

Falsehood in War Time, by Arthur Ponsonby, a British Labour MP and pacifist. The significance of this book is that it is the 1942 edition - that is, it was published in the same year as (but probably after) the Wannsee Conference which decided to implement the "Final Solution."

It shows

(a) that even in early 1942, when Britain was in a very difficult part of the Second World War, it allowed paper to be provided for printing of an anti-government book, one which exposed the lies of 1914-1918; and

(b) that many people in Britain were cynical about official war-horror propaganda (the book had already gone through eleven printings), even though the actual atrocities in the Second World War were real, while those cited in the book were either unsubstantiated rumours or made-up propaganda stories; and

(c) that many readers were prepared to buy the argument that Germany had a raw deal after 1919.

The author, Arthur Ponsonby

Ponsonby had been a member of the British diplomatic service, and then a Liberal MP. During World War I, he joined the Labour Party, and eventually became the leader of that party in the House of Lords. He left the Labour Party in 1940 when it supported Winston Churchill's government.

The book

Falsehood in Wartime is frequently used by Holocaust deniers to "prove" that the Holocaust did not take place, and that it was another wartime lie.

However, there is abundant evidence for the existence of the Holocaust. The minutes of the Wannsee conference of 1942, which initiated it, are in another document on this website/CD ROM.

By ARTHUR
PONSONBY

M.P.

(LORD PONSONBY)

Falsehood in War-Time

An
amazing
collection of care-
fully documented
lies circulated in Great
Britain, France, Ger-
many, Italy, and America
during the Great War.

FIRST PUBLISHED MAY 1928
SECOND IMPRESSION JULY 1928
THIRD IMPRESSION (SECOND EDITION) AUGUST 1928
FOURTH IMPRESSION NOVEMBER 1928
FIFTH IMPRESSION MARCH 1929
SIXTH IMPRESSION JANUARY 1930
SEVENTH IMPRESSION NOVEMBER 1936
EIGHTH IMPRESSION JANUARY 1940
NINTH IMPRESSION FEBRUARY 1940
TENTH IMPRESSION JUNE 1940
ELEVENTH IMPRESSION 1942

All rights reserved

PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN BY
BRADFORD & DICKENS, LONDON, W.C.1

FALSEHOOD IN WAR-TIME

INTRODUCTION

THE object of this volume is not to cast fresh blame on authorities and individuals, nor is it to expose one nation more than another to accusations of deceit.

Falsehood is a recognized and extremely useful weapon in warfare, and every country uses it quite deliberately to deceive its own people, to attract neutrals, and to mislead the enemy. The ignorant and innocent masses in each country are unaware at the time that they are being misled, and when it is all over only here and there are the falsehoods discovered and exposed. As it is all past history and the desired effect has been produced by the stories and statements, no one troubles to investigate the facts and establish the truth.

Lying, as we all know, does not take place only in war-time. Man, it has been said, is not "a veridical animal," but his habit of lying is not nearly so extraordinary as his amazing readiness to believe. It is, indeed, because of human credulity that lies flourish. But in war-time the authoritative organization of lying is not sufficiently recognized. The deception of whole peoples is not a matter which can be lightly regarded.

A useful purpose can therefore be served in the interval of so-called peace by a warning which people can examine with dispassionate calm, that the authorities in each country do, and indeed must, resort to this practice in order, first, to justify themselves by depicting

the enemy as an undiluted criminal; and secondly, to inflame popular passion sufficiently to secure recruits for the continuance of the struggle. They cannot afford to tell the truth. In some cases it must be admitted that at the moment they do not know what the truth is.

The psychological factor in war is just as important as the military factor. The *morale* of civilians, as well as of soldiers, must be kept up to the mark. The War Offices, Admiralties, and Air Ministries look after the military side. Departments have to be created to see to the psychological side. People must never be allowed to become despondent; so victories must be exaggerated and defeats, if not concealed, at any rate minimized, and the stimulus of indignation, horror, and hatred must be assiduously and continuously pumped into the public mind by means of "propaganda." As Mr. Bonar Law said in an interview to the United Press of America, referring to patriotism, "It is well to have it properly stirred by German frightfulness"; and a sort of general confirmation of atrocities is given by vague phrases which avoid responsibility for the authenticity of any particular story, as when Mr. Asquith said (*House of Commons, April 27, 1915*): "We shall not forget this horrible record of calculated cruelty and crime."

The use of the weapon of falsehood is more necessary in a country where military conscription is not the law of the land than in countries where the manhood of the nation is automatically drafted into the Army, Navy, or Air Service. The public can be worked up emotionally by sham ideals. A sort of collective hysteria spreads and rises until finally it gets the better of sober people and reputable newspapers.

With a warning before them, the common people

may be more on their guard when the war cloud next appears on the horizon and less disposed to accept as truth the rumours, explanations, and pronouncements issued for their consumption. They should realize that a Government which has decided on embarking on the hazardous and terrible enterprise of war must at the outset present a one-sided case in justification of its action, and cannot afford to admit in any particular whatever the smallest degree of right or reason on the part of the people it has made up its mind to fight. Facts must be distorted, relevant circumstances concealed, and a picture presented which by its crude colouring will persuade the ignorant people that their Government is blameless, their cause is righteous, and that the indisputable wickedness of the enemy has been proved beyond question. A moment's reflection would tell any reasonable person that such obvious bias cannot possibly represent the truth. But the moment's reflection is not allowed; lies are circulated with great rapidity. The unthinking mass accept them and by their excitement sway the rest. The amount of rubbish and humbug that pass under the name of patriotism in war-time in all countries is sufficient to make decent people blush when they are subsequently disillusioned.

At the outset the solemn asseverations of monarchs and leading statesmen in each nation that they did not want war must be placed on a par with the declarations of men who pour paraffin about a house knowing they are continually striking matches and yet assert they do not want a conflagration. This form of self-deception, which involves the deception of others, is fundamentally dishonest.

War being established as a recognized institution to be resorted to when Governments quarrel, the people

are more or less prepared. They quite willingly delude themselves in order to justify their own actions. They are anxious to find an excuse for displaying their patriotism, or they are disposed to seize the opportunity for the excitement and new life of adventure which war opens out to them. So there is a sort of national wink, everyone goes forward, and the individual, in his turn, takes up lying as a patriotic duty. In the low standard of morality which prevails in war-time, such a practice appears almost innocent. His efforts are sometimes a little crude, but he does his best to follow the example set. Agents are employed by authority and encouraged in so-called propaganda work. The type which came prominently to the front in the broadcasting of falsehood at recruiting meetings is now well known. The fate which overtook at least one of the most popular of them in this country exemplifies the depth of degradation to which public opinion sinks in a war atmosphere.

With eavesdroppers, letter-openers, decipherers, telephone tappers, spies, an intercept department, a forgery department, a criminal investigation department, a propaganda department, an intelligence department, a censorship department, a ministry of information, a Press bureau, etc., the various Governments were well equipped to "instruct" their peoples.

The British official propaganda department at Crewe House, under Lord Northcliffe, was highly successful. Their methods, more especially the raining down of millions of leaflets on to the German Army, far surpassed anything undertaken by the enemy. In *The Secrets of Crewe House*,¹ the methods are described for our satisfaction and approval. The declaration that

¹ *The Secrets of Crewe House*, Sir Campbell Stuart, K.B.E.

only "truthful statements" were used is repeated just too often, and does not quite tally with the description of the faked letters (page 99) and bogus titles and book-covers (page 104), of which use was made. But, of course, we know that such clever propagandists are equally clever in dealing with us after the event as in dealing with the enemy at the time. In the apparently candid description of their activities we know we are hearing only part of the story. The circulators of base metal know how to use the right amount of alloy for us as well as for the enemy.

In the many tributes to the success of our propaganda from German Generals and the German Press, there is no evidence that our statements were always strictly truthful. To quote one: General von Hutier, of the Sixth German Army, sent a message (page 115), in which the following passage occurs:

The method of Northcliffe at the Front is to distribute through airmen a constantly increasing number of leaflets and pamphlets; the letters of German prisoners are falsified in the most outrageous way; tracts and pamphlets are concocted, to which the names of German poets, writers, and statesmen are forged, or which present the appearance of having been printed in Germany, and bear, for example, the title of the Reclam series, when they really come from the Northcliffe press, which is working day and night for this same purpose. His thought and aim are that these forgeries, however obvious they may appear to the man who thinks twice, may suggest a doubt, even for a moment, in the minds of those who do not think for themselves, and that their confidence in their leaders, in their own strength, and in the inexhaustible resources of Germany may be shattered.

The propaganda, to begin with, was founded on the shifting sand of the myth of Germany's *sole* responsi-

bility.¹ Later it became slightly confused owing to the inability of our statesmen to declare what our aims were, and towards the end it was fortified by descriptions of the magnificent, just, and righteous peace which was going to be "established on lasting foundations." This unfortunately proved to be the greatest falsehood of all.

In calm retrospect we can appreciate better the disastrous effects of the poison of falsehood, whether officially, semi-officially, or privately manufactured. It has been rightly said that the injection of the poison of hatred into men's minds by means of falsehood is a greater evil in war-time than the actual loss of life. The defilement of the human soul is worse than the destruction of the human body. A fuller realization of this is essential.

Another effect of the continual appearance of false and biased statement and the absorption of the lie atmosphere is that deeds of real valour, heroism, and physical endurance and genuine cases of inevitable torture and suffering are contaminated and desecrated; the wonderful comradeship of the battlefield becomes almost polluted. Lying tongues cannot speak of deeds of sacrifice to show their beauty or value. So it is that the praise bestowed on heroism by Government and Press always jars, more especially when, as is generally the case with the latter, it is accompanied by cheap and vulgar sentimentality. That is why one instinctively wishes the real heroes to remain unrecognized, so that their record may not be smirched by cynical tongues and pens so well versed in falsehood.

