

"WAR"

Our New Serial Story

THE MOST FAMOUS WAR NOVEL OF MODERN TIMES, SHOWING GERMANY'S RUTHLESS HAND IN FRANCE, AUSTRIA AND DENMARK



Under the title "Disarm" this novel won for its author, Baroness Bertha von Suttner, the Nobel Peace Prize

The story contains some passages strangely prophetic of the present world struggle, although the final scene of the story is the Franco-Prussian War of 44 years ago. The hypocrisy of a nation adopting conscription and a policy of huge armaments and pretending to hope for peace is proven to the hilt.

IT IS A WOMAN'S PROTEST AGAINST WAR

START WITH THE FIRST INSTALMENT

Some days later a bit of news was reported: King William of Prussia visited our Emperor at Schönbrunn. They met with embraces, the Prussian eagle was hoisted, and the Prussian national airs were played with triumphant hurrahs from the people. I was very happy, for it put to shame the evil prophecies that the two powers might get into a quarrel again. My father rejoiced, for he saw in this alliance a means of reconquering lost Lombardy.

"Will you tell me," I cried out to the assembled guests one day, "why do not all the European States form an alliance? Would not that be the simplest way?"

The gentlemen shrugged their shoulders, smiled superior smiles and did not answer. I probably had said one of those silly things with which ladies are apt to venture into the realms of higher politics.

The autumn was at hand; peace had been signed, and Frederick's retirement from the army could now be carried out. But man proposes and circumstances dispose for him. As a sequel of the war many banking houses failed, and with the rest I lost my private fortune. Shot and shell blast not only the ramparts and forts but also the entire social fabric of family and finance.

My kindest of fathers, however, came to the rescue and saw that I could want for nothing, yet the retirement of my husband from the military life became impossible, for we could not entirely depend on my father. Frederick was too proud for that, and so our beautiful castle in the air was shattered. But one comfort remained: there was nowhere a black spot on the horizon, and peace might last for many years.

CHAPTER IV.

During Council was in the neighbor-

hood of Vienna. Here I could see Frederick daily. My sisters and aunt were off for Marienbad, and from there Lilli wrote me:

"I confess I am beginning to be interested in Cousin Conrad."

And another letter from Aunt Marie:

My Dear Child—It has been a tiresome winter in society, and I shall be glad when Lilli and Rosa are married off. They had opportunities enough. It is a tiresome, thankless task to chaperone two pleasure-seeking girls.

I am rejoiced to hear that you are well once more. (I had suffered from a serious fever. Your husband had been very much alarmed. But thank God, your time had not yet come. The service which I had said at the Ursulines no doubt aided in bringing about your recovery. Kiss little Rudolf for me. Tell him he must learn all he can. I am sending him a few books: The Pious Child, and his Guardian Angel—a beautiful story—and The Heroes of our Country, a collection of war stories for boys. We cannot begin too early to teach them such glorious ideals. Your brother Otto was barely five when he first learned of Alexander and Caesar. It delights me to see how heroic and enthusiastic he is. I am sorry your plan is to stay in Vienna this summer to be nearer Frederick. But you should think of your dear father as well, who would love to have you at Grumitz. Take my word for it, you married people should not be so constantly together, but allow each other some little liberty. What Heaven may protect you all is my constant prayer.

AUNT MARIE

P.S.—Your husband has relatives in Prussia. (Happy he is not so arrogant as his countrymen.) Please ask him what they are saying there about the present political situation. It is rather serious.

This letter was the first instigation to me that some complication was in view. Having been ill, I had neglected to keep myself informed of the current news, and I asked my husband: "You dear Prussian, less arrogant than the rest, what does Aunt Marie mean? Is there really a political situation just now?"

"Yes, there always is, as there always is weather, some political situation—which is as changeable and treacherous as the weather. They are still arguing about these complicated Duchies who talk of freeing their lives of these arrogant Prussians—rather Danish than Prussian! they cry."

"And what will become of Augustenburg, with his undivided right over these Danish Provinces? Is he not this history with the great circle and I have taken my stand for the old inherited right which has stood for hundreds of years. I thought I was sacrificing you to help establish this right."

"It will go hard with your historical claims, my dear Martha," argued Frederick. Again I began to read the crisis, and discovered that the Vienna treaty had really settled nothing. Schleswig-Holstein loomed more formidably than before. The old claimants renewed their claims before the Alliance, and no one could guess what they were going to do about it. The two great powers were accusing each other of encroachment.

