

# An Occult View of the War

by CW Leadbeater

The great war is the one topic of the day, the one thing about which everyone speaks - the one thing, also, about which everyone thinks, and yet vast numbers of people are not thinking rightly about it. There are many who do not know what to think. They are torn by a number of different ideas, and they find it hard to take a balanced view. On the one side there is often a rush of hatred called forth by awful barbarities, by unexampled cruelties, on the other side there is a strong feeling - a well-founded feeling - that war is an awful and insane thing, which never settles any point properly, because the side that wins in a war need not at all necessarily be always the right side. Providence, they say, is on the side of the biggest guns, and the old mediaeval idea that war was always decided by some higher power does not find invariable acceptance in the present day. People say: "We know war is an evil and a wicked thing we know that peace is right and beautiful; so how can we fight with any heart?" Yet, on the other hand, when such awful things are happening, is it not every man's duty to do what he can to stay the evil? So there is a general uncertainty of feeling, and many people hardly know what line they ought to take.

Perhaps a statement of facts with regard to the war from the inside may help you as to the attitude which we ought to adopt. In my own mind that attitude is absolutely clear and definite, and I shall endeavour to put it before you with such advantage of knowledge of the inner side of things as has come to me, because the attitude which men take with regard to this war is a matter of great importance. It is quite true that the one thing to be thought of now is to win. But many of us are not able to go and fight, and the attitude that we take with regard to this matter may make the final settlement a comparatively easy thing or an almost impossible thing, and, therefore, it is not unimportant that we should have the right ideas clearly in our minds.

In order to have clear ideas upon any subject we must first of all have the facts at our command. There is always a hidden side to everything - a side which is unseen by the ordinary man, un contemplated by the ordinary thinker; yet that unseen side is nearly always vastly more important and vastly more informing than the side which is seen.

I am going to try to give you some glimpse of the hidden side of this great struggle, and I hope that that may help you to take up an attitude, to form an opinion, which will be helpful and not harmful; when we come to the settlement later.

On the surface this war seems simple enough, although incredible. All who know anything of the real history of events - I mean from the external point of view - know that Germany has been prepared through many, many years with a careful, calculated thoroughness, which has, perhaps, never been equalled in the world, to make a spring at the throat of Europe; just precisely that - to make a tremendous bid for world-domination. I know that even that much is not generally believed in Germany. There they try to persuade themselves that they were forced to make this attack; but all of us who have read the evidence, the Blue Books, and the various messages interchanged between the countries concerned, know that the attack was absolutely unprovoked, and that one side had prepared for it in a perfectly marvelous manner - a manner which is an example of thoroughness to the rest of the world, only unfortunately an example of unparalleled treachery and dishonour as well. The Allies were most unfortunately unprepared to a terrible extent - to an extent which has cost a vast amount in lives and in suffering.

All that is one the surface and is obvious. Calculated, detailed, and marvelously unscrupulous as was the preparation, it has been fully equalled by the execution, which has been carried out with a deliberate brutality, with a finished cruelty never before approached. I know that is a strong thing to say, but you have only to read unimpeachable evidence to see that it is true. Unfortunately, I know it to be true. I have had in the course of work on other planes opportunities of observation for myself. I know that the most awful stories you have heard are absolutely founded on fact. I am sorry, but it is so. We have to face things as they are - not as sentimentalism would like to have them. We have to face things as they are, so that actually we have come to see that Kipling was right in his memorable phrase: "We shall now have to revise our vocabulary: we shall now have to divide the inhabitants of the earth into human beings and - Germans". I am sorry, but I am telling you the facts of the case.

If you think of it, that is a most amazing thing; and remember that, so far as we have been allowed to hear, there has been no protest. Just think: I do not want to stir up your passions - it is the last thing I would desire to do; but just think of the things which have happened. Remember the "Lusitania"; remember the "Persia" and the "Arabic". Think of how many cases there

have been of attacks upon unprotected towns, the deliberate murder - a verdict of wilful murder has been brought in by a court over and over again - of non-combatants. Think of that for a moment, and then say how can you account for such a thing?

