

# The White Ribbon

FOR GOD AND HOME AND HUMANITY

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## CRIMINAL NATIONS.

History repeats itself. So we have often been told, but who, in reading the history of Attilas' invasion of Europe, ever expected it to be repeated in this enlightened 20th century. Yet the callousness of the atrocities inflicted on noncombatants by Germans in Belgium to-day equals and surpasses Attila, while the destruction of historic buildings recalls the Vandals and the Goths.

A peaceful nation was overrun by Germany. To save the smaller nation, Britain, true to her treaty obligations, entered the arena. Germany mad with the lust of power, drunk with the blood of the slain, must be conquered, and taught to observe the conditions imposed by "a little bit of paper." When a criminal runs "amuck" on a large scale we never say, let him alone, we must not fight him; bushrangers are chased, captured, and brought to justice to secure the safety of the public. At present we have no international tribunal at whose bar criminal nations can be tried, but they cannot be allowed to murder, pillage, outrage, and overawe a continent, and the appeal to arms has been made, the final appeal for international disagreement. Even the peaceloving Quakers speak not against this war, but decide to help, as far as non-combatants can do so.

Women are ever the greatest sufferers in war. Starved babes, outraged girlhood, tortured motherhood, mark the path of the foe. Therefore women of every nation must oppose not only war, but the spirit of militarism, which is anti-Christian, because it is

the spirit of hate, and not the spirit of love.

In ancient times every family avenged its own wrongs, and blood feuds were common, and lasted for generations. Then followed a long course for the education of public opinion, and a long conflict before law reigned supreme and every criminal was brought to trial in a law court. Now the man who avenges his own wrongs becomes himself a criminal in the eyes of the law and of public opinion. Criminals escaped to other lands, extradition laws followed; now, with our wireless messages and swift means of transit, he is a very clever criminal indeed who escapes.

Every nation punishes criminals by legal means. Apply the same to nations. Let the nation which attempts to avenge itself, instead of appealing to international tribunal, become itself a criminal.

Surely when this war is over the nations will see militarism in all its ugliness. Cannot several large nations agree to have an international Court of Appeal? Have we not statesmen who could draft its constitution? Let representatives be elected by each nation in the compact. Instead of each nation having its own army and navy, as each little baron had his own in times past, have a police navy, and as every individual in nation is answerable to national law court, so make every nation answerable to world-wide international court. Enforce obedience to this Court. Just as by length of usage men have almost forgotten any way to avenge personal grievances save by legal means, so as centuries roll on nations will forget that they ever set-

tled differences by the sword, and will appeal to international court.

Our Empire is now fighting for its very life. It is upholding the right of small nations to exist and govern themselves. A man who enters the house of a less powerful neighbour and takes what his fancy dictates is a criminal and a robber. Is the nation any less criminal which attempts to steal a passage through a weaker nation against their consent? Germany is out for universal dominion to rule the world, to make Berlin a second Rome, and its Kaiser as absolute as any ancient Caesar. We would not allow any bushranger or robber gang to overcome our land; every man, if necessary, would turn out and bring the criminal to the court of justice. Still less can we allow any nation to overawe and terrify all others. Germany has got to be beaten before a solid peace can be secured. We must be prepared to give to the last penny to the Empire, and not to grudge her every help in her struggle.

The United States washed the Stars and Stripes from the black stain of slavery in the blood of her bravest and best, and we pray that the rivers of blood which have been shed, and the streams of tears which have fallen, may wash the ensigns of Europe clear from the crimson stain of militarism.

Surely, in a crusade to secure arbitration, instead of war, women should lead the way. Over 18 centuries have passed since the coming of the Prince of Peace, and war, ugly, ghastly, cruel, inhuman, sparing neither age nor infancy, is devastating the fairest provinces of