day, and success made its preponderance a definite one. From that day, those who claim to have remained faithful to an ideal of freedom and humanity have literally been crushed out.

Is it possible that Germany may some day return to the crossway where she found herself previous to 1870, and this time strike out another path, that of such men as Leibnitz, Kant, and Bluntschli, a path leading first to individual and national freedom, and afterwards—but only afterwards—proceeding towards a state of union and harmony in which the rights of all are respected alike ?

There enters my mind a phrase used by the Scottish professor, William Knight: " The best things have to die and be reborn." The Germany that was respected and admired by the whole world, the Germany of Leibnitz and Goethe, appears to be dead indeed: will she be reborn ?

PATRIOTISM AND WAR

It was a favourite saying of Hippolyte Taine that men but imperfectly know themselves, that the pressure of circumstances is needed to bring about, both in their own eyes and in those of others, what has lain concealed deep in their hearts; and that a man, who regarded himself as timid, proves, in the hour of trial, to be a hero; whereas another, who considered himself a great hero, is found to be a very ordinary person indeed. This theory applies particularly to France. Because we do not keep this in mind, we glibly talk of moral revolutions in such and such a sphere of thought, revolutions the scene of which frequently is France herself. Of course, France passes through transitional periods, like everything that lives, but she probably remains herself far more than men of letters affirm.

French patriotism, which raised up Joan of Arc, which supported Louis XIV. in 1709 and built up the armies of the Republic, is not

dependent upon any event. It is one with the soul of France. All the same, it manifests itself more or less and offers different aspects according to the period; along these lines it is interesting to study both its recent and its present manifestations.

In the years that immediately preceded the Dreyfus affair, it might have been imagined that patriotism was somewhat somnolent in the soul of the younger generations. Social and religious, economic, literary and educational questions seemed to take up their whole attention. About 1898, in connection with the Dreyfus affair, a distinct change came about. Those who called themselves Nationalists assumed pre-eminently the rôle of defenders of the French fatherland; they relied mainly on tradition, and, turning their gaze upon the past, required that France should win back the glorious rôle in the world which she had played in former times. Others, no less patriotic from their own point of view, were especially eager to emphasize and cause to triumph the ideal of justice and humanity, wherein they saw the very heart of the patrimony of France.

Such was the state of things in the intellectual world when, in 1905, Germany showed

herself hostile in the question of Morocco. At that time there was a very distinct impression that the threats of war frequently uttered by this Power were not mere intimidation, but that she had really made up her mind to use force in order to carry out her ambitious projects. Then, more especially in the younger generation, whose minds are free from theories and prejudice, there arose a patriotism which was more practical and less interested in differences than that of preceding generations. The Nationalists claimed the support of history, and the Rationalists that of philosophy: the new generations, above all else, felt the impress of these events. And, in place of an abstract or historical patriotism, their minds accepted one that was essentially concrete and living, in which the doctrinal oppositions that had recently roused so many and such ardent struggles were effaced. These young people were more sparing of speech; their souls were filled with a dual feeling. First, they had a very clear vision—a sensation, almost, of the possibility, or even probability, within a near period, of this war, which had been — mostly theoretically — discussed by their predecessors. Secondly, they accepted the idea of this possibility in a spirit of

determined calm, of bravery devoid of the faintest tinge of braggadocio, in the serious and well-thought-out hope of seeing the fatherland, finally and completely cleared of the humiliation its foes had claimed to inflict upon it by the Treaty of Frankfort, resume again, with fresh authority, its rôle as the defender of justice and liberty throughout the world.

Such were the sentiments that filled the minds of our youth when the war broke out. They left their homes full of ardour and enthusiasm, their minds quite made up. They kept their heads admirably, and the spirit of bravado was altogether absent. The manner in which hostilities had been entered upon added to the provocation they had received, made them aware that Germany, relying on her power which she regarded as invincible, meant to dominate the whole world, to recognize no other law than her own arbitrary will. They were happy and proud to feel, in accordance with French tradition, that they were not only soldiers of France, but soldiers of the world; not only defenders of their country, but also champions of the rights of all nationalities.

Meanwhile the war, as it developed, daily

brought clearer revelations of what the German mind had evolved into. The attitude adopted in 1870, though insolent enough, was now left far behind. First, Germany officially professed to trample under foot all law and convention, though signed by herself, if she regarded it as an obstacle to her freedom of action. Afterwards, as a matter both of doctrine and of system, she put systematically into practice such methods as treachery, cruelty and malice. It was clearly her intention, not so much to conquer, as to kill and destroy, simply that she might take the place of the nations inhabiting the territorities she had conquered. Her idea was to destroy the race, and so she found satisfaction in shooting down women and children. Under the most futile and false pretexts she set fire to buildings which, by reason of their artistic beauty and of the memories they evoke, are symbols and centres of a people's nationality. She gave forth that her ideal was no longer simply Germany over all (*Deutschland über alles*), but, rather Germany mistress of All and exploiting this All to her own advantage.

A clear understanding of these things brought about a remarkable trend of mind, more especially in the youth of France. Henceforth,

how unreal and uninteresting became our political, our academic, and even our social dissensions, in presence of the terrible danger threatening us—and the whole world also! Our young soldiers' letters tell of a sympathetic understanding, a spirit of solidarity, a sense of common duty, which effaces all difference of opinion. The questions which interested us so much but a few weeks ago are now no more than abstractions, or, at all events, are of secondary importance, incapable of producing dissension in a healthy nation. But France is our very self, our very existence, both in the present and the future. Could it really be possible that our sons should have no other alternative than to disappear or to become German? Some day, assuredly, France will endeavour, with all her strength of heart and mind, to fashion her life in the way most favourable to the liberty and concord of all her children. At present, the question for her is to continue in existence, to save herself from shame and slavery, misery and death. This thought dominates, crushes out every other, nor does the impression it is making in the soul of the nation show any sign of diminishing,

Under the influence of such emotions as these, the distinction between a traditional

patriotism and a rationalistic patriotism completely disappears. It is only too evident that the preservation of France is necessary for upholding the ideal to which she has consecrated herself. Reciprocally, confronted by the spectacle offered us by Germany, how can we help feeling greater love than ever for this France of ours, which, throughout her whole history, has proved herself a lover of moral greatness, of beauty and generosity?

Thus, moral unity, of which so much has been said in recent years, has become an accomplished fact in the souls of our youth; the heart of France, ever youthful and valiant, beats with one throb in the breasts of all men.

In such extraordinary circumstances, along what lines will this common patriotism run?

One definition of patriotism is, strangely enough, the hatred of other nations. And we must acknowledge that Germany would really appear to interpret it in this sense. She takes pleasure in being detested, and measures her power and superiority by the violence of the hatred she excites.

At the present time, she delights in the cries of horror to which her lack of faith, her cold, calculated barbarity, her profanation of the

names of God and of divine mission, have compelled mankind to give utterance.

Will France be influenced by such examples as these? Assuredly, it would be only too natural to return cruelty for cruelty, destruction for destruction. When all reflective will is absent, one's instinct inclines to vengeance and reprisals. The German people, itself, is essentially vindictive.

How, confronted with such a foe, can one help saying: "An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth"? It is not likely, however, that France will act in accordance with this instinctive reply. Our youth, more particularly in the midst of their awful trials, think that in order to defend France we ought to feel inspired with the spirit of France. Now, the patriotism of Joan of Arc, of Turenne, and of the armies of the Revolution, was not based on hatred. It was essentially rooted in love for France, in the desire to see her free and great, beautiful and glorious. France, from the times spoken of in the *chansons de gestes* on to the present time, has ever meant the union of a generous heart and a clear reason. Nor has the importance attributed to delicate and lofty feelings been a source of weakness to our country. Bismarck affirmed

that the amiability of the French was more to be dreaded than all their cannons.

It must be granted that, when the dénouement comes, we cannot conceive how it will be possible to deal with a nation whose claim it is that a treaty which it has signed is, in its eyes, but a paltry "scrap of paper"; a nation which, in the clandestine constructions it set up on our own territory in a time of peace, for the bombarding of our towns, has shown that it makes no distinction between a state of peace and one of war. There will then be a great temptation to place outside the law a nation which actually sets itself above all law. France, however, will not apply the German standard to Germany herself. If fortune favours the arms of the allied and friendly armies, to render incapable of inflicting harm a nation which acknowledges no other right than that of might will certainly be of the first importance; but once the security of the world is assured, the patriotism of the French will remain French to the very end.

FRANCE: A FORTRESS

It is related that General von Falkenhayn, when receiving some war correspondents a short time ago, said to them: " We find ourselves in the following situation: we are besieging the fortress France." And, as a matter of fact, whilst each of the two armies is besieging the other out in the open, the whole of France has become transformed into a fortified camp, wherein all arrangements have been made to hold out for an indefinite period.

How has such an event come about ? From the earliest days of our history, it has been taken for granted that we were quite powerless in defensive warfare. Even in our own country there has long been a saying that " Frenchmen are more than men in attack, but less than women in retreat." Not only, affirmed our critics, were we incapable of a patient consecutive effort, of tenacity in resistance, but our incurable individualism

inevitably brought about division, condemning us to oppose and fight one another, whenever a brilliant onrush to victory was impossible or out of the question.

Now, events have proved that we have been misjudged, that even we ourselves knew but imperfectly what we were capable of accomplishing. An event, we too frequently forget, is the great revealer—or rather the great deliverer—of souls. This war, now being waged on a vaster scale than any hitherto known, has manifested to the whole world, as well as to ourselves, what it is that constitutes the real and fundamental basis of our nature.

In place of the rapid and striking exploits of former warfare, it has substituted the toilsome and monotonous life of the trenches: a subterranean immobility in mud and gloom, with alternations of bitter cold. The deafening and continuous crash of cannon, too, is altogether alien to the ordinary conditions of normal life. And yet our soldiers retain their calmness and even high spirits, their dash and eagerness for the attack. Their philosophy may be summed up as follows: " It's not very pleasant, but what does that matter; we've got them now !"

From one end to the other of a front ex-

tending to a length of seven hundred kilometres there is but one united force; no initiative is permitted that is not in strict subordination to the general plan and action. And yet these men, who were said to be stubborn individualists, submit to control in a spirit of perfect unity, and show forth the qualities of docility, endurance, and self-sacrifice, without losing anything of their dash and buoyancy of spirit.

The country, too, has risen to the level of the army. It was said to be a prey to irremediable divisions, political and religious, social and even national. Our very enemies were relying on civil revolution to help them in the struggle. But now our land will not have its attention or its strength turned aside from the one supreme object of honourable existence, nor its spirit of sacrifice exploited on behalf of any party whatsoever. Spontaneously, and with one accord, it acts after the fashion of a besieged city. The army is the focus and centre of everything; all, according to their means, heartily and obediently exert themselves to provide for its needs and, to the extent of their powers, share in the performance of its task. Army and nation are one and indivisible, not only because there

is no single family which has not actually—or which is not ready to—shed its blood for home and country, but also because there is not a citizen who is not living, as far as in him lies, the very life of the army itself. The latter need not be concerned: the civilians will support it with might and main.

