

from the garden, laid it on the breakfast table, and went away. She walked through a little patch of woods and came out on the main highway. A peasant woman was passing in a cart. The child asked to be taken to the town. While the peasant woman did not understand her, she let her ride in the cart. When they reached the town, the child went to the railway station, waited an hour, and got in the first train that passed. At first, the conductor did not notice her, and not until she reached Berlin was it observed that she was traveling without a ticket. She could not explain. She merely cried, and said she wanted to go home to Vienna. Sympathetic people took an interest in her and provided her with a ticket to that city. A few days later, she reached Vienna. She had been away, altogether, two weeks. Scarcely had the train stopped, when she sprang wildly out of the car, and having no street-car fare, walked and ran a long distance to her home.

She came into the room, and sat down by the side of her father on his bed of straw. Her mother knelt on the floor near by, and the two little sisters snuggled up beside her. The little girl sat there, caressing her father, who with his frightfully deformed and emaciated face lay weeping with his mouth, the way the blind weep, and opening and closing his lips as a fish out of the water. The maiden stroked his gray hair, caressed his deformed features, kissed him, and then fell limp into her mother's arms.

The next day, the astonished neighbors saw the little girl again at her daily round of duties; sweeping and cleaning, going to the public kitchen for the dole of charity soup for her father. How was the little girl back home, whom they heard was living 'like a princess' in Sweden? Indeed, how did it happen?

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GERMANY'S DISILLUSIONMENT

BY LEVIN L. SCHÜCKING

THERE are, evidently, a great many people in England who, to a certain extent, are changing the mental attitude which they adopted toward Germany during, and immediately after, the war. But still they cannot get over certain things. Granted that the Germans were not exclusively responsible for the outbreak of the war, why did they not protest against useless cruelties and barbarities like the air-raids over London, the transportations of the Belgian citizens, the things that happened at Lille, and so on? Or, if they were muzzled at the time, why did they not afterward show unmistakably their disapproval, if not their repentance? Where are the signs of any 'catharsis' of the national mind in this sense? Has, for example, anything serious been done to punish those military leaders from whose hands emanated so much that destroyed the lives and happiness of tens of thousands? Evidently not. Well then . . . ?

This attitude, let us admit, undoubtedly appears in a certain sense to be justified. But things do not always appear the same if looked at from different sides. To understand rightly the German mind on this question, one must not lose sight of the historical development of things. There was a moment when not only the military power of Germany but also her 'creed' was shaken to the foundations. That was when the great breakdown of November, 1918, came. Most people, especially among the so-called 'educated classes,' had put so unshakable a faith in the military leaders that they would have expected anything rather than a sudden collapse of this sort. Everyone

suddenly realized that this exaggerated confidence had rested on the foundation of a carefully elaborated system of lies. So the military defeat brought with it a moral discrediting of the whole system. It did not appear difficult to extend this discredit to militarism all round. The revolution which brought the ideas of socialism to the fore seemed to facilitate this. At a time when officers of the army did not dare to appear in uniform, in public, without being insulted or sneered at, and the victory of pacifist ideas seemed to be in the air, the transformation of the national mind — including the denunciation of the war-brutalities on both sides — seemed a mere natural consequence. In fact, pacifism in Germany was well on the way to a great popular victory. Those Germans who from the very beginning of the war had hoped the game would end in a 'draw,' because they could not regard a German victory as a likely benefit for the world or even for Germany, thought the time had come to make themselves the mouthpiece of what was called President Wilson's gospel.

Then came the terrible disappointment which blighted all such hopes. Nobody in Germany, not even the wildest Chauvinists, had anticipated what would happen. Germany, the great beleaguered fortress, surrendered unconditionally. But *the hunger blockade was not raised!* No one understood the reason why. Had we not laid down our arms and fulfilled every wish of the Entente Powers? Then where was the necessity for this? Was it a mere act of revenge? of punishment? So King Hunger kept his sway. Entente Commissions came and visited the starving towns. I have heard of British officers who came to Breslau and could not withhold their tears on seeing the indescribable sufferings of the children of the poor. They

promised to send relief as soon as possible. But it never came. And then, slowly and surely, the situation changed, and the hope of winning over the German mind to a new conception of things grew dim. You cannot try to reform a man who feels himself 'more sinned against than sinning' — or at any rate, it is very difficult. What was begun by the blockade not being raised was finished by the Versailles Treaty, with its cynical disregard of the solemn promises of the Fourteen Points. It made those people who had talked of Wilson's gospel appear in a ridiculous light. 'Right above Might!' Here you see it enacted. 'Self-determination of Peoples!' 'A war against the German government and not against the German nation!' 'Aye, springs to catch woodcocks,' as Polonius says. And the tremendous wave of bitterness rolling over the starved and defeated country drowned all thoughts of what had happened before.

