

**THE GERMAN SOUL IN ITS
ATTITUDE TOWARDS ETHICS
AND CHRISTIANITY, THE STATE,
AND WAR; TWO STUDIES**

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The German Soul in Its Attitude Towards Ethics and Christianity, the State, and War; Two Studies by Friedrich von Hügel

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FRIEDRICH VON HÜGEL

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THE GERMAN SOUL

"A man's earnestness should be so attempered as to become a gentle longing, not a bitter vehemence."

"Let a man continually paint within his heart Thine image, O Lord Jesus—of Thee, eternal sunshine—how Thou didst always bear Thyself with a gentle, genial and benign earnestness."

Instructions of Brother David of Augsburg to the first German Franciscan Novices, about A.D. 1250.

(From Pfeiffer's *Deutsche Mystiker*,
vol. i. 1845, pp. 319, 345.)

THE GERMAN SOUL
IN ITS ATTITUDE TOWARDS
ETHICS AND CHRISTIANITY
THE STATE AND WAR

TWO STUDIES

BY

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PREFACE

THE following little book consists substantially of two distinct Studies, as these appeared, the first in *The Church Quarterly Review* for January 1915, and the second, in two instalments, in *The Quest* for April 1915 and January 1916. I have here to thank the respective editors for their kind permissions thus to reprint those articles in book form—in the case of the last article, at so short a distance of time.

I have learnt not a little from various criticisms, public and private, and from my own further observation and study, since the earlier of these Papers was written. I have here attempted to incorporate the chief results, by means of many small, and of three or four large, omissions, insertions, or changes. Thus I have dropped the story of Margarete Peter, at the end of the first stage of *The German Soul and the Great War*, because three mutually independent competent readers failed to find it truly pertinent or fair. And I

have added a section on the latest Troeltsch publications (pp. 74-107); I have amplified the argument that finds a quite undesigned but powerful connection between the early Protestant Puritanism and our present-day gigantic Capitalism and Industrialism (pp. 180-184); and I have now insisted, before the four things as to which we can act or hope as regards Germany's self-regeneration, upon the two things which I consider we ought most carefully to avoid (pp. 189-193).

An indication of the precise circumstances which occasioned and moulded these essays may possibly add something to their interest.

It was only in July 1913 that I first studied Naumann's booklet—his *Briefe über Religion*. The thing struck and stimulated, indeed stung me, greatly; and I waited thenceforth for an opportunity to publish an analysis, and allocation, of what aroused in me my large admiration for so much in the man, and my profound dissent from the pathetically absolute dualism exhibited by this most characteristic latter-day German soul. Professor Arthur Headlam gave me my chance by his invitation to treat, in *The Church Quarterly*, the general question of the relations between Christianity and War. The resulting Paper

was first read by me to a private society for the study of religious questions in December 1914, and could thus benefit by various criticisms and endorsements before appearing in public, during the following month.

It was, some half-year further back, only a few days before the outbreak of the war, that I received a long letter from a still young, highly cultivated, South German scholar and lecturer—a man who knew English and England well, ever since his student days (of some ten years before) when he had already been immersed in English subjects; a delicately religious spirit, whose Protestantism was greatly softened and suffused by large Catholic sympathies. It was a long, touchingly earnest, plea in favour of the justice of the German claims, especially of a cultural kind, and centred in the strange assertion and argument that German culture had by now, as a sheer matter of fact, fully assimilated all that deserved to live in the several civilisations of Greece and Rome, Italy, France, and England; and hence that the spreading and the substitution, by means even of the force of arms, of this German culture, now thus become the legitimate heir (because the actual quintessence) of all

those other cultures, was both no more than justice on the part of Germany towards herself, and no kind of loss, but rather a great gain in fruitful concentration, for Europe and humanity at large.

Another long letter reached me, after the war had lasted some three months, from a distinguished British professor of Philosophy who, for many a year a distinguished interpreter of Hegel, found himself dismayed and bereft of his bearings at what he felt to be the barbarous excesses of the German mentality now at work. He wanted especially to know how English and German could ever come together again, if one after another of the professed exponents of the higher German mind voiced thus a passionate unreason? And did not all these violences even suggest that the human mind, its laws and needs, is, after all, not one and the same throughout mankind?

Probably the worst, certainly the longest, of such repulsive shouts of sheer passion on the part of German professors of high standing, has, however, occurred only during these last months. Professor Eduard Meyer's *England, —The Development of its State and Policy and the War against Germany* (Stuttgart)