It is chiefly when we consider how this unity has come about that we arrive at an understanding of the essence of the French nature. Assuredly, all our countrymen thoroughly well understand what strength a nation receives from these two indispensable factors: science and discipline. And both of these, at the present time, are held in greater esteem than ever. All the same, the French nature needs something more; it wants not only to know and obey, but also to love. It conceives of the organization of material and moral forces as based, in the final issue, on mutual confidence and the union of heart with heart. In the French army, soldiers and officers are not only friends: they are also members of a hierarchy.

There is a fine Slav proverb which finds a wonderful application in those who are now fighting for us: " On the spot where men shed their blood in common, there springs up a

flower whose name is life-long friendship." And so the whole nation is animated by a glowing affection, and yet at the same time has rigidly become subject to indispensable discipline. No material fortress is the German army now besieging, but rather the fortress " France "—*i.e.*, a united band of hearts and souls, minds and wills.

True, this very characteristic, in the eyes of the successors of Frederick the Second and of Bismarck, is a sign of our weakness and inferiority. Vauvenargues said : " Great thoughts spring from the heart." Bismarck, however, refused to consider anything but brute force or cold calculation; he compared feeling or sentiment to weeds which a careful gardener cuts down and burns.

Is it true that by regarding, as realities deserving of our love and devotion, principles which have their origin and source in feeling and reason alike, such as fraternity and sympathy, generosity and honour, fidelity to the pledged word, justice, right and equity, respect and love for humanity and country, we condemn ourselves to play no other part in life than that of a dupe or a beaten foe ? That is the question now troubling men's minds. . . . We await the result with the utmost

confidence. The future will show that the heart not only inspires great thoughts, but is the source of a mysterious force which, in the long run, reveals itself as the strongest of all forces.

THE SPIRIT OF FRANCE

WHAT is the spirit in which my country is passing through this terrible war? Clearly, in such times as these, words are of little importance; it is deeds that are the real arguments. And it is advisable that we judge France by her conduct in the immediate past and in the present. If we would be faithful disciples of Descartes, we must make no attempt whatsoever to court the good opinion of the world by skilful evasion, for we recognize that all men have the right—which we claim for ourselves—to bend the knee to truth alone.

There is one principle which it is important to follow: we must not allow trifling facts, or presumptions, or reasonings of any kind, however subtle, to take the place of important facts which are manifestly self-evident. The text must not be buried beneath a mass of commentaries.

For instance, consider the attitude of France

previous to the war. When did this one of the Great Powers depart from her pacific and conciliatory attitude? What did she do of a nature to render her responsible, in the slightest degree, for the war forced upon her?

We have often read that France wanted war because she wanted her "revenge." The accusation comes strangely indeed from the mouth of those who, even in these days, are crying for vengeance on Quintilius Varus and on Mélac; and who, from the time of the Battle of Leipzig, have never ceased singing: "Wir wollen Rache haben." Besides, it is devoid of foundation. As regards Alsace and Lorraine, it is anything but "revenge" that the French claim; the affected use of the word in this connection is pure sophistry, intended to delude people. The facts are very simple and speak for themselves. In 1871 the representatives of Alsace and Lorraine said to France: "Your brothers in these two provinces, who, for the time being, are separated from the one common family, will ever retain a filial affection for absent France, until she comes to win back her former place." The Alsatians and the Lorrains, before being French, had indeed a home, "Heimat," as they say in German,

but they had never had a country of their own, a " Vaterland." France is the first and only fatherland they have ever known. They have remained faithful to France and she has proved herself faithful to them.

Since 1789, moreover, the very function of France, that which she stood for throughout the world, has been the affirmation of the right, which belongs to nations, great or small, to dispose of themselves as they please. " Damals," said Goethe, when declaring the good news which the Frenchmen of 1792 had brought, " hoffte jeder sich selbst zu leben " (Then at last every man hoped to live his own life). He added that this thought was the loftiest that man could conceive: " das höchste was der Mensch sich denkt."

It is such a motive that an attempt is being made to ridicule by calling it a " desire for revenge."

But then, some people say, to uphold the principle of nationality was to wish for war, since the conquerors, by right of conquest, the only right they acknowledge, as also by reason of their might, which they had rendered formidable, stated that they were determined to keep their prey.

France did not look upon the right of force

as the only one to be recognized by modern nations. She relied on the Alsace-Lorraine question, along with other similar questions, being brought, sooner or later, before an international tribunal, and on the differences between men being some day settled by justice in a society which claimed to attach value to Greek culture and the Christian religion. And she set to work to develop ideas of justice and humanity both in France herself and in other nations.

It is this principle, which they took upon themselves to defend by pacific measures, that the French are now upholding and defending, arm in hand.

They did not consider whether it would have been better for them to put up with the tutelage of their powerful neighbours, for, by adopting such an attitude, they would have lost their honour. Given the way in which their adversaries stirred up and waged this war, the French are conscious that they have undertaken the defence, not only of the rights of man in general, but also of the right of nations to independence, dignity, and the untrammelled development of their own distinctive genius. And this consciousness is awakening within them the zeal and ardour they

showed in 1792, whilst a calm appreciation of the conditions of the present struggle inspires in them such a degree of constancy and patience as no difficulties, however great, will be able to crush.

We are not now dealing with something akin to the generous, though rash and unsteady, outbursts of passion often attributed to the French of former days. Our determination now is that we will be resolute and immovable, just as right and truth are immovable and invincible. In this connection, may I mention the letters daily sent to me from the front by the young men entrusted to my charge in normal times? They show that the writers are brimming over with enthusiasm, determination and good-humour. With shells bursting all around, they tell me what they are doing, and relate their impressions with the same lucidity and mental calm they showed when studying with me. One feels that it is real happiness for them to fight in a cause indisputably noble and just, and that they are sure this same feeling, dominant in all hearts, both in civil life and in the army, will give France the perseverance and energy needed to carry on the war to the end.

Yes, indeed, France is still a youthful and

enthusiastic nation fighting for an ideal. Henceforth, however, she will be as deliberate and thoughtful as she has always been full of zeal and ardour. As one of her proverbs says, by helping herself, indefatigably and with all her might, she calls down the help of heaven.

AFTER THE WAR

This is a subject that affords ample food for reflection. Is it not one of the characteristics of war that it focusses all our thoughts on the present; and does not this war in particular, by reason of the extraordinary proportions it has assumed and the really vital interests it brings into action, compel us to postpone all considerations to which it does not directly apply? Whilst the house is on fire, do we think of the plan on which it is to be rebuilt? In the midst of the storm, have we the leisure necessary for speculating on the enterprises we intend to undertake in the event of our surviving?

Assuredly, the present hour is a tragic one, and we shall have to call upon our utmost resources, to put forth our best efforts, if we are to rescue our country from an enemy who glories in acting after the manner of the Hun. More than ever must we bear in mind and strictly apply the motto of General Hoche:

Age quod agis. What meaning would attach to the finest theories on the restoration of France, once France had ceased to exist? Make no mistake: this war is not a mere episode in our history, it is in very deed our existence that is at stake. Whatever does not contribute to the furthering of the task in hand is either useless or harmful.

All the same, does this mean that we must banish from our mind all thought of the future? Far from war implying forgetfulness of the future in favour of the present, it actually has that very future as its essential object. Such especially is the case with a war like the present one. Had we thought only of ourselves, we should have found it simpler and more practical to adapt ourselves to circumstances. After all, a present free from war and revolution, once you make up your mind to accustom yourself to it, is always more or less tolerable. We had, however, acquired the certainty that the trend of events threatened our descendants with a state of decadence and slavery, and so we flung in our lot with them. We prefer to suffer that they may be proud and free, to die that they may live. What characterizes such a war as this is the fact that, strictly speaking, it sacrifices

the present for the future. But it is not abjuring the present to think of a future whereof this present is to be the preparation.

Nor are we thereby diverting a portion of our forces from the task in hand; for, in this war, we are not obeying blind instincts. We are a thinking nation, a reasoning people, and along every step of the social ladder our soldiers need to know why they are fighting. What stronger motive can we conceive than the desire to safeguard for our sons their liberty and dignity, the possibility of living, thinking and acting as Frenchmen? There is a profound saying of Homer that the desire for our children to excel us is a characteristic of paternal love. To work for the glory and greatness of posterity is the task most calculated to awaken courage, to keep alive and develop within us that moral strength from whose source material force obtains its supply without ever exhausting it.

Life after the war should not be interpreted as meaning simply the life we shall live when the war has come to an end. In all probability, the war will be a long one, for we are invincibly determined that it shall create, on a permanent footing, a state of

things in conformity with justice and the legitimate aspirations of the peoples involved. Its duration must be subordinated to the result aimed at. Consequently, to bring about a favourable issue to the war itself, it is indispensable that we should not regard present trials as an intolerable break in our normal lives, but rather that we adapt our lives thereto for as long as the military authorities require. Only by continuing to live as men and citizens can we endure as soldiers.

The life of to-morrow, then, is above all the life of to-day prolonged for an unknown period, and made as tolerable and normal as possible, so that we may keep up and increase the supply of force on which our army has to draw. To live to-day is the only means whereby we shall be able to live to-morrow.

Instead, therefore, of setting over against each other war and life as two contradictory things, we ought to do our best to draw out from war itself everything it contains which is conducive to the maintenance and amelioration of life. And, according to this view, the services that war can render us, if we only use them intelligently, are many and great.

I.

War is destruction. Our enemies massacre and burn, plunder and ruin, in a way that can be compared with nothing less than the fury and madness of the barbarians of old. So many human lives mown down, so many monuments and masterpieces of the past reduced to ashes, so much wealth destroyed, fill us with stupor and a sense of incurable sorrow and pain. And yet all these sacrifices are not simply the cruel ransom of that victory of right and civilization we are determined to effect at all costs; they may, in certain directions, directly contribute to a better state of things in our country.

Not all that exists is alike worthy to continue in existence; our towns and villages contain numbers of unhealthy dwellings which we cannot make up our minds to demolish. We hesitate when brought face to face with every sort of difficulty and expense. The war has brought us up against an accomplished fact. It compels us to reason, not *a potentia ad actum*, but *ab actu ad posse;* it teaches us power through necessity, instead of allowing us to remain inert because we imagine we can

do nothing. Unhealthy or inconvenient houses and buildings will be replaced by constructions that conform with the laws of hygiene, with our everyday needs, habits, and tastes. Many a defective condition of our existence will thus be improved, because reconstruction will not only be imposed upon us, but will also be unshackled in its action.

And not only will some particular element in life thus be renewed to some purpose: our very life itself will be reborn, as it were. A generous nature endeavours to repair such losses as it may have sustained. By a kind of natural rhythm, death gives birth to life After 1870 began the resurrection of France, which threw off sturdy shoots in every direction. How mighty will be her growth when this awful trial comes to an end, especially with the issue favourable to us, as everything leads us to believe will be the case! Then we shall have a spontaneous solution of that redoubtable problem of the birth-rate, before which science and social and legislative action have shown themselves powerless. In the last analysis, the cause of a low birth-rate lies in egoism, in a determination to think only of the present or the strictly immediate field of action. Along with confidence in the future and a vast

far-reaching perspective arises the desire to survive in one's family, to become great and honoured in one's descendants. The life which, according to nature, tends to perpetuate itself is, in the case of man, checked by the dread or favoured by the love of this very perpetuity.