You have all, I am quite sure, know people belonging to this race. I, at least, have known many Germans. I belong to the Theosophical Society - a society which has branches in every country in the world. I have met men of that race. I have known them, they have been friends of mine. I am sure that the same is true of a great many of you.

It is true that in that Theosophical Society we had a foretaste of this endeavour to dominate the world, for the German section of the Theosophical Society rose against the rest of it and tried to obtain supreme power in the Society some years ago, before this war was in sight. They employed exactly the same weapons that are now being employed by the political agents of the German press: the same unscrupulous lies, the same discovery of spies in all sorts of unexpected places. We in the Theosophical Society went through - on paper of course mainly - a small edition of this attempt to capture the whole organization. We did not understand then; the utter unscrupulousness of it all astounded us. Now we see that it was only part of the whole German scheme - an attempt to get hold of a world-wide Society, through which something might have been done to help the German plan of world-domination. Fortunately, the scheme was defeated, with all its attendant calumny and treachery.

We have all known men of German race: were they on the whole the kind of people who would behave in this fashion? You know that they were not. Do not you see that this dire change requires accounting for - that it needs something absolutely unusual, something entirely novel in the way of an explanation? I will try to tell you exactly how it did happen - how it is happening.

Here is another point. We all of us feel, I think, that we are engaged more or less in a war of principle, that there are great principles at stake, that we are fighting for liberty, for what is called democracy. I have not personally by any means an unalloyed admiration of democratic methods; but I do say that democracy at least means an effort towards liberty for the people, though I think there is a good deal which is crude and unfinished and unscientific about it.

We are fighting then, surely, for this democracy and liberty on one side as against terrible tyranny and slavery on the other. It is not only the right of existence of smaller nations. You know it has been quite openly stated in the German press that the day of small nations is over, that they have no right to exist. It is not only that that is it honour, and the keeping of a pledge. You know well how the next man below the Emperor described a solemn treaty as "Only a scrap of paper" and could wish to go to war merely for this scrap of paper. It is against that kind of thing that we are fighting. The fact that our enemy has miscalculated does not, after all, make the matter any better: the fact that they cynically judged us by themselves - that they supposed that Ireland would be certain to rebel (because it seemed on the verge of civil war) if England were attacked; the fact that they believed that you, in Australia, with our fellow citizens of the Empire in Canada and the Cape of Good Hope, would all take the opportunity to break away - that is what they expected. They calculated on all that. They have miscalculated, but that does not make their case any better.

So quite clearly we are standing for principles. And I can tell you this - that more truly than you know, and on a greater scale than you know, is this a question of principle.

We know that there are forces which work against evolution as well as those which work in favour of it. We know that there is frequently a small, even a personal, struggle taking place between these forces over individuals, and sometimes over what seem to us quite small things. But we know also that now and then great world-crises arise, where good and evil set themselves against one another in serried array, and humanity is influenced by these powers and driven into taking part on one side or the other. The last occasion on which so great a world-struggle took place was in Atlantis some twelve or thirteen thousand years ago. There was a great fight then between those who were on the side of good and those who were on the side of selfishness.

We may read something of the Lords of the Dark Face in Atlantis in the Secret Doctrine. Madame Blavatsky devotes much time and energy to expounding their line of work. We must try to understand that there may be people who are doing what to us seems absolutely evil, and yet they may think themselves justified in their action. They may think that the line which they are taking is not evil, but in the long run good. It is true that when they say: "in the long run good," I think they generally mean good for themselves; but these Lords of the Dark Face had their own view of evolution, and to themselves they justified it, much

along the line in which some people in these days try to justify the action of Judas Iscariot on the ground that he was more anxious than the rest that the Master as glory should be shown to the world, and so he put his Master in a position where he thought that He must show for the His glory. However incredible it may seem, that view is gravely put forward by some writers.