When war reaches such dimensions as to involve the whole nation, and when the people at its conclusion

¹ See page 57.

find they have gained nothing but only observe widespread calamity around them, they are inclined to become more sceptical and desire to investigate the foundations of the arguments which inspired their patriotism, inflamed their passions, and prepared them to offer the supreme sacrifice. They are curious to know why the ostensible objects for which they fought have none of them been attained, more especially if they are the victors. They are inclined to believe, with Lord Fisher, that "The nation was fooled into the war" (*"London Magazine,"* January 1920). They begin to wonder whether it does not rest with them to make one saying true of which they heard so much, that it was "a war to end war."

When the generation that has known war is still alive, it is well that they should be given chapter and verse with regard to some of the best-known cries, catchwords, and exhortations by which they were so greatly influenced. As a warning, therefore, this collection is made. It constitutes only the exposure of a few samples. To cover the whole ground would be impossible. There must have been more deliberate lying in the world from 1914 to 1918 than in any other period of the world's history.

There are several different sorts of disguises which falsehood can take. There is the deliberate official lie, issued either to delude the people at home or to mislead the enemy abroad; of this, several instances are given. As a Frenchman has said: "Tant que les peuples seront armés, les uns contre les autres, ils auront des hommes d'état menteurs, comme ils auront des canons et des mitrailleuses." ("As long as the peoples are armed against each other, there will be lying statesmen, just as there will be cannons and machine guns.")

A circular was issued by the War Office inviting reports on war incidents from officers with regard to the enemy and stating that strict accuracy was not essential so long as there was inherent probability.

There is the deliberate lie concocted by an ingenious mind which may only reach a small circle, but which, if sufficiently graphic and picturesque, may be caught up and spread broadcast; and there is the hysterical hallucination on the part of weak-minded individuals.

There is the lie heard and not denied, although lacking in evidence, and then repeated or allowed to circulate.

There is the mistranslation, occasionally originating in a genuine mistake, but more often deliberate. Two minor instances of this may be given.

The Times (agony column), July 9, 1915:

JACK F. G.—If you are not in khaki by the 20th, I shall cut you dead.—ETHEL M.

The Berlin correspondent of the *Cologne Gazette* transmitted this:

If you are not in khaki by the 20th, *hacke ich dich zu Tode* (I will hack you to death).

During the blockade of Germany, it was suggested that the diseases from which children suffered had been called *Die englische Krankheit*, as a permanent reflection on English inhumanity. As a matter of fact, *die englische Krankheit* is, and always has been, the common German name for rickets.

There is the general obsession, started by rumour and magnified by repetition and elaborated by hysteria, which at last gains general acceptance.

There is the deliberate forgery which has to be very

carefully manufactured but serves its purpose at the moment, even though it be eventually exposed.

There is the omission of passages from official documents of which only a few of the many instances are given;¹ and the "correctness" of words and commas in parliamentary answers which conceal evasions of the truth.

There is deliberate exaggeration, such, for instance, as the reports of the destruction of Louvain: "The intellectual metropolis of the Low Countries since the fifteenth century is now no more than a heap of ashes" (*Press Bureau, August 29, 1914*), "Louvain has ceased to exist" (*"The Times," August 29, 1914*). As a matter of fact, it was estimated that about an eighth of the town had suffered.

There is the concealment of truth, which has to be resorted to so as to prevent anything to the credit of the enemy reaching the public. A war correspondent who mentioned some chivalrous act that a German had done to an Englishman during an action received a rebuking telegram from his employer: "Don't want to hear about any good Germans"; and Sir Philip Gibbs, in *Realities of War*, says: "At the close of the day the Germans acted with chivalry, which I was not allowed to tell at the time."

There is the faked photograph ("the camera cannot lie").² These were more popular in France than here. In Vienna an enterprising firm supplied atrocity photographs with blanks for the headings so that they might be used for propaganda purposes by either side.

The cinema also played a very important part, especially in neutral countries, and helped considerably in turning opinion in America in favour of coming in on

¹ See page 140.

² See page 135.

the side of the Allies. To this day in this country attempts are made by means of films to keep the wound raw.

There is the "Russian scandal," the best instance of which during the war, curiously enough, was the rumour of the passage of Russian troops through Britain.¹ Some trivial and imperfectly understood statement of fact becomes magnified into enormous proportions by constant repetition from one person to another.

Atrocity lies were the most popular of all, especially in this country and America; no war can be without them. Slander of the enemy is esteemed a patriotic duty. An English soldier wrote ("The Times," September 15, 1914): "The stories in our papers are only exceptions. There are people like them in every army." But at the earliest possible moment stories of the maltreatment of prisoners have to be circulated deliberately in order to prevent surrenders. This is done, of course, on both sides. Whereas naturally each side tries to treat its prisoners as well as possible so as to attract others.

The repetition of a single instance of cruelty and its exaggeration can be distorted into a prevailing habit on the part of the enemy. Unconsciously each one passes it on with trimmings and yet tries to persuade himself that he is speaking the truth.

There are lies emanating from the inherent unreliability and fallibility of human testimony. No two people can relate the occurrence of a street accident so as to make the two stories tally. When bias and emotion are introduced, human testimony becomes quite valueless. In war-time such testimony is accepted as

¹ See page 63.

conclusive. The scippiest and most unreliable evidence is sufficient—"the friend of the brother of a man who was killed," or, as a German investigator of his own liars puts it, "somebody who had seen it," or, "an extremely respectable old woman."

There is pure romance. Letters of soldiers who whiled away the days and weeks of intolerable waiting by writing home sometimes contained thrilling descriptions of engagements and adventures which had never occurred.

There are evasions, concealments, and half-truths which are more subtly misleading and gradually become a governmental habit.

There is official secrecy which must necessarily mislead public opinion. For instance, a popular English author, who was perhaps better informed than the majority of the public, wrote a letter to an American author, which was reproduced in the Press on May 21, 1918, stating :

There are no Secret Treaties of any kind in which this country is concerned. It has been publicly and clearly stated more than once by our Foreign Minister, and apart from honour it would be political suicide for any British official to make a false statement of the kind.

Yet a series of Secret Treaties existed. It is only fair to say that the author, not the Foreign Secretary, is the liar here. Nevertheless the official pamphlet, *The Truth about the Secret Treaties*, compiled by Mr. McCurdy, was published with a number of *unacknowledged excisions*, and both Lord Robert Cecil in 1917 and Mr. Lloyd George in 1918 declared (the latter to a deputation from the Trade Union Congress) that our policy was not directed to the disruption of Austro-Hungary, although they both knew that under the Secret Treaty concluded with Italy in April

1915 portions of Austria-Hungary were to be handed over to Italy and she was to be cut off from the sea. Secret Treaties naturally involve constant denials of the truth.

There is sham official indignation depending on genuine popular indignation which is a form of falsehood sometimes resorted to in an unguarded moment and subsequently regretted. The first use of gas by the Germans and the submarine warfare are good instances of this.¹

Contempt for the enemy, if illustrated, can prove to be an unwise form of falsehood. There was a time when German soldiers were popularly represented cringing, with their arms in the air and crying "Kamerad," until it occurred to Press and propaganda authorities that people were asking why, if this was the sort of material we were fighting against, had we not wiped them off the field in a few weeks.

There are personal accusations and false charges made in a prejudiced war atmosphere to discredit persons who refuse to adopt the orthodox attitude towards war.

There are lying recriminations between one country and another. For instance, the Germans were accused of having engineered the Armenian massacres, and they, on their side, declared the Armenians, stimulated by the Russians, had killed 150,000 Mohammedans (*Germania*, October 9, 1915).

Other varieties of falsehood more subtle and elusive might be found, but the above pretty well cover the ground.

A good deal depends on the quality of the lie. You must have intellectual lies for intellectual people and crude lies for popular consumption, but if your popular

¹ See page 146.

lies are too blatant and your more intellectual section are shocked and see through them, they may (and indeed they did) begin to be suspicious as to whether they were not being hoodwinked too. Nevertheless, the inmates of colleges are just as credulous as the inmates of the slums.

Perhaps nothing did more to impress the public mind—and this is true in all countries—than the assistance given in propaganda by intellectuals and literary notables. They were able to clothe the rough tissue of falsehood with phrases of literary merit and passages of eloquence better than the statesmen. Sometimes by expressions of spurious impartiality, at other times by rhetorical indignation, they could by their literary skill give this or that lie the stamp of indubitable authenticity, even without the shadow of a proof, or incidentally refer to it as an accepted fact. The narrowest patriotism could be made to appear noble, the foulest accusations could be represented as an indignant outburst of humanitarianism, and the meanest and most vindictive aims falsely disguised as idealism. Everything was legitimate which could make the soldiers go on fighting.

The frantic activity of ecclesiastics in recruiting by means of war propaganda made so deep an impression on the public mind that little comment on it is needed here. The few who courageously stood out became marked men. The resultant and significant loss of spiritual influence by the Churches is, in itself, sufficient evidence of the reaction against the betrayal in time of stress of the most elementary precepts of Christianity by those specially entrusted with the moral welfare of the people.

War is fought in this fog of falsehood, a great deal of

it undiscovered and accepted as truth. The fog arises from fear and is fed by panic. Any attempt to doubt or deny even the most fantastic story has to be condemned at once as unpatriotic, if not traitorous. This allows a free field for the rapid spread of lies. If they were only used to deceive the enemy in the game of war it would not be worth troubling about. But, as the purpose of most of them is to fan indignation and induce the flower of the country's youth to be ready to make the supreme sacrifice, it becomes a serious matter. Exposure, therefore, may be useful, even when the struggle is over, in order to show up the fraud, hypocrisy, and humbug on which all war rests, and the blatant and vulgar devices which have been used for so long to prevent the poor ignorant people from realizing the true meaning of war.

It must be admitted that many people were conscious and willing dupes. But many more were unconscious and were sincere in their patriotic zeal. Finding now that elaborately and carefully staged deceptions were practised on them, they feel a resentment which has not only served to open their eyes but may induce them to make their children keep their eyes open when next the bugle sounds.