And, along with life, we shall have all our creative potencies called upon for development by our present losses. A vast career will open out before science, before art and literature, before practical activity in every form. Assuredly, too, there will spring up that spirit of originality and novelty which we vainly attempt to create by erudition or by the will to be original. In this world of ours, which is subject to the law of decay and old age, there is but one way to restore this spirit of youthfulness which pre-eminently constitutes a joyous and fruitful life, and that is to die and be born again.

II.

In finding our way and our bearings along this new phase of our existence, war itself affords the most valuable information. War is not simply the struggle of one force against another; it brings into play every faculty

possessed by man, compelling him to contract habits that will interest and influence his entire life.

These are, in the first place, physical habits: sobriety, endurance, flexibility, the capacity for extraordinary effort, a resolute resistance to fatigue and suffering of every kind. Measures most opposed to the *laisser-aller* and the indifference of the immediate past are now accepted without opposition—the prohibition of absinthe, for instance. Thus disappear of themselves many fictitious and imaginary needs, which we regarded as necessities imposed either by nature or by civilization. In one direction, civilization is the invention of innumerable needs that are either foreign to nature or fatal to it. A considerable number of these needs are so many chains, causes of weakness and frailty. And yet, lacking all these superfluities, we have no sense of privation but are rather conscious that we have entered once again into full possession of our powers and are better able to use them in the performance of useful work.

War enables us to appreciate physical qualities at their right worth. Of course, we have often heard quoted, more especially during the

last few months, Juvenal's famous line: *Mens sana in corpore sano*. And its meaning is sometimes exaggerated. Now, exaggeration is self-betrayal. The saying was thought to mean that a healthy body makes a healthy mind. But Juvenal himself says nothing of the kind; he does not abjure Hellenic spirituality to such an extent as that. If we read the context, we find him saying that man ought to desire to combine health of mind with health of body. Assuredly, the body possesses a virtue, a dignity and beauty of its own, and these, *per se*, have a value of their own, quite as much as the qualities of the soul. It is this value that war teaches us pre-eminently to recognize. In this respect, it gives us an education far superior to that afforded by gymnastics or even sports. These latter are more or less external to our normal life; they do not readily appeal to all, and they lead us to look upon physical qualities as qualities *de luxe*, praiseworthy in proportion to their singularity. War enables us to set an altogether different value on the merits of the body. It makes us look upon physical qualities as necessary for all and on all occasions. It enables us to distinguish between qualities that are useful and substantial and a virtuosity devoid of object. It also gives us a keen

sense of the intrinsic and absolute value of a healthy, vigorous, and beautiful body, the free and complete unfoldment of nature's work. Future generations will not need to listen to erudite lectures dealing with the cult of physical exercise; they will practise it of their own free will, in their studies and games, in their daily occupations and throughout the whole of life.

Not only is war a physical education: it is also an intellectual education. The danger that threatens intellect, in schools and academies, is that it takes itself as an end—*i.e.*, allows itself to be led astray by the evidence and the harmony of its conceptions or by the elegance of its reasonings, and thus confuses its own ideas with reality. That intellect which feels responsible only to itself constantly risks plunging into one or other of these two shoals: dogmatism or dilettantism. In war, however, this dual danger is eliminated. Here, every conception is an action, and every action is immediately confronted with reality. In war, a false conception or a sophistical reasoning constitutes a defeat or a disaster; we are compelled never to think except in terms of deeds, to entertain only such ideas and reasonings as are at the same time tangible realities.

The discipline that war imposes on thought is as precise as it is imperious. With regard to every single undertaking, we must first acquire true and full information. Any error, however trifling it appear, may have fatal consequences; and incomplete information is, in itself, erroneous information. It is an easy matter to shine in an academic or parliamentary discussion by marshalling a few skilfully chosen facts. In war, however, as in mathematics, we must have before us all the data of the problem, *without exception*, if we would be in a position to avoid the direst catastrophes. Neither keenness of intellect nor decision and energy of will can make up for lack of information.

And just as we must have at hand the whole of the facts relating to the matter with which we are dealing, so we must interpret these facts with discernment. Purely mechanical reasoning is by no means sufficient. It is especially necessary to put oneself in the place of one's opponent and see things from his point of view. The effort necessary involves reasoning combined with a sort of intuition, of which only a keen, profound sense of realities that are not only physical, but also psychological and moral, is capable.

Thus does war act as a formative influence on the mind, by maintaining it in a state of perpetual contact with facts. It accustoms the mind to work in accordance with the law which is the condition of its integrity and veracity —viz., by closely associating and combining with one another intelligence, reasoning and intuition. Instead of war being, as is sometimes affirmed, action substituted for thought, it is largely thought itself, which acquires all its power and value from being united to action.

In short, war is manifestly a moral education.

From the very beginning, it teaches us to put earnestly into practice that duty of tolerance as regards the opinions of others which we have so much trouble to carry out ourselves in times of peace. How abstract and superficial now appear those political, religious and social divisions which but recently we regarded as irremediable! Differences of every kind deal more with words than with things, since the minds and hearts of all alike are now aware that they are united, that they think and feel the same regarding the primary conditions of our honour, even of our very existence. Who could persuade that they belong to different camps, these soldiers who

meet and embrace after a battle, conscious that a common trial has united them for ever? In these times of patriotic anxiety, we see that it is quite unnecessary to teach men of good-will and mutual affection to tolerate and bear with one another. They do more than tolerate one another, for they bring together all their strength and thought, heart and experience, to the performance of a common duty.

War not only sets free our souls from the selfish or artificial passions which divide them, it also teaches us positive virtues: decision and intrepidity, the sacrifice of life for honour and country. The present war possesses this remarkable characteristic: it inculcates in us those modest virtues which seem in accord with the temperament of our race.

It called for patience, and this people, which was regarded as incapable of silently bearing painful and prolonged trials, is calm and determined, and will remain so as long as this is necessary. We know that to hold on now is the sure guarantee of victory, and so we willingly assume the mental attitude required by circumstances.

It was also said that we were incapable of devotion in an obscure cause; and yet our

soldiers, adapting themselves to the conditions of this war, readily forgo brilliant exploits the only result of which is to cast a halo of renown over particular individuals. Both soldiers and officers understand that their rôle is to participate in some vast general action; and they consider themselves sufficiently rewarded for their efforts if this action proves successful, as the result of their anonymous collaboration.

The French, it was affirmed, were incapable of acting in this collective fashion. Owing to their incurable individualism, their vivacity of mind and intellect was employed in attacking one another. Hence their remarkable personal worth was rather a hindrance than of use to them. Napoleon was known to prefer a bad general in sole command to two good ones who were not of one mind. The present war is accustoming the French to co-operate together, and that in French fashion.

Germany, assuredly, has shown incomparable powers of organization. This latter, however, works solely by means of division of labour, each individual being strictly specialized for the function incumbent upon him. Here man is literally reduced to the condition of a machine. The organization is wholly

imposed from without; it is the result of absolute authority which brings together and co-ordinates members who have no internal affinity whatsoever for one another.

This is not the French point of view. Through all the differences in education and capacity required by the necessary division of labour, we consider that the community of thought and feeling which characterizes the members of one and the same family should be maintained. We think that a strictly human union is that which has its principle in sympathy and the close understanding of soul by soul. Thus, the discipline in our troops involves both strict obedience and mutual confidence. The officer commands, and in his voice there is as much affection as energy; his authority implies devotion to men and country alike. The men obey, and in doing so they espouse the idea and thought of the officer, since they form one with him and know that he is devoted to their interests. This solidarity is more than rigorous, it is fraternal. Beneath hierarchical inequality there exists moral equality. Consequently, the value of the troops depends less on the presence and action of the officer. If he falls, his determination and ardour live on and continue to inspire his men.

All these virtues, physical, intellectual, and moral, which the war is now developing within us, are essentially human virtues. It is our business to keep them alive, and that is perhaps the most difficult task of all. Pascal said: "A man's virtue should not be measured by his efforts, but by his ordinary life." By this he meant that it is easier for a man to make superhuman efforts occasionally than to continue on these higher levels where these efforts of his have placed him. The law of nature tends either to maintain or to restore one's mean or average state. "To maintain oneself above one's nature," concluded Pascal, "the intervention of grace is needed."

It should be our concern to gain possession of the interior force necessary to oppose this rhythmic balancing, which generally, in the living being, tends to bring about the disappearance of every habit which deviates from the average state.

We must keep and cultivate within ourselves this moral energy, without which our present acquisitions might well be ephemeral and transitory. Nothing great endures of itself. And the preservation of power, faith and love, which alone ensure the persistence of the habits of which we are speaking, implies continual creation deep within our own souls.

III.

Independently of the habits it develops within us, war supplies us with many a lesson worth meditating upon and remembering. Let us try to find out what some of these lessons are.

In the first place, this war admonishes us never to lull ourselves into a sense of idle security. Though our intentions might be irreproachable, though the peoples forced themselves to set up international justice, there are States that admit of no other right than the right of the stronger, and that direct the whole of their activity towards the acquisition of a force superior to that of the rest of the world; to these States a convention they have themselves signed becomes null and void if they feel themselves strong enough to violate it with impunity. There are States that regard peace as nothing but a means of organizing future war on the very territory of those they intend to plunder. There are nations which, in the name of a culture which they declare to be superior to that of all other nations, claim the right of organizing the world in accordance with their good pleasure—*i.e.*, of

exploiting and enslaving it. Since it has been possible to profess and carry into practice these ideas concurrently with the widest expansion of science and civilization, it has become impossible, in international politics, to rely upon one's own good right, upon the rights of peoples, or upon conventions. The genius of force and domination is directed towards the conversion of all the elements of life into engines of war; and so right, also, must be in a position to defend itself. And as war, more than ever nowadays, demands mighty and lengthy preparations, the reconciliation of war with life—the characteristic of our present condition—will, to a certain extent, have to be continued when the present war has come to an end. An adversary who believes in nothing but force will check his ambitious ideas only when he finds himself confronted with a force which commands his respect and awe.

A second lesson imposed on us by the present war is that the defence of the country can no longer be regarded as a special function devolving solely on special organs of the nation. This war, by reason of the enormous proportions it has assumed, calls for the participation of the entire nation. Our utmost strength will be needed to resist an enemy who has

done everything possible to crush us. Not only should every fit man be enrolled in the army, but the entire nation, more or less immediately, should support military activities.

One of the most remarkable consequences of this situation is the obligation incumbent upon us to reconcile, in one common, harmonious action, the efforts of the State with those of free societies or of citizens. In France, we have not yet altogether lost the habit of regarding State and society as rivals, whose sole concern is to encroach on the domain of each other. Authority and freedom we look upon as two contraries, of which the one cannot be increased without the other being diminished. In such a competition, however, war shows that there is a fatal division. Forces annul one another, when they should be added together and combined. The State and freedom must learn not only mutual support—a paltry thing, after all—but also the combination of their resources, powers and efforts, a cordial, intelligent and loyal cooperation. What difficulties will be smoothed away and noble feelings awakened, what mistrust will be dissipated, when both are thoroughly convinced that it is not their end to be each wholly for itself alone, but both to

devote themselves respectively to one transcendent task: the preservation, honour and grandeur of one's country!

