

**THE GENESIS OF WAR
AND THE FOUNDATION
OF PEACE**

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The Genesis of War and the Foundation of Peace by Gervaise Rundall

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by

GERVAISE RUNDALL



UNIV. OF
CALIFORNIA

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**THE GENESIS OF WAR AND THE
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THE GENESIS OF WAR AND THE FOUNDATION OF PEACE

SINCE that August day when this fearful war fell upon the world, we have been treated, by press, platform, and pulpit, to a confusing variety of thoughts concerning it.

We have Treitschke and Bernhardi, who dismiss the imminence of a vital step in the spiritual evolution of the race and, assuming the permanence of the status quo of the law of claw and fang, ably apply themselves to a demonstration of the virtue of war as a means of Teutonic self-preservation and expansion.

We have the conventional-minded clergy who, with an even less consistent notion of the reign of sequence and order in the universe, no sooner hear of war's advent than they busy themselves mightily in organizing a nation-wide prayer for peace, all the while deliciously innocent of any comprehension of their own past, present and continuing contribution to the causes that alone lead to war.

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We have one belligerent's frank announcement of the "law of necessity," and a complete gamut of opinions from all sources upon the scope and authority of international law, upon the rights and duties of neutrals, upon humane treatment of the enemy and of non-combatants. The authority of precedent is strenuously denied and as vigorously upheld.

Where, in all this maze of thinking, lies the truth?

In proceeding to disentangle and lay straight in our understanding the elements of any one of the complex problems that harass the life of the race, it is necessary to trace present conditions from their point of origin. It may be said, strictly, that the finite mind is not capable of dealing with origins. But we can greatly aid our thinking by excluding incidentals and thereby reducing the complexity of the problem to its simplest terms; we can return, in our thought, to that stage of development where human life included only the simple, fundamental relations and experiences. Today it includes essentially no more,

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but our perception of this truth is confused by a massed froth of detail. In all the world's literature of fiction there are said to be no more than a score of distinct plots. The engrossing and all but infinite variety of tale is obtained by mere superficial differences of incident and circumstance.

It is so with life. The elements in its problems are few. A comprehensive and balanced philosophy of life is not the abstruse thing it seems, possible only to philosophers of pretentious and resounding phrase. If the vital essentials of a sound philosophy were possible of ready comprehension only by the minds of these few, it would tend to negative the primary hypothesis of all human thought—that the universe is under a just and beneficent rule. In first seeking to understand life, therefore, that we may understand war, the problem is one for direct and simple thought and simple words. It is well within the intellectual scope of the average man.

Life is not a stationary set of conditions. It is an evolution. It is not a repeating circle,