Let us attempt a very faint and inadequate analogy between the conduct of nations and the conduct of individuals.

Imagine two large country houses containing large families with friends and relations. When the members of the family of the one house stay in the other, the butler is instructed to open all the letters they receive and send and inform the host of their contents, to listen at the keyhole, and tap the telephone. When a great match, say a cricket match, which excites the whole

district, is played between them, those who are not present are given false reports of the game to make them think the side they favour is winning, the other side is accused of cheating and foul play, and scandalous reports are circulated about the head of the family and the hideous goings on in the other house.

All this, of course, is very mild, and there would be no specially dire consequences if people were to behave in such an inconceivably caddish, low, and underhand way, except that they would at once be expelled from decent society.

But between nations, where the consequences are vital, where the destiny of countries and provinces hangs in the balance, the lives and fortunes of millions are affected and civilization itself is menaced, the most upright men honestly believe that there is no depth of duplicity to which they may not legitimately stoop. They have got to do it. The thing cannot go on without the help of lies.

This is no plea that lies should not be used in war-time, but a demonstration of how lies *must* be used in war-time. If the truth were told from the outset, there would be no reason and no will for war.

Anyone declaring the truth: "Whether you are right or wrong, whether you win or lose, in no circumstances can war help you or your country," would find himself in gaol very quickly. In war-time, failure to lie is negligence, the doubting of a lie a misdemeanour, the declaration of the truth a crime.

In future wars we have now to look forward to a new and far more efficient instrument of propaganda—the Government control of broadcasting. Whereas, therefore, in the past we have used the word "broadcast" symbolically as meaning the efforts of the Press

and individual reporters, in future we must use the word literally, since falsehood can now be circulated universally, scientifically, and authoritatively.

Many of the samples given in the assortment are international, but some are exclusively British, as these are more easily found and investigated, and, after all, we are more concerned with our own Government and Press methods and our own national honour than with the duplicity of other Governments.

Lies told in other countries are also dealt with in cases where it has been possible to collect sufficient data. Without special investigation on the spot, the career of particular lies cannot be fully set out.

When the people of one country understand how the people in another country are duped, like themselves, in war-time, they will be more disposed to sympathize with them as victims than condemn them as criminals, because they will understand that their crime only consisted in obedience to the dictates of authority and acceptance of what their Government and Press represented to them as the truth.

The period covered is roughly the four years of the war. The intensity of the lying was mitigated after 1918, although fresh crops came up in connection with other of our international relations. The mischief done by the false cry "Make Germany pay" continued after 1918 and led, more especially in France, to high expectations and consequent indignation when it was found that the people who raised this slogan knew all the time it was a fantastic impossibility. Many of the old war lies survived for several years, and some survive even to this day.

There is nothing sensational in the way of revelations contained in these pages. All the cases mentioned are well known to those who were in authority, less

well known to those primarily affected, and unknown, unfortunately, to the millions who fell. Although only a small part of the vast field of falsehood is covered, it may suffice to show how the unsuspecting innocence of the masses in all countries was ruthlessly and systematically exploited.

There are some who object to war because of its immorality, there are some who shrink from the arbitrament of arms because of its increased cruelty and barbarity; there are a growing number who protest against this method, at the outset known to be unsuccessful, of attempting to settle international disputes because of its imbecility and futility. But there is not a living soul in any country who does not deeply resent having his passions roused, his indignation inflamed, his patriotism exploited, and his highest ideals desecrated by concealment, subterfuge, fraud, falsehood, trickery, and deliberate lying on the part of those in whom he is taught to repose confidence and to whom he is enjoined to pay respect.

None of the heroes prepared for suffering and sacrifice, none of the common herd ready for service and obedience, will be inclined to listen to the call of their country once they discover the polluted sources from whence that call proceeds and recognize the monstrous finger of falsehood which beckons them to the battlefield.

VI

THE MUTILATED NURSE

MANY atrocity stories were circulated which were impossible to prove or disprove, but in the early months of the war the public was shocked by a horrible story of barbarous cruelty, of which a complete record can be given. It is a curious instance of the ingenuity of the deliberate individual liar.

A NURSE'S TRAGEDY.

DUMFRIES GIRL THE VICTIM OF SHOCKING BARBARITY.

News has reached Dumfries of the shocking death of a Dumfries young woman, Nurse Grace Hume, who went out to Belgium at the outbreak of war. Nurse Hume was engaged at the camp hospital at Vilvorde, and she was the victim of horrible cruelty at the hands of German soldiers. Her breasts were cut off and she died in great agony. Nurse Hume's family received a note written shortly before she died. It was dated September 6th, and ran: "Dear Kate, this is to say good-bye. Have not long to live. Hospital has been set on fire. Germans cruel. A man here had his head cut off. My right breast has been taken away. Give my love to — Good-bye. GRACE."

Nurse Hume's left breast was cut away after she had written the note. She was a young woman of twenty-three and was formerly a nurse in Huddersfield Hospital.

Nurse Mullard, of Inverness, delivered the note personally to Nurse Hume's sister at Dumfries. She was also at Vilvorde, and she states that Nurse Hume acted the part of a heroine. A German attacked a wounded soldier whom

Nurse Hume was taken to hospital. The nurse took his gun and shot the German dead.

"*The Star*," September 16, 1914.

LETTER DELIVERED BY NURSE MULLARD TO MISS HUME.

I have been asked by your sister, Nurse Grace Hume, to hand the enclosed letter to you. My name is Nurse Mullard, and I was with your sister when she died. Our camp hospital at Vilvorde was burned to the ground, and out of 1,517 men and 23 nurses, only 19 nurses were saved, but 149 men managed to get away. Grace requested me to tell you that her last thoughts were of — and you, and that you were not to worry over her, as she would be going to meet her Jack. These were her last words. She endured great agony in her last hours. One of the soldiers (our men) caught two German soldiers in the act of cutting off her left breast, her right one having been already cut off. They were killed instantly by our soldiers. Grace managed to scrawl the enclosed note before I found her, but we all say that your sister was a heroine. She was out on the fields looking for wounded soldiers, and on one occasion, when bringing in a wounded soldier, a German attacked her. She threw the soldier's gun at him and shot him with her rifle. Of course, all nurses here are armed. I have just received word this moment to pack to Scotland. Will try and get this handed to you, as there is no post from here, and we are making the best of a broken-down wagon truck for a shelter. Will give you fuller details when I see you. We are all quite safe now, as there have been reinforcements.

A condensed account appeared in the *Evening Standard* with the note: "This message has been submitted to the Press Bureau, which does not object to the publication and takes no responsibility for the correctness of the statement."

A story which attracted particular attention both because of its peculiar atrocity and because of the circumstantial

details which accompanied it, was told in several of the evening papers on Wednesday. It was first published, we believe, in the *Dumfries Standard* on Wednesday morning and related to an English nurse, who was said to have been killed by Germans in Belgium with the most revolting cruelty. This nurse came from Dumfries and, according to the *Dumfries Standard*, the story was told to the nurse's sister in Dumfries by another nurse from Belgium, who also gave an account of it in a letter. Further, the *Dumfries Standard* published a facsimile of a letter said to have been written by the murdered nurse when dying to her sister in Dumfries. The story therefore appeared to be particularly well authenticated and, as we say, it was published by a number of London evening papers of repute, including the *Pall Mall* and *Westminster Gazette*, the *Globe*, the *Star*, and the *Evening Standard*. But late on Wednesday night it was discovered to be entirely untrue, since the nurse in question was actually in Huddersfield and had never been to Belgium, though she volunteered for the front. The remaining fact is that her sister in Dumfries states, according to the *Yorkshire Post*, that she was visited by a "Nurse Mullard," professing to be a nurse from Belgium, who told her the story and gave her the letter from her sister in a handwriting that resembled her sister's.

"*Times*" *Leader*, September 18, 1914.

The Times goes on to call for an inquiry and to suggest that the story may have been invented by German agents in order to discredit all atrocity stories.

Kate Hume, seventeen, was charged at Dumfries yesterday, before Sheriff Substitute Primrose, with having uttered a forged letter purporting to have been written by her sister, Nurse Grace Hume, in Huddersfield. She declined to make any statement, on the advice of her agent, and was committed to prison to await trial.

"*The Times*," September 30, 1914.

The case came before the High Court at Dumfries, and

it was proved that Kate Hume (the sister) had fabricated the whole story and forged both the letter from her sister and that from "Nurse Mullard" and had communicated them to the Press.

"The Times," December 29 and 30, 1914.

THE CRIMINAL KAISER

HAVING declared the enemy the sole culprit and originator of the war, the next step is to personify the enemy. As a nation consists of millions of people and the absurd analogy of an individual criminal and a nation may become apparent even to moderately intelligent people, it is necessary to detach an individual on whom may be concentrated all the vials of the wrath of an innocent people who are only defending themselves from "unprovoked aggression." The sovereign is the obvious person to choose. While the Kaiser on many occasions, by his bluster and boasting, had been a subject of ridicule and offence, nevertheless, not many years before, his portrait had appeared in the *Daily Mail* with "A friend in need is a friend indeed" under it. And as late as October 17, 1913, the *Evening News* wrote:

We all acknowledge the Kaiser as a very gallant gentleman whose word is better than many another's bond, a guest whom we are always glad to welcome and sorry to lose, a ruler whose ambitions for his own people are founded on as good right as our own.

When the signal was given, however, all this could be forgotten and the direct contrary line taken. The Kaiser turned out to be a most promising target for concentrated abuse. So successfully was it done that exaggeration soon became impossible; every crime in the calendar was laid at his door authoritatively, publicly and privately; and this was kept up all through the

war. His past was reviewed, greatly to his discredit. Over his desire to fight Great Britain while we were engaged in the Boer War, however, there was an unfortunate contradiction in point of fact, as the following two extracts show :

Delcassé, with the help of the Czar, thrust aside German proposals for a Continental combination against us during the Boer War.

"The Times," October 14, 1915 (editorial on Delcassé's resignation).

