England and Germany

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ENGLAND AND GERMANY
TO
H.S.H. ALICE
PRINCESS OF MONACO
THIS PARTIAL PRESENTMENT OF THE
BEGINNINGS OF A WORLD
CATACLYSM
INTRODUCTION

Behind any human institution there stand a few men—perhaps only one man—who direct its movement, protect its interests, or serve as its mouthpiece. This applies to nations. If we wish to know for what a nation stands and what are its ideals and by what means it seeks to realise them, we shall do well to know something of the men who lead its people or express their feelings.

It is of vital importance that we should understand the attitude of every one of the nations—both friends and enemies—in this war. For in this way only can we know what is necessary to be done to achieve victory.

And the remarkable man who has written this book knows those who lead the warring nations in this titanic conflict very much better than ordinary men know their own townsmen.

Dr. Dillon has moved through the chancelleries of Europe. He has seen and heard what has been denied to all but very few. In the Balkans, that cauldron of racial passions which, overflowing, gave our enemies an ostensible cause for this war, he moved as though an invisible and yet keenly observant figure. He
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could claim the friendship of Venizelos and other Balkan statesmen. He has travelled as a monk throughout the mountain fastnesses, he has slept in the caves of Albania. He understands the people of all the Balkans, speaks their tongues as a native, and knows and assesses at their true value their leaders.

At the time of the murder of the Archduke Ferdinand and the Archduchess, Dr. Dillon was in Austria, and he remained there through those long negotiations in which Germany tenaciously clung to her design of war.

How well he knows Germany let his book speak. His knowledge of Russia is profound. A master of many languages, he occupied a chair at the Moscow University for many years, and his insight into Russian politics is deep.

In this book he speaks out of the depth of his knowledge, and tells the people of Britain what this war means to them, and what needs to be done before we can hope for victory. He speaks plainly because he feels strongly.

It may be that we cannot agree with him in everything that he says. But no one, after reading Dr. Dillon's remarkable book, will any longer regard the war as but a passing episode. It is a timely antidote to that fatal delusion.

For this war is a veritable cataclysm, and the future of the world hangs upon the result. We must change our lives. Insidiously, while we have called all foreigners brothers and sought foes amongst ourselves, the great force of barbarism, in a new guise and with enormous
power of penetration and annexation, has worked for our undoing. This force now stands bared, in the hideous bestialty of Germany’s doctrine of Might, and it can be defeated only by an adaptation of its methods that will leave nothing as it was before.

Dr. Dillon’s unfolding of the story of German preparation is, it will be admitted, one of fascinating interest. Of its value as a contribution to political and diplomatic history it is not for me to speak. But to its purpose in keying all men to the pitch; all to a sense of the great events in which we are taking part, I bear my testimony. “Germany is wholly alive, physically, intellectually, and psychologically. And she lives in the present and future” (p. 312). And the living force of Germany requires us to rise to the very fulness of our powers; for as the champions of truth and right we must prove ourselves physically and morally stronger than the champions of soulless might.

Germany is wholly alive; but she is alive for evil. We whose purpose is good, whose cause is justice and whose triumph is indispensable if honest industry and human right are not to disappear from mankind, are as yet not fully alive to the immensity and necessity of our task. We must awaken, or be awakened, ere it be too late.

Germany is living in the present and in the future. It is a present of determined effort, of unlimited sacrifice, of colossal hope. The future for which she strives and suffers is a
future incompatible with those ideals which our race cherishes and reveres. Either our philosophy, our religion and code prevail, or they fade into decay, and Germany's aims remain. The choice is definite.

There can be no parley, no compromise with the evil thing for which Germany fights. There is not room for both. One must go down.

We must win outright. And we can and shall win—if we bend every thought, our whole will, our every energy, our utmost intensity of determination to the great work. Failing this, we shall secure only a victory equivalent to defeat. We chose the part of free men, and, when purified by complete self-sacrifice, shall emerge from the ordeal a great and regenerated people.

W. M. Hughes.