

**THE EUROPEAN WAR OF  
1914: ITS  
CAUSES, PURPOSES,  
AND PROBABLE RESULTS**

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The European War of 1914: Its Causes, Purposes, and Probable Results by John William Burgess

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**JOHN WILLIAM BURGESS**

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Max C. B. W.  
December 1915

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EUROPEAN WAR OF 1914:  
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PROBABLE RESULTS

By

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## PREFACE

**T**HE contents of this little book were prepared some months ago, but its appearance has been intentionally delayed until this time. I am not sure that its publication even now is not premature.

It is a fact of history as well as personal experience that the majority is generally on the wrong side of every great question in the beginning. I myself have seen this country in hysteria four times during my own conscious existence. The first time was the Anti-Abolitionist craze, when the North as well as the South rose in what men then fancied to be righteous indignation against these assailants of the existing order and the public peace, the despised Garrisonians, but what really was only the rage of a guilty conscience trying to deaden itself to the knowledge of the sin it was supporting. And then in less than five years I saw these same men leading the vast choir of the majority and singing the battle hymn of freedom.

## *Preface*

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The second time was the greenback craze and the third time was the free-silver craze, when, in spite of the jejuneness of the subject, the great majority were so affected by it and worked themselves up to such a pitch of self-righteousness against the rascals, who would make the debtor pay in appreciated money, as almost to silence their contention for a sound and honest currency. It took all of the official and moral power of four Presidents, Grant, Hayes, Cleveland, and McKinley, to stem this torrent of popular holiness, make men exercise a little common sense, and feel a little common honesty. And yet I hardly know a man today who is not ashamed if his grandfather was touched by either of these follies.

And now for six months we have had the Anti-German craze, perhaps the most unreasonable of all—for who is so blind as not to perceive with a glance that the united triumph of the Autocrat of the Land and the Autocrat of the Sea means their dominance of the world; and what have the Germans ever done

## *Preface*

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to us to deserve abuse at our hands—but perhaps the most explicable of them all, for if the majority has so little correct understanding, in the beginning, of domestic questions, such as I have cited, how can it be expected to have any comprehension whatever of a great foreign movement, epochal in civilization, such as that with which the European world is now convulsed?

It was quite inevitable that the attention of the vast majority should be riveted primarily upon some of the nearer lying, more unimportance, incidents of the movement, and that these should be misinterpreted and these misinterpretations become exaggerated until they should finally assume the form of caricature and catchword. There are some evidences at present that we are beginning to emerge from this spell of excited and misguided feeling and to look at things more calmly and objectively. It is this which has encouraged me to release this little volume for publication at this juncture.

*March, 1915.*

J. W. B.