At the time of the South African War, other nations were prepared to assist the Boers, but they stipulated that Germany should do likewise. The Kaiser refused.

General Botha, reported in the *"Daily News,"* September 3, 1915.

But over his criminality in the Great War there was no difference of opinion.

He had called a secret Council of the Central Powers at Potsdam early in July 1914, at which it was decided to enforce war on Europe. This secret plot was first divulged by a Dutch newspaper in September 1914. The story was revived by *The Times* on July 28, 1917, and again in November 1919. It was believed even in Germany, until reports were received from various officers in touch with the Kaiser showing how he spent these days, and it was finally disposed of and proved to be a myth by the testimony of all those supposed to have taken part in it. This was in 1919, after the story had served its purpose.

Only a few of the thousand references to the Kaiser's personal criminality need be given.

He (the enemy) is beginning to realize the desperate character of the adventure on which the Kaiser embarked when he made this wanton war.

"Daily Mail," October 1, 1914.

The following letter from the late Sir W. B. Richmond, in the *Daily Mail* of September 22, 1914, is a forcibly expressed example of the accepted opinion :

Neither England nor civilized Europe and Asia is going to be set trembling by lunatic William, even though by his order Rheims Cathedral has been destroyed.

This last act of the barbarian chief will only draw us all closer together to be rid of a scourge the like of which the civilized world has never seen before.

The madman is piling up the logs of his own pyre. We can have no terror of the monster; we shall clench our teeth in determination that if we die to the last man the modern Judas and his hell-begotten brood shall be wiped out.

To achieve this righteous purpose we must be patient and plodding as well as energetic.

Our great England will shed its blood willingly to help rid civilization of a criminal monarch and a criminal court which have succeeded in creating out of a docile people a herd of savages.

Sir James Crichton Browne has said, in Dumfries: "A halter for the Kaiser"; shooting him would be to give him the honourable death of a soldier. The halter is the shrift for this criminal.

Lord Robert Cecil said that for the terrible outrages, the wholesale breaches of every law and custom of civilized warfare which the Germans had committed, the people who were responsible were the German rulers, the Emperor and those who were closely advising him, and it was upon them, if possible, that our punishment and wrath should fall.

"*The Times*," May 15, 1915.

Cities have been burned, old men and children have been murdered, women and young girls have been outraged, harmless fishermen have been drowned, at this crowned criminal's orders. He will have to answer "at that great day when all the world is judged" for the victims of the *Falaba* and the *Lusitania*.

Leader on depriving the Kaiser of the Order of the Garter,
"*Daily Express*," May 14, 1915.

A *Punch* cartoon in 1918 depicted the Kaiser as Cain. Under it was put :

More than 14,000 non-combatants have been murdered by the Kaiser's orders.

There was a poster portrait of the Kaiser, his face composed of corpses, his mouth streaming with blood, which could be seen on the hoardings. The equivalent of this in France was "Guillaume le Boucher," the Kaiser in an apron with a huge knife dripping with blood. Throughout he was a good subject for the caricaturist, as he was so easy to draw.

The fiction having become popular and being universally accepted in the Allied countries, it became imperative for the Allied statesmen to insert a special clause in the Peace Treaty beginning :

The Allied and Associated Powers publicly arraign William II, of Hohenzollern, formerly German Emperor, for a supreme offence against international morality and the sanctity of treaties,

and going on to describe the constitution of "the special tribunal" before which he was to be tried.

Having committed themselves to the trial of the Kaiser by a clause in the Peace Treaty, the Allies were obliged to go through the formality of addressing a note to the Netherlands Government on January 16, 1920, dwelling on the Kaiser's "immense responsibility" and asking for him to be handed over "in order that he may be sent for trial." The refusal of the Netherlands Government on January 23rd was at once accepted and saved the Allied Governments from making hopeless fools of themselves. But before the

decision was publicly known, and after it had been privately ascertained that the Government of Holland, whither the Kaiser had fled, would *not* give him up, the "Hang the Kaiser" campaign was launched, and in the General Election of 1918 candidates lost votes who would not commit themselves to this policy.

But the campaign had been launched before the decision of the Netherlands Government was made public.

The ruler (the Kaiser), who spoke for her pride and her majesty and her might for thirty years, is now a fugitive, soon to be placed on his trial (loud cheers) before the tribunals of lands which, on behalf of his country, he sought to intimidate.

Mr. Lloyd George, House of Commons, July 3, 1919.

As a matter of fact, there was not the smallest intention of doing anything so absurd as try the Kaiser. Nor did anyone with knowledge of the facts believe him to be in any way personally responsible for starting the war. He was, and always had been, a tinsel figure-head of no account, with neither the courage to make a war nor the power to stop it.

His biographer, Emil Ludwig,¹ has written the most slashing indictment of William II that has appeared in any language, showing up his vanity, his megalomania, and his incompetence. But so far from accusing him of wanting or engineering the war, the author insists, time after time, on the Emperor's pacific attitude. "In all the European developments between 1908 and 1914, the Emperor was more pacific, was even more far-sighted, than his advisers." At the time of the Morocco crisis "the Emperor was peacefully inclined,"

¹ *Kaiser William II*, by Emil Ludwig.

and in the last days of July 1914, speaking of Germany, Austria, and Russia, Ludwig says :

Three Emperors avowedly opposed to war were driven by the ambition, vindictiveness, and incompetence of their Ministers into a conflict whose danger for their thrones they all three recognized from the first and, if only for that reason, tried to avoid.

Even Lord Grey says, now that it is all over :

If matters had rested with him (the Kaiser) there would have been no European War arising out of the Austro-Serbian dispute.

"Twenty-Five Years," vol. ii, p. 25.

Nevertheless, up to 1919 the Kaiser, as the villain of the piece, was set up in the Allied countries as the incarnation of all iniquity.

This very simple form of propaganda had a great influence on the people's feelings. There can be no question that thousands who joined up were under the impression that the primary object of the war was to catch this monster, little knowing that war is like chess : you cannot take the King while the game is going on ; it is against the rules. It would spoil the game. In the same way G.H.Q. on both sides was never bombed because, as a soldier bluntly put it, "Don't you see, it would put an end to the whole bloody business."

Finding he had unfortunately not been caught or killed during the war, the people put their faith in his being tried and hanged when the war was over. If he was all that had been described to them, this was the least that could be expected.

When, as months and years passed, it was discovered that no responsible person really believed, or had ever believed, in his personal guilt, that the cry, "Hang the

Kaiser," was a piece of deliberate bluff, and that when all was over and millions of innocent people had been killed, he, the criminal, the monster, the plotter and initiator of the whole catastrophe, was allowed to live comfortably and peacefully in Holland, the disillusionment to simple, uninformed people was far greater than was ever realized. It was the exposure of this crude falsehood that first led many humble individuals to inquire whether, in other connections, they had not also been duped.

VIII

THE BELGIAN BABY WITHOUT HANDS

NOT only did the Belgian baby whose hands had been cut off by the Germans travel through the towns and villages of Great Britain, but it went through Western Europe and America, even into the Far West. No one paused to ask how long a baby would live were its hands cut off unless expert surgical aid were at hand to tie up the arteries (the answer being, a very few minutes). Everyone wanted to believe the story, and many went so far as to say they had seen the baby. The lie was as universally accepted as the passage of the Russian troops through Britain.

One man whom I did not see told an official of the Catholic Society that he had seen with his own eyes German soldiery chop off the arms of a baby which clung to its mother's skirts.

"The Times" Correspondent in Paris, August 27, 1914.

On September 2, 1914, *The Times* Correspondent quotes French refugees declaring: "They cut the hands off the little boys so that there shall be no more soldiers for France."

Pictures of the baby without hands were very popular on the Continent, both in France and in Italy. *Le Rive Rouge* had a picture on September 18, 1915, and on July 26, 1916, made it still more lurid by depicting German soldiers eating the hands. *Le Journal* gave, on April 30, 1915, a photograph of a statue of a child without hands. But the most savage of all, which

contained in it no elements of caricature, was issued by the Allies for propaganda purposes and published in *Critica*, in Buenos Ayres (reproduced in the *Sphere*, January 30, 1925). The heading of the picture was, "The Bible before All," and under it was written: "Suffer little children to come unto Me." The Kaiser is depicted standing behind a huge block with an axe, his hands darkly stained with blood. Round the block are piles of hands. He is beckoning to a woman to bring a number of children, who are clinging to her, some having had their hands cut off already.

Babies not only had their hands cut off, but they were impaled on bayonets, and in one case nailed to a door. But everyone will remember the handless Belgian baby. It was loudly spoken of in buses and other public places, had been seen in a hospital, was now in the next parish, etc., and it was paraded, not as an isolated instance of an atrocity, but as a typical instance of a common practice.

In Parliament there was the usual evasion, which suggested the story was true, although the only evidence given was "seen by witnesses."

MR. A. K. LLOYD asked the First Lord of the Treasury whether materials are available for identifying and tracing the survivors of those children whose hands were cut off by the Germans, and whose cases are referred to by letter and number in the Report of the Bryce Committee; and, if so, whether he will consider the possibility of making the information accessible, confidentially or otherwise, to persons interested in the future of these survivors?

SIR G. CAVE: My Right Hon. Friend has asked me to reply to this question. In all but two of the individual cases in which children were seen by witnesses mutilated in this manner, the child was either dead or dying from the treatment it had received. In view of the fact that these

children were in Belgium, which is still in German occupation, it is unlikely that they could now be traced, and any attempt to do so at this time might lead to the further persecution of the victims or their relatives.

MR. LLOYD: Were there not other cases brought over here to hospital?

SIR G. CAVE: Not the cases to which the Hon. Member's question refers.

House of Commons, December 19, 1916.

Sometimes the handless person was grown up. A Mr. Tyler, at a Brotherhood meeting in Glasgow on April 17, 1915, said he had a friend in Harrogate who had seen a nurse with both her hands cut off by Germans. He gave the address of his informant. A letter was at once addressed to the friend at Harrogate, asking if the statement was correct, but no reply was ever received.

