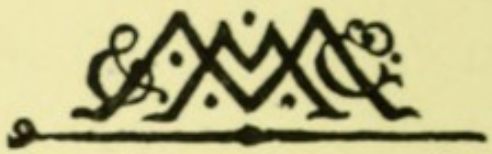
A new way of life / by J. St. Loe Strachey.

Presented by

Mr. Edward Thomson.

A NEW WAY OF LIFE



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TORONTO

A NEW WAY OF LIFE

BY

J. St. LOE STRACHEY

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The profits derived from the sale of this book will be devoted to the work of the National Service League.

TO

LORD CROMER

TO WHOSE SCHOOL,

IF THERE ARE SCHOOLS IN PATRIOTISM,

I BELONG.

JOHN ST. LOE STRACHEY.

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A NEW WAY OF LIFE

INTRODUCTION

I

"SOLOMON tells us of a poor wise man who saved a city by his counsel. It hath often happened that a private soldier, by some unexpected brave attempt, hath been instrumental in obtaining a great victory. How many obscure men have been authors of very useful imventions, whereof the world now reaps the benefit? The very example of honesty and industry in a poor tradesman will sometimes spread through a neighbourhood, when others see how successful he is; and thus so many useful members are gained, for

which the whole body of the public is the better. Whoever is blessed with a true public spirit, God will certainly put it into his way to make use of that blessing for the ends it was given him, by some means or other. And therefore it hath been observed in most ages, that the greatest actions for the benefit of the commonwealth, have been performed by the wisdom or courage, the contrivance or industry, of particular men, and not of numbers; and that the safety of a kingdom hath often been owing to those hands from whence it was least expected."

I CAN find no better introduction for the articles reprinted from the *Spectator* which make up this little book than the above quotation. It is to be found in Swift's sermon on "Doing Good," an epitome of patriotism which won the whole-hearted commendation of Burke.

It meets, I trust, the objection that may be brought against me that I am too insignificant a person to venture to address the nation on the need of a new way of life. Swift shows that no man can deem service to his country too high for his endeavour. May I suggest that what is true for the writer is true for the reader, and that those who give way to the feeling that they are too weak to affect the great march of events, and that all they can do is to submit in anxious acquiescence to the decrees of destiny, are guilty of a crime against the State. Such impotent pessimism is base. In patriotism as in every scene of life the victory is won in the spirit. If the nation with a single heart will determine that no matter what the sacrifice she will retain the command of the sea

and all that goes with it, humanly speaking, there can be no doubt as to the result. All that is wanted is the will to will that no effort, moral or material, shall be neglected, which will secure the strength of the nation. The material power of fleets is necessary, but it is not the one or the only thing necessary. It must be supported by the general resolve of the individuals who make up the State.

II

I am far from saying that military preparations can provide in any sense a substitute for sea power, though unquestionably they can be a most valuable support for that power. What I do say is that any nation which deliberately refuses to make the sacrifices required to give every citizen a

training in the use of arms will not in the long run be able to maintain the command of the sea. Those who think that sea power is to be bought or hired and that it is a matter solely of the long purse are mistaken. It rests in the long run upon the spirit of the people, and that spirit can only be fostered by making the people realise that every man should some time in his life make a definite renunciation of ease and comfort for his country's good. Our Puritan forefathers realised instinctively that men could not keep their bodily and spiritual freedom unless they could bear arms to defend their persons and liberties. Therefore they placed the right to bear arms in the very forefront of the Petition of Right. In these days it is not enough for a

man to bear arms. He must be taught how to use those arms, if he is to be a full citizen and enjoy the full rights of the free man. He who says, "If you menace my home or my liberties I will hire men to oppose you," is in peril. He only is safe who can say, "I will resist you in the might of my own right arm." Therefore I hold that unless our people as a whole are trained to the use of arms as are the citizens of the Swiss Republic and the men of that equally free and equally democratic community, Norway, the nation cannot enter upon the new way of life for which I plead. She must either tread that new way, or be forced to make way for those who are not unwilling to render the sacrifices of patriotism.

III

If I say more by way of introduction I shall only repeat what is said in the essays in this book. I must add, however, a word of explanation for the inclusion of the article on "How Bismarck used the Press" which I have placed in an appendix. Even if it may seem at first sight out of focus I think a good defence can be made out for its inclusion. Let me also add that in including it I do not wish to suggest for a moment that Bismarck, in dealing with the Press as he dealt with it, was doing anything which he, or those whose opinions he respected, regarded as wrong or ignoble. If Bismarck had been asked how he, as a man of religion and honour, could have found it compatible with his

conscience to act in the way described in the article, he would no doubt have said that he thought it no more shame to confuse and injure a national enemy through the Press than he would have thought it shameful to put on a disguise or a false beard in order to get through the enemy's lines and obtain useful information for his country. We may not all agree with this view, but at any rate it is only just and right that we should understand it and not profess what would honestly seem to many Germans a hypocritical abhorrence of action which no true patriot would hesitate to take in similar circumstances.

J. St. Loe Strachey.

"A NEW WAY OF LIFE"

In a brilliant summary of the events of the month to be found in the April *Fortnightly*, the writer, while dealing with the naval crisis, uses these words :— "The problem will not depart. We shall have to meet it not by battleships alone but by a new way of life." We are profoundly convinced of the truth of this statement. We have got as a nation to face a situation which can only be adequately met by "a new way of life." When we say this we must not be thought to be yielding to the pessimism which has affected a certain section of the population, or to give encourage-

ment to the notion that we have become decadent as a people, or that we have in any way begun to decline as one of the Great Powers of the world. We are not among those who think that the nation has suffered in its moral health, or that we are worse from that point of view than our forefathers. On the contrary, we believe that the nation was never better in this respect, and that there never was a larger proportion of the population anxious to do right, and to act in accordance with what it believes to be the will of God. Again, we doubt whether there ever was a time when men were more sincerely patriotic, and more anxious to maintain the Empire "in health and wealth long to live." It is true, no doubt, that now, as when Wordsworth wrote his famous

sonnet, there is much to deplore in the national character, and much that needs change. We are far too much given to luxury and softness. If our richer classes are less drunken, they are more gluttonous and more extravagant and effeminate in their personal habits. Our life is still too often the "mean handiwork of craftsman, cook, or groom." But though these are evils that cry aloud for remedy, and though we do not forget them, they are not the evils on which we want to dwell at the present moment. While we do not deny the continuous need for higher moral ideals, what we specially desire to emphasise is the need for a greater seriousness, or, if you will, hardness, of outlook. What we have got to change is a certain light-heartedness, or complacency of temper,

that has lately marked our people,—the easy belief that everyone must admire and respect our good intentions and our noble and humanitarian point of view. We have got in future to face the world, not as we should like it to be, but as it is,—the world of blood and iron, controlled by men who are not humanitarians and philanthropists, but persons intensely human on the other side of man's nature, persons who do not take what they would call a Sunday-school view of the world, but rather the view that man is still a wild beast, that the race is to the strong and not to the well-intentioned, that victory belongs to the big battalions, not to those who say that they envy no man anything, and who cannot understand why nations should hate or be jealous of each other.

Marston in the prologue to one of his tragedies warns his audience that if they have been too long "nuzzled 'twixt the breasts of happiness," and if they dare not face life as it is, and realise what men have been and will be, they had better avoid his play. As far as the great external national responsibilities are concerned, we as a nation have been too long "nuzzled 'twixt the breasts of happiness"; or, as another Elizabethan poet has said, we have come very near to being "drowned in security." Hitherto, though we may have had periodical scares about the Fleet and the command of the sea, at heart the British people have always felt that there was little or no risk of our supreme power at sea being successfully challenged. They have been willing every now and then

to indulge in, or even to encourage, a slight sense of anxiety about the Navy in order to "make assurance doubly sure." They have never believed, however, that there was any real risk of the command of the sea being taken from us. The mood of the nation has been similar to that which Sir John Fisher seventeen months ago recommended to his countrymen in stentorian tones. It was the mood of those who say: "We have got a Fleet so invincible that even if things are not quite as well with the Navy as they might be, there is no appreciable danger, and we can all of us sleep comfortably in our beds, knowing that the worst that could possibly happen to us would be some trouble in India or on the Continent, a trouble which, however disagreeable, could never touch our

hearths and homes." Like the Anglo-Saxons so well described by Carlyle, we have gone about our business in "pot-bellied equanimity," good-temperedly oblivious of the hard realities of life, and sure that nothing disastrous could ever overtake us. Carlyle, remember, went on to point out how the Norman invasion woke the Anglo-Saxon out of this "pot-bellied equanimity" and braced him for higher things.