I should like to mention a third lesson, which contemporary history has taught us with increasing distinctness, but which the present war is applying with special force. It has become impossible henceforth for any power, whether great or small, to confine itself to its own inner life and politics and relegate to the background all thoughts of foreign politics. The solidarity of nations is such, at the present time, that whatever affects one necessarily finds an echo in all the rest. No longer are there any purely home politics, independent of foreign politics. If we are determined to continue our existence and retain the possibility of living in accordance with our own distinctive traditions and genius, we must constantly keep our eyes fixed on the events now happening throughout the world.

Dumont-Wilden, a Belgian writer, recently said that Alsace-Lorraine was the " neuralgic spot " of Europe. To-day, it must be acknowledged that the question being discussed between the Allies on the one side and the Germans and Austrians on the other is vital to all nations. For we now have to decide

whether the whole world is to become the prey of that one of them which, believing itself the strongest, refuses the others all right of existence; or whether every nation, great or small, which possesses an individuality of its own, has the right to live, whilst respecting the freedom of the rest. In very deed, every nation in the world will be affected by the issue.

Thus it has become more certain than ever that, if we are to keep our place and maintain our rôle in the world, we cannot be content with considering ourselves alone and looking upon other peoples in the light of our traditional ideas. We must take up the study of foreign languages seriously, and make ourselves capable of penetrating the thought and mind of others. There has been talk of universal languages, and such, it may be, are capable of proving useful in commercial transactions, but they would be rather harmful than advantageous were they to prevent us from learning the national languages, which alone can reveal the genius of foreign peoples. To know and understand what is taking place every hour throughout the world, and to consider all the aspects of our national life in their relation to the life of the other nations—this

task, which has long been an important one, henceforth seems to me to be implied in all the rest.

IV.

To sum up, war everywhere calls forth in the nation, and will continue to do so, a new outburst of life. It directs our activities, in the main, along important channels, it inculcates habits and teaches lessons which have not only a military, but largely a human import.

Must this war, then, change the whole course of our national life, or have an effect in this direction ? Such a conception would be alike pernicious and chimerical. It seems impossible that war, however profound its influence, should transform our nature, and it would be strange if we were to attempt to make it produce such a result. It is in order to remain French that we are fighting; it is from our national soul that we obtain the strength needed to adapt ourselves to present circumstances. Therefore we shall continue to regard our national ideal as a supreme law, a sufficiently noble ideal to ensure our fidelity to it.

And now that we can compare it, in actual practice, with the German ideal, we better understand its meaning and value.

Germany has been a country enamoured of poetry and music, of metaphysics, of the infinite and the ideal. Doubtless these tendencies might have been maintained amid the material transformations which modern times are bringing into the world. Under the influence, however, either of circumstances, or of human beings, or of a weakening of that inner activity, or urge, which Goethe regarded as the essential of life, German genius has departed so far from its ideal as to seem to abjure it altogether.

German idealism consisted in finding no satisfaction in any of the objects offered us by this visible and tangible world. Goethe, long a fervent disciple of Greece, feeling himself, in his old age, once more under the influence of this transcendental idealism, writes:

> " Und mich ergreift ein längst entwöhntes Sehnen
> Nach jenem stillen, ernsten Geisterreich."

(Now there comes over me a long-forgotten yearning after yon calm, grave spirit-world.)

The mental state that characterizes this idealism is communicated by a word impossible to translate—*Sehnsucht*. The *Sehnsucht* of German poets and philosophers is an ever-unassuaged desire, the yearning after some-

thing infinite, ineffable, all-embracing and absolute, which no apprehensible and definite form of existence will ever be able to realize.

Now, strange to say, the German mind has come to persuade itself that it is itself this infinite, absolute spirit, become real and visible and with the self-appointed task of taking possession of this world of ours. " The Word of God became flesh, and dwelt amongst us." This was nothing but a prediction of the rôle which the German people was some day to assume.

How did this revolution come about ? It would seem as though the idea of the Biblical Jehovah, who manifested his protection by the power he conferred on his elect, played an important part therein. Germany conquered Napoleon, Austria, France; consequently, the old God of the Hebrews is henceforth at the service of the Germans who, in their songs, call him by the familiar name, *der alte*, *der deutsche Gott*.

A second sign of Germany's mission is her scientific superiority over all other nations. To those who know Germany and have frequented her Universities, this superiority is so evident that they will never think of demanding proof, when confronted with the assertions

of German scientists. They know beforehand that proof exists, and is too voluminous and learned to be transcribed in works intended for the public. But a like privilege cannot be accorded to other nations, for their science is uncertain and their assertions are of value only in so far as they are based on proof accepted by German science.

Alike by her science and her power, Germany claims to have been called upon to realize the kingdom of God upon earth. Hence she does not belong to herself, but, as representing God, she must do his will. And, according to Germany, this will consists first in subjugating the world, and afterwards organizing it according to German principles. At the present time, Germany is carrying through the first of these tasks; in the near future she is to undertake the second. And, as the divine essence of Germany consists of her absolute power and science, it is solely from German power and science that she will obtain the principles which control her mode of carrying on war as well as of organizing the world.

Over against this apotheosis of Germanism, which France has been amazed to find succeeding the all-enfolding thought of a Leibnitz or

a Goethe, our country has jealously maintained the classic ideal to which she has long been attached, and of which she has become ever more distinctly aware.

France does not start with the idea of the infinite or the absolute as the norm of thought and the principle of the organization of the world. She has simply before her eyes the idea of humanity, and her first task is to conceive, as judiciously and nobly as possible, this idea which is familiar to all men, and afterwards to realize it ever more deeply in the various departments of human life.

Not that French thought is ignorant of the divine infinite or even of the infinite of nature: Pascal has extolled both in terms that can never be forgotten. Minds fed on classic tradition, however, rise from man to that which transcends man; they do not speak of the unknown or the unknowable in order to define and organize the known.

In such an idea of humanity, classic thought assigns an essential rôle to an element which German thought—mainly preoccupied with power and science—has almost always regarded as secondary, and that is sentiment or feeling. Classic thought does not place sentiment on a pedestal, as Rousseau did. All the same, it

does not content itself with a purely geometrical or metaphysical reason, as do the German philosophers. Aristotelian reason is the faculty of judging not only about the possible, but about the suitable. It endows with order and beauty, with all that is desirable, good and honourable, a sentiment that cannot be reduced to strictly logical thought. Cartesian reason is a living faculty of everywhere discriminating the false from the true, a faculty nourished by practical life quite as much as by the study of the sciences. It is well known with what nicety Pascal distinguishes between the geometrical mind and the intuitive mind. We may say that, according to classic thought, the geometrical mind is never adequate, not even in geometry, but that the union of the geometrical mind with the intuitive is requisite in all investigations that tend to transcend the sphere of abstractions and retain a firm hold on reality.

Hence we have in present-day society the cult, not only of science, but also of intelligence, strictly so called, of judgment and good sense, of tact, and the sense of gradation and measure. Hence also the maintenance, throughout the entire range of knowledge, of that relationship and kinship between science

and art, theory and practice, which the ancients affirmed in their definition of wisdom.

Nor should force, any more than science, in accordance with the classic conception of the human ideal, be isolated from feeling. Force must become ever more human and mild, more imbued with the moral elements of equity, generosity and kindness. Greek civilization is but a constant effort to subject force to grace, to replace compulsion by persuasion. Bismarck said that feeling is to calculation and force what weeds are to corn; and that, like weeds, it ought to be rooted up. We think, on the contrary, that feeling, when judiciously cultivated, forms an integral part of an intelligence that is refined and a force that is beneficent.

Aiming after such an ideal as this, we interpret the march of civilization in the world quite differently from the Germans. We reject an extreme individualism which tends to regard every bond between human beings as compulsion and all organization as tyranny. The very thing for which we reproach Rousseau is that, according to him, every human individual possesses an absolute and naturally independent existence. Individuals, both in reality and in theory, are mutually intercon-

nected. This interconnection, too, goes on increasing daily as human communications become facilitated. Still, we consider that the difference in nature between a person and a thing continues to exist just the same. A person merits respect, and, in this world of ours, there are collective as well as individual persons. A nation, too, is a person, and has the right to live in accordance with its own distinctive genius, provided it does not jeopardize the life of other nations. The idea of right, based on that of dignity and moral worth, must consequently, in our eyes, be reconciled with that of organization, if we intend this latter to be not only scientific but also human. The whole alone has no value, if we are dealing with a whole consisting of persons. In this case, the part itself must be regarded as an end. The organization we want not only respects the freedom of its members but also co-ordinates their faculties with a view to common action. The whole that we conceive is a living harmony, not a dull unity.

This is the reason why our country is called, and will continue to be called, *la douce France*. Here, assuredly, patriotism is manifest, and we become at once united when the honour

and life of the country have to be defended. Union, however, is not imposed from without on wholly heterogeneous organs which are simply complementary to one another. The principle of action lies in the soul of the people, in one common nature, one common sense of fidelity and love to that ideal, and to an eternal France which history depicts for us so beautifully. And this feeling implies the love of those various traditions and tendencies whose harmonious whole constitutes the French spirit. The result is that unity does not exclude variety, and that France remains a land in which, whatever one's beliefs and opinions, it is good to live.

The French nature, too, is similarly disposed towards foreign peoples. No Frenchmen, enamoured of good sense, of moderation and right judgment, would think of claiming that they have nothing to learn from others. On the contrary, they are inquisitive regarding what takes place in other lands; they understand and appreciate this better than is generally thought to be the case. Latterly they have written about Germany works of rare insight and impartiality. Not only do they value the original productions of other countries: they allow these productions to inspire

them in their own creations. Corneille borrows from Spain, our eighteenth century from England, our romanticism from Germany. When borrowing, however, the Frenchman practises the classic method of imitation. He sets his stamp on what he borrows and makes it his own. "Not in Montaigne, but in myself," said Pascal, "do I see that which I see."

The reconciliation of freedom and solidarity, of organization and initiative, of feeling and intelligence, of art and science, and thereby the loftiest and widest possible realization of the idea of humanity: such is the object which France has set before herself in the past. She has no need to seek another. To the experience afforded by the present war she will be indebted for many a new method of reaching forward to her ideal, but at the same time will remain faithful to this ideal, for her own honour and advantage, as well as in the interests of humanity as a whole.

THE FRENCH CONCEPTION OF NATIONALITY

I.

In the examination I purpose to make of the French conception of nationality, it would be quite wrong to imagine that our countrymen, in this war, are eager to obtain power or influence. Rather are they struggling for the dignity and liberty of the nations, as well as for their own independence. And it is the principle which underlies nationality that excites their invincible courage and tenacity. It is quite in conformity with our present mental state to inquire of what exactly this principle consists, and to ask ourselves if it will effectually withstand the criticism of an impartial and strictly philosophical reason.

