

The Daily Nebraskan

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SILENCE.

Silence is the element in which great things fashion themselves together; that at length they may emerge, full-formed and majestic, into the daylight of life, which they are henceforth to rule.—Carlyle.

Wait and see how the law students can root.

The all-University party Friday night will be one of the big social functions of the year. If you know of any alumni who will be in town that night, drop them a card inviting them to the party. It will be an excellent place for old students to meet. Of course, you will be there yourself.

BELGIUM.

Seven million men, women and children in Belgium are threatened with starvation. The population of the United States is close to 100,000,000, and our wealth is computed to be \$130,000,000,000.

We in peace and plenty praise Belgium for her heroic stand. We have expressed in verse and editorials our profound sympathy.

Little Belgium is appealing to big America for bread. Will our pocket-books follow our sympathy? Can our tribute to a brave but stricken people be measured in fifty-cent pieces?

THE FORUM

German Culture and Militarism.

To the Editor:

Every German carries with himself a panacea—an unfailing cure for the rest of the world, which he is ready to prescribe in homeopathic or allopathic doses according to circumstances. The first constituent of this powerful remedy is Messiah Wilhelm, who has decreed, "There is but one law and that is my law," also uttered "Sic volo, sic Jubeo." (Whatever I desire, I order.) The next constituent is the Almighty, not so powerful as Wilhelm but nevertheless his faithful ally. The last element of this great remedy is "German Kultur," which means, as Life says, "pig iron, Krupps, ships, beer, chemicals, music, discipline, military service and professors."

To an American, "culture" means "refinement," "civilization," the humanities and the like, as conceived

by the liberal-minded Gustav Bissing when he compares British civilization with that of Germany. "Culture" and "education" are not synonymous. "Culture" is the result of a long hard evolution of the species rather than of the individual; but "education" can be grafted on the individual from without, scarcely affecting the soul within.

German "Kultur" stands isolated like the pyramids and the Sphinx in the desert sands of Egypt. Surely it does not bring to Germany honor and glory but the reverse of these. It has made Germany the Eris in the concert of Europe, instead of the invincible Germanio.

A nation becomes more cultured as it absorbs the spirit and ideals of its great ones. France is a good illustration of this. The ideals of Voltaire and Rousseau become an integral part of the nation and prepared the material for the French revolution. The romantic period of Victor Hugo became a part of the French soul. The great French artist and his works are not merely for the single individual, but are also the common property of the masses of the nation. French art is not concealed in the museums and salons. You meet it on every street, in every garden, and on the elaborately moulded corners of the houses. Each Frenchman's house is a museum in itself. Paris is a museum, a salon, a work of art, the most beautiful city in the world.

Every epoch has its calm. This can be traced in the antiques of the nations remaining in the curio shops where porcelain, bronze, old marble and bric-a-brac are exhibited for sale.

The French have never recognized other cultures than their own. Shakespeare is almost a stranger to the French stage. Foreign dramas are seldom played in the theaters of France. But in Germany it is different. The dramas created by its leading spirits are more widely known in other lands than in Germany.

Goethe is the symbol of righteousness and humanity, which he brought to life in his period. There is a strong resemblance between Goethe and the wisest man of the Bible, King Solomon. Goethe, in his youth, sang "Die Leiden des jungen Werthers"—a veritable "Song of Solomon." In his prime he wrote "Hermann und Dorothea," which is full of wise sayings like Proverbs. In his old age Goethe wrote "Faust"—a modern Ecclesiastes. Goethe, who calls on us to appreciate life in all its beauty, as viewed from every angle, now stands in Germany like a castle in the wilderness. At present the Germans are very far from Schiller's idealism. The voice of Beethoven, in his ninth symphony, praising the good ones and chiding the bad ones, falls on deaf ears. The humanistic theory of Schopenhauer is lost in the roar of the giant siege guns at the battle front after being submerged in times of peace by the professional leaders of thought of the Hegelian type so cordially detested by Schopenhauer in his lifetime.

Every phenomenon in life must have its basis in the past. Therefore we cannot believe that the great German spirits sprang directly from heaven, or appeared, Minerva-like, full-canopied from the brow of Jove, neither must we look for their roots in the German nation. Others have proved that when Germany was poor in body, she was rich in spirit. Goethe, Schiller, Kant, Schopenhauer and Beethoven, the fruits of Germany's renaissance, were antecedents of German imperialism—before "Places in the Sun" were so coveted—before German unity was in process of accomplishment. From that time till now, Germany has sought pre-eminence with the sword and has been engulfed in imperialism.

The German imperialism differs from French imperialism in the time of Napoleon. The latter is based on "hero-worship" of Bonaparte and the desire on the part of France to share republican institutions with the rest

of Europe—to free monarchial Europe from government by the sword and the divine right of kings. The idolizing of Napoleon brought on the romantic period in France. The German imperialism could not depend on its personalities for heroes. Its hero was the sword, and Germany was soon saturated with militarism, not only in the army, but also in the civil life and "Kultur."

Not long ago, the young German crown prince gave out a parole which became the countersign of all Germany. This parole was: "The earth is not so safe in its movements as Germany is in resting with her sword."

Germany depends not on its spirit, but rather on Herr Krupp's Geschutze. Here we see the ideals of German imperialism resulting from the victory over France. These ideals are not spiritualistic, but materialistic. They are expressed in Wagner's music which exhorts the physical power of nature by representing storms, lightning, "Donner und Blitzen," etc.

The idolizing of power has, as its natural corollary, a militaristic nationalism, i. e., a nationalism which thinks it necessary that every individual should serve in the army in which the strength of the nation is supposed to be. The nationalism of France has not followed the path cleared by Nietzsche, but on the contrary, has followed the steps of Bergson, who seeks to improve the common man instead of sacrificing him on the altar of the cult of that vague abstraction, "The Superman." This cult has flourished to such an extent in Germany that it is ready to make a scapegoat laboratory of entire Europe. From this we see the Nietzscheistic Von Bethmann-Hollwig is logically correct in breaking international law and destroying Belgium. He seems to be an out-and-out convert to the doctrine set forth in a recently published maxim: "The strong aspire, the shrewd conspire, and the weak expire." That scholar, Nietzsche, is a product of the English materialistic school of Darwin and Malthus, and the theory of the struggle for existence. Malthus' theory was that "not all men have a place at the banquet of nature—first come, first served." Then came Darwin and proved it by nature. Nietzsche swallowed the theories of both and applied them to the moral sphere of life. He asserted that "might is right," and that is the moral core of life. Sympathy, mercy, religion, these form the ethical code of the weak, who have not the power to exist alone. Consequently, the weak are surplus products—degenerates—of the world and it is the ethical duty of the stronger to eliminate them. It is therefore the duty of German militarism to blot out the decadent Latin civilizations in France, Belgium and western Europe.

According to Professor Munsterberg, no moral wrongs have been perpetrated by Germany or its foes in the present war. It is the ethical duty of Russia to attempt to force its Slavonic civilization on Germany and vice versa, and of each to resist the efforts of the other to the utmost. It is a sign of moral vigor in England to become intensely jealous of Germany's economic advance and to seek to put this formidable competition out of the running. France should relentlessly pursue its "Revanche" policy, which is nothing but Gallic Nietzscheism.

The destruction of German militarism will free the world from the cannon beast which swallows up the strength and energy of humanity and it will free true German culture from the clutches of Nietzsche, Von Treitschke and Bernhardi, so that it can blossom as the rose at home in Germany as it now flourishes abroad. When Krupp's factory is levelled to the ground and a "Tier-garten" occupies its site, then German culture will be appreciated world-wide.

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