It is clear that the men of the present generation have got to abandon their mood of "pot-bellied equanimity." Though we have not been, and we believe we shall not be in the end, passed in the race for naval supremacy by Germany, the rivalry for the command of the sea which we are now experiencing is something wholly dif-

ferent from anything which we have known for the past hundred years. Even though by a great effort at construction we pass unscathed through the danger zone of 1911 and 1912, we shall still have to face the fact that Germany is determined in the course of the next ten or fifteen years to produce a fleet of battleships equal, if not indeed superior, to our own, and that this determination has been come to by a nation more populous than our own, and quite as rich, quite as capable, quite as energetic, and with a capacity for seamanship hardly inferior to ours, and a capacity for discipline and organisation probably superior. Again, we have got to face the fact that though our start in the race has been

a very great one, it is a start which by the nature of things we cannot maintain. Our handicap at present consists in the possession of ships which, though they are good ships now, and may remain good ships for another seven or eight years, must in the end, and owing to natural causes, disappear. "Dreadnoughts" may not be, and probably are not, all that their constructors fancy them, but be the "Dreadnoughts" good or bad *per se*, the pre-"Dreadnought" type of ship is bound to become antiquated with time. But the period in which the pre-"Dreadnought" type will become, obsolete coincides with the period in which the German rate of construction will have become, or may have become, equal, and in certain years superior, to

our own. Here is the new fact,—a new fact from which there is no escape. Our command of the sea is being challenged by a people with material resources just as great as, if not greater than, our own. That the prospect is a hard and disagreeable one it would be absurd to deny. [We do not believe it in any sense to be hopeless, because we believe that when our people become fully alive to a specific danger there are no men on the face of the globe so resolute, so brave, so self-sacrificing, and therefore so likely to be successful in war.] The sense of absolute security which we used to enjoy may have been injurious to us as a nation, but we are not going to be so hypocritical as to pretend that it was anything but pleasant. It gave us a sense of stability

at home and of the power to influence the world in regard to many humanitarian and philanthropic objects abroad which, we are not ashamed to say, was extremely gratifying. For example, it was our invincible power at sea which enabled us to do so much to abate the greatest moral evil from which the world has ever suffered,—slavery and the slave trade. It enabled us, again, to do much for the cause of political liberty throughout the world. No doubt we may not always have exerted our power as we should, yet on the whole we believe that the influence conferred by the command of the sea was not ignobly employed, nor without the sincere desire to benefit mankind as a whole. Our determination to maintain the command of the sea as a matter of self-preserva-

tion may therefore not unjustly be mixed with a desire to use that command of the sea in the future for the beneficent purposes in which it has been used in the past.

If we are asked specifically how we are to reach the new way of life, we should answer, in the first place, by refusing to feed ourselves any longer upon what Wordsworth called "emasculating food,"—the food of sentiment and unreality. We must not pretend that the world is better than it is or different from what it is, but take its true measure, and face the facts like men. We must realise that in public as in private life business is business, and that we are not engaged in a pleasant game of bridge, but in transactions where failure to maintain our ground

means ruin, and the international equivalent of the Bankruptcy Court. We must give up the pleasant pretence that nobody could really be so wicked, so hard-hearted, so unkind as to mean us any harm, or to desire to bully us,—to knock on the head, in fact, so beneficent and kindly and "much respected" a middle-aged gentleman as John Bull. We must not accept the politenesses of diplomacy and the fine phrases of "international amity" too seriously, and when we find that they do not mean much show ill-temper and indignation.—To do that is to act as foolish and unbecoming a part as if a man on the duelling-ground were to take the salutes and courtesies of his antagonist as a sign of goodwill, and then complain that after treatment so kindly he had

been run clean through the body, or had had a bullet lodged in his shoulder.—Next, and most important of all, we must strain every nerve, not merely to provide the material means of defence, though these of course are essential, but also to brace the nation as a whole for the great and patriotic struggle to which in all human probability it will be exposed in the course of the next ten or fifteen years, if not before.

To our mind, one of the best ways of doing this is to train the nation as a whole to the use of arms, and to call no citizen capable unless he is able to use his rifle in active co-operation with his fellows, and under an appropriate organisation and discipline, in the defence of his country. Universal training and

national service will give us a military force in these islands which will make it impossible for any Power to invade us. To conquer a million of trained men you must bring at least a million and a half, or probably two millions, to match them, and this is beyond the resources of what we somewhat strangely term civilisation. Again, universal training gives us a reservoir from which, in the event of any great Imperial catastrophe, we can draw volunteers for oversea service. If we were faced with another Indian Mutiny, we might have to ask for half a million volunteers. As it is, we should no doubt get them, but they would be of little or no use to us because they would be without training. If we had had universal training for some ten or fifteen years, such an appeal would give us

volunteers in whom the foundations of military service had been well and truly laid.

The new way of life which we desire to see in this country must not be confined to the political outlook or to naval and military preparations. It must go deep into the fibre of the people. Every man, whether he is tilling the soil, hewing coal, laying bricks, writing books, organising business, or planning some industrial work great or small, must accustom himself to feel that he is doing it, not for himself or his family alone, but partly for his country. In every form of activity the Motherland must be the silent partner who calls upon him for an extra margin of effort, energy, and self-sacrifice. The present writer can best put the matter in

concrete form by recalling a criticism made of this country by a very friendly and most able German professor. "You Englishmen," he said in effect, "differ from us Germans in the way in which you regard your business, whether it is writing books, manufacturing industrial products, or doing work under Government. The Englishman is always looking forward to the time when he will be able to give up the boredom of the shop or office and retire to amuse himself by field-sports, or golf, or travel, or literature, or whatever interests him as an individual. His object is to make enough money to become what he calls a free man. In Germany a man's object is different. He wants to be able to feel that he has done the particular work in which he

has been engaged better than anyone else has ever done it,—that he has written the very best book or compiled the very best table of statistics on the special matter which he has in hand, or that he has produced the very best material product that the world has ever seen, or developed the best organisation conceivable either in his own trade or in a Government office. His work is not a servitude to be got over, but a passion. He believes himself to be doing patriotic and public work, no matter what the particular drudgery in which he is engaged, and he knows that his fellow-countrymen as a whole will understand this, and will give him the reward of praise and sympathy according as he shall deserve it. Hence he does not look for his reward in relief from his

work, but in its more complete accomplishment."

[That the contrast was too strongly drawn may be true, but it is a criticism which is endorsed from many quarters. For example, our latest Transatlantic critic, Mr. Collier, tells us very wittily that an American is always "going to business," while an Englishman is always "going home."] Our new way of life as a nation must be to copy the German spirit in this respect. It ought not to seem the most natural thing in the world to say that a man is going to give up work, not because his health and energy are exhausted, but because he has earned the right to go and amuse himself. Hitherto Englishmen have thought that rather a fine thing and a noble thing to say, and a

proof of how little they care for money and material concerns. We trust it will not be so regarded in future, but that instead a man may feel proud to say :— "I could leave off work if I liked, but I mean to stick to my job, pleasant or unpleasant, as long as I feel I can do it thoroughly and well, because what I want is not an easy time, but to do my share of the nation's work as a whole."

At the crisis of the Revolution Danton, copying Bacon, told his countrymen that what was needed was Boldness, Boldness, and again Boldness. It is not necessary for us, or for anyone else, to say that to the British people, for they have enough, perhaps too much, of boldness and recklessness in their composition. The word that they need said to them, and we hope it may be said

to them by voices that will reach further than our own, is Prepare, Prepare, and again Prepare. Preparation is the need of the moment, and want of preparation has always been, though we trust it may not be in future, the chief of our national weaknesses. Our new way of life must be a way of preparing ourselves, morally, intellectually, and materially, for the coming struggle,—a struggle which, by the paradox of life, may be avoided by the perfection of such preparation, but in no other conceivable way.

For fear of misconception, let us say once more that if we have dwelt less upon moral than upon material regeneration, it is not because we ignore the need of higher moral ideals. That need is always with us. What is wanted in

addition is a new way of facing the hard and disagreeable facts of the world. A mere sentimental rush towards higher things, to be followed only too probably by a reaction towards sloth and luxury, will not save us.

WHY SHOULD THE NATIONS WAGE WAR?

In writing on the need for "a new way of life" we left one aspect of the problem now before the nation almost untouched. We expressed our earnest belief that for the immediate future the nation's motto must be "Prepare, Prepare, and again Prepare," and that this preparation for war must not be merely physical, but must also be moral and intellectual. It was not enough, we urged, for the Government to build battleships and make gun-mountings and armourplates.

Every man and woman in the land must engage in a work of self-preparation which shall make them, and therefore the nation which they compose, fit to bear the coming strain. We must now deal with the chief objection to our contention. It is the objection of those well-meaning and often great-hearted people, the advocates of universal peace. "Instead of urging the nation to bend all its energies to preparation for war, why," they ask, "do you not bid us prepare for peace? You are falsely and wickedly assuming that war is the natural and inevitable fate of mankind. You have no right to make an assumption so horrible. Assume instead the humane, the Christian view that wars can cease and must cease, and you will be helping to make them cease." Behind

those who take this frankly Quaker view are those troubled souls who, though they are not prepared to go the whole length of bidding the nation lay down its arms and trust to the forces of reason and humanity, yet raise the cry: "Why, oh why, cannot we have peace? Why should men want to waste their treasure and their energies in killing each other? Why cannot they agree to rise above the savage state and settle their disputes by reason and goodwill? Private individuals no longer have recourse to killing each other in order to compose their differences. Why should the nations?"

These are questions which it is most important that the British people should ask and answer. To turn aside from them half answered is to do the very thing

which we are imploring our countrymen not to do,—to refuse to face the real facts, and to live in an unreal world of sentiment and emotion. Until the nation as a whole is willing to accept the hard, nay, pitiless, answer which must be given to these questions, it cannot truly prepare itself for the task before it or begin the "new way of life." The honest pilgrim when he reaches the foot of the Hill Difficulty begins at once to brace himself for the effort before him, and sets forward up the ascent. He does not stray about the meadows at the foot gathering flowers, and, while he admires their beauty, assert the belief that He who made things so beautiful and sent such sweet airs rustling through the grass could never have intended that men should

toil and faint upon the dreary hillside, chilled by the biting winds or crushed by the avalanches that sweep down from the snowfields. Instead the pilgrim grasps his staff and bends his body to the task, content that the hill is before him, and determined to delude himself with no idle dreams that if only he will have faith the mountain will fade away into the plain, and the pilgrimage become a delightful saunter through flower-strewn fields.

Still, is there any good reason why wars must continue and battles remain the last argument of nations? Yes. They will and must continue because communities of men will always differ from each other upon many questions, and differ so fundamentally that they will not yield save to the only argument

which all men admit to be unanswerable, the argument of proved superiority in physical force. Wars do not come about by accident, or through the influence of the stars, or no man knows how, but always in the last resort through the clash of human wills. Analyse any diplomatic correspondence or negotiation which has ended in war, and you will find that it falls at last into a formula of this kind :—

One nation says to another :

> "We desire that you will refrain from taking such-and-such a course of action."

