

The European war has brought into general notice certain neglected books which now appear in the light of subsequent events to have been singularly clairvoyant. The late Professor Cramb's eloquent lectures afford the best-known example. But for definiteness of forecast no other work equals Dr. Charles Sarolea's "The Anglo-German Problem" (Putnam). We have here to do not merely with intelligent anticipation, but with almost uncanny prophecy. Published in 1912 to warn England of the menace from Germany, the book fell flat and was even contemptuously dismissed by leading English newspapers as alarmist and sensational. The following sentences, scattered through the book, now seem more like portents than scare mongerings:

"Europe is drifting slowly but steadily towards an awful catastrophe which, if it does happen, will throw back civilization for the coming generation."

"It is true that in theory the neutrality of Belgium is guaranteed by international treaties; but when I observe the signs of the times, the ambitions of the German rulers, and when I consider such indications as the recent extension of strategic railways on the Belgian-German frontiers, I do not look forward with any feeling of security to future contingencies in the event of a European war."

"And not only is German Socialism not as strong, neither is it as pacifist as is generally supposed. . . Many things in Germany are national which elsewhere are universal. And in Germany Socialism is becoming national, as German political economy is national, as German science is national, as German religion is national."

"German contemporary history illustrates once more a general law of history, that the dread of a civil war is often a direct cause of a foreign war, and that the ruling classes are driven to seek outside a diversion from internal difficulties."

"Very few observers have pointed out one special reason why the personal methods of the Kaiser will prove in the end dangerous to peace—namely, that they have tended to paralyze or destroy the methods of diplomacy."

"In vain does the Kaiser assure us of his pacific intentions: a ruler cannot with impunity glorify for ever the wars of the past, spend most of the resources of his people on the preparations for the wars of the future, encourage the warlike spirit, make the duel compulsory on officers and the *Mensur* honorable to students, place his chief trust in his Junkers, who live and move and have their being in the game of war, foster the aggressive spirit in the nation, and hold out ambitions which can be fulfilled only by an appeal to arms."

In view of the above passages, to which others of a like nature might be added, it is small

wonder that the book is now attracting widespread attention. Apart from any adventitious interest, it deserves careful reading for its fairness, moderation, and political insight. Although Dr. Sarolea is a Belgian, and was therefore in 1912 a disinterested neutral, his attitude was even then one of frank sympathy for England, because British rule "is to-day the most just, the most moderate, the most tolerant, and the most adaptable, the most progressive, government of the modern world."

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