

**JUSTICE
IN WAR-TIME**

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Justice in War-Time by Bertrand Russell

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BERTRAND RUSSELL

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HONORABLE BERTRAND RUSSELL

**AUTHOR OF
JUSTICE IN WAR TIME**

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BY
BERTRAND ^{Russell} RUSSELL, 3d earl

*Author of "German Social Democracy,"
"The Principles of Mathematics,"
"Scientific Method in Philosophy" &c., &c.*

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PREFACE

THE following essays, of which all except the last two have appeared in various magazines, were written at different times during the course of the war, and are not perhaps wholly consistent in their expectations as to the future, or in their view as to the attitude of the ordinary citizen towards war. In such matters, the development of events inevitably somewhat modifies first impressions. The view that the bulk of the population is naturally pacific, and is only incited to war by politicians and journalists, is widely held among pacifists, but is vehemently rejected by the more bellicose, who point out that men have an instinct of pugnacity, which demands war from time to time. I think it is true that many men have an instinct towards war, but unless it is roused by its appropriate stimulus it may well remain completely latent. The instinct, and the machinations of warmongers, are both needed to bring about war; if either were coped with, the other would be no longer operative for evil. In the following essays I have dealt sometimes with the one, sometimes with the other; but both are essential factors in the problem, and neither can be neglected by any prudent friend of peace.

The first of these essays, which was written before the Bryce Report appeared, deals in part with the question of atrocities. Nothing in that report tends to invalidate the conclusion reached in the article, namely: "No doubt both German and Russian atrocities have occurred. But it is certain that they have

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been far less numerous, and (for the most part) less unnatural, than they are almost universally believed to have been." Those who can recall what was believed in England in the early months of the war will acknowledge that the Bryce Report, bad as it is, tends to show that the atrocities which may be called "unnatural" have been much fewer than most English people had supposed. I think it should be added that some of the cases mentioned in the Bryce Report are admittedly based on evidence such as would not be accepted in a criminal prosecution. I have not seen the German Reports on supposed Russian atrocities, but they, if they are honest, presumably show exaggeration in what Germans believed about Russians. If the atrocities, however, were as bad as was believed, that can only increase our horror of war. It is war that produces atrocities, and every fresh atrocity is a fresh argument for peace.

The last essay is an attempt to show how England might have averted the war by a wiser policy during the ten years preceding its outbreak. To publish, in war-time, a criticism of the policy of one's own Government, is an act which will be thought by many to be unpatriotic. My own deliberate belief, however, is that what I have to say is more likely to benefit England than to injure it, in so far as it produces any effect at all. As some readers might misunderstand my motives, I have thought it well to state them by way of introduction.

I consider that either a serious weakening of England, France, and Italy, or a serious strengthening of Germany, would be a great misfortune for the

civilisation of the world. I wish ardently to see the Germans expelled from France and Belgium, and led to feel that the war has been a misfortune for them as well as for the Allies. These things I desire as strongly as the noisiest of our patriots. But there are other things, forgotten by most men in the excitement of battle, which seem to me of even greater importance. It is important that peace should come as soon as possible, lest European civilisation should perish out of the world. It is important that, after the peace, the nations should feel that degree of mutual respect which will make co-operation possible. It is important that England, the birthplace of liberty and the home of chivalrous generosity, should adopt in the future a policy worthy of itself, embodying its best, not deviously deceptive towards the hopes of its more humane citizens. Because I prize civilisation, because I long for the restoration of the European community of nations, but above all because I love England, and because I have hopes in regard to England which I should feel Utopian in regard to Germany: because of these fears and these hopes, I wish to make the English people aware of the crimes that have been committed in its name, to recall it to the temper in which peace can be made and preserved, and to point the way to a better national pride than that of dominion.

The British public, under the influence of an excited Press, believes that any criticism of the past actions of our Foreign Office tends to interfere with our success in the war. This, I feel convinced, is an entire delusion. What has interfered with our success, is,