The other nation in effect replies :

> "We have a right to take it, and mean to take it."

The following are the next steps in the dialogue :

"We warn you that if you do, we shall prevent you by force of arms."

"We cannot yield to your threats, but maintain our right to do what we will with our own."

"Then there is no way but war, and may God defend the right!"

"So be it."

"That is all very well," it will be urged, "but private individuals are quarrelling like that and saying just such things every day and yet no physical struggle occurs. The world has found a way out of the difficulty. It has found it in a Court of Law. Surely it must be quite as easy to apply this remedy to nations as to individuals." Alas! this hope rests on a delusion. Why do men have recourse to a Court of Law in private quarrels, however heated they become, and however con-

vinced each may be that he is morally and legally in the right? Because they are forced to do so, and are allowed to use no other arbitrament. Does anyone suppose, however, that when a litigant is beaten in a Court of Law, and believes, as one of the litigants almost always does believe, that he is suffering a gross injustice, he would obey the order of the Court unless he knew that he would be compelled to do so? In ninety-nine cases out of a hundred men submit to an injunction or mandamus or an order to pay damages, not because they are persuaded that their antagonists are in the right and they in the wrong, but simply and solely because they know that the whole force of the community will be set in motion to oblige them to do so. The

power behind the Court of Law is capable of crushing every obstacle that comes in its way. No doubt if one could imagine an international Court of Law armed with invincible powers, powers of coercing States as surely and as rapidly as men are coerced by the Courts which administer Private Law, it would be easy enough to substitute arbitration for war and the decision of a Hague Tribunal for the last resort of sovereign States. Unfortunately, mankind has never been able to create such a Court, and to arm it with powers sufficient to enforce its decrees. Stay, it has found one method of preventing the clash of will in human communities, but the method is one which the free men of Europe reject instinctively as bringing greater evils in its

train even than the reign of war. That method is universal monarchy. If one Power in the world, or in one portion of the world, rises to such a height of strength and power that its decrees are irresistible, it becomes in fact, if not in name, the universal Sovereign, and will force the smaller States that surround it, or are embodied in it, to keep the peace. Such was the *Pax Romana*. So irresistible was the force of the Roman Empire that it was able to lap the world in universal peace. If during the sway of the Antonines any kinglet or chief threatened to fight with his neighbour or to resist the Imperial power, Rome spoke her final word, and crushed out opposition as the High Court crushes out opposition to an injunction or a mandamus. We see the

same results in British India. India, bounded by the ocean on two sides, and on the third by a vast semicircle of mountains, is like another world. In that world British power has become so supreme that wars between native States have stopped for the last seventy years. No Rajah within the *Pax Britannica* dare lift his sword against his neighbour. This is not because the various peoples are not inclined to quarrel with each other, but because they know that the whole weight of our power would be instantly brought into action to prevent recourse to arms. Those Native States which think they suffer injury have to accept the decision of the Government of India in lieu of settling their disputes by war.

To return to the analogy of the

Roman Empire, does any man seriously desire the establishment of a Power so strong that all Europe must obey its decisions, even though an end could thereby be put to wars, and to the practice of settling by the sword disputes that can be settled in no other way? Next, even if the States groaning under the burden of armaments were theoretically willing to see such a condition of things established, which Power would they choose to endow with the attributes of the Roman Empire,—the attributes of universal sovereignty? One has only to ask the question to see that it is unanswerable. Can one imagine the Powers agreeing to disarm while, say, Russia or Germany remained armed, and endowed with the function of keeping order,—for that would be the

practical way of producing the desired result? "Ah!" the friends of arbitration may say, "but you do not state the case fairly. We would put the universal sovereignty in commission, and entrust it to an International Council on which all the States would be represented. This Council would have at its disposal the only armed force in Europe, and therefore would always be able to carry out its decrees, which would naturally be the decrees of the majority."

Alas! what a vista of international quarrel and intrigue is opened up by such a prospect. Either the men composing the great Council would become completely denationalised, in which case the world would be ruled by a lifeless cosmopolitan oligarchy, or else it would be a mere hotbed of international in-

trigue. In the first-named case, imagine the kind of influences which would be at work in the armed force. Presumably that force would have to be composed of sections representing all nationalities. But some nations are admittedly more warlike than others, and very soon it would be well understood that there were only three or four sections which counted. This would mean that if the officers of the majority of these put their heads together, they would be able to dominate the whole world. What a chance for turning the International Council into a universal military dictatorship! To speak plainly, the whole idea is preposterously absurd, unless, of course, we assume human nature completely altered and men grown like angels. But in that case

there would be no need of an International Council or anything of the sort. Men would not want to be restrained by the sword, for they would be vying with each other as to who should give way in case of a clash of wills.

Remember, however, that as far as human experience goes, a reign of peace does not breed men less inclined for intrigue or for quarrelling, or for trying to get the better of each other. Human nature in Southern India, where peace has reigned for two generations, has not been altered. Again, take Italy from 1715 to the outbreak of the Napoleonic Wars. The peninsula was lapped in peace, but men degenerated instead of improved, and no one will dare to say that Florence and Venice

in 1790 presented a worthier spectacle than Florence and Venice in less peaceful times. In truth, universal peace, whether produced by a universal Empire or by some accident, does not breed worthier men and women. That is not a pleasant fact. On the contrary, it is a very sad fact, but it is one which we are bound to face, for if we do not face it we shall delude ourselves with shams and shadows.

Must the world, then, continue fighting, and is there no hope for peace, or, to put it in another way, is that deep and instinctive desire for peace which unquestionably is implanted in the minds of the best of human beings a snare and a delusion? How naturally arises in every woman's heart an echo of the old song:—

"Oh, were I King of France,
Or better, Pope of Rome,
I'd have no fighting men abroad,
No weeping maids at home."

Is that cry always to be denied? We are far from saying that it must be, and far from denying that war is a terrible evil. That it dominates the world as it does is a riddle which we have not the power to solve, and which we will make no pretence at explaining. All we can do is to point out to our countrymen that they must face the fact that war is the law of the civilised world quite as much as of the uncivilised, and that mankind has as yet found no other way of settling which will is to prevail when what we have termed a clash of wills takes place between communities who believe themselves equal in physical force. Such clash of wills among

nations is as certain to take place from time to time in the future as in the past. We delude ourselves if we think that arbitration and the reign of peace and reason constitute one of the ways by which the British nation may escape from the anxieties and difficulties which now beset it. That door is closed, at any rate for this generation, and he is no true friend to his country who pretends otherwise.

To return to our metaphor. The Hill Difficulty is before us, and the sooner we bend our backs and our wills to the task of surmounting it the better for us. It is true that the icy whirlwind and the avalanche bear death and destruction in their train, and may overwhelm us. Nevertheless, to the bold, the cautious, and the strong-hearted

climber the summits offer clear air, wide prospects, bracing winds, bearing with them health and strength. If love and delight are of the valley, truth, freedom, and independence belong to the mountain-top. In any case, and whatever the future, our path is now onward and upward. We have stayed already too long among the meadows and by the reed-fringed streams.

PREPARATION

We have received a large number of letters from readers of the *Spectator* who are in sympathy with our articles declaring that as a nation we must adopt "a new way of life," and that "Prepare, Prepare, and again Prepare" should be our motto. In not a few of these the writers suggest that some sort of league or society should be formed among British men and women who are determined to do their best to help on the "new way of life," and to make the country face morally and intellectually as well as physically the

position in which it stands. Those who propose the establishment of such a league take the highest ground, and ask for an associated effort of a kind such as Savonarola demanded for the regeneration of his fellow-citizens. We need hardly say that we are not only convinced of the sincerity and of the soundness of purpose of those who have written to us in this wise, but that we are also in sympathy with the spirit which they display. We feel bound to point out, however, that there are certain obvious objections to such action as they propose. To begin with, the lead in such a movement must come from an individual or from a group of individuals, and not from a newspaper. We take no light view of a newspaper's function in the

commonwealth, but we are convinced that its particular business is publicity with a good purpose and to public criticism, and that, though it may aim at, and may attain to, the leading of public opinion, it should not attempt to pass that limit.

When we come to the question whether a league or association for promoting "a new way of life" could usefully be founded by others we cannot but express our doubts. The aim of such an association would, it seems to us, be too wide. The leagues which do the best public work are those which have special and particular objects in view, and ask for concentration of purpose upon those definite objects,—as, for example, the National Service League, which holds that not only

would the cause of national defence be helped by the whole youth of Britain receiving a training in arms such as they receive in Switzerland and Norway, but that an improvement would result therefrom in the physical, moral, and intellectual condition of the people. Would not there also be a touch of self-righteousness in men banding themselves together to do what admittedly ought to be done by every good citizen and good patriot? A body with aspirations which the vast majority of the people of this country—in fact, every thinking man and woman within it—must admit to be sound would only be the nation under another name.

But though patriotism and good citizenship are too wide a foundation on which to build anything less than a

nation, may it not be argued that something in the nature of an associated pledge or resolve might be taken by individuals, and that the taking of that pledge would create, say, a brotherhood of persons, men and women, agreed to prepare themselves individually, and to prepare the nation as a whole, for the sacrifices which must be undergone if we are to do all that can humanly be done to attain our full strength and nationhood? Without indulging in metaphysical or psychological subtleties, we cannot doubt that an enormous result would be achieved if the great majority of men and women in this country came to a definite and serious resolve to do their best in the future to prepare themselves for meeting a great national emergency, should it arise, in a calm, vigilant,

and self-sacrificing spirit; to make the sacrifices that may result from such a resolve; to induce the Government to make the necessary preparations, physical and material; and, further, to render their resolve not a temporary effort of will, but one which should become a continuing mental habit possessing them at all times and appropriately influencing their actions. A crowd informed by one thought has again and again been shown to be an instrument of mighty force—no doubt often of an evil force, but always a force. If we can conceive the nation inspired by a single thought, and that thought of a continuing and not a transitory character, none but materialists will deny that the resultant will-power, spiritual energy, or whatever else we like to call it, must

be of a very potent kind. Much may be achieved if one man resolutely sets his mind to accomplish a particular object. If alongside him he has millions acting on similar lines, and resolved to maintain their determination, who can doubt that a dynamic influence of vast strength would be set going?