The Lords of the Dark Face in Atlantis were intensifying themselves as separated beings against the stream of evolution. WE hold that the trend of evolution is towards unity - that this vast multiplex Universe that we see around us is all the expression of One Mighty Power, and that as from Him we all came out, so to Him one day we shall all return - not losing our sense of individuality, not losing the memory and the benefit of all our experience, but certainly rising ever higher and higher into perfect realisation of our unity with Him. Therefore, we know it to be pleasing to Him that we should work ever towards that unity. But those who hold the opposite view think that the Deity sets up this current which we call evolution in order that we may strengthen ourselves by fighting against it; and although we do not believe that, we can see that it is a possible view, and it is clear that men who hold it will not live at all as we do. We think that such people are vitally in error, that they are allowing themselves to be clouded by the lower self; still we see that they try to justify their position by a certain line of argument. It is not necessary to suppose that those Lords of the Dark Face were doing evil for evil's sake; but they held what we consider a wrong and selfish view as to the intention of the Deity. I have myself heard some of their successors of the present day say: "You people think you know what GOD means; your Masters hold these views, and, of course, you follow Them. But we have a different view; we are following the traditions of a very ancient school and we contrive to hold our own fairly well".

In Atlantis this attitude led, among the ordinary and commonplace followers, to extreme selfishness and sensuality, to general unscrupulousness and irresponsibility. It led to an extraordinary condition in which each man set up an image of himself and worshipped that as a God - a perversion of the perfectly true idea that God is within everyone of us, and that if you cannot find Him within yourself it is useless to look for Him elsewhere. So it came about that there was a vast revolution against the Ruler of the Golden Gate, and practically the good and evil forces which are always seeking to influence the world found physical expression in that great series of battles in Atlantis. In that case the majority of the population was distinctly on the side of evil, and the evil won. Because the evil won, it was necessary, more than one thousand years afterwards, to overwhelm that great island of Poseidonis beneath the waters of the Atlantic: and sixty five million died within twenty four hours in that great cataclysm.

This time once more the forces of good and evil have materialised themselves here on the physical plane, and the mighty contest has come down again to this level. Remember, we are the same people who were in Atlantis, and it is probable that we took our part in the struggle - with the minority, let us hope - yet perhaps some of us with the majority; it is a long time ago, and we cannot be certain.

I remember reading a terrible story (fiction only, I hope, for it could hardly have been actual fact) of the recovered memory of a past incarnation. There was once a man, an earnest and devout Christian, who through the accident of subjecting himself to mesmeric treatment, found that in a trance condition he was able to gain glimpses of what he felt to be past lives of his own. Incredulous at first, the strength and vividness of his experiences soon forced him to admit that they must be real reminiscences; and in this way he acquired much interesting information about mediaeval periods. There arose in his mind a wild but fervent hope that if he could press his memory further he might discover that he had been on earth during the lifetime of Jesus; he yearned inexpressibly for a glimpse of that Divine Presence; he imagined himself following and ecstatically worshipping the Lord whom he so loved; he even dared to hope that perhaps he might have had the supreme honour of martyrdom for his faith. Further and further in successive trances he pushed back his recollection, until at last with inexpressible thankfulness and awe he realised that he had trodden the sacred soil of Palestine at the very same time as that majestic Figure. And then, with a shock so terrible that it left him a dying man, he knew the appalling truth that in that life of long ago he had been a rabid unit in an angry crowd yelling wildly: "Crucify Him crucify Him!".

I trust devoutly that we were: on the right side in that stupendous struggle in Atlantis; but however that may have been, at least the very same people are having their change again now, but this time the majority thank Heaven, is on the side of the good, and the good will win. The very fact, that many who were of the wrong side then are on the right side now, is full of hope and cheer for us, for it shows that in spite of all appearances to the contrary the world is evolving; and, however disheartening are our failures, we are on the whole better men than we were twelve thousand years ago. Therefore we may hope to avoid for

some thousands of years to come a cataclysm on the tremendous scale that sank Poseidonis. But if the evil won the cataclysm would follow; it must follow, for the Deity intends that humanity deliberately casts itself out of the line of evolution, that particular set of bodies and minds must be wiped out, and must begin again under other conditions. The souls will come back to birth again presently, scattered all over the world in various countries so that there can no longer be the same terrible strength of united unscrupulousness that has made that nation a danger to the world.

