

THE VAMPIRE OF THE CONTINENT

Table of Contents

- CHAPTER I THE “HEROIC AGE” OF THE BRITONS
SIXTEENTH CENTURY
- CHAPTER II THE PIOUS PIRATES SEVENTEENTH
CENTURY
- CHAPTER III THE CAMPAIGN AGAINST THE “ENEMY OF
PEACE” ERA OF LOUIS XIV
- CHAPTER IV “WE HAVE CONQUERED CANADA IN
GERMANY” FREDERIC THE GREAT AND
ENGLAND
- CHAPTER V THE PROTECTOR OF NEUTRAL
COUNTRIES—THE LIBERATOR OF
EUROPE SECOND HALF OF THE
EIGHTEENTH CENTURY
- CHAPTER VI THE GREAT HARVEST THE NAPOLEONIC
WARS
- CHAPTER VII ENGLAND DIGESTS HER BOOTY—THE
CONTINENT GRADUALLY BECOMES
UNRULY 1815–1890
- CHAPTER VIII ANGLO-GERMAN FRIENDSHIP AND
ESTRANGEMENT AFTER BISMARCK’S
DEPARTURE 1890–1895
- CHAPTER IX “AND IF THOU WILT NOT BE MY
SERVANT...” FROM 1895 TILL THE
ENTENTE CORDIALE

CHAPTER X DELENDA GERMANIA THE BEGINNING OF
KING EDWARD'S REIGN

CHAPTER XI EDWARD VII PREPARES THE HUMILIATION
AND DESTRUCTION OF GERMANY 1905–
1908

CHAPTER XII THE INCENDIARY AT WORK THE
CAMPAIGN AGAINST THE GERMAN
NAVY

CHAPTER XIII KING EDWARD'S UNSUCCESSFUL
ATTEMPT TO SET THE NEAR EAST
ABLAZE THE BOSNIAN CRISIS

CHAPTER XIV THE CATASTROPHE IS MORE CAREFULLY
PREPARED 1909–1914

TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE

Count Ernst zu Reventlow's book "The Vampire of the Continent," of which I have much pleasure in presenting a considerably abridged English edition to American readers, cannot be too strongly recommended to all those who desire to obtain an insight into the hidden recesses of European political history, where the forces are at work which have shaped the evolution of Europe since about the middle of the sixteenth century. It is the first systematic attempt to go to the root of things, to lay bare the developmental forces in question that have escaped the attention of partial or insufficiently clear-sighted historians up till now. With rare penetration and skill does Count Reventlow show all such forces to find their synthesis in England's Will to Power—to use an expression coined by Nietzsche—in England's insatiable greed, in her limitless craving for the riches of this world. The center-point of European history during the last 350 years is to be found in London. It is here that have been spun all the threads of the countless political intrigues, the result of which has been to turn the palaces and cottages of Europe alike into shambles, her sunny fields and pastures into a desert deluged with human blood. And, meanwhile, the barns and granaries of England were filled with corn, her warehouses with goods of all descriptions from all corners of the globe; her factories and workshops poured forth their products with quadrupled energy; her warships prowled along the ocean highways, stealing all they could lay hands on, whether it belonged to friend or foe or neutral; and her trading vessels transported her manufactured articles to all countries, draining the

wealth of the latter in exchange, and filling the pockets of the British merchant with gold.

The more greatly Europe was impoverished, the more did England's wealth increase. Therefore has England stirred up wars innumerable, in which she has herself taken practically no part, in order to ruin Europe economically, morally, and politically. Therefore has she always sought to prevent by all means the rise of any prosperous European State capable of competing with her in the markets of the world. She knew that, as long as she ruled the seas, Europe was helpless, and that the monopoly of the oversea trade belonged to her. Therefore did it become a fundamental principle of hers to destroy mercilessly the sea power of every nation, as soon as this sea power showed signs of growing to an extent such that England's "maritime supremacy" would be threatened.