We do not, of course, suggest that if the whole of the British people were simultaneously to swear that they would maintain the command of the sea a miracle would thereupon be wrought, and their will instantly achieved. That, at any rate, is one of the miracles which do not happen. We do say, however, that if such a determination were first intelligently conceived by the great mass of the population, and then became a habit of mind, not a mere mental

explosion, and if, in addition, part of the determination were to take action appropriate to maintaining their resolve, a very great deal would have been accomplished to ensure us the command of the sea. The philosophers may find it impossible to define Will, the psychologists may be doubtful where Will should appear in a true analysis of the mental functions, and the physiologists may be quite incapable of telling us what we do in our brains or with our brains when we *will*. Yet in spite of the mystery which surrounds the whole subject, we know that there is such a thing as Will. Though it may be one of those things to which the only appropriate reply to the question "What is it?" is "I know when you do not ask me," still there is such a thing as Will,

and it affects far more than mere movement in the grey matter of the brain. We need not, however, enter any further into the fields of psychology. It is enough for our purpose to express a belief that if the individuals who make up the nation can be inspired with a common determination to will preparation of the kind we have described, and can maintain that determination, the first step, and the greatest step, will have been taken in the work needful for the maintenance of the national welfare.

What does preparation mean? We doubt whether any good purpose will be served by an attempt to define preparation in detail. It is not more fruitful to do that than to attempt to define duty. Preparation, or making oneself or the nation ready to meet a great strain, is,

in truth, but one facet of duty, and duty in the abstract is best left to instinct, and in the concrete to the individual judgment, as each case arises. But though we shall make no attempt to define preparation in a positive sense, there is at least one negative condition which may be worth laying down. No man or woman who estimates and undertakes seriously the duty of national preparation will do anything or indulge in any habit, mental or physical, which may later on incapacitate him or her from serving, or make him or her less efficient in serving, the Motherland at a moment of peril. The good citizen will not allow himself to grow weak or effeminate in body or soul, and will do his best to prevent others from falling into such a condition, lest at the

appointed hour he and they shall be found wanting. And remember that women may grow effeminate as well as men, and are under as great, or perhaps even greater, temptations to renounce their obligations to the State, or, again, to fail in that strengthening and upholding of the man which is one of their special duties. The final stronghold in every country is that cellular citadel, the family and the home,—*Templum et arx*, a shrine as well as a fortress. But how can that stronghold be defended if part of the garrison raises the white flag?

Before we leave the subject we must, for fear of misrepresentation, meet once more the criticism of those who say that we have placed our plea for the "new way of life" and for preparation on too material a basis, and that we

have not dared to ask, as we ought to have asked, for a true spiritual and moral regeneration. In other words, we are told that, instead of asking men to adopt the Puritan standpoint and to abandon "the pleasant vices" which are supposed specially to mark this generation, we have merely called upon them to become materially and intellectually more efficient. Our answer is plain, and will, we believe, convince any person who will take the trouble to think the matter out. We are not going to ask people to do what is on other grounds a religious and moral duty merely in order to make themselves secure as a nation. To do that would, in our opinion, be little short of blasphemy. Archbishop Whately said finely: "Honesty is no doubt the best

policy; but he who is honest for that reason is not an honest man." In the same spirit we say that though the practice of religion and morality is the best policy, any nation which became moral and religious on that ground would be an evil nation. The notion of, as it were, purchasing national security by moral and spiritual regeneration is not only odious in itself, but is necessarily a chimera. High heaven rejects such a bargain, and can agree to no such traffic. No doubt the man who leads a moral and religious life will find it far easier to be a good patriot than the materialist who ignores the teachings of religion and morality; but that is a very different matter. Religion and morality must be practised for their own sakes, not for ulterior motives, however

useful *per se*. But we must go further, no matter how disagreeable the statement we are going to make may seem to certain of those whose minds we are anxious to move by our arguments. It is not enough that the people who make up the nation should be individually guided by moral and religious aspirations. That alone will not secure national safety. A community will not be saved as a community by the sanctity of its inhabitants. In a political sense it is perfectly true to say that a nation may be ruined by its virtues quite as much as by its vices, or, rather, that a virtuous community which neglects certain political duties may easily fall before a nation far less spiritual, far less moral, which observes those political duties. Cromwell knew this truth,

and expressed it with convincing force. Though he had the Word of God in his mouth and in his heart, he told his troops to keep their powder dry. Without the observation of that injunction the spiritual aspirations of the Puritans would have been of little avail, and they would have fallen before the roystering, light-living cavaliers of the King's army, —"the bravos of Alsatia and pages of Whitehall."

Perhaps the strangest, and in one sense the most disquieting, symptom which is to be noticed among the moral symptoms of the present moment is a certain fearfulness among many good people that there is something of wickedness in all preparation for war. Surely the truth is that preparation for aggression and for unjust war is an

evil, while preparation for defence and for war levied with a good intent is not evil but good. War in itself, like peace, is a neutral thing. It is not until you know the purpose of a war that you can tell whether it is righteous or wicked. In the same way, peace, though, we admit, in itself "the benign extreme," cannot be declared good unless we know the foundation upon which it rests. Peace maintained because people are too luxurious, too cowardly, too much sunk in self-indulgence to endure the sacrifices of war is not a good, and may become a hideous evil. Peace in itself is no more virtuous than sleep.

COMPULSORY TRAINING

An advocate of compulsory training (we think it was Lord Newton) once described our present system of providing for the military defence of these islands as one under which nineteen men joined in a conspiracy to cajole the twentieth to do a duty which not only ought to fall upon each one of them, but which if performed by them individually would be immensely to their moral and physical advantage. The absurdities, injustices, and inconveniences caused by this system of conspiring to cajole, or even sometimes to compel, as contrasted

with a fair and democratic system of making all share in the performance of a duty which gives security, and therefore is of benefit, to all, were never better illustrated than in the debate on the Army Estimates which took place at the beginning of the Session. Almost everybody who spoke was annoyed by some one or other of the developments of the present system. Some were indignant because Mr. Haldane, in order to avoid the very serious consequences which must have occurred had the units of the Territorial Force remained unfilled, had recourse to cajoleries through the popular Press on one side, and to a system of partial compulsion at the hands of employers on the other. Mr. Henderson, the leader of the Labour Party, combined these

criticisms. He was equally indignant at the use made of the *Daily Mail*, and at what he described as "an unwarrantable and unscrupulous abuse of the rights of the employing classes so far as the employees are concerned." Sir George Scott Robertson, again, was particularly annoyed "at the methods of enlistment which had lately come into vogue, especially through the medium of a play, *An Englishman's Home*." A friend who had seen this play said that the occupants of the stalls were firmly convinced that the occupants of the pit and gallery should at once join the Territorial Force,—a by no means unfair statement of the position of those who do not volunteer themselves, who detest the notion of compulsory service, and who yet are convinced that if the Terri-

torial regiments are not filled the country will be in grave peril. Hardly anyone ventured to defend *in principle* the present system of filling the Territorial Army, though Mr. Haldane, with his usual ability and dexterity, made the best apology possible for the methods that had been adopted. His argument really came to this,—even if the methods used had been objectionable *per se*, they would not have to be employed again, as the Territorial units were now full.

The methods to which we have just alluded will not, we feel sure, be regarded with satisfaction by any serious-minded man. In the background, however, there are considerations even more disagreeable. Not only has it proved necessary to fill the ranks of the Territorial Force by doubt-

ful, and in a sense unfair, methods, or at any rate by methods which result in shirking by a large part of the population. The Force is also proving very costly. In addition the system of training, which we fully admit is the only system possible under voluntary conditions, does not give us what we require to secure the home defence of these islands. Mr. Haldane's Territorial system supplies an admirable skeleton organisation for home defence, but unfortunately the *personnel* is to get its real training after war is declared and when the danger has arisen. It is the merit of that system of universal training which we desire, and which is being pressed upon the attention of the country by the National Service League, that the training will take

place before the emergency has arisen, and not when it is probably too late.

The policy of the National Service League gets rid of almost all the prime objections that were raised in Parliament to the existing system. To begin with it is thoroughly democratic, and prevents that shirking by the men in the stalls of which Sir George Scott Robertson complained, and rightly complained. It would put an end to the conspiracy which may be said to have been formed to induce a special section of the labouring population, *plus* a special section of the middle-class to carry out the heavy obligation which, in justice, should fall upon all. The Trade-Union and Labour leaders like Mr. Henderson talk very big about the wickedness of suggesting that the work-

ing man should be compelled to train himself to defend, if necessary, his home, his liberties, and his country, just as if compulsion were to fall solely upon the working man. They seem to forget that compulsion such as is advocated bv the National Service League would fall upon all classes, and that those who would be most hardly hit, because they now do least, would be certain large and well-defined sections of the upper and middle classes,—the men in the stalls and dress and upper circles, and many men who do not go to the theatre at all.