The general idea of the French doctrine is as follows:

Basing its deductions on the Hellenic and Christian conception of human nature, the Declaration of 1789 had proclaimed, as also had America, that men are born free, and

equal in their rights, and that they continue so. The French theory of nationality consists in extending to nations that which, in this maxim, is affirmed of individuals.

According to the doctrine which inspired the Declaration of 1789, the basis of right is nothing else than personality. Now, the French doctrine consists in recognizing that personality may be found in nations as well as in individuals, and that, wherever it exists, it carries with it the same dignity and brings to pass the same consequences. Any nation in which the conditions of personality are realized must for that very reason claim its liberty by the same right as other nations which possess the same character.

Now, what is the expression and sign of personality in a nation? According to the French way of thinking, it is the consent of the inhabitants, their conscious will to live together and form a political community. In this philosophy, a national consciousness is a true self-possessing being, a self-willing unity. A national consciousness is a reality by the same claim as an individual consciousness, for it is nothing more than a conscious and deliberate agreement or harmony of individual consciousnesses.

To the political communities thus characterized applies the French motto, " Liberty, Equality, Fraternity."

Nations endowed with personality have a right to liberty—*i.e.*, they have the right to live in accordance with their own genius, their laws, customs, and aspirations, in so far as they do not hinder a similar or analogous development in other nations.

All nations truly worthy of the name are equal in this respect. Neither territorial possessions nor military power, wealth nor scientific culture, can destroy this fundamental equality. Assuredly, there may exist many and great inequalities of condition between two persons, but their quality as persons is not affected, and they retain the rights inherent in this quality. It is the same with nations; their moral equality continues throughout every possible material and intellectual difference.

Again, fraternity, which along with liberty and equality should govern personal relations, according to French ideas, is equally in its place in international relations. Two persons are not two material atoms, foreign to or impenetrable by each other. Persons need one another; they develop and grow by main-

taining relations of mutual sympathy and help. In the relations which Nature herself has set up between the members of a family, they find a pattern of the relations they should tend to establish with one another. It is the same with nations. The liberty and equality suitable to them find their culmination in fraternity.

II.

Such, in its simplicity and precision, is the French conception of nationality.

No sooner had these ideas been announced, than they everywhere met with enthusiastic assent and adhesion. We know how Goethe, in *Hermann and Dorothea*, describes the feelings which filled all hearts when the good news spread from Paris throughout the nations: "Paris, so long the capital of the world, and now more than ever worthy of this glorious title":

"... der Hauptstadt der Welt, die es so lange gewesen,
Und jetzt mehr als jeden herrlichen Namen verdiente."

"Then at last," said the poet, "each man hoped to live his own life. It seems as though the chains which held so many nations in bondage were seen to fall away.":

"Damals hoffte jeder sich selbst zu leben: es schien sich
Aufzulösen das Band, das viele Länder umstrickte...."

And Goethe adds that this thought was "the loftiest that man could conceive":

> ". . . das höchste
> Was der Mensch sich denkt."

The conception of nations as persons, or as the principle of nationality, dominates the entire history of the nineteenth century, as we see from what took place in Germany, Spain, Greece, Belgium, Hungary, Italy, Roumania, Poland, Bulgaria, etc.

Even to-day the principle of nationality is boldly affirmed, though it must be noted that, in certain spheres, it is conceived of in a very different sense from that it received in 1789. We hear it said, for instance, that the consent of a country's citizens, the criterion of nationality according to the French teaching, is really but a subjective and superficial idea, devoid of true worth; and it is declared that the genuine touchstone of nationality can only be found in strictly objective, unconscious and impermanent data, such as impersonal science alone—and not the conscious feelings of individuals—can give. For instance, consider the inhabitants of Alsace-Lorraine: they look upon themselves as of French nationality. In accordance with this

sentiment, numbers of them in 1871 found a refuge in France for as long as the German occupation should last. And those who stayed behind in their native land refused to allow themselves to assimilate with the conquering nation. According to German theorists, however, these facts express nothing more than the feelings of the inhabitants of Alsace and Lorraine : consequently they are negligible. German science affirms that these populations are objectively German, and therefore, in accordance with the principle of nationality, they ought to be annexed to Germany.

The so-called objective principles which are brought against that of the consent of the populations are many and various. We will consider the main ones.

First we have the question of race. In race, it is thought, is found the origin of the physical and moral constitution of men. Those who, grouped geographically, belong to one and the same race, really form one nation. Racial purity is the true sign of a natural nationality. Again, the worth of the various races is proportionate to their degree of purity; and if there is any one race that is particularly pure and primitive, that race is superior to all the rest.

As we see, this theory expressly contradicts

the French doctrine of the natural equality of nationalities. It is not easy, however, to regard the deductions of which it consists as truly scientific.

In the first place, it is not at all certain that the purity of a race insures its superiority. Races become exhausted unless they are revivified by blending with different races. And if a race is of inferior quality, the persistence of its purity is the very thing that will maintain it in a state of inferiority.

Besides, where nowadays are to be found those absolutely pure and primitive nations whose existence is recognized by this theory? To what inaccessible past should we not have to go back before we find such races, if any of them actually exist?

At all events, it is not with races of this kind that we have to deal in practical life. Several of the leading nations, such as Germany, England, France, are made up of blends of extremely complex races. The United States, as the name implies, is a collection of peoples of every race and origin. And the United States claims that it possesses, in the highest degree, a common national consciousness. If racial purity were to be the standard of a nation's worth, where should we have to

place Germany, consisting as she does of Germans of the most varied stocks, of Slavs, Frisians, Lithuanians, Walloons, Latins, etc.? Numbers of savage tribes are far more homogeneous.

Does this mean that there is no connection between race and nationality? Such an assertion could not be maintained. We must distinguish, however, between the nations that have remained in an unconscious state and those that are conscious of their own nature. The former, indeed, are frequently nothing but groupings founded on natural relationship; the latter are more independent of the races of which they consist. Or, rather, we must recognize two acceptations of the word race: There is the natural, physiological, primitive race, and it is this, strictly speaking, that is called race; and there is a sort of race derived from the blending of natural races that are often very diverse, a secondary creation, which may be called the psychological race. The remark is often made that, in a family, not only do the children resemble one another, but the parents also, after a time, resemble one another. They acquire a family air of relationship, so to speak. This evolution, both moral and physical, results from a

life spent in common, from the habit of blending together one's thoughts, feelings, and occupations. No doubt it is in this sense that the Germans, for instance, speak of a German race. Whatever be their origin, the colour of the hair, or the shape of the skull, the Germans resemble one another. They have ways of thinking and feeling, judging and speaking, walking and behaving, and dealing with other men, which straightway set up a demarcation between them and other peoples. They do not constitute a physiological race, but, without being arbitrary, one may say that they form a psychological race, definitely characterized and perceptibly homogeneous. An inhabitant of Munich may soon come to resemble one of Berlin.

Interpreted in this sense, race certainly has a great deal to do with nationality. People are inclined to feel at one with those amongst whom they find themselves. Probably, in the language of the Germans themselves, the words " unity and purity of the German race " refer principally to the reality of *Deutschheit*, or the German character, in so far as it is distinct from the Latin character and common to most men who go by the name of Germans.

But thus interpreted mainly in a psychological sense, the race cannot be taken for a genuine principle. It is not something naturally *given:* it is a progression, a result of human activity. If we would inquire into the formation of this race we call psychological, we should have to go back to the causes and reasons which determine men to agree to dwell together and constitute a nation. We should have to insert man between the primitive races and the present race—in other terms, appeal to the French doctrine and set it in the foreground.

A second principle invoked against French principles is language. We are told that in language is found not only a sign, but a cause, of the profound and general similarity amongst men. Not only do men who speak the same language naturally seek one another, whilst those who speak different languages remain apart; but it is clear that, along with the language, men have in common innumerable ideas, modes of thought and habits of mind; consequently, that the divergencies capable of taking place between men who speak the same language are insignificant as compared with the instinct which unites them, and makes of them, in a way, throughout the multiplicity

of individuals, a single and identical consciousness.

From these general considerations, Fichte propounded a remarkable theory which gave a deeper significance and importance to language in the destiny of nations.

He regarded the difference between primitive and derivative languages as most important, claiming that a nation which speaks a primitive language is thereby radically superior to those nations whose language is derivative. The conclusion he reached was that the former was destined to exercise a moral domination over the latter—to be their schoolmaster, in fact.

The Germans, for instance, whose language is primitive, are of necessity superior to the Latin nations, whose languages are derivative. Not only can the German have—or actually has—full knowledge of his own language, but he is capable of understanding any Latin language—French, for instance—better than the people who speak that language will ever understand it. The French neither understand nor are capable of understanding French. Indeed, this language consists of Latin elements, the origin and inner meaning of which were not grasped by the ancestors of present-

day Frenchmen at the time they adopted them. The French cannot even master Latin, a knowledge of which might help them in understanding their own tongue. In fact, they do not know what a primitive language is, and the French words from which they start when studying Latin words, being themselves but distorted residua, do not permit them to assimilate the creative principle of the Latin tongue. Nothing but contact with life can awaken life.

The Germans, on the other hand, knowing by experience what it is that constitutes a primitive, living language, are able to assimilate the inner principle of the Latin tongue, and consequently to understand, in so far as they are comprehensible, the dead languages derived from it.

These prerogatives confer on the German nation not only an indisputable nationality but the one nationality that is above all others.

Evidently, it would be advisable to dispute this conclusion, to examine closely the Fichtean theory of languages which has played so large a part in the history of German thought. In default of systematic investigation into the question, on which I cannot now enter, I will make a few observations.

It cannot be doubted that the Germans are most anxious to maintain, or rather to restore, the purity of their language. They perceive that numerous foreign words are continually stealing in, and they do all they can to drive out the intruders. It would be an insult to the German language, they imagine, to suppose that it should ever need to have recourse to a foreign tongue for the designation of any object whatsoever. Their task, however, is not so easy as at first it seems. Numerous examples prove this. In certain German hotels and restaurants may be found a box intended to receive the fines inflicted as a punishment for using foreign words. Above this box stands the word " Fremdenwörterstrafkasse." Now, in this expression, the word *kasse*, in spite of the *k* which disguises it, is simply the old French word *casse*, still used by printers, and represented in the ordinary language of the day by the words *caisse*, *cassette*. I remember once reading an order of the Kaiser himself, forbidding the use of French words in the army. The very order contained a number of French words.

Is this anything more than a practical, a temporary difficulty ? May it not rather be that the difficulty results from some radical defect in the theory ?

Fichte was not content with distinguishing between primitive and derivative languages, manifestly a real distinction if we thereby mean no more than languages relatively primitive and languages relatively derivative. He added that the former, *qua* primitive, are living languages, the only living languages, whereas derivative languages are necessarily dead languages. This particularly is his opinion with reference to the German and the French languages.

Are we to admit the equivalence affirmed by this philosopher between primitive and living, derivative and dead ?