"Now, what are the arrogant Prussians up to?" was the constant suspicion of Austria as well as of the Middle States and the Duchies. Napoleon III. offered Prussia to annex up to the black-spoken border, but Prussia pretended to be unwilling. But at last she formulated her claim: thus, Prussian troops should remain in occupation on the defensive, and under Prussian leadership; a contingent should represent the Alliance, the harbor of Kiel to be occupied; postal, telegraph, and customs to be under Prussian control. This angered the Austrian Minister of War; the jealous Middle States objected, and although willing that Prussia should hold the harbor of Kiel, could not tolerate her right to recruit soldiers and sailors. And so the quarrel ripened.

Prussia declared she had no design absolutely to annex, but was planning the best interest of all parties. Under opposition Prussia became even more assertive, and voice after voice was raised against this "insolent announcement," public sentiment rising daily against Prussia and Bismarck.

The Middle States demanded to know the secret negotiations carried on between the diplomats of the two powers. The two Emperors bit their themselves to their country seats, and messages flew between them thick and fast. Several points were agreed upon. The investment should be shared half and half. Lauenburg should fall to Prussia, and Austria in lieu thereof receive two and a half million thalers. I asked myself, what return could such a sum be to offset all the losses, my financial losses, Ferdinand, and in case of thousands of others their fallen loved ones? Yet I was rejoiced when a new "treaty" was signed; that sounded so reassuring. Later I learned that these documents generally contain the germs of some future casus belli. The breaking of a treaty is only a fresh chance to fly to arms.

The quarrel seemed to be laid aside. The powers occupied the provinces, and I was again obliged to give up my favorite aspiration to see them once more "for ever together undivided," as was decreed in 1460.

But in spite of the treaty, the situation was not relieved. Patient reading of the political press gave me an idea of the shifting condition, but I could hardly believe that war would result. I contented myself with the thought that legal questions could always be settled legally and justly. All these wise ministers, diplomats, judicious councillors, parliamentarians, and polite monarchs, could surely settle such a trivial point. Thus I was actuated more by curiosity than anxiety in my research, which I was carefully jotting into the red book:

Oct. 1, '65—Imperial Council at Frankfurt adopts the following resolutions: 1. The right of Schleswig-Holstein to control itself must remain in force. The German treaty is rejected as a violation of right to the nation. 2. Officials shall refuse to pay taxes and loans to the Kaiser.

Oct. 15—The Prussian royal edict approved the decision in regard to hereditary claimant, who renounces all right to the throne for the sum of a half million thalers. By the Vienna treaty the duchies were ceded to the Allies, hence there can be no further claim.

Protests were made on all hands. "Prussian arrogance" became a catchword, and all hands declared, "We must protect ourselves against them." "King William would be another Victor Emmanuel." "To reconquer Sillesia in Austria's secret intent." "Prussia is paying court to France." "Austria is negotiating with the French." Thus little-tattle and recrimination was indulged in by the Cabinets of the great

powers, quite as seriously as by the gossips at a village tea.

The entire family returned for the autumn to Vienna.

I was very eager to keep my little Rudolf away from the influence of his grandfather, who was determined to inspire in him military tastes, which were already awakened, probably through a long line of soldier ancestry. My studies of natural science had taught me that such tendencies could be inherited. On my boy's birthday his grandfather brought him a sword. I remonstrated:

"You know very well that my son shall never be a soldier?"

"Would you tie him to your apron strings? Never mind, good soldier blood will tell; let him grow up, and see what profession he chooses—the noblest of all, I am sure—the military."

Martha fears he may die in battle, said Aunt Marie. "As though the same fate might not overtake one in bed."

"If a hundred thousand fell in battle," I said, "would the same fate have been theirs in peace?"

Aunt Marie was always ready with an answer. "No, it would have been their destiny to have died in war."

"Suppose they had been bold enough

to refuse to go to war," I suggested. "Impossible," shouted my father, and then the old controversy began.

The Greek fable of the hundred-headed hydra illustrates so perfectly the manner of argument between two convinced opponents. No sooner have you sliced the head off one point and started to attack the second, when the first head has grown on again.

The following were my father's favorite and unconquerable arguments in favor of war:

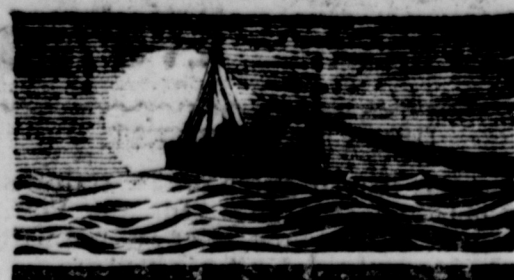
1. War was the decree of God Himself (see Bible.)
2. Wars have always been and always will be.
3. Without war population would increase too fast.
4. Permanent peace would corrupt, weaken, relax, and degenerate the race.
5. War best develops self-sacrifice, heroism, and fine character.
6. Human beings will always differ in opinions, interests, and desires, hence perpetual peace is impossible.