Under the present system the homes which contribute least to home defence are distinctly those of the well-to-do. Except for those who become officers, the Territorial system touches only very slightly the homes with incomes of, say,

£500 a year and above. It would be one immense advantage of a compulsory system that the youth of the comfortable classes would not only be trained for the defence of their country, but would be trained side by side with the artisan and the labourer, as they are in Norway and Switzerland. As to the good results achieved by bringing all classes together during two or three months' recruit training, we should like to call the attention of Liberal Members of Parliament to a very striking article by a young Swiss soldier which appeared in the February number of the journal of the National Service League, *The Nation in Arms* (National Service League, 72 Victoria Street, S.W., 3d.). The writer, who evidently comes from a rich man's house, shows

how excellent are the physical and moral effects of military discipline under conditions which are not in operation long enough to produce the deadening results of militarism, but yet long enough to make men understand the meaning of obedience and co-operation. And here we may say that when we speak of the need of discipline which exists in our population, we consider that the need exists for the well-to-do quite as much as, if indeed not more than, for the poorer classes of the community. Those who will benefit most by four months' military discipline will be the young men of means and the street-boys and larrikins. The superior artisans and the clerks get a great deal of wholesome discipline in the workshop and the office. The undisciplined are to be

found among "our young barbarians" of the residential quarters on the one hand, and of the mean streets on the other.

It is worth mentioning here that the young Swiss recruit, who evidently knows England as well as Switzerland, expresses a very emphatic opinion that we shall never adopt the Swiss system. We are not, he asserts, a sufficiently democratic people to endure it. We believe that in the end he will be proved wrong. In view, however, of the kind of arguments that are used against universal training among middle-class Liberals, we can hardly wonder at his expressing this opinion. In spite of Mr. Henderson and the conventional talk of other Labour leaders about what they call "conscription," the real resist-

ance to the proposals of the National Service League comes, we believe, from the middle class, and not from the workmen. The objection of the working man is first assumed, and then used to conceal and support a very different series of objections to compulsory service. Here, indeed, is another example of a fact which we have noted before in these columns,—namely, that on many questions the Labour leaders represent, not the class for which they profess to speak, but that special section of the middle class into which they have won their way by their intellectual capacity and force of character. At home and in his personal characteristics the Labour leader is very often much more like, and much more in sympathy with, the small professional man, the tradesman,

the shopkeeper, and the Nonconformist minister than the working man, and shares their likes and dislikes and prejudices in regard to most matters political and social.

Before we leave the debate on the Army Estimates we should like to say a word on Mr. Harold Cox's restatement of the old proposition that if we have a strong enough Navy we can have no need for a military force in these islands, and that therefore our true plan is to spend every penny we can spare upon the Navy. If it were possible to make absolute statements about human affairs, Mr. Cox's logic would no doubt be irrefutable. Unfortunately, as Burke pointed out long ago, nothing absolute can be affirmed upon any moral or political question, and therefore we have

to be content to take lower grounds, and to deal with the problems of human society on considerations other than those of pure logic. The objections to the acceptance of Mr. Cox's proposition are many. In the first place, he assumes that there is no possibility of conditions arising under which, although we hold a vast preponderance of sea power, our shores may for six or seven days lie open to attack. We should put it that the command of the sea will give us ninety per cent. of protection from invasion, but that there remains over a ten per cent. risk, and that, considering the appalling nature of a catastrophe, it is well worth while to provide against this ten per cent. risk by the provision of an armed force in these islands. To state the matter in another way, it is

worth while to insure ourselves in two companies in case one might fail—in the army insurance office as well as the naval office. At any rate, this is the view which we feel sure that the British public not only has always held, but always will hold. We venture to say that if Mr. Cox's suggestion of keeping no soldiers in these islands were to be submitted to the nation, it would not gain the assent of one voter in a hundred thousand.

Another objection to Mr. Cox's view is to be found in the fact that the stripping of these islands bare of all military protection must act as a tremendous incentive to foreign Powers to endeavour to take from us the command of the sea. Mr. Cox, like the good economist he is, desires, we are sure, to keep the

command of the sea on the cheapest possible terms. To do this we must give as little incentive to other Powers as possible to compete with us. But considering the predatory instincts of mankind, just imagine the temptation to outbuild us which would be offered by the fact that if the command of the sea could be taken from us for a week or so these islands and their riches would lie absolutely open to the plunderer. The incentive thus provided might easily cost us another twenty or thirty millions a year on naval preparation. On the other hand, the fact that we had a million well-trained home defenders would act in the opposite direction, and incline the Powers not to waste their money in competing with us for the command of the sea. It would tend to

make them say: "Even if we could manage to get the command of the sea for a week or so, we could do nothing to bring Britain to her knees. Her adoption of universal training has made it useless to think of invasion by anything short of a million and a half of men, and it is impossible to find transport for such a number." Mr. Cox must remember the saying of the Irish priest which we have often quoted in these columns. When a landlord was shot by his parishioners, he asked indignantly from the pulpit: "What right had he to tempt the poor people of this district to murder him by going about unarmed?" We do not want the Powers of Europe to be tempted after this fashion.

Mr. Cox should consider also the evil

moral results which must ensue if we were to act on the principle that we can give ourselves absolute security by spending sufficient money on sea power. Surely he does not want to see the people of this country "drowned in security,"—to employ the expressive phrase of one of the Elizabethan poets. To be thus drowned is good neither for men nor for nations. It is not good for men to think that in no possible circumstances can they ever be called upon to make the supreme sacrifice of defending themselves and their country. If men are once taught that, come what may, they can eat, drink, and be merry and go about the world in swinish equanimity, secure that their sty will never be disturbed, they will become the most hateful and demoralised of human beings.

To impress upon the people of this country the notion of such an absolute security would be to turn Britain into a Capua, and to unfit our race and nation for their true mission in the world.

SHAKESPEARE AND NATIONAL SERVICE

As warm supporters of the policy of the National Service League, we note with satisfaction the progress which is being made by the League, and how very much greater and wider is the sympathy extended to it now than when it began its work. And while noting this with satisfaction, we note also that the obstacles to the policy prove very different from those which were expected. At the beginning it was very generally believed that the chief difficulty would be to convince the working man of the

necessity of universal training. It was feared that though there was little doubt as to his essential courage and patriotism, he would be alarmed by the notion of anything approaching military training, and that it might be difficult to convince him that he would be asked to undertake no obligation which would not be imposed quite as strictly upon his richer fellow-subjects. These fears are, we believe, turning out to be groundless. It is the experience of almost all who have addressed popular audiences—it is certainly the experience of the present writer—that the opposition to the notion of universal military training does not come from the working class. The real opponents to the policy are the well-to-do,—the middle and lower middle class. We do not suggest for a moment that

they are as a class physically timid, or that they mean to be unpatriotic; but unfortunately they seem to show a certain selfishness and a certain prevalence of caste-feeling in regard to letting their sons be trained which are not shown either by the working class or by the aristocratic class. The aristocratic class is not afraid of rubbing shoulders with the democracy on the drill-ground; but we fear that the class above the working class does at present dislike this notion very greatly. The fathers think it will be "lowering" to their sons, and the mothers think that the training would be too rough, for there is no class, taken as a whole, in which the worship of comfort and the dread of roughing it are so great.

Strange as it sounds, this attitude of

the well-to-do and of the poor towards national service, and the true solution of the problem, were divined by Shakespeare some three hundred years ago, and were treated by him with astonishing power. Let our readers who are sceptical as to our assertion turn to the second part of *King Henry IV.*, and read the immortal scene in which Falstaff and Bardolph, assisted by Justice Shallow, set about pressing men for the Army. In the second scene of the third act Falstaff impresses Mouldy, Feeble, and Bullcalf. Mouldy is a man of property, and so is Bullcalf, who belongs to the class of prosperous yeomen. Feeble, on the other hand, comes from the lower ranks of the artisans. He is the "woman's tailor" whom Falstaff laughs at so heartily as

"courageous Feeble!"—"valiant as the wrathful dove or most magnanimous mouse." As soon as they are impressed, Bullcalf and Mouldy set about getting themselves exempted by paying money to Corporal Bardolph. Bullcalf's protestations are the very epitome of the language always used by the men who are patriotic enough in theory, but who wish to shirk all patriotic obligations:—

"In very truth, sir, I had as lief be hanged, sir, as go: and yet, for mine own part, sir, I do not care; but rather, because I am unwilling, and, for mine own part, have a desire to stay with my friends; else, sir, I do not care, for mine own part, so much."

That sort of man always says that he has no real objection to serving his

country, but that somehow or other, in the special circumstances, he finds he must say he would rather not. Then comes Mouldy, the other prosperous man, who has excellent family reasons for not going, and he accordingly bribes his way out like Bullcalf :—

"And, good master corporal captain, for my old dame's sake, stand my friend : she has nobody to do any thing about her when I am gone ; and she is old, and cannot help herself : you shall have forty, sir."

Feeble has been standing by meantime, and has heard their excuses. And now comes in that note of passion which Shakespeare knows how to infuse into his art even when it is most farcical. He has brought us down to the very depths, to the corrupt officer taking a

bribe and betraying his duty to the State, and has shown us the cowardly fat and prosperous men sweating and squealing at the bare idea of discharging their obligations. We might expect that Feeble, the "woman's tailor," upon whom every sort of contempt has been poured, as the man who would "make as many holes in an enemy's battle as thou hast done in a woman's petticoat," would sweat and squeal too, and worse than any of them. One looks to hear him cry aloud on the injustice which makes him serve merely because he had not enough to pay for an exemption. With Shakespeare, master of the human heart, a very different thing happens. He has taken us, as we have said, down to the very dust, to the social gutter, to what seem like the

dregs of humanity, and then suddenly the scene soars aloft into the most poignant expression of patriotism and true nobility of mind that is to be found even in the work of Shakespeare. The wretched Feeble, " the wrathful dove," the " most magnanimous mouse," makes no attempt to bribe or to complain, to lament his cruel fate or to shirk his duty. He shows indeed that in him, at any rate, there lives the true spirit of patriotism, and that he can " stand as firm as Sparta's king because his soul is great." —But there is a kind of sacrilege in attempting to act as showman or interpreter to Shakespeare in such a mood. He must speak for himself. Here is Feeble's comment upon what he has seen, and upon his knowledge that he will go to the wars and serve his country

while Mouldy and Bullcalf stay snug and secure at home :—

"By my troth I care not ; a man can die but once : we owe God a death : I'll ne'er bear a base mind : an't be my destiny, so ; an't be not, so : no man is too good to serve's prince ; and let it go which way it will, he that dies this year is quit for the next."