But the most harrowing and artistically dressed version of the handless child story appeared in the *Sunday Chronicle* on May 2, 1915.

Some days ago a charitable great lady was visiting a building in Paris where have been housed for several months a number of Belgian refugees. During her visit she noticed a child, a girl of ten, who, though the room was hot rather than otherwise, kept her hands in a pitiful little worn muff. Suddenly the child said to the mother: "Mamma, please blow my nose for me." "Shocking," said the charitable lady, half-laughing, half-severe, "a big girl like you, who can't use her own handkerchief." The child said nothing, and the mother spoke in a dull, matter-of-fact tone. "She has not any hands now, ma'am," she said.

The grand dame looked, shuddered, understood. "Can it be," she said, "that the Germans——?" The mother burst into tears. That was her answer.

Signor Nitti, who was Italian Prime Minister during the war, states in his memoirs:

To bring the truth of the present European crisis home to the world it is necessary to destroy again and again the vicious legends created by war propaganda. During the war France, in common with other Allies, including our own Government in Italy, circulated the most absurd inventions to arouse the fighting spirit of our people. The cruelties attributed to the Germans were such as to curdle our blood. We heard the story of poor little Belgian children whose hands were cut off by the Huns. After the war a rich American, who was deeply touched by the French propaganda, sent an emissary to Belgium with the intention of providing a livelihood for the children whose poor little hands had been cut off. He was unable to discover one. Mr. Lloyd George and myself, when at the head of the Italian Government, carried on extensive investigations as to the truth of these horrible accusations, some of which, at least, were told specifically as to names and places. Every case investigated proved to be a myth.

Colonel Repington, in his *Diary of the World War*, vol. ii, p. 447, says :

I was told by Cardinal Gasquet that the Pope promised to make a great protest to the world if a single case could be proved of the violation of Belgian nuns or cutting off of children's hands. An inquiry was instituted and many cases examined with the help of the Belgian Cardinal Mercier. Not one case could be proved.

The former French Minister of Finance, Klotz, to whom at the beginning of the war the censorship of the Press was entrusted, says, in his memoirs (*De la Guerre à la Paix*, Paris, Payot, 1924) :

One evening I was shown a proof of the *Figaro*, in which two scientists of repute asserted and endorsed by their signatures that they had seen with their own eyes about a hundred children whose hands had been chopped off by the Germans.

In spite of the evidence of these scientists I entertained doubts as to the accuracy of the report and forbade the publication of it. When the editor of the *Figaro* expressed his indignation, I declared myself ready to investigate, in the presence of the American Ambassador, the matter that would stir the world. I required, however, that the name of the place where these investigations had to take place should be given by the two scientists. I insisted on having these details supplied immediately. I am still without their reply or visit.

But this lie obtained such a hold on people's imagination that it is by no means dead yet. Quite recently a Liverpool poet, in a volume called *A Medley of Song*, has written the following lines in a "patriotic" poem :

They stemmed the first mad onrush
Of the cultured German Hun,
Who'd outraged every female Belgian
And maimed every mother's son.

THE BABY OF COURBECK LOO

It is not often that we have a confession of falsehood, but the story of the baby of Courbeck Loo is an illuminating example of an invention related by its author.

Captain F. W. Wilson, formerly editor of the *Sunday Times*, related the story in America in 1922. The following account appeared in the *New York Times* (reproduced in the *Crusader*, February 24, 1922):

A correspondent of the London *Daily Mail*, Captain Wilson, found himself in Brussels at the time the war broke out. They telegraphed out that they wanted stories of atrocities. Well, there weren't any atrocities at that time. So then they telegraphed out that they wanted stories of refugees. So I said to myself, "That's fine, I won't have to move." There was a little town outside Brussels where one went to get dinner—a very good dinner, too. I heard the Hun had been there. I supposed there must have been a baby there. So I wrote a heart-rending story about the baby of Courbeck Loo being rescued from the Hun in the light of the burning homesteads.

The next day they telegraphed out to me to send the baby along, as they had about five thousand letters offering to adopt it. The day after that baby clothes began to pour into the office. Even Queen Alexandra wired her sympathy and sent some clothes. Well, I couldn't wire back to them that there wasn't a baby. So I finally arranged with the doctor that took care of the refugees that the blessed baby died of some very contagious disease, so it couldn't even have a public burial.

And we got Lady Northcliffe to start a crèche with all the baby-clothes.

THE CRUCIFIED CANADIAN

LIKE so many other stories, this one underwent considerable changes and variations. The crucified person was at one time a girl, at another an American, but most often a Canadian.

Last week a large number of Canadian soldiers, wounded in the fighting round Ypres, arrived at the base hospital at Versculles. They all told a story of how one of their officers had been crucified by the Germans. He had been pinned to a wall by bayonets thrust through his hands and feet, another bayonet had then been driven through his throat, and, finally, he was riddled with bullets. The wounded Canadians said that the Dublin Fusiliers had seen this done with their own eyes, and they had heard the officers of the Dublin Fusiliers talking about it.

"The Times," May 10, 1915. Paris Correspondent.

There is, unhappily, good reason to believe that the story related by your Paris Correspondent of the crucifixion of a Canadian officer during the fighting at Ypres on April 22, 1915, is in substance true. The story was current here at the time, but, in the absence of direct evidence and absolute proof, men were unwilling to believe that a civilized foe could be guilty of an act so cruel and savage.

Now, I have reason to believe, written depositions testifying to the fact of the discovery of the body are in possession of British Headquarters Staff.

The unfortunate victim was a sergeant. As the story was told to me, he was found transfixed to the wooden fence of a farm building. Bayonets were thrust through the palms of his hands and his feet, pinning him to the fence. He had been repeatedly stabbed with bayonets, and there were many punctured wounds in his body.

I have not heard that any of our men actually saw the crime committed. There is room for the supposition that the man was dead before he was pinned to the fence and that the enemy, in his insensate rage and hate of the English, wreaked his vengeance on the lifeless body of his foe.

That is the most charitable complexion that can be put on the deed, ghastly as it is.

There is not a man in the ranks of the Canadians who fought at Ypres who is not firmly convinced that this vile thing has been done. They know, too, that the enemy bayoneted their wounded and helpless comrades in the trenches.

"The Times," May 15, 1915. Correspondent, North France.

MR. HOUSTON asked the Under-Secretary of State for War whether he has any information regarding the crucifixion of three Canadian soldiers recently captured by the Germans, who nailed them with bayonets to the side of a wooden structure.

MR. TENNANT: No, sir; no information of such an atrocity having been perpetrated has yet reached the War Office.

MR. HOUSTON: Is the Right Hon. Gentleman aware that Canadian officers and Canadian soldiers who were eye-witnesses of these fiendish outrages have made affidavits? Has the officer in command at the base at Boulogne not called the attention of the War Office to them?

MR. HARCOURT: No, sir; we have no record of it.

House of Commons, May 12, 1915.

Mr. HOUSTON asked the Under-Secretary of State for War whether he has any official information showing that during the recent fighting, when the Canadians were temporarily driven back, they were compelled to leave about forty of their wounded comrades in a barn, and that on recapturing the position they found the Germans had bayoneted all the wounded with the exception of a sergeant, and that the Germans had removed the figure of Christ from the large village crucifix and fastened the sergeant, while alive, to the cross; and whether he is aware that the crucifixion of our soldiers is becoming a practice of Germans.

MR. TENNANT: The military authorities in France have

standing instructions to send particulars of any authenticated cases of atrocities committed against our troops by the Germans. No official information in the sense of the Hon. Member's question has been received, but, owing to the information conveyed by the Hon. Member's previous question, inquiry is being made and is not yet complete.

House of Commons, May 19, 1915.

The story went the round of the Press here and in Canada, and was used by Members of Parliament on the platform. Its authenticity, however, was eventually denied by General March at Washington.

It cropped up again in 1919, when a letter was published by the *Nation* (April 12th) from Private E. Loader, 2nd Royal West Kent Regiment, who declared he had seen the crucified Canadian. The *Nation* was informed in a subsequent letter from Captain E. N. Bennett that there was no such private on the rolls of the Royal West Kents, and that the 2nd Battalion was in India during the whole war.¹

¹ For the American version see p. 184.

XVII

THE CORPSE FACTORY

A SERIES of extracts will give the record of one of the most revolting lies invented during the war, the dissemination of which throughout not only this country but the world was encouraged and connived at by both the Government and the Press. It started in 1917, and was not finally disposed of till 1925.

(Most of the quotations given are from *The Times*. The references in the lower strata of the Press, it will be remembered, were far more lurid.)

One of the United States consuls, on leaving Germany in February 1917, stated in Switzerland that the Germans were distilling glycerine from the bodies of their dead.

"*The Times*," April 16, 1917.

Herr Karl Rosner, the Correspondent of the Berlin *Lokalanzeiger*, on the Western front . . . published last Tuesday the first definite German admission concerning the way in which the Germans use dead bodies.

We pass through Everingcourt. There is a dull smell in the air as if lime were being burnt. We are passing the great Corpse Exploitation Establishment (*Kadaververwertungsanstalt*) of this Army Group. The fat that is won here is turned into lubricating oils, and everything else is ground down in the bone mill into a powder which is used for mixing with pig's food and as manure—nothing can be permitted to go to waste.

"*The Times*," April 16, 1917.

There was a report in *The Times* of April 17, 1917, from *La Belgique* (Leyden), via *l'Indépendance Belge*, for April 10, giving a very long and detailed account of a

Deutsche Abfallverwertungs-gesellschaft factory near Coblenz, where train-loads of the stripped bodies of German soldiers, wired into bundles, arrive and are simmered down in cauldrons, the products being stearine and refined oil.

In *The Times* of April 18, 1917, there was a letter from C. E. Bunbury commenting and suggesting the use of the story for propaganda purposes, in neutral countries and the East, where it would be especially calculated to horrify Buddhists, Hindus, and Mohammedans. He suggested broadcasting by the Foreign Office, India Office, and Colonial Office; there were other letters to the same effect on April 19th.

