

most of us, but Abbé Wetterlé has proved it with all the force of mathematics. Germany must control Belgium, France and Holland, as she must dominate Russia, or the simplest of her plans fails. This is the premise of her whole syllogism. There are many war books, none valueless, and some interesting; but this is unique and both valuable and interesting. No collection of war books can be complete without it. Abbé Wetterlé is the first writer to give an intelligent and very frank explanation of the relations of the German parliamentary party from the inside, and he knows how to do it with a light touch—a delightfully light touch which, however, has the sting of a rapier. People who know German politics will have exceeding pleasure in this book. Abbé Wetterlé makes it plain that the Centrum is no longer a strictly Catholic body and that the Social-Democrats are not destructive Socialists or utterly devoted to Marx and Bebel, but that both are parties subservient to Imperialism.

If we had prayed for an illuminating book in the shrieking darkness, we could not have been better rewarded. Prince von Bülow changed the complexion of all parties—strong men, like Windthorst and Bebel, disappeared. Their places are filled by mere politicians, and hence the complaisance with which the Reichstag is hurried into new horrors. They regard France and Italy as decadent; they are, like Erzberger, whom the German propagandists in this country would impose on certain circles of our community as a lover of religious liberty, haters of France and scorners of America. “We’ll throw your idol, France, over with our little

*Behind the Scenes in the Reichstag. By Abbé E. Wetterlé. George H. Doran Company.

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“What Germany was before the war she is during and will remain after the war. Nothing will drive her from her object, which is to destroy France,” writes René Doumic in the preface.* This was self-evident to

finger. And look out for breakages! It will not be five but fifty thousand milliards of francs we shall exact from the conquered, and we shall impose upon her a treaty of commerce which will paralyze her for a century." The Abbé quotes this from the lips of the Pan-German speaker.

Nearly all the war books printed in English lack discrimination when they deal with the complexities of political parties; they give us no lights and shades, and very few bold sketches of the personality of the German politicians. Hertling is probably the best mind in the Reichstag; his gravest fault is that he lacks courage; "he chiefly sought to spare the government", as Abbé Wetterlé says. Lieber, Spahn and Hertling were the principal precursors of the odious Pan-Germanism of the Centrum. Groeber is another, an honest man used by his crafty colleagues to force the Centrists under the yoke of the Empire. "I always had", writes Abbé Wetterlé, "a feeling of embarrassment and pity when I heard Groeber in his strong bass voice uphold the crafty policy of his friends. He put such conviction and spirit into it." For a time Groeber sympathized with the sorrows of Alsace-Lorraine, and then, at the behest of the Pan-Germanists, turned against these unfortunate provinces.

Consequently people abroad were unable to follow the rapid evolution of parties. "Thence", writes Abbé Wetterlé very truthfully, "arose the stupid confidence in which the rivals of the Empire lived. In France they had still faith in the democracy of Rich-ter, in the socialism of old Liebknecht, and in the strong opposition of Windthorst, whereas Müller-Meiningen, Frank and Spahn had completely overthrown the traditions of

the national representation of Germany."

Democrats throughout the world, who thought they knew Germany, believed that a revolution must come because of the growth of the Social-Democratic movement. They trusted in the socialism of Bebel to disintegrate and in the prudence of the National Liberals to reconstruct. They forgot that, while the repression in Prussia of all freedom through the influence of caste might invite revolution, Saxony, Bavaria and the South were comparatively free, and could only be brought under the law of the tyrant by a unifying war. In 1808 William II learned his lesson; he thought that the time was ripe for the throwing of his cards on the table; he became the sole voice of his people, and he spoke out irresponsibly, despotically. He met his first and only check; it made him think; he must corrupt the Centrum, who had been influenced by ideas antagonistic to his, he must soften the fibre of the Socialists, who were determined on his destruction. This he did, as Abbé Wetterlé shows, and when the "Tag" seemed to dawn, he made all parties his by declaring a war of conquest—see the fable of the wolf and the lamb—which would end in half a year. We know the result, and Abbé Wetterlé shows the processes as no man has yet done.

—*Maurice Francis Egan.*