We must not think, if we can help it (I know how hard it is to help it that all the people who fight on the side of the evil are necessarily all wicked people. Unquestionably many of them are appallingly wicked; but equally unquestionably many of them are not so by nature; they are victims of a mighty obsession so tremendous in its power that if you and I had been subjected to it we too might not have seen our way clear through it and come out of it unstained; who can tell? Thousands and thousands of people, as good as we, have not come through it satisfactorily. The power behind which is contrary to evolution can and does seize upon a whole nation and obsess it and influence it. It is true that it cannot do that (just as is the case with individual obsession) unless there is in the obsessed something or other which responds. But if there be in any nation a majority, or even a powerful minority, which - perhaps through pride, perhaps through grossness and coarseness, through not having opened up sufficiently the love side of the nature, through having given itself too entirely, too unscrupulously to developing intellect - is already in that condition of ready response to evil, then the rest of the nation, the weaker people, are simply swept along with them, and they cannot see straight for the time. We must try to realise that.

What, then, was there in Germany which has made this awful obsession possible? I find part of the answer to this question in a remarkable set of statistics which I came across recently. They are taken from a book called *The Soul of Germany*, written by a Professor of the University of Erlangen, in Bavaria. He makes a comparison between the amount of certain kinds of crime which came before the Courts in England and in Germany in a period of ten years. It must be remembered, in making such a comparison, that the population of Great Britain is about forty million, while that of Germany is seventy million; so that we must add 75 per cent to the English numbers to see what, if the two countries stood at an equal level of moral development, we might reasonably expect to find in Germany; but even after making this allowance we shall see a truly appalling disproportion. Forgive me if the statistics are unsavoury, but we want to understand how this ghastly condition of affairs has arisen.

The professor takes first the crime of maliciously or feloniously wounding. Of this there occurred in England during the ten years 1261 cases, so we might expect in Germany about 2200, the actual number is 172, 153.

During the same time there were in England 97 murders, which would lead us to estimate those in Germany at 170; the number given is 350 - almost exactly double what might be expected; and there is a further complication due to the fact that (we read) there are hundreds upon hundreds of man-killings in the Fatherland which the German law does not technically term murders - which therefore, do not appear in murder statistics.

Of rapes there were in Britain 216, which should give 380 in Germany; there were actually 9,381. Cases of incest were with us 56; we might, therefore, look for about 100 in Germany, but we find 573.

The number of illegitimate children was with us 37,041 - a sufficiently shameful total, which should lead us to look for perhaps 65,000 in the larger country; instead of this there are 178, 115.

Of malicious damage to property - a peculiarly mean and cold - blooded crime - I regret to say that we had in England 358, so on the same scale there might have been 627 in the Fatherland; but there really were no less than 25,759.

God forbid that we should set ourselves up to be self-righteous; we English have our faults, and grave faults; but when we examine those statistics we cannot but realise that there has been a difference in the average level of morality; we begin to see how this incredible and awful obsession has happened, and why it was that the plan originally made by the Great Ones for this particular little bit of human evolution could not be carried out.

It was hoped that the Fifth Root Race would stand as a whole. And the hope was nearly realised. The Powers that stand behind human evolution worked long through Their pupils to prevent this catastrophe. Whether those Powers knew all the time that the labour would not achieve its end, I cannot tell. We sometimes think of Them as knowing beforehand all that will

happen; whether They do or not, I know not, but at least it is certain that in many cases They work most earnestly to produce certain results, and to give to men certain opportunities. Through the failure of humanity to take the chances offered, the results may not then be attained. They are always eventually attained, but often they are postponed for what to us seems an enormous time. The Great Deity of the solar system, the LOGOS himself, knows perfectly all that will happen, and knows who will take his chances and who will not. That we must believe; whether all who work under Him also know that we cannot tell. Certainly I know that a great conflict between good and evil forces has been long impending over us. I know also that it need not have taken precisely the form it has taken, if only some of those to whom great opportunities were offered had risen to the level of those opportunities and had taken them.