If the German language claims, as Fichte would have it, to be self-sufficient and to develop solely in accordance with its own primordial laws, it condemns itself to the necessity of rendering, by means of its own distinctive roots, all the new ideas which time may bring forth. By combining these elements in such or such a fashion, the problem is to form syntheses which necessarily evoke in the mind the new ideas we purpose to express. To the man, however, who regards as sacrosanct the purity of the language, the roots of words, and the modes in which they may be combined, are immutable and finite

in number. The problem we set ourselves, then, consists in satisfying, with nothing but the resources contained in the legacy of the most distant past, the unknown requirements of the future, in filling up the infinite with a determined amount of finite materials. It is something like a wager made by a chemist, that from purely inorganic elements and by applying strictly mechanical laws he would attain all the forms and functions, adaptations and creations of life. And it may be that thought is even more fruitful than life !

That the task is paradoxical is frequently shown when it is our object to name something new.

When aeroplanes first appeared, the word *Flugmaschinen* was applied to them. This expression, however, " flying-machine," rather suggests the apparatus of which Icarus dreamed. Nowadays the words *Taube*, *Aviatik*, *Albatros*, are used, the method of composition peculiar to the German tongue being abandoned in favour of the comparative method, that of the Latin tongues.

The apparatus we call *ascenseur* was first called *lift*. The day came, however, when they were horrified to find that they were using an English word, and so it was replaced

by the compound word *Aufzug*. But *Aufzug* simply means the action of drawing upwards, or else a machine for lifting loads or parcels. *Aufzug*, then, was replaced by *Fahrstuhl*. But even this word is anything but satisfactory. It means a rolling chair as well as one carried upwards. Besides, the chair or seat is not an essential part of a lift. For a satisfactory designation of even so simple an object, difficulties are encountered which are evidently insuperable.

In the moral order of things, also, whether owing to the genius of the language or for other reasons, many ideas familiar to us can be expressed but imperfectly in German. An Alsatian assured me that the German language, whatever the dictionary may say on the matter, possesses no equivalent for *générosité*. "I must, however, add," he said, "that the French language has no word which translates *Schadenfreude*."

It is anything but certain, *a priori*, that the roots and synthetic methods at the disposal of the German tongue will at all times suffice to render every idea capable of being conceived by the human mind. Besides, there is another inconvenience, no less essential, the danger of obscurity.

It is by the aid of compound words that the German language must respond to the new appeals made upon it. By the elements of which it is made up and the order in which these elements are arranged, the compound word must itself adequately explain the meaning it bears. It cannot, however, be at all sure of performing this task. As a matter of fact, between the different elements of the compound word there necessarily exist certain relations, and it is these very relations that determine the sense of the word as a whole. But the qualitative syntheses which most compound words represent are not like the quantitative syntheses of the mathematician. The latter appeal to a single relation, that of addition, the simplest and clearest of all. In the order of qualitative realities, on the other hand, the relations are very diverse, as we see from the multiplicity of our French prepositions, the precise object of which is to note the most important of these relations. Now, the German language, in its manner of building up compound words, does not indicate relations. It leaves the reader or the listener to guess whether we are dealing with a relation of possession, of causality, of destination, of place or of time, etc. In many cases it follows

either that the reader does not reflect sufficiently on the relation which it is advisable to supply, and then his idea of it is but vague; or else he imagines a relation other than that understood by the author, in which case he gives a wrong interpretation to the compound word.

Here is an instance of the diversity of the relations which may be implied between the determinant and the determined: *Lichtkur* means treatment or cure by means of light; *Lichtschirm*, a protection against light, a lamp-screen; *Lichtmaterie*, matter possessed of luminous radiation; *Lichtmesser*, an instrument for measuring light; *Lichtloch*, a hole that lets the light through.

Certain problems of exegesis arise from our uncertainty as regards the relation we must supply between the various elements of the compound word. Does Kant's well-known formula *Vernunftglaube* mean belief of reason, or belief in conformity with reason, or belief imposed by reason, or belief created by reason? These divers interpretations have been given, and they present the Kantian doctrine under perceptibly different aspects.

Thus it is anything but evident that the German language is essentially living solely

because it is primitive. The life within it seems rather to resemble the property of combining chemical elements than the power of adapting and creating really living organisms. This language tortures itself in trying, with rough unyielding materials, to obtain the delicate shades and infinite movement of life; its success is but partial.

On the other hand, it is not at all evident that such a language as French, simply because it is derivative and made up of elements taken from without, is therefore a dead language.

The meaning of French words has only a more or less distant connection with the meaning of the roots from which they are derived. This, assuredly, is a feature of the French language, although in this connection it is advisable to avoid exaggeration, and to recognize that a certain relation is generally maintained between the present meaning of the word and the meaning of the Latin roots. Instead, however, of this characteristic being, as alleged, a sign of death, it is rather an indication or mark of life.

The German language, which proceeds from the word to the idea, keeps close to the etymological meaning of the roots, and frequently fails in its effort to grasp the idea. The French

language starts with the idea, and with the elements at its disposal, or even with the elements it borrows from other languages; it endeavours to find an elegant and practical sign for this idea. The link that unites the idea to its expression will partly be etymology, though mainly and essentially it will be convention, taste, custom:

". . . . . usus,
Quem penes arbitrium est et jus et norma loquendi."

The French language seeks the golden mean between the algebraical language, in which the sign, a purely arbitrary one, receives the whole of its meaning from the thing signified, and the etymological language, in which the meaning of the word should be adequately determined by its elements. Now, it is clear that, whereas the etymological language, proceeding from the word to the idea, is indissolubly connected with a past which could not foresee the whole of the future, the language founded on custom or usage—*i.e.*, proceeding from the idea to the word—is readily adapted to new ideas, however different they may be from the former ones. Is not this limitless power of adaptation and invention, this adherence of the word to the idea, this identity

of aspect, maintained throughout all changes, not by the immutability of the elementary materials, but by the activity of one and the same spirit animating this docile body and revealed in this transparent form—is not this also life, true life, as applied to language ?

It is useless, taught Bréal, to try to discover any life immanent in the words themselves; words are but products, they receive their life only from the spirit that permeates and subsists in them, constantly working upon them. *Mens agitat molem.*

The more we reflect on Fichte's famous theory dealing with the contrast between the German and the Latin tongues, the more risky does it appear. Independently of this theory, however, we cannot look upon language as either the basis or the criterion of nationality.

Here we must distinguish between primitive men and men who have attained to a certain degree of consciousness and personality. Those who are dominated by instinct group themselves together according to language, and see only a stranger, often an enemy, in the man whom they neither understand nor are understood by. But cultured minds are not, to the same extent, slaves of the idiom they speak. They can know and appreciate

one another in spite of differences of language; they can, in different languages, become aware of the same tastes, keep alive the same memories, recognize a mutual solidarity of interests and of physical, intellectual and moral life, profess the same faith and aim after the same ideal. Instances are not lacking of nations in which several languages are spoken and where there exists a very clear and strong sense of national unity. The more men are civilized, the less do we find them subordinating the ends to the means. If they wish to be united, they can be; even though they may be deprived of that precious instrument for attaining union: a common language.

Does this mean that nationality has no relation to language in the case of highly cultured men? No such conclusion need be drawn. Still, it seems just to admit that the whole of human language is not contained in the languages we learn from our parents. Along with the language we receive passively is that we make for ourselves, one capable of innumerable forms. Monuments, works of art of every kind, form a language which gives notable expression to the national character. The rites of ordinary life, games, ceremonies, are all symbols of the common thought. Two

persons animated by mutual sympathy understand each other through the different languages they speak; community of thought is expressed by the creation of fine shades of meaning and of special forms which each of them introduces into his mother-tongue. In a word, one is naturally inclined to learn the language of those amongst whom one willingly lives. And so unity of language, whether in the spiritual or the material sense, tends to become established, if it was not already there, in the very heart of a firmly constituted nation, and itself becomes an element of nationality. But the language which is an expression of nationality, in men of advanced culture, is not the language that results from birth, but rather that created by the common activity of members of the same nation. Now, it is just this language which presupposes that free consent of hearts and wills which the linguistic theory of nationality would fain declare superfluous.

Apart from race and language, history is nowadays frequently advanced as the fundamental principle of nationality. This doctrine is readily employed to prove that the various nationalities cannot be regarded as equal in their rights, but that the march of events, in

this world, tends to establish the domination of some peoples over the rest. The world's history, we are told, is the world's tribunal. History, in its course, has judged the nations, and has proclaimed that it is the mission of one of them, the German people, to set its yoke on all the rest, and to organize the world according to its own ideas. History is not a picture of the past, more or less faithfully traced out by man; it is the interior objective course of events. The chosen people is no more free to shirk its mission than the inferior peoples have the right to rise against the chosen people. History dictates laws to which superiors and inferiors alike owe obedience.

It would certainly be wrong to eliminate the consideration of history under the plea that certain nations have deduced from the historic theory the most exorbitant consequences. No doubt the history of a people is an important factor of its nationality; for in every country we find the advocates of the national idea constantly appealing to the common past, to the historical conditions which have created and preserved the collective personality whose existence and rights they defend.

Still, the same distinction must be made regarding the part played by history as regard-

ing that of race or language. The nations that live in a spontaneous condition inevitably depend, whether they know it or not, on the historical conditions that controlled their formation. But the nations in whom there have been awakened consciousness, reflection, a critical spirit, are not linked to the past in the same degree. A distinguished American poet, Henry van Dyke, has written the following line:

"But the glory of the present is to make the future free."

How noble an exaltation of human initiative!

The history invoked by the nations to maintain and strengthen their existence does not consist of crude facts, such as might be revealed by a scholar's investigations; it is that part of the past which responds to the actual national sentiment, and in which the present sees not only its origins but also the pledge of its vitality and the means of attaining to the ends after which it aims.

It is with this idea that Frenchmen of to-day regard, as outstanding features in their history, that model of French virtue, Joan of Arc, or the cathedral of Rheims, the cradle and centre of national unity, or the French Revolution,

that declaration of French will to establish the reign of justice in the political institutions of humanity. Here a choice has evidently been made from amongst the data of history. The true principle is not history itself, but rather living, present thought, which relies on the past to prepare the future.

And who would maintain that, as distinguished from the French, those who find in the dust of libraries a providential mission to subjugate the world and exploit it to their advantage are the true servants of objective history? Does anyone who regards history in a strictly scientific fashion imagine that God, when creating the world, had no other design than to establish the world-wide domination of the Hohenzollerns? Is it not rather history interpreted in a preconceived fashion than considered objectively that brings a like revelation to the world?

In the nations which live in a reflective state, history is one element—though not the basis—of nationality. In these nations, indeed, it is not looked upon as an external fatality, of which nationality is a simple manifestation. It is dominated by a principle of adhesion, of choice and will, which has its seat in the consciousness of the nations. This

precise form of history which, in reflective thought, is linked with the idea of nationality, is in no way contrasted with the rôle which the French theory attributes to consent and to will, for it presupposes the predominant operation of these very conditions.

