

HOW GERMANY MAKES WAR

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How Germany Makes War by Friedrich von Bernhardi

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FRIEDRICH VON BERNHARDI

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HOW GERMANY MAKES WAR

BY

FRIEDRICH VON BERNHARDI

GENERAL OF CAVALRY (RETIRED)

Author of "Germany and the Next War"

UNIV. OF
CALIFORNIA

NEW YORK

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EDITOR'S PREFACE

GENERAL VON BERNHARDI'S book "On War of To-day" is one of the most important military works that have appeared in recent years. It is of special interest at the present moment as an exposition of the ideas underlying the German plans for the war with the Allies, and the methods on which the German staff rely in their operations in the field.

The book is an attempt to show how war can be successfully conducted with the enormous masses of men now thrown into a conflict between nations, the armies of millions that put the whole fighting power of a people into the battle line. General von Bernhardi insists that while certain fundamental principles of war must always hold good, their practical application has to be considerably modified now that these "armies of masses" are brought into action, and have to employ weapons and appliances more efficient than any which were used in earlier wars.

The book was written for experts, and all serious students of war should read the complete translation of the work issued last year by Mr. Hugh Rees. But many readers will be glad to have the condensed version of General Bernhardi's treatise contained in the following pages. Some of the more technical details of the original work have been omitted; but nothing has been thus set aside which affects the writer's main argument. So, too, a choice has been made among the numerous examples from military history by which

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he illustrates it. The more interesting of these are given; for the others the reader can refer to the complete translation. Throughout, the author's own words are used, only here and there a more familiar expression is substituted for one which would not be so easily understood by a reader unacquainted with the technical phraseology of German military literature.

The work is none the less interesting because the General does not always slavishly follow the theory of the German Army Regulations. He boldly departs from the mere letter of these when he has to show what must happen in the conflict of great armies in the field. The reader will of course understand that the opinions General Bernhardt expresses as to the policy of our own and other Governments and their action in the past are given without comment or correction, though Englishmen will in many instances regard the view thus put forward as hardly consistent with the facts as we know them. He is writing as a leader of German military opinion for German readers, and looks at matters from a standpoint hostile to ourselves. As we read his words we must remember this. The book is a revelation of German policy as well as of German ideas on the way in which war should be conducted with modern weapons and under the new conditions of to-day.

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