Some have taken them. This mighty British Empire has been formed and has been welded together by bonds of close affection in a way in which no Empire has ever been united before. There was a huge Roman Empire; but it was self-interest, the Roman peace; and the power of Rome which held that together. It was not the love for Rome of those subject races at all. There have been other vast Empires in the past, but they were held together by force, not by love. But what else than love holds this Empire together? England, the little Mother State, has no wish to coerce it. Once she did, under utterly mistaken direction by an obstinate King and a foolish Minister, try to coerce the American colonies. The only result of that was that nearly half of what should have been the Empire is not part of it now, though it is being bound closely to it by other ties. It should have been all with this one great Empire; that was the plan, but the stupidity of man overthrew that part of it. England has made no later effort to coerce the far mightier Dominions attached to her. She has left them perfectly free; yet they are bound to her more close now than they ever were before.

It was hoped that the other nation which belong to our sub- race would join in a great confederation. America and England have been drawn closely together, so that war between them is now scarcely thinkable; at the hope was that Scandinavia and Germany would have come into a similar friendship, but Germany would not come in. There has been for many years a curious and undesirable form of national spirit arising in the country. There is plenty of evidences as to this. Read the German literature, and you will see perfectly well the direction in which for forty years and more its people have been going. Because of their intense pride, because of the teaching of brutality and of force, of blood and iron instead of the law of love, and because of the low level of general morality which is the direct consequence of such teachings they have laid themselves open to the dreadful obsession, and some of the great Lords of the Dark Face have again taken their place among them.

Prince Bismarck was such an once as Madame Blavatsky told us long ago. While he was still alive he laid His plans for the subjugation of Europe. You may be thankful he has no survived till the present, for his plan were far wiser than those of the me who have followed him. Long ago Madame Blavatsky explained to us that he had considerable occult knowledge, and that before the war wit France in 1870 he had travelled physically to certain points to the north the south, the east and the west of France, and had there cast spells of some sort, or made magnetic centres with the object of preventing effective resistance to the German armies. Undoubtedly the French collapse at the time was so complete and unexpected that it seemed to need some unusual explanation.

In the course of the work of the invisible helpers on the battle-field I have several times encountered and spoken to the Prince, who naturally watches with the keenest interest all that happens; and some months ago I had an interesting conversation with him. Speaking of the War, he said that if we were servants of the Hierarchy and students of Occultism we must know that Germany was in the right. One of our party, becoming somewhat indignant, replied that all the rest of the world was willing to be at peace, that Germany had made an unprovoked attack, and had caused all this awful carnage, and was therefore entirely in the wrong. But the Prince said:

"No, no; you do not understand. This is a struggle which had to come - a struggle between the forces of law and order, science and culture on the one hand, and on the other those of disorder and license, and the degrading tendencies of democracy. It does not matter how it started. If, as you say, Germany began it by an act of unexampled aggression, what of that? It is fate; it had to be - if not in this way, then in some other; and this way offered us the best chance of success; though for my part, I should have set all these nations to fight one another first, and I should have stepped in when they were all exhausted".

We maintained that we also loved law and order, science and culture, but we wished along with them to have liberty and



progress. The Prince would have none of such ideals he declared that democracy cared nothing for culture, but wished to drag everybody down to a common level, and that the lowest; that it desired law to rob and restrain the rich, but itself would obey no law; that it had no conception of liberty under law (which is the only true liberty) but desired a triumph of utter lawlessness, in which selfish might should rule, and only those should be restrained who wished to live and work as free men. Further, he said that if we ourselves served the true inner Government of the world we must know that it is the very opposite of all democratic theories, and that therefore it is Germany, and not England, who is fighting for the ideals of the hierarchical Government.

"Which", he asked, "is nearer to the true ideal of a King - our Kaiser, who holds his power from GOD alone, or your King George, who can strike our no line of his own, whose every action is limited by his ministers and his parliament, so that he can do no real good? And the French President, what is he but the scum momentarily thrown to the top of a boiling mass of corruption?"

We were most indignant at such an insult to our brave Allies; but we could not but admit that there was a modicum of truth in some of his earlier remarks. We tried to tell him that, though we shared his utter disbelief in the methods of democracy, we thought it a necessary intermediate stage through which the world had to pass on its way to a nobler freedom, because a scheme (however good ) which was forced upon a people could never lead to its ultimate evolution; but that men must learn to choose the good for themselves with open eyes, to renounce their brutal selfishness, not because they were driven to do so at the point of the sword, but because they themselves had learnt to see the higher way and the necessity that each should control himself for the good of all.