Founded on piracy, the British Empire has been built up at the expense of humanity. The English commenced by robbing the Spanish treasure-ships—acts of murderous and dastardly brigandage which are held up to Englishmen to-day as deeds of prowess. They continued by robbing Canada and the States from the French, Gibraltar from the Spaniards, India from the French and the Portuguese, South Africa from the Dutch, Egypt and Cyprus from the Turks, Malta from the Italians—and last, but not least, Ireland from the Irish. Over the whole world we can follow the trail of the venomous serpent, which has fastened its deadly fangs into so many victims. Over the whole world we hear the cry for vengeance and for redemption.

The great merit of Count Reventlow's work is that of showing us the history of Europe in its true light. Pitilessly has the historian

here torn to shreds the garment of hypocrisy in which the English seek to clothe themselves; spurred on by the sole desire of impartiality searching for the truth, he has rent asunder the veil which they have thrown over the real history of the world with a cleverness equalled only by their unscrupulousness. England is here exposed to the reader in all her hideous nakedness, with not even a rag to cover her sores; in the cold, unshaded light of facts she appears before our eyes—no longer as the “Liberator,” but as the Vampire saturated with the blood of its victims, as the Shylock gorged with ill-gotten wealth, as the Parasite grown fat on the marrow of the bones of all the peoples of the earth.

Count Reventlow’s book is not only a book to be read; it should be re-read many times, pondered on, slowly and carefully digested; the great lessons it teaches us should be engraved in our minds. When the world has grasped the central truth taught by all the facts of its history during the last 350 years or thereabouts—the truth, namely, that Europe has never been considered by England as anything else but an instrument adapted to increasing the latter’s wealth and power: then only can the salvation of the world be hoped for.

Spain, Holland, France, who, all of them, defended the interests of Europe against England, have been vanquished. But the victories of England were never obtained by England herself. Physical courage, endurance, organisation, are not characteristics of the Vampire. England’s victories were obtained by Europe against Europe. From the outset England succeeded in trading on the ignorance and stupidity of Europe; admirably did she understand how to wave red cloths before the eyes of the European bulls, skilfully goaded to fury by her; equally admirably did she understand how to enthrall them with sententious phrases about

“liberty” and “justice,” even as the mermaids of old enthralled unsuspecting mariners by means of their divinely sweet melodies. The English Mermaid bewitched Europe with her Song of Liberty; and only too late has Europe discovered that it was a Song of Death.

But has she discovered it? We fear the truth is only just beginning to dawn. France at any rate does not yet perceive that she is being bled to death for the sake of England, who employs her to-day against Germany, even as she employed Germany against Louis XIV and Napoleon in former centuries. France, Belgium, Russia, Italy, are to-day England’s instruments. By means of them does she hope to destroy Germany and Austria-Hungary; but she also hopes that by destroying these, they will have eo ipso destroyed themselves. The whole of Europe will thus be drained to the last drop of blood, exhausted, ruined; and on those ruins will England’s trade flourish anew. The harvest reaped as the result of the Napoleonic wars will be reaped again.

Such was England’s calculation. It was a mistaken one. For the first time in her history since the Elizabethan period, England has miscalculated her chances. Grievously miscalculated them! Germany has to-day assumed the glorious task of liberating the world from the clutches of the British parasite. She it is who continues the great mission of Napoleon, who takes up the sword dropped by him, and which France, unfortunately, is to-day unwilling to wield. In this great war everyone must take his part—for it is a struggle between light and darkness, between truth and lies, between manly vigor and parasitical cowardice, between civilisation and barbarism. Germany, the champion of the light and the truth, against the power of darkness and mendacity! Under

such circumstances, to sit on the fence would be contemptible. And those who cannot fight with the sword must fight with the pen.

Germany, in fighting for her own existence, is fighting also for the liberation of the world. The great day of liberation will surely come, sooner or later. The *conditio sine qua non* of that liberation is the destruction of England's maritime supremacy. For as long as England rules the waves, humanity must remain her slave. This is a fundamental truth. And another fundamental truth is that England's maritime supremacy cannot be destroyed until IRELAND IS A FREE COUNTRY.

The one criticism which can be levelled against Count Reventlow's admirable work is that it has not sufficiently insisted on this second great truth. As long as Ireland remains a British colony—or, rather, a British fortress—England can at any time shut off the whole of Northern and Eastern Europe from all access to the ocean; even as, by means of Gibraltar and Port Said and Aden, she can close the Mediterranean. Ireland is the key to the Atlantic. Release Ireland from her bondage, and the Atlantic is at once opened up to Europe.