Even the corrupt and hardened Bardolph cannot forbear his word of admiration :—

"Well said : thou'rt a good fellow."

And then with the reiterated exclamation of Feeble, magnificent in its sturdy and undemonstrative heroism, the scene closes :—

"Faith, I'll bear no base mind."

Every Briton has, we suppose, his favourite passage in Shakespeare—

lines which thrill him and move him beyond expression. The present writer is bound to confess that nothing in the whole range of Shakespeare affects him like Feeble's apologue, "I'll bear no base mind," coupled with the declaration that no man is too good to serve his country.

We are as regards patriotism a reticent race, and we may thank God for it, for the great emotions are volatile spirits which evaporate when they are given to the air. They are only potent when they are sealed up. Nevertheless we are convinced that the majority of the British people do not "bear a base mind," and they realise that no man is too good to serve and defend his native land.

Therefore we have every confidence

that if the appeal is made to them plainly and directly they will respond, not with shameful evasions like well-to-do Mouldy and Bullcalf, but with the nobility and patriotism of Feeble. But to be true to the genius of our people the appeal must not be made in heroics, with "high-falutin'" words, or with wavings of the flag, but in the spirit which Shakespeare shows us. We need not go beyond reminding our people that they must not bear a base mind, that no man is too good to serve the State, and that in the last resort we owe God a death. If, as we can and must, we make plain to the nation that the peril will become deadly if the inhabitants of this country are not trained to the use of arms for home defence,

we shall not need any more rhetoric or sentiment than is to be found in the phrases we have just quoted. Even these will not be needed for the working man, since he, like Feeble, holds them already. He is not drowned in security and smothered in comfort. He is face to face with the realities of life. And Mouldy and Bullcalf, when the matter is put before them properly, will, we are sure, no longer feel that they would "as lief be hanged as go," and that they "desire to stay with [their] friends," or that they must avoid their obligation for their "old dame's sake." If once they are made to realise the true position, they will prove the truth of the poet's words :—

"When Duty murmurs low, 'Thou must,'
The Youth replies, 'I can.'"

"THE LIBERTY NOT TO FIGHT FOR ONE'S COUNTRY"

We are constantly told that the British people will never accept "conscription," partly because compulsory as contrasted with voluntary service is antagonistic to the nature of our people, and partly because we have no need for the huge army that would be created by it. That this is perfectly true we have no wish to deny,—presuming that conscription means, as it apparently does when used by the opponents of the National Service League, a military system like that of Germany or France. This admission,

however, makes no difficulties for us or for the National Service League, for neither they nor we have ever advocated the adoption of any military system analogous to that of France or Germany. What we do advocate is something in no way antagonistic to the spirit of the British people, to their history, or to their requirements. It is the training to arms of the adult male population of this country very much on the model adopted in Switzerland and Norway, in order that the nation may be provided with a force of home guards which shall be able to take the place and do the work of the present Territorial Army, and which shall also endow the whole of our population with a training which would, if this country were threatened with invasion,

enable us to put under arms a force so great that no foreign Power would dare to run the risk of disembarking its men on our shores. A further advantage of universal training would be that at a time of great emergency, like that which arose during the Boer War, the thousands of citizens who would voluntarily come forward and offer to serve oversea would be able to offer the service of men well grounded in the use of arms, and not merely offer willing hearts but absolutely untrained hands.

The most curious point in the antagonism which is shown to the proposal for universal training is that in the abstract every Briton, whatever his politics or class or trade, admits the whole case of the National Service

League. All that, in truth, the opponents of the policy of the National Service League do is to refuse to admit the necessity of making that policy effective. We can best illustrate what we mean by a story of a Wiltshire labourer who was listening to a patriotic lecture. In the course of his remarks the lecturer put to his audience the question: "What would you do if the enemy had landed and were entering your village?"—"What would I do, Zur? Why, go for un with a pitchfark!" was the instant reply of an old labourer at the end of the hall. Practically this is the reply that every Englishman, Welshman, Scotsman, and Irishman would make. What the National Service League propose is to make the policy of the pitchfork effective. All

they want to do is to teach the men to handle the pitchfork, or rather, to substitute a better weapon for it, and to teach men how to use it, not individually and in isolation, but in co-operation with their fellows. The policy of the pitchfork and its intelligent application is the League's first and last word. Indeed, we cannot imagine a better poster for the League than an agricultural labourer attempting to drive the enemy from his cottage-door with a pitchfork, and underneath it the words, "We want to teach him as a lad how to do it properly,"—or perhaps they might use a slight variation of the Red Comyn's words and merely put below the picture, "We mak' siccar!"

A practical objection which is sometimes made to the policy of the National

Service League deserves consideration. We are told that the cost of universal military training and of the maintenance of the Army which the system would automatically give us is too great, and that we could not endure that burden as well as the expenditure on a sufficiently strong Navy. We should be the last not to give due attention to a question of national finance, but it is a complete delusion to suppose that the burden of universal training would be financially unendurable. Mr. Shee, the able secretary of the National Service League, sends us an interesting calculation of the cost which the policy of the League would place upon the country. The League, it will be remembered, propose that our young men when they reach a certain age—*i.e.*, between seventeen and

eighteen—shall receive three or four months' recruit training, and after that shall have a fortnight's training each year for the next three years. They calculate that a hundred and forty-three thousand lads would become every year liable to training. Assuming that each lad while under arms would cost as much as a Regular soldier—an unnecessarily large assumption, we think—and also assuming that the recruit training should be four months—which we again think is a fortnight more than is absolutely necessary—the cost works out at slightly over five millions a year. But it must be remembered that under a system of universal training we should require no Territorial Army, or, rather, that this "new (Swiss) model" would become the Territorial Army. There-

fore the whole of the money now spent on the Territorial Army would be saved. But the Territorial Army, it is evident, will very soon, if not at once, cost us five millions a year. Therefore it cannot be said that the adoption of the policy of the National Service League would seriously add to the cost of national defence.

That indirectly we as a nation should gain in health, strength, and efficiency we cannot doubt for a moment, for the effect of a three or four months' training on our urban population would be extraordinarily beneficial. To take young men of between seventeen and eighteen out of our towns and give them three and a half months' good physical training in the open air, and also, what is quite as important, three and a half months' good

feeding, would be to endow them with a fund of health and strength which, properly maintained, might last through life. The present writer will never forget the effects which he witnessed of the first three months' training upon the young men of the *Spectator* Experimental Company. Though they were not drawn in any way from the slum population, but from what one might call the average working-class home, and though many of them came from country districts, the improvement, physical, moral, and intellectual, produced by their three months' training was little short of marvellous. No one who saw and studied their development with an open mind could resist the feeling that it was a positive crime to withhold such benefits from the whole of the population.

We have one more argument to meet, which is what we may term "the last ditch" of the opponents of universal training,—that we should be interfering with the liberty of the subject by compelling men to learn how to carry out that duty of defending their country, should need arise, which we all admit in theory to be the most sacred of duties. Curiously enough, this very point was met some two hundred years ago by a certain Captain George St. Loe, a naval officer and pamphleteer of great humour and ability who wrote on naval and military affairs during and after "the glorious revolution" of 1688. One of his pamphlets is entitled "A Discourse about Raising Men." The pamphlet advocates universal service, and asserts that therein "all objections are answered,

and particularly that popular one, namely, that this way of Raising Men is a Violation of Liberty and Property" :—

"This," he declares, "is the Objection which has prevailed most against this Way of Raising Men, and which the Gentlemen that Oppose it insist upon more than any other; not, I suppose, because it's any better than the rest, for that it is not, but because to seem to assert, and talk for Liberty and Property, is always Popular, makes a great Shew, and gives a Man an Air, tho' it be nothing to the purpose."

Later on the gallant Captain deals in a passage of ironic humour with what he calls the "Liberty not to Fight for one's Country" :—

"All Englishmen then have, as you say, Gentlemen, a Liberty not to Fight for their Country, and no Body can

make 'em do it, unless they, Kind Hearts, should happen to be in a good humour, and offer their Service themselves; tho' the English Fleet should be sunk, and the Army destroy'd, yet Englishmen may stand still with their Hands in their Pockets and look on, and no Body can make 'em strike a Stroke. This is their Liberty, and no Body has a Word to say to it; nay, tho' the Kingdom itself were sure to be lost, our Laws, Liberties, Religion, Government and all with it, yet neither the King nor the Parliament, nor both of them together with all their Laws and all their Authority, can make a Man of 'em Fight to prevent it."

Incidentally he draws from his own times an example which is not a little amusing of how our commanders sometimes forgot the sacred liberty of the subject. He begins by describing how

"the late King James went away and left his army on Salisbury Plain; he knew Englishmen could not be made to fight against Foreigners without violating their Liberties, and therefore, rather than make 'em do that, he chose, out of a tender regard to the Liberties of England, to go his Way and lose his Kingdom. . . . . And so, it seems, our Admiral did, that we had in the beginning of this War [no doubt referring to Lord Torrington's withdrawal from the action off Beachy Head]. . . . . When the French came up to him, near the Isle of Wight, he bore away from 'em as fast as the Wind and Tide would carry him, bravely maintaining the Liberties of England, quite from Spithead to the River's mouth":—

"But his successor, Gentlemen, one may say it among Friends, has not behav'd himself so well in this Point as he did, for happening to meet with the French fleet some Years after, much about the same Place, what does he do but fall on them without any Regard to our Liberties, and there was he at it for above an Hour, Fist to Fist with Admiral Tourville, and all the while the poor Seamen's Brains and their Liberties flew about together in the saddest manner. I protest to you, Gentlemen, 'twas a shame to see it. Between you and me, Gentlemen, he may be an honest Man, but really he does not understand the Business of Liberty. I believe he means well, but he has not seen so far into that Matter as you have done: Pray, Gentlemen, take a little Pains with him, and set him right, and give him a Copy of the English Liberties to put in his Pocket when he goes to sea again."

