

**THE WAR BOOK OF THE GERMAN
GENERAL STAFF. BEING "THE
USAGES OF WAR ON LAND"
ISSUED BY THE GREAT GENERAL
STAFF OF THE GERMAN ARMY**

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The War Book of the German General Staff. Being "The Usages of War on Land" Issued by the Great General Staff of the German Army by J. H. Morgan

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BEING "THE USAGES OF WAR ON LAND"
ISSUED BY THE GREAT GENERAL
STAFF OF THE GERMAN ARMY

TRANSLATED WITH A CRITICAL INTRODUCTION

BY

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1915

TO
THE LORD FITZMAURICE
IN TOKEN OF
FOURTEEN YEARS OF FRIENDSHIP
AND OF
MUCH WISE COUNSEL IN THE STUDY
OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

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PREFATORY NOTE

THE text of this book is a literal and integral translation of the *Kriegsbranch im Landkriege* issued and re-issued by the German General Staff for the instruction of German officers. It is the most authoritative work of its kind in Germany and takes precedence over all other publications whether military or legal, alike over the works of Bernhardt the soldier and of Holtzendorff the jurist. As will be shown in detail in the critical introduction, The Hague Conventions are treated by the authors as little more than "scraps of paper"—the only "laws" recognized by the German Staff are the military usages laid down in the pages of the Manual, and resting upon "a calculating egotism" and injudicious "form of reprisals."

I have treated the original text with religious respect, seeking neither to extenuate nor to set down aught in malice. The text is by no means elegant, but, having regard to the profound significance of the views therein expressed or suggested, I have thought it my duty as a translator to sacrifice grace to fidelity. Text, footnotes, and capital headlines are all literally translated in their entirety. When I have added

Prefatory Note

footnotes of my own they are enclosed in square brackets. The marginal notes have been added in order to supply the reader with a continuous clue. In the Critical Introduction which precedes the text I have attempted to show the intellectual pedigree of the book as the true child of the Prussian military tradition, and to exhibit its degrees of affinity with German morals and with German policy — with "Politik" and "Kultur." I have therefore attempted a short study of German diplomacy, politics, and academic teaching since 1870, with some side glances at the writings of German soldiers and jurists. All these, it must be remembered, are integrally related; they all envisage the same problem. That problem is War. In the German imagination the Temple of Janus is never closed. Peace is but a suspension of the state of war instead of war being a rude interruption of a state of peace. The temperament of the German is saturated with this belligerent emotion and every one who is not with him is against him. An unbroken chain links together Clausewitz, Bismarck, Treitschke, von der Goltz, Bernhardi, and the official exponents of German policy to-day. The teaching of Clausewitz that war is a continuation of policy has sunk deeply into the German mind, with the result that their conception of foreign policy is to provoke a constant apprehension of war.

Prefatory Note

The first part of the Introduction appears in print for the first time. In the second and third parts I have incorporated a short essay on Treitschke which has appeared in the pages of the *Nineteenth Century* (in October last), a criticism of German diplomacy and politics which was originally contributed to the *Spectator* in 1906 and a study of the German professors which was published, under the title of "The Academic Garrison," in the *Times* Supplement of Sept. 1st, 1914. I desire to thank the respective Editors for their kindness in allowing me to reproduce here what I had already written there.

J. H. M.