It certainly should have been the duty of the new government not to let itself be turned by any means from the path it had chosen. It had gained its position by dethroning a power deadly hostile to it, so that it would have been a mere act of common sense to discredit the old leaders as much as possible. At the same time, it would have served the highest moral interests of the country to make the truth known. Something was done in this direction. The publication of the documents concerning the outbreak of the war (the so-called *Karutsky-Akten*) was carried out conscientiously and with great care. Moreover, a kind of law court was constituted in order to cross-examine the political and military leaders, but it was scarcely to be called a success. Then all measures of this sort came to a standstill. The strange political lethargy of the leading circles was caused partly, no doubt, by the weak-

ness of the government and the growing influence of the reaction, but its principal reason was that in face of the gigantic grievances of the moment, everything that might have happened during the war seemed to lose its importance. Try to speak to a man of Belgium, Lille, or the air-raids over London, and he will instantly ask you what you think of the fact that *still to-day*, more than six years after the outbreak of the war, quite a number of unfortunate German prisoners are kept back in penal servitude at Avignon and other places in France. So one hard heart hardens the other.

The question of 'reparations,' too, is often looked at from the wrong side. Most people abroad seem to think that the Germans are trying in a more or less artful way to evade the incurred liabilities. This is certainly not so. One must remember that the German peace delegation at Versailles, in 1919, offered to pay 100 milliards of marks. It did not, of course, at the time think it possible that, contrary to the Fourteen Points, Germany was to be stripped of all her colonies, that she was to lose her mercantile marine, her cables, her private property in the Allied countries and elsewhere, that her economic arteries were to be cut open by force and by stratagem, that the Pole was to be invited to take from her as much as he liked. And now, after all this has been done, after she has been consciously and deliberately crippled, she is talked of as if she were the Germany of 1914, and asked to pay a sum of, at the present rate of exchange, more than 3000 milliards of marks in 42 years; in addition to this, her export trade is to bear a special tax of 12 per cent for the benefit of the Allies, control of the customs is to interfere with her sovereignty,

and so forth, and so forth. The average law-abiding German is not able to grasp the whole meaning of this, but he finds by the most elementary arithmetic that, according to this scheme, every soul in Germany, including babies and children, has to pay to the Entente 50,000 marks — a family of six would be liable for 300,000 marks! Where is the man on the whole surface of the earth who thinks this possible? And this in a country whose underfed children are kept alive by the charity of the 'Society of Friends.' And the German reader remembers, during the war, hearing faint echoes from the other side of the wall of iron and fire, of the wild utterances of excited French papers demanding that the Germans should be punished by enslavement for a hundred years, and by the transformation of their country on this side the Rhine into a kind of German Congo State. He did not think at that time that these voices represented the mind of France. . . .

How, then, are these demands to be understood? They, evidently, are not meant to be fulfilled. Is their only aim to deliver Germany, finally and altogether, into the hand of France? Is the prisoner first to be disarmed, then bound, then executed? Everyone knows the French programme — the annexation of the Rhineland, the occupation of the Ruhr valley, the breaking up of German unity. Is what we have seen until now only the prologue, and is the real tragedy now to begin? No one in Germany knows. But what we do know is that if things go on like this, a man who still talks of the 'League of Nations' or of Cobden's 'goodwill among the nations,' in Germany, will run the risk of being put into a lunatic asylum.

LIFE, LETTERS, AND THE ARTS

THREE OPINIONS

AT the request of Sir Philip Gibbs, now editor of the *English Review of Reviews*, Mr. Joseph Conrad, Mr. John Galsworthy, and Sir Arthur Pinero each contributed a paragraph on the matter of 'Ideals for 1921.' Mr. Conrad's views are of particular interest. The little essays follow:

I. *The Wisdom of the Race*

By Joseph Conrad

I PUT my trust in the political genius of the people—in that capacity for dealing with the problems of collective life in a kindly, able, commonsense manner, for which this nation is prominent among all the nations of the earth. In the last few years I was tried (as much as the rest of us) by the stress of many and varied emotions—but dismay was never one of them.

I have never tried to systematize my impressions of the state of public affairs, and the notions (I can hardly call them ideas) which have occurred to me. I believe that the imponderable elements of the situation will determine the solution of the problem of the future: the latent sagacity of the race rather than the ideas of individuals; the deepest, almost unconscious, movements of the national soul rather than brilliant theories, unanswerable arguments, or wild enthusiasms. Qualified individuals (of whom I am *not* one) ought to, and, indeed, must speak with some effect.

Any given crowd may be stupid and even wicked. Yet I, who am no political democrat, have a deep-

seated conviction that in simple morality, self control, and courage, the people in the mass is always better than its leaders.

II. *A Defense of Idealism*

By John Galsworthy

IF I had to sum up the aspirations that might help our distressful land of England in these days, I should hardly use a despised word and say that we could not do better than to try to act like gentlemen. It would be a pleasant change.

In regard to idealism generally, I think we are all suffering from the natural dejection which follows the discovery that all the 'hot air' poured forth by public men of all sorts, during the war, *was* 'hot air.'

If a nation talks through its hat to keep up its spirits and attain its material ends, it will—as soon as it ceases talking—feel the cold air which blows in, through the hole, on to its bald spot. We are not and never have been so noble as all that; and idealists are not without blame, in that they do so constantly forget to remember realities. Though, like most people with any comedic sense, I am more a realist than an idealist, I share in this blame, I shall try and mend my ways.

III. *The Honesty of Ministers*

By Sir Arthur Pinero

THE nation's great want at the present moment is, in my opinion, a renewal of confidence in the honesty and