The Prince was absolutely unconvinced ; he said that our plan was Utopian, and that we could never bring the canaille to understand such considerations - that the only way to deal with them was the method of blood and iron, forcing them for their own ultimate good (and meantime for our convenience) into the life which we who were wiser saw to be best for them.

When some of this was later reported to the King of England, he smiled, and said quietly:

"I believe that GOD has called me to the position which I hold, just as much as He has called my imperial cousin the Kaiser; I rule not by force, but because my people love me, and I want no higher title than that".

I fear we must admit the Prince's claim that man as a whole is not yet fit for freedom; but he can never become fit unless he is allowed to try the experiment. Of course at first he will go wrong just as often as he will go right. We shall have an intermediate period when things are not at all as they should be, when they are not by any means as well managed as they would be under a benevolent despotism. Nevertheless we shall never get men to advance unless we leave them a certain amount of freedom. We must pass through this unlovely stage of democratic mismanagement, in order to get a time when the government of the people will be the government of the best. At present frankly it is not that. Aristocracy means government by the best; democracy means government by the people. We hope for a time when democracy and aristocracy will be one. We expect to reach that by our system; we should never get there along the line of military despotism. That is the real fundamental point at issue; so we see that this War is essentially one of principles.

If any should be inclined to doubt that a whole nation can be so obsessed from behind, a nation which has a great deal that is beautiful in its past history, which has produced some really fine people - if any should be disposed to doubt that, let him take the official German statements, and read the proclamations of His Imperial Majesty the Kaiser; the proclamations in which he speaks of himself (and probably he believes it) as commissioned by God to govern the world; in which he says: " On me spirit of God has descended. I guard my whole task as appointed heaven. Who opposes me I shall crush to pieces. Nothing must settled in this world without the intervention of the German Emperor. See the insane pride of this, and realize that the whole nation, so far we know, applauds and approve Read Mr. Owen Wister's "embodiment of composite statement of Prussianism, compiled sentence by sentence from the utterances of Prussians, the Kaiser and his generals, professors, editors and Nietzsche ; part it said in cold blood, years before the war, and all of it a declaration of faith now being ratified by action". Re.. .. the calm statement: "Weak nation have not the right to live powerful nations. The world has longer need of little nationalities". The Belgians should not be shot dead; they should be so left as to make impossible all hope of recovery. The troops are to treat the Belgian civil population with unrelenting severity and frightfulness". Remember all the horrors of the sinking of the "Lusitania",

and remember how that great German nation went mad with joy over the slaughter of non-combatants, of helpless women and children. Except by that theory of obsession how can we account for it? As I have said many of us have known people of that nation. Were they such people as would have agreed to anything of that kind? Of course they were not; no more than you or I. Unquestionably it is true that the powers from behind are working through these people now.

This is the real explanation of all that seems so incomprehensible; these people that fight us are not fighting only of themselves. They are directed by a power of will far stronger than their own, and they are driven on to do awful things. They are willing enough to be driven, for that is all part of the obsession. The men who drive them are utterly unscrupulous, and will use any means whatever to gain their end, for they know nothing of what we mean by right or wrong. They hold it as a manly duty to kill our all emotion or sympathy, because they consider such feelings a weakness. They are pitiless, exactly as a shark is. The slaughter or torture of thousands or millions is nothing whatever to them, so long as they gain their end.

It this had not been; if the Fifth Sub- Race had all combined together to present a perfect front, we should still have had a conflict, but it would have been with some tremendous uprising of the much less developed races - perhaps another attempt such as Attila made to overturn Europe. The evil would have expressed itself, but it would have been among the backward nations. It is a great victory for the powers that stand for darkness that they can take a nation supposed to be in the forefront of civilisation, and twist that to their ends.

We must not think that that all the members of that nation are wicked people. We must not let ourselves be brought down to their level. They have made it their special boast to set up a stream of hatred towards us, to compose hymns of hate and teach them to the innocent school-children. We must not be led away into such foolishness at that. We must have no single thought of hatred. We shall hear of incredible brutality and horror on their part; but if we wish to take the occult point of view we must have no shadow of hatred in our hearts for all this but only pity.