One word more, and it concerns those —and they are by far the majority of our opponents—who will not say they object to universal training themselves, but who weakly and vaguely argue that "the country would never stand it." To such persons we would say: How do you know the country will never stand it? For ourselves, we may say at once that we have met plenty of people who believed that it was no good to talk about universal training because Englishmen were so strongly opposed to it, but, strangely enough, we cannot recall ever having met in the flesh anyone who was opposed *per se* and on its merits to teaching men how to use arms for the defence of their homes. Of course, thousands of men can be found who will say, and say rightly, that no

man must ever be compelled to leave these islands. That, however, is a perfectly different matter, and one which leaves the policy of the National Service League untouched. The League realise that oversea service must always in the future, as in the past, be left to purely voluntary service. What we contend is that there is no serious opposition to teaching men how to defend these islands. A duty which belongs to all should be performed by all, and the State should see that the citizen is trained in his youth to do that duty efficiently.

GERMANY'S NAVAL POLICY

If people will take the trouble to ask themselves frankly and fairly why it is that the Germans want to maintain a great and powerful fleet, capable of challenging our own, they will soon realise the true significance of the situation. Germany's progressive naval policy is based upon the following considerations. First, she not unnaturally desires, as a logical outcome of the very large extent of her oversea commerce, to have a powerful fleet to protect that commerce. Next, in view of the possibility of war with France and Russia,

she desires to have a fleet which, granted that France has no naval ally, will secure to Germany the command of the sea as against France, and with it those immense advantages that come when the command of the sea is coupled with enormous military strength. Germany cannot assume that if she and her Austrian ally were opposed by France and Russia she would be able to do more, in the case of France, than hold her own on the French Eastern frontier. Without naval superiority Germany would find this a very disagreeable position. In spite of her vast military strength, she might ultimately be worn down by a long and exhausting war with two fronts. If, however, Germany had the command of the sea, this would prove, as it has so often

proved in the past, quite enough to turn the scale in her favour and give her the victory. Here is the reason why the ruling class in Germany viewed the Franco-British *Entente* with such passionate dislike, and, losing their heads for the moment, made so desperate and so ill-advised an attempt to break it down in the months preceding the Algeciras Conference. The knowledge that we should stand by France in case of any attack upon her by Germany renders the great sacrifices that Germany has up till now made to build up her naval force, we will not say altogether useless, but useless, at any rate, in one direction.

Germany would not have been human had she not felt deep annoyance at such a turn of events. Another reason for

Germany's desire to obtain naval power is the fact that she thinks it possible that some day her very great commercial, and what for want of a better word we may call her emigration, interests in South America may induce her to challenge the Monroe doctrine, and thus bring her into conflict with the United States. If Germany's Fleet were weaker than that of the United States, she would be quite unable, she argues, to defend those interests. If, on the contrary, it were as strong as, or stronger than, that of the United States, she would be able to express herself emphatically, and not be obliged to yield instantly in face of what, from a German point of view, might be called an unfair or unreasonable development of the Monroe doctrine. There are

analogous reasons in the Far East why Germany should wish for great naval strength. The Anglo-Japanese Alliance will, she holds, not last for ever, and circumstances might arise when it would be exceedingly galling for Germany to be told by Japan that she must not do this or that in China or in the China seas. But Japan could only take up such an attitude if Germany's Fleet were weaker than hers.

The final and supreme reason for Germany's desire to possess a fleet of very great power can be best expressed by saying that she wishes to be in a position to talk diplomatically with Britain on terms of equality when matters involving sea power are concerned. At present the more ambitious of German politicians assert—

and from their point of view by no means unreasonably—that while their Fleet is inferior to that of Britain they are always liable to be brought up diplomatically by the unpleasant reminder that the British Fleet is so much stronger than theirs that they dare not risk a collision. "There are moments," they are inclined to say, "when you cannot get your rights respected unless you can effectively threaten the Power which is ignoring those rights. But we cannot at present threaten Britain effectively. While our Fleet is so inferior to hers she would laugh at our threats. If, however, there were equality between our Fleets, then our threats, or, to give them a fairer word, admonitions, would become very grave realities. Invasion—that is the

magic word which, if it can be pronounced with power, is capable of dissolving the British Empire and breaking the charm which holds it together. But invasion becomes a very real, and therefore a very terrible, risk for Britain if her sea supremacy can be challenged. To be able to challenge it, then, would give us an enormous extra power and weight in the councils of the world. If we can menace the vulnerable spot of Britain by pointing to a fleet which, even if not quite as strong as hers on paper, is strong enough to make her very anxious, our ability to get our way with her, which is, after all, what we want, is secured. We do not want to invade Britain merely for the sake of invading her, but we do want to see her placed in a position in which she

will not feel herself, as now, absolutely invulnerable, and therefore above the reach of our diplomacy. Unless we have equality of sea power, our magnificent Army, which could swallow the British Army at a mouthful, loses half its strength to support the national and world-wide aspirations of the German State. We must have a Navy comparable to the Navy of Britain in order to give our Army its full rights, and to make the great sacrifices we have endured to build up that Army of real avail. If not, our policy in South America, in the China seas, in the Pacific Ocean, in Turkey, and in Central Europe may become the merest moonshine. Take an example. Suppose the Austro-Hungarian Empire were unhappily to break

up. We do not want it to break up, of course, but still it may. In that event circumstances may afford us an opportunity of acquiring Trieste, the Istrian Peninsula, and a portion of the Dalmatian coast. That magnificent opportunity might be taken from us owing to Britain's sea power. If, on the contrary, we have a force sufficient to make Britain feel supremely uncomfortable on the score of invasion, we should be able to talk with her on terms of equality and do a reasonable 'deal' with her. That is, we should, without actual war, be able to take advantage of our opportunity, and thus be able to fulfil our destiny as a world-Power. As long as Britain feels invulnerable she can veto our ambitions. If we can take away that

sense of invulnerability, she will become reasonable—just as Russia became reasonable over the Balkans in the early spring. But there is only one way of taking away her sense of invulnerability, and that is the possession of sea power on so large a scale that the invasion of Britain becomes a possibility, and a possibility recognised by our neighbour. Therefore we must build up a great Navy."

These, in the last resort, are the reasons why Germany wants sea power. They are not reasons which *per se* it would be at all fair to call wicked or, from the German point of view, unreasonable. They are the kind of views that ambitious statesmen and nations have always held. Indeed, it may be said that a part of our determination

to maintain the command of the sea resides in these very arguments reversed, or applied to our own case. No doubt our intentions are in many ways much more pacific, for they are whole-heartedly for maintaining the *status quo*. But to this the Germans might well reply:—"There is no virtue in your desire for peace and the *status quo*, because you have got all you want. It was a very different story when you were in our position, and had not achieved all you desired in the matter of Empire." To argue on such a point as this is, however, not only unfruitful, but actually dangerous. It tends to endless recrimination and accusations, since no man and no nation can ever be judges in their own cause. What we have got to remember as

practical men is the fact that, unless we run the risk either of a great defeat, or a great humiliation, which would be as bad as a defeat, we must follow Germany's lead in the matter of naval development and maintain the naval *status quo*,—that is, must make sacrifices relatively as great as, and actually much greater than, hers, in order that Germany shall not alter the existing relations between her Fleet and ours.

Whatever it costs us, we must maintain the command of the sea. But naturally, being businesslike people, we must obtain that command at the cheapest rate and with the minimum of sacrifice. Now, in our opinion, there can be no doubt that the line of least sacrifice is not to be found in a policy of

naval driblets,—or doing just enough, and only just enough, to keep the command of the sea. The practical effect of that policy would be to lead Germany on, because it is certain to make her rulers and her people think that we are fainting in the struggle, and that if they, as the more virile, the more self-sacrificing, and the more practical people—for such they consider themselves—make "just one more effort," we shall fall behind in the race. "You see he is panting and reeling already. Just one more spurt and we shall beat him altogether." That is the most dangerous feeling we can possibly encourage in the German people, and it is just the feeling we are encouraging by the policy of driblets. If, on the

other hand, we increase our pace so much as to place a very great distance between ourselves and our German competitors, and at the same time show unmistakable powers of staying, then there is good ground for believing that it will be the Germans who will grow faint in the struggle, become depressed, and abandon the race. Already there are signs in Germany that people are saying :—"The game is not worth the candle. We shall never catch up with the British, and we are therefore exhausting our strength uselessly in trying to do so." That is the feeling we want to encourage, and we can and shall encourage it if now—for now is the moment—we make a really great effort and show the whole world that we are

absolutely determined, no matter what the cost, not merely to keep just ahead, but to place a great and impassable interval between us and our chief competitor for the command of the sea.[1]

[1] These words were written at the beginning of January of this year.

NEW HEARTS FOR THE OLD WAY.

We are called. We hear. Be this the single test—
Give we our best?
Doth there from meadow, street, and school arise
A dust of toil, a steam of sacrifice?
Have we a lodestar to light fainting eyes
With solemn hest?

An Empire's might, not proved by wail or blood
But widening good,
A might to lift the weak, to guide the strong,
To make day quicken from the night of wrong—
Be this with us as love or light or song
Or daily food.