In *The Times* of April 20, 1917, there was a story told by Sergeant B——, of the Kents, that a prisoner had told him that the Germans boil down their dead for munitions and pig and poultry food. "This fellow told me that Fritz calls his margarine 'corpse fat' because they suspect that's what it comes from."

The Times stated that it had received a number of letters "questioning the translation of the German word *Kadaver*, and suggesting that it is not used of human bodies. As to this, the best authorities are agreed that it is also used of the bodies of animals." Other letters were received confirming the story from Belgian and Dutch sources (later from Roumania).

There was an article in the *Lancet* discussing the "business aspect" (or rather the technical one) of the industry. An expression of horror appeared from the Chinese Minister in London, and also from the Maharajah of Bikanir, in *The Times* of April 21, 1917.

The Times of April 23, 1917, quotes a German statement that the report is "loathsome and ridiculous," and that *Kadaver* is never used of a human body. *The*

Times produces dictionary quotations to show that it is. Also that both *Tierkörpermehl* and *Kadavermehl* appear in German official catalogues, the implication being that they must be something different.

In *The Times* of April 24, 1917, there was a letter, signed E. H. Parker, enclosing copy of the *North China Herald*, March 3, 1917, recounting an interview between the German Minister and the Chinese Premier in Peking :

But the matter was clinched when Admiral von Hinke was dilating upon the ingenious methods by which German scientists were obtaining chemicals necessary for the manufacture of munitions. The admiral triumphantly stated that they were extracting glycerine out of their dead soldiers ! From that moment onward the horrified Premier had no more use for Germany, and the business of persuading him to turn against her became comparatively easy.

The following questions in Parliament show the Government evading the issue, although they knew there was not a particle of authentic evidence for the report—a good instance of the official method of spreading falsehood.

MR. RONALD McNEILL asked the Prime Minister if he will take steps to make it known as widely as possible in Egypt, India, and the East generally, that the Germans use the dead bodies of their own soldiers and of their enemies when they obtain possession of them, as food for swine.

MR. DILLON asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether his attention has been called to the reports widely circulated in this country that the German Government have set up factories for extracting fat from the bodies of soldiers killed in battle ; whether these reports have been endorsed by many prominent men in this country, including Lord Curzon of Kedleston ; whether the Government have any solid grounds for believing that these statements are well-founded ; and if so, whether he will communicate the

information at the disposal of the Government to the House.

LORD R. CECIL: With respect to this question and that standing in the name of the Hon. Member for East Mayo, the Government have no information at present beyond that contained in extracts from the German Press which have been published in the Press here. In view of other actions by German military authorities, there is nothing incredible in the present charge against them. His Majesty's Government have allowed the circulation of facts as they have appeared through the usual channels.

MR. MCNEILL: Can the Right Hon. Gentleman answer whether the Government will take any steps to give wide publicity in the East to this story emanating from German sources?

LORD R. CECIL: I think at present it is not desirable to take any other steps than those that have been taken.

MR. DILLON: May I ask whether we are to conclude from that answer that the Government have no solid evidence whatever in proof of the truth of this charge, and they have taken no steps to investigate it; and has their attention been turned to the fact that it is not only a gross scandal, but a very great evil to this country to allow the circulation of such statements, authorized by Ministers of the Crown, if they are, as I believe them to be, absolutely false?

LORD R. CECIL: The Hon. Member has, perhaps, information that we have not. I can only speak from statements that have been published in the Press. I have already told the House that we have no other information whatever. The information is the statement that has been published and that I have before me (quoting *Times* quotation from *Lokalanzeiger*). This statement has been published in the Press, and that is the whole of the information that I have.

MR. DILLON: Has the Noble Lord's attention been drawn to the fact that there have been published in the *Frankfurter Zeitung* and other leading German newspapers descriptions of this whole process, in which the word *Kadaver* is used, and from which it is perfectly manifest that these factories are for the purpose of boiling down the dead bodies of horses and other animals which are lying on the battlefield—(an

HON. MEMBER: "Human animals!"—and I ask the Right Hon. Gentleman whether the Government propose to take any steps to obtain authentic information whether this story that has been circulated is true or absolutely false. For the credit of human nature, he ought to.

LORD R. CECIL: It is not any part of the duties of the Government, nor is it possible for the Government, to institute inquiries as to what goes on in Germany. The Hon. Member is surely very unreasonable in making the suggestion, and as for his quotations from the *Frankfurter Zeitung*, I have not seen them, but I have seen statements made by the German Government after the publication of this, and I confess that I am not able to attach very great importance to any statements made by the German Government.

MR. DILLON: I beg to ask the Right Hon. Gentleman whether, before a Minister of the Crown, a member of the War Cabinet, gives authorization to these rumours, he ought not to have obtained accurate information as to whether they are true or not.

LORD R. CECIL: I think any Minister of the Crown is entitled to comment on and refer to something which has been published in one of the leading papers of the country. He only purported to do that, and did not make himself responsible for the statement (an Hon. MEMBER: "He did!"). I am informed that he did not. He said: "As has been stated in the papers."

MR. OUTHWAITE: May I ask if the Noble Lord is aware that the circulation of these reports (interruption) has caused anxiety and misery to British people who have lost their sons on the battlefield, and who think that their bodies may be put to this purpose, and does not that give a reason why he should try to find out the truth of what is happening in Germany?

House of Commons, April 30, 1917.

In *The Times* of May 3, 1917, there were quotations from the *Frankfurter Zeitung* stating that the French Press is now treating the *Kadaver* story as a "misunderstanding."

The Times of May 17, 1917, reported that Herr Zimmermann denied in the Reichstag that human bodies were used; and stated that the story appeared first in the French Press.

In reply to a question in the House of Commons on May 23rd, Mr. A. Chamberlain stated that the report would be "available to the public in India through the usual channels."

A corpse factory cartoon appeared in *Punch*.

KAISER (to 1917 recruit): And don't forget that your Kaiser will find a use for you alive or dead. (At the enemy's establishment for the utilization of corpses the dead bodies of German soldiers are treated chemically, the chief commercial products being lubricant oils and pig food.)

View of the corpse factory out of the window.

The story had a world-wide circulation and had considerable propaganda value in the East. Not till 1925 did the truth emerge.

A painful impression has been produced here by an unfortunate speech of Brigadier-General Charteris at the dinner of the National Arts Club, in which he professed to tell the true story of the war-time report that Germany was boiling down the bodies of her dead soldiers in order to get fats for munitions and fertilizers.

According to General Charteris, the story began as propaganda for China. By transposing the caption from one of two photographs found on German prisoners to the other he gave the impression that the Germans were making a dreadful use of their own dead soldiers. This photograph he sent to a Chinese newspaper in Shanghai. He told the familiar story of its later republication in England and of the discussion it created there. He told, too, how, when a question put in the House was referred to him, he answered it by saying that from what he knew of German mentality, he was prepared for anything.

Later, said General Charteris, in order to support the story, what purported to be the diary of a German soldier was forged in his office. It was planned to have this discovered on a dead German by a war correspondent with a passion for German diaries, but the plan was never carried out. The diary was now in the war museum in London.

"The Times," October 22, 1925. From New York Correspondent.

Some opinions of politicians may be given.

LLOYD GEORGE: The story came under my notice in various ways at the time. I did not believe it then; I do not believe it now. It was never adopted as part of the armoury of the British Propaganda Department. It was, in fact, "turned down" by that department.

MR. MASTERMAN: We certainly did not accept the story as true, and I know nobody in official positions at the time who credited it. Nothing as suspect as this was made use of in our propaganda. Only such information as had been properly verified was circulated.

MR. I. MACPHERSON: I was at the War Office at the time. We had no reason to doubt the authenticity of the story when it came through. It was supported by the captured divisional orders of the German Army in France, and I have an impression it was also backed up by the Foreign Office on the strength of extracts from the German Press. We did not know that it had been invented by anybody, and had we known there was the slightest doubt about the truth of the story, it would not have been used in any way by us.

A New York correspondent describes how he rang General Charteris up, and inquired the truth of the report and suggested that, if untrue, he should take it up with the *New York Times*.

On this he protested vigorously that he could not think of challenging the report, as the mistakes were only of minor importance.

“*Daily News*,” November 5, 1925.

There was a *Times* article on the same subject quoting the *New York Times*' assertion of the truth of their version of the speech.

This paper makes the significant observation that in the course of his denial he offered no comment on his reported admission that he avoided telling the truth when questioned about the matter in the House of Commons, or on his own description of a scheme to support the Corpse Factory story by “planting” a forged diary in the clothing of a dead German prisoner—a proposal which he only abandoned lest the deception might be discovered.

Brigadier-General Charteris, who returned from America at the week-end, visited the War Office yesterday and had an interview with the Secretary of State for War (Sir Laming Worthington-Evans) concerning the reports of his speech on war propaganda in New York. It is understood that the War Office now regard the incident as closed and that no further inquiry is likely to be held.

General Charteris left for Scotland later in the day, and on arrival in Glasgow issued the following statement:

“On arrival in Scotland I was surprised to find that, in spite of the repudiation issued by me at New York through Reuter's agency, some public interest was still excited in the entirely incorrect report of my remarks at a private dinner in New York. I feel it necessary therefore to give again a categorical denial to the statement attributed to me. Certain suggestions and speculations as regards the origins of the *Kodaver* story, which have already been published in *These Eventful Years* (British Encyclopædia Press) and elsewhere, which I repeated, are, doubtless unintentionally, but nevertheless unfortunately, turned into definite statements of fact and attributed to me.

“Lest there should still be any doubt, let me say that I neither invented the *Kodaver* story nor did I alter the captions

in any photographs, nor did I use faked material for propaganda purposes. The allegations that I did so are not only incorrect but absurd, as propaganda was in no way under G.H.Q. France, where I had charge of the Intelligence Services. I should be as interested as the general public to know what was the true origin of the *Kadaver* story. G.H.Q. France only came in when a fictitious diary supporting the *Kadaver* story was submitted. When this diary was discovered to be fictitious, it was at once rejected.