The tragedy of Belgium has horrified the world. It has been one of the most terrible things that the world has ever know; but the tragedy of the moral downfall of Germany is greater even than that - that such a great nation, with such possibilities, should sink to this. That is, in truth, a more awful thing to see than all the pain and misery of countless ruined homes. That a race which produced Goethe and Schiller should so fall as to become a byword among the nations, so that for centuries to come all decent men will be ashamed of nay connection with it, and none shall speak its name without a shudder of horror- surely that is a tragedy unequalled since the world began.

Therefore not hatred, but pity should fill our minds. But on no account and under no circumstances must our pity be allowed to degenerate into weakness, or to interfere with our absolute firmness. We stand for liberty, for right, for honour, and for the keeping of the pledged word of the nation, and that work which has come into our hands must be done, and it must be done thoroughly. But we must do it because we stand on the side of the Deity, because we are in very truth the Sword of the Lord, because this is, indeed, a holy war, in a far deeper and more real sense than were the Crusades of old. Let us take care that we do not spoil our work and our attitude by such an unworthy passion as hatred. We do not hate the wild beast that is attacking our children, but we suppress it. We do not hate a mad dog, but for the sake of humanity we shoot it. We do not hate the scorpion we tread under foot, but we tread on it effectively. We do not hate a lunatic; we are sorry for him; but we defend our dear ones against his attack with unflinching determination, and we have no hesitation in taking whatever steps are necessary to deprive him of the power to do further harm. There must be no thought of hatred, but there must be no weakness. There must be no sickly sentimentality or wavering. There are those who clamour that the mad dog is our brother, and that it is unfraternal to shoot him. They forget that the men whom his bite would doom to an awful death are also our brothers, and that they have the first claim on our consideration. Germany is the mad dog of Europe, and must be suppressed thoroughly and at all costs. "Therefore fight, O Arjuna". Remember, we are fighting for the liberty of the world; Germany itself is part of that world, and we are fighting to free Germany from its obsession.

Let us have that well in our minds, and we shall begin to see what is the attitude we must take with regard to this terrible war; and if we do our duty unflinchingly in maintaining that attitude we shall make the final settlement infinitely easier. When this is over, as it will be over presently, when the struggle is of the past, there will still remain the aftermath. Those among the Allies who have hated will find their hatred turning into fiendish glee in their victory; but having allowed themselves to be turned aside

form the true view of the struggle, those people will be in no condition to understand calmly and rationally what is to be done. It is only those who have kept their heads, who have shown themselves philosophers, but nevertheless puissant soldiers to stand and strike for the right - it is only they who will be able to judge what can be done, and what is best for the world.

So we who are Theosophists should hold a firm and steady attitude, and not allow ourselves to be misled. The path of wisdom is, as usual, a razor edge. We must not fall over on one side or the other; we must have neither weakness nor vindictiveness, but a grasp of the real reasons for it all, and of what it is that is really happening.

The egos that have been swept into this vortex of hate on the wrong side of the fight will come back again; they will recover. It is indeed a terrible thing to throw oneself open to such an obsession. They will have a long way to climb, just as had those who went wrong in Atlantis; but thousands of those who were on the wrong side in Atlantis are now on the right side now, and that is an omen of great hope for us. The world has advanced, otherwise the evil would win again; and this time it will not win.

So our attitude must be one of unselfishness and of firm attention to duty. But we must do our duty because it is our duty, and not because of any personal feeling of hatred, or even of horror. We cannot but feel horror at the awful things that have been done, at the deliberate way they have been justified, at the terrible things that have been said. We cannot help feeling horror, but nevertheless we must try to hold ourselves steady, with iron determination as to what is to be done, but yet with readiness when all this is over to take one more the philosophical point of view.

The Lord who is to come - although when He came last time He said to His people: "I come not to bring peace but a sword", is nevertheless the Prince of Peace, the Lord of Love and the Lord of Life; and when love and life and peace can be for the people. He will lead them in to love and life and peace. But when the people have made that impossible for themselves for this incarnation, where these things cannot be for them, there will be other side of the prophecy come true, that those who draw the sword will perish by the sword.