None of the above wise sayings can be maintained under argument, but each in turn can be set up as a fresh defence when the preceding one topples. For example, obliged to drop argument No. 4 and admit that peace is more apt to secure happiness, prosperity, and progress, my father would agree, "War is an evil, but arguments 1 and 2 inevitable." Then I would prove that by international agreement and law, war could be avoided. He would acknowledge that it could, but ought not (No. 5). If the argument for peace upsets the claims of Nos. 4 and 5, and shows that war hardens and brutalizes men, then he would admit it, but quote No. 3. This argument sounds hugely humane and learned, but is the least sincere of all. Wars are not waged for the benefit of posterity. When you have proved the fallacy of 3 the other returns to 1, and so the trick can be carried on till it becomes a labyrinth puzzle.

The lovers of war reason in a circle where one can always see and follow, but never catch them. That their arguments often proceed from opposite points of view and nullify each other matters nothing to them, and proves that they are arguing a position they have not thought out for themselves, but are bolstering up opinions which have been handed on to them. I did not see this clearly at the time I carried on the argument with my father on peace and war, but I always came away from the combat fatigued and dizzy, and I realized later that it came from whirling in this circle which his lack of logic necessitated.

New Year's eve, 1866. As the first hour of this momentous year struck, we were sitting about my father's table, celebrating the engagement of Lilli and Conrad. My father arose and offered his New Year's toast:

"My dear children and friends: The year '66 begins well, for long have I desired Conrad for a son-in-law. May we hope that this year may bring Rosa her ideal also. And you, Martha, may your husband be promoted to the rank of Colonel. For you, Dr. Bräuer, I may wish hosts of patients, although it does not fit in with the spirit of my wishes for health and happiness. And for you, my dear, fatalistic Marie, may destiny bring you the grand prize of a full indulgence, or anything else you may be wishing for. For my Otto, my son, I can only wish him every distinction in his final examination, that he may acquire every soldierly virtue, and some day be an ornament to the army, and a pride to his old father's heart. And for myself, who knows no greater joy than the welfare and fame of my husband, I can only wish that the coming year may bring back to my Austria the province of Lombardy, and—who knows—Sillesia also. And may we take back from the insolent Prussians this land which they stole from the great Maria Theresa."



Alfcat or Ashore
SEAL BRAND COFFEE
is still the favorite
IT IS SUPERB!



A critic fell upon the company as my father closed his toast. Truly, none of us felt any pressing need for these two provinces.

"No, father, dear," I replied, "we must not forget that in Italy and Prussia it is also New Year's Day, and we will wish them no evil. May the year '66 and all the years to come help us to grow more united and happy."

"Oh, you fantastic idealist," said my father, shrugging his shoulders.

"Not that," said my husband in my defence. "The wish is not one of an enthusiast and dreamer, for science assures us that it must be fulfilled some day. The world has slowly been growing better since the beginning, and it must go on, although we do not note it from year to year. We all know that men are happier, and better, and freer than in the primeval days."

"If you are so sure of eternal progress, why so often complain of reaction and the relapses into barbarism in our day?" asked my father, bluntly.

"Because"—Frederick took out his pencil and drew a spiral—"because the movement of progress goes on like this. It continually ascends, although at times appearing to go backwards. This coming year, if war is forced upon us, may be represented by one of these backward curves. Such events hurt civilization materially as well as morally."

"How unadmirably you speak, Tullus!"

"These are universal matters; the opinions of a soldier or civilian have no different weight here, for the truth is always the same. If a thing is bad, must one obstinately call it blue because one wears a blue uniform, or black because one wears a black coat?"

"A what?" said my father, who, when the argument went against him, was apt to appear hard of hearing. Since it is difficult to repeat a long argument, the discussion inclined to drop.

Upon our return home, I asked my husband: "What did I hear you say? There is prospect of war? Never, never will I allow you to go into another campaign."

"How can your passionate 'Never, never!' help in the matter? The nearer the fatal day comes, the less possible it will be for me to resign. Immediately after Schleswig-Holstein it would have been possible, but not now."

"Ah, that unlucky Schmidt & Sons the bankers!"

Again I found myself anxiously following developments in the newspapers and reports. "Be prepared! Be prepared!" was now the cry. "Prussia is preparing." "Austria is quietly preparing." "The Prussians claim we are preparing; it is not true, it is they who are preparing." And thus the variations were sounded in my anxious ear.

"Why is all this commotion about armaments," I asked my father, "if neither party plans to use them?" He answered me with the old saying: "In times of peace prepare for war."

Thus each is keeping the eye on the other, and each accuses the other of war motives. So again begins the old story—the serpent with his tail in his mouth.

On the morning of March 18 my father sat at my father's bedside.

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