If the theories we have just examined excluded that equality between the nations which, from the French point of view, is a fundamental one, they at all events maintained the idea of the nation as a moral person. Certain other theories, now in force, are less concerned with establishing and defining the idea of nationality, than with superseding it. They set up principles of another order, and then define nationality in terms of these principles.

One of these notions is that of the State, in the meaning given to this word by a nation which owes to the State all it is—Prussia.

The State, according to the Prussian doctrine, is the highest power on earth, it is even supraterrestrial, for it is the realization of divine power; it is God, no longer potential, but actual, and become capable of acting in the visible world, the world of existences.

The essence of the State is unity, a concrete unity, built up of the freedom of its members.

Individuals regard themselves as free when they exercise their free will, their individual liberty. They are mistaken: free will is something other than a revolt against unity, against true liberty, against God. It is the result and the principle of sin. Liberty is effective only if it is organized, and it is the State that realizes this organization. True liberty, for the individual, is the unity of his will with that of the whole: " die Einheit des Einzelnen mit dem Ganzen." The individual is free in so far as he thinks, feels, acts, moves and exists only in and by the whole—*i.e.*, in the State and by the might of the State.

The State is an eminently moral being; it is the loftiest realization of freedom and justice. Consequently, whereas the individual, as regards the State, has only duties and no rights, the State, when dealing with individuals, has only rights and no duties. Its duty is to realize its essence, which is force, and so to become as strong as possible.

According to this definition, the State is so far no more than an ideal. Is this ideal realized in our world ?

The philosopher Fichte had discovered that the German ego was none other than the divine ego itself, whose task it was to regener-

ate the world after its own image. He neglected to state, however, by what means Germanism could carry out this task. Hegel converted a dream into a reality by demonstrating that the Prussian State was the very agent appointed by Providence to accomplish the divine work, the Germanic task, and that the kingdom of the spirit, the kingdom of the German spirit, was nothing else than the omnipotence of the Prussian State.

This clear and precise doctrine wonderfully simplifies the problem of the essence and right of nationalities. The Prussian State, the centre and focus of divine unity, has for its mission and its *raison d'être* the extension throughout the world of the benefits of that superior organization whereof it is the type. It appertains to this State to discern the part which each group of men is capable of playing in the world-wide task of civilization, and, by a wise division of work, to realize divine unity and peace within a free and conscious humanity.

And so in this doctrine we have the idea of nationality replaced by that of function. A nation is a functionary, contributing, in the way indicated by his chief, to the working of the human machine.

All the same, we may ask, is this the true idea of humanity? Kant claimed that humanity, which is the substance of individual and nation alike, should always be considered, not as a means, but as an end in itself. " Handle so, dass du die Menschheit, sowohl in deiner Person, als in der Person eines jeden Andern, jederzeit zugleich als Zweck, niemals bloss als Mittel brauchst." Surely this doctrine, which sums up the highest teaching of the ancient wisdom, of Christianity and of modern thought, should not nowadays be regarded as out of date, and the most perfect form of human life henceforth consist of the kind of life lived by bees and ants!

Undoubtedly, man possesses the faculty of organization, and it is the widest possible exercise of this precious faculty that conditions his very progress and existence. All the same, must he become engrossed and annihilate himself in the mechanism he creates? Born a human being, intelligent and free, capable of a conscious and personal life, is it his ideal to abjure these characteristics and become reduced to the state of an organ, limited to the faculties which the functions of this organ demand?

Neither morality nor common sense permits

us thus to renounce the idea of humanity, which the greatest minds of all time have taught us to honour.

No doubt both individuals and nations, if they would act effectively, must concentrate their strength on certain fixed objects, and abandon a universality which is nothing more than indetermination and impotence. Still, this necessary specialization does not prevent men from retaining the general qualities whereby they resemble one another, and the exercise of which aids in the performance of the special work itself. Man is a being who makes himself tools. Of himself, in a sense, he makes an instrument. But how could the tool render the workman useless? On the contrary, the tool is all the more effective when handled by an intelligent workman. The whole man, applying himself to a particular task, his mind retaining its relationship with the infinite whilst functioning in a material finite body: such is the privilege of human nature. "Be a whole man to one thing at a time," said Carlyle.

Again, the interest and nobility of mankind require that the various human qualities should, to a certain extent, be distributed amongst the different peoples and individuals,

so that each may carry to a higher degree of perfection that quality which, in a way, it represents. It is just, then, to admit that the human person, both in the case of nations and of individuals, is deserving of respect, not only in what he has in common with all men, but also in the very characteristics that distinguish him and constitute a certain type of humanity. Liberty, in so far as it is the right to be oneself and to develop one's own being to the extent that this development can be reconciled with that of other persons, is a principle of dignity and fruitfulness. Nations serve humanity far more effectively if they can maintain their distinctive temperament and remain faithful to their ideal than if they are compelled to serve an alien cause.

And so, however powerfully organized a certain State may be, it is the duty of mankind to resist the claim manifested by this State to exercise hegemony over all the rest. Every fully conscious and living State is, like every person, an end in itself; the diversity of the various nationalities and their equal right to free development are conditions both of their own dignity and of the greatness of the human race. In the relations between States, duty consists in more fully realizing the idea of a

relation between person and person, based on consent and sympathy, not the idea of passive submission, imposed by constraint and intimidation.

The idea of the State is not the only one contrasted with our principle of nationality. Along the same lines, the idea of culture is also put forward.

Culture, we are told, is the final object of all the higher aspirations of mankind. All other ends have a relative value; it alone is absolute. Right, after all, to which our contemporaries attach such importance, is measured by degree of culture; it is absurd to recognize the same rights in men who are uncultured, those who are half cultured, those who are simply cultured, and those who are fully cultured (*die Vollkulturmenschen*). To these latter, by virtue of their intrinsic superiority, belongs authority, the right to rule other men with a view to increasing their degree of culture and their participation in the work of the world.

And if there exists a nation which henceforth realizes the idea of the loftiest culture, it appertains to that nation to play the part of leader.

Now, this condition actually exists. The

German nation is the cultured nation *par excellence*. Its Universities are the first in the world. In science and art, industry and commerce, religious and moral life, political and military organization—in everything it excels and is unique. It is self-sufficient, for everything great in the world comes from it, and its fruitfulness is inexhaustible. Henceforth, it is not only the nation predestined to develop human culture to perfection, it is the realization of this culture itself in all its essential features.

From this it follows that it would be madness to degrade Germany to the level of other nations. There can be no reciprocity between the ignorant and the learned, between the undisciplined and the disciplined man, between irreligion and piety, between corruption and virtue, between barbarism and culture. The German people are above the mediocre justice of the weak and the envious; they must, and can, if need be, tear up their engagements, violate human conventions and the laws of common morality, and pour scorn upon prejudices and the silly hostilities of the feeble and the vanquished, in order to meet the stern and dreadful obligations their superior culture imposes on them.

In presence of this supreme right, the so-called right of nationality is but a crude fact, of no rational importance. From the summit of her science, her moral worth and her might, Germany must control the education of the nations, apportion to them their tasks, not in accordance with their own wishes and inclinations, but according to her own will, and so make them capable of contributing, as she understands it, to the progress of supreme—*i.e.*, German—culture.

Such are the consequences reached by German theorists along the lines of an imperious logic. The reason for this result may be found in the idea they form of culture.

According to the Germans themselves, it is the moral element that constitutes the basis and the main characteristic of their culture. Such is the teaching of their University professors, and such the declaration of the first professor in the empire—the Kaiser, who, distinguishing between civilization and culture, attributes to his people a monopoly of culture, since true culture implies the preponderance of the moral factor, and Germans alone possess the notion of duty. In reality, however, German culture corresponds in no way to this theory. Its

dominant idea is that science and power are the two poles of human life. Science as the principle, power as the end, and organization as the means: such, in reality, is the German conception of culture.

Hence it is easily explainable that culture, in Germany, is regarded as a cause of inequality and a justification of despotism. Indeed, science, power, organization, are quantitative terms, comprising numerically measurable differences. And it is possible to prove objectively that some particular nation, compared with the rest, contains more schools, more works, more cannon. Also, if science, organization, and power, form the whole ideal of human life, it is logical that the nation which regards itself as first in these three domains should aspire after world-wide domination. The conception, however, of the human ideal which actually governs modern Germany is a very debatable one.

Long ago the Greek philosophers pointed out the original and distinctive value of the strictly moral qualities: self-control, the cult of justice and modesty, respect for human dignity, and scorn of brute force. And in modern times, beneath the combined influence of Hellenism and Christianity, respect for

the voice of conscience, honour, good faith, humanity, concern for justice and equity, both in political and social as well as in individual relations, have more and more emphatically been valued and extolled, when confronted with the most triumphant and terrible powers. The result is that the moral element of civilization has been more and more distinguished from the material or even intellectual elements, not in words, but in reality, and set above these elements.

But if culture is thus interpreted, it could not in its development prejudice the equality of nations and confer on a so-called superior nation the right to subjugate the rest. Whilst, indeed, men are irremediably unequal in things connected with science and power, on the other hand they are radically equal in their capacity of aspiring after moral worth. Any culture which really deserves to be called moral, instead of doing away with this equality, recognizes and sanctions it.

And so we cannot legitimately lay aside the French theory of nationality in the name of culture, as the human consciousness interprets it.

The State and culture are not the only notions we find set above the principle of

nationality; there has been established a doctrine which raises force, material brute force, above every principle that can be conceived by man.

This doctrine starts with the distinction between abstract or potential right and real or concrete right. Abstract right, it is declared, is but a vain, ineffective possibility; right possesses its distinctive quality of exactableness only if it is upheld and actualized by force: we possess only what we can defend. Thus force precedes right (*Macht geht vor Recht*), a maxim often erroneously interpreted as meaning that force takes precedence over right.

So far force is but the condition under which right is realized, a grave enough doctrine, for, in a sense, from the practical if not from the theoretical point of view, it means that right without force is non-existent.

German thought, however, goes farther than this. We know that the Hegelian philosophy lays down as a fundamental dogma the identity of the rational and the real. From this point of view, force is not simply one condition of the realization of right: it is right itself, regarded from the standpoint of the real. Here force becomes literally the equivalent, the

practical substitute, of right, the only right known and recognized by minds framed to distinguish realities from vain ideas. A realistic policy knows only force; when the word right is uttered, it thinks of force. It sees but an empty word in a right which does not present itself under the aspect of force.

Thus force is moral, sacred and divine, at all events when it is strongest and imposes itself irresistibly. The reasonings of men regarding the intrinsic value of ideas that have not force on their side are but the despicable revenge of weakness and cowardice upon energy and the spirit of domination. In the beginning was action or acting force; within it lies all that engenders, all that counts, all that is.

It is unnecessary to show that this doctrine does away with the principle of nationality. If a nation happens to be the strongest, it thereby possesses the right, from this standpoint, to dispose as it pleases of the fate of other nations. It cannot with any sincerity respect their independence. To bring them to a condition of obedience, it will consider that it can legitimately use every means in its power. It will aim at reducing them to the condition of instruments, and reducing the

world to a vast machine of which it will be the first mover.

