

the German fatherland. It would deserve such punishment as befel the Jewish people for ignoring its divine vocation, and for rejecting the Son of God when He came on earth. How many in Germany entertain such notions? Their number is probably very great. But of course there is a legion of unbelievers, and they doubtless sneer at the pretended "divine vocation" of Germany and the Emperor's mysticism. True, but they reach the same views by another way. They teach that the German is the superman, and he is so, they say, by his physical structure, by the height and the breadth of his forehead, by the color of his eyes—arguments quite as grotesque as those of the theologian and the preacher. This set of infidels also believes Germany made for the domination of the world, and the pride of both classes is certainly one cause of the war.

III.—Political Causes of the War: Prussianised Germany.

There is one more cause and that most important: Germany lived on for a long while in the state of anarchy. She was composed of hundreds of states, each with its independent life. The Emperor's authority was alike pompous and worthless. But among those states one rose above the others—Prussia. At the dawn of the eighteenth century it was a poor tiny kingdom having hardly two million inhabitants, and made up of scattered fragments between the Rhine and the Vistula, the two extremities of Germany. But in the lifetime of Frederick-William, and of Frederick II., it became a military state. Everything was subordinate to the needs of the army. The finances were administered with extreme economy—luxury nowhere; everybody at work. In other countries the nobility had some pretence of independence: it defended itself against the crown: it was at times rebellious. In Prussia it was subservient.

The Prussian Junker (squireen) gloried in his service: it was his honor and pride. From father to son he served in the army. A military caste was born in the country, scorning the burghesses, harsh on the peasant, always docile to the master, ever standing with joint heels and hand to forehead. In this state none reasoned: *nicht raisonniren*. "No reasoning," said the master.

Therefore Prussia was organised for war. It needed war—that little Prussia split into minute parts. The forces required combination. Territories had to be conquered again, and again, and again. There was once a small history of Prussia made for primary schools. In it, alongside of each princeling, was a delineated square, in which was inscribed the number of kilometres conquered by him. It was by necessity that war became in Mirabeau's words, "*The national industry of Prussia.*"

To sum up:

A people has become a huge industrial power, over-productive, ambitions, greedy.

This people is mad with pride: it deems itself charged by God to rule and save the world: it believes that to be its duty, or else it believes that its natural superiority over all peoples mark it out for the government of the world.

This people is governed by a soldier-Emperor, by heritage a soldier, by tradition a conqueror, and master of the greatest military might ever seen in the world.

Combine all that, or rather contemplate it already combined: trade, philosophy, religion, militarism tend to the same end, German supremacy, religion, militarism tend to the same end, German supremacy, German hegemony.

And the leader, Kaiser William, while he provokes our smiles by proclaiming himself God's representative, may rightly affirm that he exactly represents his own people: for he honors trade, he philosophises, he preaches, and he is the War-lord.

Never at any period, or in any country, was there a people so bent on war as the Germans.

IV.—The Programme of German Ambitions.

What this people wants, what it expects from war, it has declared again and again in every possible tone. It wanted the French departments of north and of Calais, a part of the department of the Somme, another of the department of Ardennes, the department of Meuth-et-Moselle, the arrondissement of Briey. It wanted Verdun and Belpport.

That is written textually in the famous memorial tendered to the Government by the six great industrial and agricultural annexations, which comprise millions of Germans, and in a manifesto published by high German notabilities. That is repeated daily by the Pan-Germans who control public opinion. They wanted, and still want, to obtain a war indemnity: some have claimed 20 milliards, others 30: in March, 1917, the *Cologne Gazette*, the Government organ, claimed 100 milliards.

For them one of the main objects of the war was the annihilation of France. "*He must never more,*" wrote the author, General Bernhardt, "*again find France in our way.*" The wresting from her the richest of her departments, representing one-third of her fortune, the crushing of her by overwhelming contributions—that means the annihilation of France.

And for Germany, what an increase of wealth; what an abundance of raw materials! coal and ores from France. Already they thought themselves possessed of rare treasures. They spoke of expropriating all manufactures, all the owners in those annexed French provinces, and the substitution of German owners: they spoke of transferring into German hands all the means and instruments of production. But who would indemnify the expropriated? "France," audaciously they responded.

Of course they also estimated that the colonies would be much better in their hands than in the French. Moreover, they wanted a rich agricultural and industrial land: they wanted Holland, the Belgian and Dutch coasts, the French coast from the Somme: these were a necessity for them because they are opposite England, because they possess the mouths of the Escaut, Meuse, and Rhine. By what right, forsooth, did the Dutch, that *little coastal people*, as they say, possess the mouth of the Rhine, the German river? So much for the enlargement on the West. On the East they wanted to push the Russians far back in order to grasp the provinces bordering on the Baltic, to cut their communications with the Black Sea, and separate them from Europe. In their extension on this side, they wanted the wheat lands, so as to people them with German colonists. Thus they would provide themselves with wheat, and settle their surplus population. They would thus also restore the balance between their agricultural and industrial population. Finding themselves cramped they simply want to be at ease.

By these means they would at the same time extend the German land and increase their inward power. They wanted to use this force both promptly and colossaly.

One of their greatest schemes was to open a way to Asia from Hamburg. The main stations would be Berlin, Vienna, Budapest, Belgrade, Sofia, Constantinople, and Bagdad. Germany and Austria would subject the intervening countries, Servia, Bulgaria, and Turkey. To this region would be attached the North of France, Belgium, and then Holland, and afterwards, in due course, Scandinavia. Thus the starting point would be the North Sea and the goal the Persian Gulf; and so the whole world would form an Empire vaster than the ancient Roman Empire.

The Germans saw themselves already at work in remote Asia, and thousands and thousands of colonies would cultivate the region made famous by Nineveh and Babylon.

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