"I have seen the Secretary of State this morning and have explained the whole circumstances to him, and have his authority to say that he is perfectly satisfied."

"*The Times*," November 4, 1925.

LIEUT.-COMMANDER KENWORTHY asked the Secretary of State for War if, in view of the feeling aroused in Germany by the recrudescence of the rumours of the so-called corpse conversion factory behind the German lines in the late war, he can give any information as to the source of the original rumour and the extent to which it was accepted by the War Office at the time.

SIR L. WORTHINGTON-EVANS: At this distance of time I do not think that the source of the rumour can be traced with any certainty. The statement that the Germans had set up a factory for the conversion of dead bodies first appeared on April 10, 1917, in the *Lokalanzeiger*, published in Berlin, and in *l'Indépendance Belge* and *La Belgique*, two Belgian newspapers published in France and Holland. The statements were reproduced in the Press here, with the comment that it was the first German admission concerning the way in which the Germans used their dead bodies.

Questions were asked in the House of Commons on April 30, 1917, and the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs replied on behalf of the Government that he had then no information beyond that contained in the extract from the German Press. But shortly afterwards a German Army Order containing instructions for the delivery of dead bodies to the establishments described in the *Lokalanzeiger* was captured in France and forwarded to the

War Office, who, after careful consideration, permitted it to be published.

The terms of this order were such that, taken in conjunction with the articles in the *Lokalanzeiger* and in the two Belgian papers and the previously existing rumours, it appeared to the War Office to afford corroborative evidence of the story. Evidence that the word *Kadaver* was used to mean human bodies, and not only carcasses of animals, was found in German dictionaries and anatomical and other works, and the German assertion that the story was disposed of by reference to the meaning of the word *Kadaver* was not accepted. On the information before them at the time, the War Office appear to have seen no reason to disbelieve the truth of the story.

LIEUT.-COMMANDER KENWORTHY: I am much obliged to the Right Hon. Gentleman for his very full answer. Does he not think it desirable now that the War Office should finally disavow the story and their present belief in it?

SIR L. WORTHINGTON-EVANS: I cannot believe any public interest is served by further questions on this story. I have given the House the fullest information in my possession in the hope that the Hon. Members will be satisfied with what I have said. (HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear.)

LIEUT.-COMMANDER KENWORTHY: Does not the Right Hon. Gentleman think it desirable, even now, to finally admit the inaccuracy of the original story, in view of Locarno and other things?

SIR L. WORTHINGTON-EVANS: It is not a question of whether it was accurate or inaccurate. What I was concerned with was the information upon which the War Office acted at the time. Of course, the fact that there has been no corroboration since necessarily alters the complexion of the case, but I was dealing with the information in the possession of the authorities at the time.

House of Commons, November 24, 1925.

This was a continued attempt to avoid making a complete denial, and it was left to Sir Austen Chamberlain to nail the lie finally to the counter. In reply to

Mr. Arthur Henderson on December 2, 1925, asking if he had any statement to make as to the *Kadaver* story, he said :

Yes, sir; my Right Hon. Friend the Secretary of State for War told the House last week how the story reached His Majesty's Government in 1917. The Chancellor of the German Reich has authorized me to say, on the authority of the German Government, that there was never any foundation for it. I need scarcely add that on behalf of His Majesty's Government I accept this denial, and I trust that this false report will not again be revived.

The painful impression made by this episode and similar propaganda efforts in America is well illustrated by an editorial in *Times-Dispatch*, of Richmond, U.S.A., on December 6, 1925.

Not the least of the horrors of modern warfare is the propaganda bureau, which is an important item in the military establishment of every nation. Neither is it the least of the many encouraging signs which each year add to the probability of eventual peace on earth. The famous *Kadaver* story, which aroused hatred against the German to the boiling-point in this and other Allied nations during the war, has been denounced as a lie in the British House of Commons. Months ago the world learned the details of how this lie was planned and broadcasted by the efficient officer in the British Intelligence Service. Now we are told that, imbued with the spirit of the Locarno pact, Sir Austen Chamberlain rose in the House, said that the German Chancellor had denied the truth of the story, and that the denial had been accepted by the British Government.

A few years ago the story of how the Kaiser was reducing human corpses to fat aroused the citizens of this and other enlightened nations to a fury of hatred. Normally sane men doubled their fists and rushed off to the nearest recruiting sergeant. Now they are being told, in effect, that they were dupes and fools; that their own officers deliberately goaded them to the desired boiling-point, using an infamous

lie to arouse them, just as a grown bully whispers to one little boy that another little boy said he could lick him.

The encouraging sign found in this revolting admission of how modern war is waged is the natural inference that the modern man is not over-eager to throw himself at his brother's throat at the simple word of command. His passions must be played upon, so the propaganda bureau has taken its place as one of the chief weapons.

In the next war, the propaganda must be more subtle and clever than the best the World War produced. These frank admissions of wholesale lying on the part of trusted Governments in the last war will not soon be forgotten.

implication that it was because these were well-known fortified towns that they had been selected for bombardment. The matter was discussed on the day the newspaper was published, and the German Trade Unionists pointed again and again to the evidence in the Press of the military nature of these three towns. The Englishman accurately described Hartlepool and Scarborough as favourite holiday resorts of British children and Whitby as a place of pilgrimage for visitors both from England and America. But he made no impression. They were greatly annoyed and preferred their own lie, which was universally accepted in Germany. It will be remembered that the *Daily Mail* replied with a row of photographs of babies.

A lie exposed by no less a person than the Foreign Secretary must certainly be recorded. Sir Edward Grey, speaking on May 25, 1916, in the House of Commons, referred to a statement of the German Chancellor (Herr von Bethmann-Hollweg) in the following terms :

I did find one new thing in the statement of the German Chancellor with regard to the terms of peace. That is the statement as to what the attitude of the British Government was in the time of diplomatic difficulty about Bosnia. That statement is untrue so far as we are concerned. The charge that our attitude was bellicose about the negotiations concerning Bosnia is a first-class lie. The idea that we attempted to urge Russia to war and that we said that this country would be ready to go to war about Bosnia is directly contrary to the truth.

(B) FRANCE.

Whatever criticisms may be made of the French, we can never accuse them of being hypocrites. They realized the great importance of "propaganda" and

went to work with a will. They are neither ashamed of the fact nor attempt to conceal it. We always mixed our lies up with righteous indignation and high morality, and tried to make them as statesmanlike and genteel as possible, although the *Kadaver* story was perhaps the most atrocious as well as the most successful lie in the war. The French authorities were delighted with it, and an English war correspondent has related how the French correspondents were made to send in reports of the corpse factory over their own signatures.

It will be remembered that in the eventful days before August 4, 1914, the French Government declared that they showed their pacific disposition by retiring all their troops ten kilometres from the frontier—a gesture which was acclaimed here and in France as magnificent and magnanimous and heroic. The truth, however, was that the French desired to delay, as long as possible, the declaration of war so as to give full time for the preparations in Great Britain and Russia. This is how a Frenchman writes of it :

It was evident that if this order were in the least degree to compromise the success of our plans, our generals would not have tolerated it. One can say with absolute certainty that if there were any points where our troops could keep back ten kilometres from the frontier, it would be at points where it would not be inconvenient, and in the places where it would be necessary for them to be nearer they would be nearer. In fact, there were certain points where they remained on the frontier, and many, according to M. Messimy (Minister for War), where they were withdrawn only four or five kilometres. Moreover, after August 2nd, 3.30 p.m., that is, a whole day before Germany's declaration of war, the order was suppressed on the pretext that three German patrols had in the morning made an incursion into our territory.

Without doubt the ten-kilometre retreat was only a fool's trap specially designed to make the English believe that the French mobilization was a pacific mobilization.

M. Demartial, in "L'Évangile du Quai d'Orsay," 1926.

A good many of the lies circulated in Great Britain originated from across the channel. The French were adepts at faked photographs; instances are given under that heading. The insinuations in their merciless caricatures also had considerable influence with those to whom pictures appeal.

Lies in France were, many of them, the same as those with which we were provided here. But their method was more extensive and thorough, as is shown by the disclosures in *Behind the Scenes of French Journalism*, by "A French Chief Editor," from the eighth chapter of which book the following extracts are taken.

. . . If you reduce the lie to a scientific system, put it on thick and heavy, with great effort and sufficient finances scatter it all over the world as the pure truth, you can deceive whole nations for a long time and drive them to slaughter for causes in which they have not the slightest interest. We have seen that sufficiently during the last war, and will see it in the next one, by which a kind providence will clumsily try to solve the problem of over-population.

We concluded immediately, and very correctly, that it is not sufficient to inflame the masses for war, and, in order to escape the accusation of the war-guilt, to represent the enemy as a dangerous disturber of the peace and the most terrible enemy of mankind.