A strange ideal for men who pride themselves on attaining to the synthesis of all the progress that has been effected throughout the ages by the whole of humanity! Was it not everywhere believed that human progress had mainly consisted in thrusting farther and farther into the background that force which, amongst primitive beings, is the predominant law? Is not what is called humanity precisely the sum total of another order of qualities which tend to dominate, to tame and permeate force?

In this connection, nothing is clearer than the dual teaching bequeathed to men by Hellenism and Christianity.

Aristotle expresses Hellenic thought in his remarkable doctrine of the relation of God to the world. God, or perfect Being, says the author of the *Metaphysics*, moves the world by the virtue he possesses of being at once the supremely intelligible and the supremely desirable. In such terms does Aristotle define God, eliminating force from his nature and retaining only thought and goodness. It is in the world of sense that he places force, as being the lower essence, which must be

spiritualized, made tractable and gentle, under the divine influence.

And whereas the Greek ideal regarded the supremely intelligible and the supremely desirable as being in the divine essence, Christianity, wishing to show even more strongly the contrast between God and force, defines God by the word love, and only looks upon the other perfections as worthy of God if they are permeated by love. Even more completely than intelligence, indeed, is love irreducible to force, opposed to constraint and to mechanical necessity.

What, from the Christian point of view, is the supernatural, wherein men must seek the realization of their destiny ? It is the triumph of love over force, and it is also, in spite of their impotence from the physical standpoint, purity of heart, meekness, the spirit of justice and pity, victorious alike in heaven and on earth.

Such is the faith of humanity. So long as there are men worthy of the name, they will maintain these beliefs over against that refined barbarism which, armed with science and cannon, would pluck them from their soul. For, as Pascal said, *this* cannot act upon *that:* justice is of another order than force.

III.

However distinct from one another be the principles in the name of which the French doctrine of nationality is combated, these principles all end in the same consequence, which it is important that we should clearly set forth.

They substitute hierarchy in the place of equality between nations, and posit the existence of a head nation whose mission it is to dominate the rest and assign to them their place and function in the universe.

What, exactly, is the fate which, according to this theory, awaits the so-called inferior nations ?

There are three cases for us to consider.

The first is that of the nations immediately assimilable into the head nation. This latter will respect—and cause to be respected—the integrity of the nations in question, and, more or less openly, will incorporate them into itself. Indeed, from its point of view, it is by abandoning an illusory independence and blending with the whole to which they virtually belong, that these nations can truly become themselves and exercise their full powers.

The second case is that of radically irreducible nations, which affect to set up against both menace or flattery an invincible claim to independence. The end which, as they think, the head nation must aim at is extermination. Utterly to destroy irreducible rebels, to crush their material power and moral existence, is the sole means of assuring the triumph of good, the welfare of mankind.

The third case is that of the nations which, though not actually assimilable, are capable of being utilized, and whose destruction, moreover, it would be practically impossible to effect. The situation adapted to these nations is that of vassals or subjects or dependents of the head nation. Kept strictly dependent, never able to satisfy the passions of revenge or rebellion to which the conquered are exposed, such nations may gradually come to recognize the superiority and friendliness of the head nation and prove deserving to play an ever more active and prominent part in the general task of civilization.

If we compare these theoretical conclusions with the realities around us, we find that the countries whose nationality is most threatened by the doctrine of the head nation are those

nearest to it in language, culture and customs. We cannot imagine the possibility of Italians, Spaniards, Englishmen, Frenchmen, or Poles, ever becoming Germans. Apart, then, from their extermination, a manifest impossibility, Germany would be compelled to permit these peoples largely to retain their nationality. It is not so with the Flemish, the Dutch, the Swedes, the Danes, etc. However original the culture, however glorious the traditions, of these nations, a common political life with the Germans would prove their moral destruction. Swedes, Dutch, and Danes, once united to Germans, would literally become Germans themselves; their admirable civilization would be no more than a museum of antiquities or a page of history growing musty in the libraries.

And so it is the nations with a language and culture most akin to the German whose future is most threatened by the struggle now taking place between the principle of nationality and that of a feudal autocratic empire. The defeat of the defenders of national right would involve the moral ruin of these small unresisting nations. It is but fair to state that the Allies, in fighting for their own freedom and independence, are shedding their

blood for all those, throughout the world, who are jealous of their national patrimony and their human dignity.

As all the theories we have examined culminate in one common result, so also do they appear to conceive of human nature along certain lines. That which characterizes this common conception is the subordinate—even harmful—rôle attributed to feeling. Cold calculation alone, affirmed Bismarck, was worthy of a statesman. The entire Prusso-German policy and methods of war are based on this scorn of feeling. In the German philosophy itself we generally find that feeling has been set aside, thrust into the background, or reduced to the other faculties of the mind. Kant declared that there could be no moral doctrine worthy of the name, which did not make a radical elimination of sensibility. And the means Leibnitz employed to maintain the value and importance of feeling was to regard it as an obscure and lower form of intellectual perception. Undoubtedly, there are remarkable mystical doctrines in German philosophy, though here the mysticism is mainly intellectual: it is an intuitive knowledge of the absolute. What does Faust demand? To see in itself, he says, the creative activity of

being, to contemplate the elementary germs of things:

> "Dass ich . . .
> Schau' alle Wirksamkeit und Samen. . . ."

Now, if feeling is eliminated from the human soul, there remain intellect and will, so parched and withered that neither the one nor the other, nor their combination, is able to uphold the reality and value of the individuality.

Intellect, isolated from feeling and thrust back upon itself, tends towards a wholly abstract idea of the one and the universal. If men are distinguished from one another by their intellect, in the strict sense of the word, it is only in so far as some are more intelligent and learned than the rest. Here, their progress consists in differing less and less from one another, in freeing themselves from their individuality.

It is the same with will, when divorced from feeling. Will, of itself, tends solely towards effective action, and so towards organization and unity, the conditions of power. It constantly happens that men think they will, of and by themselves, what is really suggested to them and is but the expression of an in-influence exerted over them, even though they

do not know it, by a stronger will or by the general urge of a group to which they belong.

And so, reduced to intellect and will alone, man tends to be no more than an anonymous force whose right employment is mechanical collaboration in collective work. In such a system as that of Hegel, individuals are not exactly without a distinctive existence and a *raison d'être*. Their part, however, consists in building up a structure from which they will be excluded. The life of the whole will be made up of their death. Their individualities, as such, are of no value; they have no right to exist. They are the drops of rain which compose the ocean.

But humanity is not imperatively compelled to accept the conception of human nature which has prevailed in German thought. Feeling, the subjective and individual element of our being, is not really a simple epiphenomenon, unstable and ineffective, nor is it a purely provisional form of existence. Feeling is the very stuff composing our consciousness which would otherwise lose itself in the universal and the impersonal. Our cognitions and wills are our own; emptied of all feeling, however, they are like any commonplace coin, which remains the same no matter through

whose hands it may have passed. Feeling is more than something that belongs to us: it is our very self. We may have our cognitions and wills in common with others; it is only in a metaphorical sense that our feelings can be shared. The subjectivity proper to feeling forms an integral part of its essence.

Besides, what is this intellect, this will, regarded as devoid of all dealings with feeling? Is such a separation possible? Can it be looked upon as desirable?

If we consider our will and intellect in normal exercise, we find that in reality they do not function apart from feeling. Science, ready-made, so to speak, or regarded as such, may be expounded and taught by the aid of axioms and purely abstract reasonings. But science is only created, developed, and kept living and true, by means of constant intercourse with reality. Now, this intercourse has its seat in feeling. In reality, the science which seems ready-made is never anything more than a stage in the science which is in process of making; fresh progress may always demand a modification of the most firmly established results; contact with reality ever remains indispensable.

Will, likewise, has need of feeling if it is to

avoid abstract formalism and fanaticism. The very notion of duty is as dangerous as it is sublime if it arrogantly flings aside all connection with feeling. It is the necessary and legitimate guide of human life only if it has a content, if it commands not simply obedience, but the doing of what it is right and good to do. Now, this content can be supplied only by certain feelings: justice, rightmindedness, respect, harmony, humanity.

The whole of our life, if we analyze its conditions, is thus based on feeling—not a crude, purely instinctive and blind feeling, but a feeling more or less harmoniously combined with intellect and will.

In our relations with men, in our scientific works, artistic creations and religious activity, we succeed in doing good and permanent work only if we draw from feeling an indispensable recognition of the real and the ideal, of being strictly so called, irreducible to our own rules and concepts.

Such appears to be the true nature of man. Now, if we apply these remarks to the question of nationality, we find that the French theory is confirmed all along the line.

The individual's being is inseparable from feeling, which is the very basis of his conscious-

ness. Similarly, a nation is, above all, a group of men united by the desire to live together, by a sense of solidarity, by community of joys and sorrows, by memories, aspirations and destinies. *A nation is a friendship*.

But feeling, in the individual, should not be divorced from intellect and will, or even from the instincts of organic life. Man is soul and body, and that inseparably. The nation, too, whilst it possesses a soul, the feeling common to all its members, also possesses a body inseparable from this soul. The body of the nation is the sum total of those conditions which we wrongly try to substitute for its soul, but which regain their full value when set in their right place. These consist of race, language and history, State, culture and power. Detached from the national consciousness and reduced to purely objective data, these phenomena offer the idea of nationality only a provisional basis, which, as consciousness evolves, becomes ever more ruinous. It is advisable, however, to disguish from these elements, as seen from without, the same elements living and developing through the working of the national consciousness; just as from the language as given in the dictionary we distinguish the language spoken

by the people, changing and evolving day by day; or as, from that state of passive habit wherein human freedom disappears, we distinguish an active habit of which man remains the master and on which he leans in order to transcend himself. Race, language and culture, are assuredly becoming more and more clearly the manifestations and effects of conscious activity, instead of being its mechanical causes, so to speak. Thus understood, race, language and history, State, culture and power, naturally resume their right and important place alongside of the principle of free consent.

Κοινὰ τὰ τῶν φιλῶν, said the Greeks: "For friends, all things in common." In proportion as reflection grows and develops in man, he no longer simply regards community of life, of customs and destinies, as a sum total of given conditions, but as a form of existence agreed to and loved and constantly being created anew. This is no longer the body becoming aware of itself in a passive soul; it is rather the creative soul, expressing and realizing itself in a docile body.

As thus conceived, nations are really like persons; consequently, not only do they refuse to recognize the right to suppress or crush rival

nations, rather do they set up the rule of justice, equality and friendship, alike amongst peoples as amongst individuals, as the ideal of humanity.

Why did God create the world? asks Plato in the *Timæus*. And the philosopher replies: *Ἀγαθὸς ἦν, ἀγαθῷ δὲ οὐδεὶς περὶ οὐδενὸς οὐδέποτε ἐγγίγνεται φθόνος* (God was good, and in him who is good, never, in whatsoever connection, can hatred be born). Plato adds: "God, being such, willed that all things should resemble him as far as possible" (*Πάντα ὅ τι μάλιστα γενέσθαι ἐβουλήθη παραπλήσια ἑαυτῷ*).

Is not the ideal set forth by Plato in the fourth century before Christ worthy of humanity, even at the present time?

THE END

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