tenable and not very creditable to those who hold it. It dishonours the long series of Englishmen who during the past hundred years have gladly taken over what was best, and not only what was best, in German thought. It overlooks the fact that when eighty years ago John Stuart Mill was writing his great essay *On Liberty* he drew his inspiration, more than from any other men, from two Germans, Goethe and Wilhelm von Humboldt,[1] and forgets the fact that two of the most influential intellectual forebears of National Socialism, Thomas Carlyle and Houston Stewart Chamberlain, were a Scot and an Englishman. In its cruder forms this view is a disgrace to those who by maintaining it adopt the worst features of German racial theories. The problem is not why the Germans as such are vicious, which congenitally they are probably no more than other peoples, but to determine the circumstances which during the last seventy years have made possible the progressive growth and the ultimate victory of a particular set of ideas, and why in the end this victory has brought the most vicious elements among them to the top. Mere hatred of everything German, instead of the particular ideas which now dominate the Germans is, moreover, very dangerous, because it blinds those who indulge in it against a real threat. It is to be feared that this attitude is frequently merely a kind of escapism, caused by an unwillingness to recognise tendencies which are not confined to Germany, and by reluctance to reexamine, and if necessary to discard, beliefs which we have taken over from the Germans and by which we are still as much deluded as the Germans were. It is doubly dangerous because the contention that only the peculiar wickedness of the Germans has produced the Nazi system is likely to

[1] As some people may think this statement exaggerated, the testimony of Lord Morley may be worth quoting, who in his *Recollections* speaks of the "acknowledged point" that the main argument of the essay *On Liberty* "was not original but came from Germany".