In the midst of raging selfishness let us try to live in utter unselfishness let us be full of trust, because we know; however dark and difficult things may be, we cling to the certainty that evolution is working. We went down in that great conflict in Atlantis, and yet we never lost our faith in the final triumph of good. This time good will triumph even the outer world; but remember, victory will be achieved only by the greatest effort, by the most utter determination, and the most thorough federation and trust among the people who are chosen to rule the world and to do the work. To Germany also a great opportunity was offered. To the egos incarnated there an opportunity is offered even now of protest and of martyrdom. They have not taken it so far, but there may yet be those among them who will take it. I trust and hope that it may be so; that there will be those who will shake off the nightmare of obsession, who will say: "Kill us if you will, but we will not share in these horrors, we will denounce them". Those people will earn a better fate than their fellow-countrymen.

Let us take it all as part of the development of the great world. That war is an awful thing, wrong and wicked in itself, none can doubt; also that it is an utterly irrational way of deciding a disputed point. The karma of the man who provokes a war is more appalling than the human mind can conceive. But for those upon whom it is forced, as if has in this case been forced upon us, it may be the lesser of two evils. Since it had to be, those who stand behind and direct the evolution of the world are unquestionably utilising it for great and high purposes, and thus wringing good out of the very heart of ill. Horrific as it is, it has yet lifted thousands upon thousands of people clear out of themselves, out of their petty parochialism into world-wide sympathy, out of selfishness into the loftiest altruism- lifted them into the region of the ideal. It has raised them at one stroke more than many lives under ordinary conditions would raise a man.

You know how nobly people have thrown away their lives - not even for their country in the ordinary sense of the word. Remember that we were not in immediate danger, though that would inevitably have come later. It was not self-defense; it was the honour of the flag; it was the name of England; the sacredness of a promise; the duty of standing by the weak and defending them against brutality. It was for an ideal in the truest and noblest sense of the word that your fellow-countrymen have shed their blood, and just because they gave to the uttermost that they had to give, they have by that very act raised themselves greatly in the scale of humanity. The ordinary man has not effort such as this. It is true that wonderful and beautiful self-sacrifice is often shown by individuals in ordinary life: a man will give up all his hopes and ambitions to minister to some relation who is weak and ailing; but still those opportunities come only here and there. I suppose nothing else than a colossal war could have



offered an opportunity for so splendid an outburst from so many simultaneously.

Remember that unselfish and awakened egos are needed at this very moment for the Sixth Sub- Race, which is beginning in America and Austral-asia. Perhaps there was no other way to get them in sufficient numbers and in a sufficiently short time, except through some great world-conflict. Be thankful that we, at least, are on the right side in this. Be thankful, you who send to this great War those whom you love, that the opportunity has come to them thus to advance themselves in one incarnation more than otherwise they could have done in a score of lives. You have sorrow and suffering and pain as your share; but you are offering that suffering for the freedom of the world; and remember that you who send the soldier are thereby also taking your part in the fight, and that the very sorrow and pain through which you pass is lifting you, just as his devotion to duty has lifted him. Many of those who die will be worthy of birth in the new Sub-Race, but so also will be many of the women who have bravely sent forth their nearest and dearest to answer to their country's call. They have given up husband or son or brother. They win the advantage by that noble sacrifice just as much as the men who go and stand in the firing line.

There are many who cannot for one reason or another go and fight, though I hold very strongly that everyone who can should do so. But we can all do something to help. Some of us are too old to fight ourselves - or so the can take up the work of some younger man and set him free to go. That I have done myself. So you may all bear your share in this. All can help , and furthermore, all must help, certainly all should be on the side of the right in a matter like this, and all should do whatever they can to help in any one of the many indirect ways that are possible.

We are all trying, so far as may be, to prepare for the coming of the Great Teacher. Realize that this great War is part of the world-preparation, and that, however terrible it may be, there is yet the other side - the enormous good that is being done to individuals. Perhaps in the distant future when we come to look back upon it all with greater knowledge and with wider purview, we shall see that the good has outweighed all the frightful evil, and that though the old order changeth, giving place to new, it is only that God may fulfil Himself in many ways.