Not with fond sigh or dream that peace is here
Shall we uprear
That peace which comes of soul attuned to stress,
Of armoured calm and iron gentleness,
Of valiant youth, and wisdom skilled to bless,
And woman's cheer.

So peals the question riving our long rest—
Give we our best?
Arm we with zeal and labour that the day
Of ultimate battle find us not at play?
Ay, with new hearts to dare the old great way
We yet shall hold, by gift of each man's best,
Our sires' bequest.

Archibald Fox.

APPENDIX

HOW BISMARCK USED THE PRESS

THERE is a tendency among certain amiable and sentimental persons in England, whose sincerity is unquestionable, to accept the opinions of the German Press, and above all its "inspired" opinions—those which are prompted, or expressly dictated, by the bureaucracy—as though they had the same value as corresponding statements in our own newspapers. This is an old error, but a very easy one to fall into. It is the familiar mistake of dealing with one set of conditions in the terms of another. The German Press has

different methods and standards from ours, and though everyone knows this in a way, it is astonishing how ready people are to accept in an absolute sense statements to which the authors of them would attribute no such authority or finality. That this easy-going habit is creditable in a way to many Englishmen we do not deny; but its dangers are great and obvious, particularly at a time like this, when German newspaper statements about shipbuilding and naval intentions are quoted as having the value of exact evidence. There would be reason in this English practice only if the Bismarckian method were dead; but it is not dead; there are officials in the German Departments of State who were trained in the Bismarckian tradition and in none other. We think it therefore a duty to remind our readers at this time what sort of relations Bismarck entered

into with the Press, and what use he made of it. Anyone can go into the matter for himself by reading Herr Busch's "Bismarck: Some Secret Pages of his History,"—a work of which the authenticity is established. We can give here only a few quotations, but they will be quite enough to prove our meaning.

Herr Busch was an official in the German Foreign Office, and was employed for many years by Bismarck as his agent in "working the Press." The first quotation we shall give refers to an episode in 1870, five months before the outbreak of the Franco-German War:—

"Read over to the Minister, at his request, an article which he ordered yesterday and for which he gave me the leading ideas. It was to be dated from Paris, and published in the *Kölnische Zeitung*. He said:—'Yes, you have

correctly expressed my meaning. The composition is good both as regards its reasoning and the facts which it contains. But no Frenchman thinks in such logical and well-ordered fashion, yet the letter is understood to be written by a Frenchman. It must contain more gossip, and you must pass more lightly from point to point. In doing so you must adopt an altogether French standpoint. A Liberal Parisian writes the letter and gives his opinion as to the position of his party towards the German question, expressing himself in the manner usual in statements of that kind.' (Finally Count Bismarck dictated the greater part of the article, which was forwarded by Metzler in its altered form to the Rhenish newspaper.)"

Bismarck apparently had no objections on principle to fabricating a letter purporting to come from Paris in order to influence German opinion. No

honest newspaper in England would concoct such information for its own uses, and of course it is unthinkable that a Cabinet Minister would do it. In the same month (March, 1870) Bismarck wanted to have the Polish question discussed in the Press *à propos* of Klaczko's appointment at Vienna. He instructed his agent as follows :—

"Quote Rechenberg's confidential despatch of the 2nd of March from Warsaw, where he says that the Polish secret political societies which are engaged at Lemberg in preparing for a revolution, with the object of restoring Polish independence, have sent a deputation to Klaczko congratulating him on his appointment to a position where he is in direct communication with the Chancellor of the Empire. Send the article first to the *Kölnische Zeitung*, and afterwards arrange for similar articles in the provincial newspapers.

We must finally see that this reaches Reuss (the Ambassador in St. Petersburg), in order that he may get it reproduced in the Russian Press. It can also appear in the *Kreuzzeitung*, and it must be brought up again time after time in another form."

On July 19th Herr Busch records that he met Bismarck in his garden :—

"He stopped in his walk as I came up to him, and said: 'I wish you to write something in the *Kreuzzeitung* against the Hanoverian nobles. It must come from the provinces, from a nobleman living in the country, an Old Prussian—very blunt, somewhat in this style: It is reported that several Hanoverian nobles have endeavoured to find pilots and spies in the North Sea for French men-of-war. The arrests made within the last few days with the assistance of the military authorities are understood to be connected with this

affair. The conduct of those Hanoverians is infamous, and I certainly express the sentiments of all my neighbours when I put the following questions to the Hanoverian nobles who sympathise with those traitors. Have they any doubt, I would ask them, that a man of honour could not now regard such men as entitled to demand honourable satisfaction by arms whether their unpatriotic action was or was not undertaken at the bidding of King George?'"

And so on—another fabricated letter in which Bismarck was no doubt more at his ease than in the case of the French Radical.

Side by side with entries about the work of fabrication and disingenuous suggestion we find such entries as the following, which we may perhaps take as proof that Bismarck never thought otherwise than that the "working of

the Press" was a quite natural and legitimate part of a statesman's diplomacy :—

"At 11 o'clock this morning [April 25th, 1870] Count Bismarck and his family took the Holy Communion at their residence. He asked whether any one in our bureau desired to join them, but no one offered to do so. I was for a moment tempted, but reconsidered the matter. It might look as if I wished to recommend myself."

Indeed, we have the key to Bismarck's heart in the entry which tells us that he remarked : "We are at least entitled to tell the truth with discretion in presence of such indiscreet lies." We are really, as we have said, dealing with a different code when we find that truth and falsehood may be judged for political purposes by the degree of their discre-

tion. On April 29th, 1888, Herr Busch wrote in his diary :—

"I read this morning in the *Berliner Boersen Zeitung:* 'We are in a position to state that the Imperial Chancellor, as was indeed to be expected, is most indignant at the notorious article in the *Grenzboten* slandering the Empress Victoria, and that he has given expression to his condemnation in very strong terms. In this connection exceptional importance is to be attached to the sympathetic article in the *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* on the Queen of England's visit.' Doubtless as that paper is in the Bleichröder's service, this utterance has been inspired by that firm, over which floats the flag of the British Consulate General. Well informed? Possibly, indeed probably. A disclaimer? Why not! Quite in order! *Tempora mutantur?* But I shall never change towards him, nor he

doubtless towards me. He will once more call for his little archer when he again wants an arrow shot into the face of this or that sun, and 'Büschlein's' bow shall never fail him."

The ejaculations of Herr Busch on reading the *Berliner Boersen Zeitung* can be easily understood when it is explained that the publication of what was said to the discredit of the Empress had been procured by Bismarck himself, as the previous pages of the diary show. This is the prettiest example in the book, though there are several, of the art of *démenti*. As a final specimen we will quote the following. It is dated September 26th, 1888 :—

"In the intervals he had a long conversation with me on the manner in which the Crown Prince's diary should be dealt with. He introduced the subject by the remark (in English) : 'I am

afraid you have forgotten your English.' On my answering, 'No, sir, by no means,' he continued the conversation in that language on account of the coachman. He began: 'As you will have seen from what you read, we must first treat it as a forgery, a point of view from which a great deal may be said. Then, when it is proved to be genuine by the production of the original it can be dealt with further in another way.' I said that on the whole it appeared to me to be genuine, but incomplete. . . . He rejoined: 'You were quite right. I myself consider the diary even more genuine that you do. It is quite insignificant, superficial stuff, without any true conception of the situation, a medley of sentimental politics, self-conceit and phrase-mongering. He was far from being as clever as his father, and the latter was certainly not a first-rate politician. It is just that which proves its genuineness to me. But at first we must treat it as doubtful.'"

These extracts surely prove that if anything like the Bismarckian tradition remains, it is childishness to set an exact scientific value on statements which are part of an accepted system of "flying kites" and of general manipulation. If there had been any effort to break with the Bismarckian method, we should find that the political fame of Bismarck had fallen into some disrepute. But this has not happened. His statesmanship is held in high honour by the bureaucracy and its supporters. Herr Busch's diary and Bismarck's reputation exist side by side. Only a few years ago we ourselves had an amusing illustration that the methods of employing the Press held good. The *Spectator* published an article when the German Emperor was beginning to demand a strong Navy, pointing out that the desire was a very

natural one for a rising industrial Power which might have to protect its overseas commerce. If there should unhappily be a quarrel, we said, between Britain and Germany, German commerce would be at our mercy. The article was reproduced in Germany, and quoted freely by the German Navy League in confirmation of its views. Soon it was mentioned in the Reichstag, whereupon the late Herr Richter, the well-known leader of the National Liberals, who spoke in perfect good faith, declared that the article was worth nothing as independent evidence, as it had obviously been concocted in Berlin by the Imperial Press Bureau, had been sent over to London, and its insertion then procured in the *Spectator!* In other words, a continuance of the practices by which Bismarck conjured up letters from the French Radical and

the blunt Old Prussian was assumed; no German Deputy apparently thought what Herr Richter said at all unnatural. Yet of course the article had been written in the usual way in the *Spectator* office by the writer of these lines. We can hardly hope that those Englishmen in whom the wish is invariably father to the thought will cease to accept the German Press as an authority like the *Times*; but we do hope that we shall cause some of our readers who have been accustomed to regard the talk of disingenuousness in German journalism as vague and unreal to look on the matter with new eyes. We make no charge of dishonesty against the German Press. There are, to begin with, a number of newspapers which are quite independent of official influences. Again, those newspapers which are ready to insert official articles do so on patriotic

grounds, and not from any base or unworthy motives. It is natural that they should publish what is offered to them by officials, what they are assured is sent them in the public interest, and what, as a matter of fact, is often remarkably good "copy." In the case of the Navy, however, we should be maniacs if we adjusted our building programmes by the tone of German newspapers instead of by our own independent conception of what our needs may be.

THE END

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