We have not waited for Lord Northcliffe's procedure. On the spur of the moment we appreciated the great importance to enthuse public opinion for our mote or less just cause. As early as three days after the outbreak of the war, Viviani promulgated a law which on the same day was passed by the House and the Senate, and which provided as the first instalment of a powerful propaganda the trifling amount of

twenty-five million francs in gold for the establishment of

LA MAISON DE LA PRESSE,

a gigantic building, François Street 3, five stories high, without the basement, where the printing-presses are located, and the ground-floor with its large meeting hall. A busy, lively going and coming, as in a beehive; trucks arriving, elegant autos with pretentious-looking persons. The two hundred rooms contain the workshops, offices, parlours, and reception-rooms, where those war-mad heroes are domiciled whose courage grows with the degree of distance from the trenches. From the basement up to the fifth story covered with a glass roof, all is the embodiment of concentrated propaganda. In the basement stood the machinery necessary for printing and reproduction, under the glass roof operated the photo-chemigraphic department. Its principal work consisted in making photographs and cuts of wooden figures with cut-off hands, torn-out tongues, gouged-out eyes, crushed skulls and brains laid bare. The pictures thus made were sent as unassailable evidence of German atrocities to all parts of the globe, where they did not fail to produce the desired effect. In the same rooms fictitious photographs were made of bombarded French and Belgian churches, violated graves and monuments and scenes of ruin and desolation. The staging and painting of these scenes were done by the best scene-painters of the Paris Grand Opera. . . . The Press House was the indefatigable geyser which belched forth incessantly false war reports and fictitious news from the rear and the front, the meanest and most brutal slanders of the opponents, the astonishing fictions of infamous acts attributed to them. The insidious but efficacious poison thus broadcast has misled and infected a host of well-meaning but unsophisticated people. . . . During the war the lie became a patriotic virtue. It was forced upon us by the Government and the censor, and through the peril of losing the war considered a necessity; besides, lying was profitable and often publicly honoured. It would be useless to deny the success of the lie, which used the Press as the best means of an extended and rapid circulation. The greatest efforts were made to stamp every word of the enemies as a lie and every lie of

our own as absolute truth. Everything sailed under the flag of "Propaganda."

Children's education was not neglected. In *Le Matin*, November 12, 1915, there was a paragraph headed, "To Teachers."

All French schools must possess a collection of the cards "German crimes," in order to impress for ever upon the children the atrocities of the barbarians. It went on to say that an artist of note had created a dozen compositions relating to "the most striking episodes among German crimes." . . . "Teachers, subscribe to-day and place these pictures in your schools."

Press distortions were as common in France as in other countries. As early as July 25, 1914, M. Berthelot, M. Poincaré's permanent head of the Foreign Office, caused a gravely distorted account of the Pacific conversations between Bienvenu Martin and Baron Schoen to be published in the *Écho de Paris* and *Le Matin*. Public opinion can be far more easily dragooned by Government and Press in France than it can be in this country. There was, therefore, less need for subtlety, more chance for concealment, and little fear of the crudest lies not being accepted, provided they had the hall-mark of some sort of authority. Moreover, in France there is less disposition to examine the stories and statements by which they were deceived and expose their falsity now that it is all over. Nevertheless, no people is more intelligently aware of the imbecile futility of war and its senseless barbarity than the common people of France.

(C) THE UNITED STATES.

There was no richer field for propaganda than the United States of America in the first years of the war.

The Allied Powers and the Central Powers were both hard at work competing. The German method began by being too subtle. A wireless news agency, under German control, gave at first the best, most authentic, unbiased, and by far the cheapest war news, and thus attracted a large number of subscribers and fed the American Press. As the months passed, their news began to be ingeniously "slanted" in favour of the Central Powers. But they relied too much on argument. The cruder British methods were far more successful, and intensive work was done by the British War Mission, which (as Lord Northcliffe stated in *The Times*, November 16, 1917) comprised 500 officials with 10,000 assistants. Atrocities, Germany's sole responsibility, the criminal Kaiser, and all the other fabrications started in Great Britain, were worked up by American liars with great effect. The Belgian baby without hands was a special favourite. There was hardly a household in which it was not discussed all over that vast continent, and even so ridiculous a scare as the concrete platforms for German guns was current in California. Spy stories abounded and effective films were produced by those who were pressing for America to come into the war. One particularly good one dealt with the pacific spirit which at first prevailed. Instead of deriding it, the pacifist hero was depicted as a fine, noble figure standing out against the excited agitation which surrounded him. The incursions of a foreign army were graphically and dramatically produced. Villages were burned, women carried off, and various cruelties perpetrated. The representative of a foreign Power, with an unmistakably German cast of countenance, was depicted as a hideous villain plotting and scheming with evil intent. There was a particularly fine "close-

up" of him, rolling his eyes with Mephistophelian cunning, in the gallery of Congress. Finally the pacifist hero, carried away by his patriotic feelings, succumbs and supports the war with enthusiasm.

After America entered into the war a number of "actual war picture" films (prepared at Hollywood) were released. An immense army of speakers and pamphleteers were employed by the Committee on Public Information, and the country was flooded with literature describing the iniquities of the Hun.

The tragedy of the sinking of the *Lusitania*, which was of course the turning-point, was distorted to the utmost limit. Atrocity stories and faked films worked more especially on the feelings of the women, so that when neutrality was abandoned and "Uncle Sam needs you" was substituted, it took very few days to bring the whole country round. Once America was in the war, all the propaganda of the Allied nations was used and further exaggerated.

Among active patriots, John R. Rathom was conspicuous with his articles in the *Providence Journal* and with his numerous lectures. During 1917 and 1918 he led the campaign against any who could be suspected of having German sympathies. His spy stories were sensational, and he was said to be coached by the British Secret Service. In February 1918 he was issuing a series of articles on "Germany's Plot Exposed," when the *New York World* discontinued them, as they were suspicious and believed that the articles were faked. In 1920 he was charged by Franklin D. Roosevelt for circulating false and defamatory libels, and in the course of examination he admitted "drawing freely on his imagination." He was finally utterly discredited, but not till after "Rathomania" had

achieved considerable success during the time that it mattered.

Some lies which were little known here seem to have circulated successfully and been swallowed down in America, such as : poisoned sugar-candy dropped by German aeroplanes for children to eat ; the outraging of nuns in Belgian convents ; the clipping of a chaplain's ears by Uhlans ; and the German deification of Hindenburg by the hymn "Hindenburg ist unser Gott" (someone with insufficient knowledge of, or ear for, German having heard Luther's hymn "Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott"). Persecution of Germans and everything German was undertaken with zeal ; Wagner was unfavourably compared to Sousa, the danger of sauerkraut was emphasized and people rooted up "bachelors' buttons" from their gardens, as being a German national flower. The frenzy with which the whole propaganda was conducted in America surpassed anything we experienced here. America being a land of extremes, colour and emphasis have to reach an exceptionally high pitch before anyone takes much notice.

In October 1918, some of the lies having become too absurdly preposterous, General Pershing and the War Department of the United States authorized the publication of the following cablegram :

A St. Louis (Missouri) paper recently received here states that a sergeant, one of fifty men sent back in connection with the Liberty Loan campaign, is making speeches in which he states : "The Germans give poisoned candy to the children to eat and hand-grenades for them to play with. They show glee at the children's dying writhings and laugh aloud when the grenades explode. I saw one American boy, about seventeen years old, who had been captured by the Germans, come back to our trenches. He had cotton

in and about his ears. I asked someone what the cotton was for.

“ ‘The Germans cut off his ears and sent him back to tell us they want to fight men,’ was the answer. ‘They feed Americans on tuberculosis germs.’ ”

As there is no foundation whatever in fact for such statements, based on any experience we have had, I recommend that this sergeant, if the statements quoted above were made by him, be immediately returned for duty and that the statements be contradicted.

PERSHING.

The American version of the crucifixion story¹ arose from the following statement of an American soldier :

It was on October 23, 1918, that our detachment, the Fifth Marines, Second Division, entered Suippes, situated north of Châlons and west of the Argennes Forest, the village having just been evacuated by the Germans. There we found a naked girl nailed to a barn door. In addition about half of the coffins in the village churchyard had been torn from the graves and been opened, apparently with the idea of despoiling them.

When the soldier was pressed to give more precise details, he referred to the number of the *Pittsburg Sunday Post* of February 2, 1919, in which a description of the alleged incident, accompanied by drawings—not photographs—was given.

The matter having been referred to the German State Archives, it was stated, on September 27, 1924 :

During the year 1918 no Germans were in Suippes, situated on the Suippes and north-east of Châlons. The German front, especially in October 1918, ran north of Souain. That village was in possession of the French and the village of Suippes lies seven kilometres behind to the south.

¹ See page 91.

A Catholic clergyman in Suippes, replying to an inquiry, dated February 18, 1925, answered :

Your American soldier could not have seen that a young girl had been crucified, for there is nothing whatever known here about this tale. That graves have been despoiled is possible, but not in the cemetery of Suippes.

In spite of the denial of the story by General March at Washington, it was introduced as the basis of a war propaganda drama which had the blessing of President Wilson.*

Hideous cruelties, attributed to German submarine commanders, were also widely circulated. In April 1923 Admiral Sims stated, in the *New York Tribune* :

There exists no authentic report of cruelties ever having been committed by the commander or the crew of a German submarine.

The Press reports about cruelties were only meant for propaganda purposes.

Traces of the deluge of falsehood still linger to-day among the more ignorant sections of the population. But far greater is the resentment of the disillusioned, who recognize now the quagmire of falsehood from which the whole war-fever emanated.

Mr. Kirby Page sums up the activities of the Committee of Public Information :

An examination of all this propaganda reveals the exaggerations and misrepresentations to which the American public was subjected. . . . Every Government systematically planned to deceive its own people, and a rigid censorship prevailed everywhere.

* *Duty to Civilization*, by Francis Nielson.

An interesting volume on the technique of propaganda has recently been published by Professor Lasswell, of Chicago,¹ from which the following passage may be quoted :

So great are the psychological resistances to war in modern nations, that every war must appear to be a war of defence against a menacing, murderous aggressor. There must be no ambiguity about whom the public is to hate. The war must not be due to a world system of conducting international affairs, nor to the stupidity or malevolence of all governing classes, but to the rapacity of the enemy. Guilt and guilelessness must be assessed geographically, and all the guilt must be on the other side of the frontier. If the propagandist is to mobilize the hate of the people, he must see to it that everything is circulated which establishes the sole responsibility of the enemy.

Mr. George Creel was, in the United States, the equivalent to Lord Northcliffe. His bureau was subsidized by public money, and in the book in which he relates the amazing activities undertaken, he gives some idea of the field covered when he says : " The service cost the taxpayers \$4,912,553 and earned \$2,825,670.23 to be applied on expenses." ²

¹ *Propaganda Technique in the World War*, by Harold D. Lasswell.

² *How We Advertised America*, by George Creel.