Therefore must Ireland be restored to Europe, if Europe is to be free. An independent, neutral Irish Nation would be the natural bulwark of European liberty in the West. The freedom of Europe depends on the freedom of the seas; and the freedom of the seas depends on the liberation of Ireland.

We hear a lot about Ireland's helplessness and poverty. And it is nothing but trash accumulated by England's scribes and hirelings. Ireland, the most fertile country in Europe; Ireland, whose flourishing industry was deliberately destroyed by England;

Ireland, whose civilisation reaches back far beyond the Christian Era into the dim twilight of the ages, and whose missionaries carried, during the early Middle Ages, the torch of learning and piety all over Western and Central Europe; Ireland, who, in the nineteenth century alone, whilst artificially-made famines wrought havoc amongst her children, furnished one thousand million pounds sterling to her oppressor for investment in the latter's world policy; Ireland, whose sturdy sons, broken on the wheel of misery, were decoyed to the number of 2,000,000 during the nineteenth century into England's army of mercenaries; Ireland, whose geographical position makes of her the connecting link between Europe and America, and whose forty harbors to-day lie empty and desolate at England's behest; Ireland, whose economic and biological wealth has formed the basis on which the whole structure of the British Pirate Empire has been reared:—Ireland is a rich country, rich by reason of her economic resources, and rich by reason of the incomparable moral qualities of the Irish race.

Europe has too long forgotten Ireland, too long has she shut her ears to Ireland's cry of distress. And to-day the most far-sighted of her thinkers and statesmen recognise that the secret of Europe's future destinies lies embedded in the green isle of Erin.

In his great speech in the Reichstag on August 19th, 1915, the German Chancellor, Herr von Bethmann-Hollweg, said: "The welfare of all peoples and nations demands that we obtain the freedom of the seas, not—as England has done—in order to rule the latter ourselves, but in order that they may serve equally the interests of all peoples." The words spoken by the Chancellor prove that Germany understands the nature of the immense historical task incumbent on her; and we may confidently believe

that she likewise realises the conditions under which alone this task can be satisfactorily accomplished.

Despising the foul calumnies and the impotent vituperation of England's scribes, Erin waits calmly and confidently for the great day of her liberation. The best proofs of her invincible strength—proofs which no English lies can suppress—she carries within her bosom: namely, her Existence and her Faith. Alone against the most powerful empire in the world since the days of Rome, Ireland has survived. The British Butcher has tried in vain during three centuries to exterminate her; and yet, just before the war broke out, he was forced to hold out his gory hands in a vain attempt to coax the victim he had intended to strangle. Her race, her religion, her traditions, her language—Ireland has maintained them all, and yet no foreign help has been hers since the days of Napoleon. Often has she been deceived, but none the less is her faith to-day stronger than ever. For England's difficulty is Ireland's opportunity. These who, to-day, are intently listening, can hear the groan of an empire staggering under the blows rained mercilessly upon it—they can hear, as if borne on the wings of Time, a music like unto a distant death-knell, tolled by bells of the future cast by German hands, strong, swift, undaunted.

And meanwhile voices are calling to us, voices from the grave, the voices of our dead—of the martyrs who died for Ireland,—sacred voices that we hear both waking and in dreams, and that bid us watch and pray and be of good cheer, for the Green Flag of Erin is to-day unfurled in the whirlwind alongside of the Black, White, and Red.

G. C.-H.

Geneva, September MCMXV.

THE VAMPIRE OF THE CONTINENT

CHAPTER I

THE “HEROIC AGE” OF THE BRITONS

SIXTEENTH CENTURY

The average German considers the destruction of the Spanish Armada to have been a great and noble deed of liberation, for which the world owes an eternal debt of gratitude to England. This is what the German is taught at school, and this is what he reads in innumerable historical works. Spain, and above all the Spanish King Philip II, desired to force the whole of Europe into submission to the Catholic Church, and to prevent the development of the spirit of freedom. And behold! The Virgin Queen sends forth her fleet, and the world was saved: *afflavit Deus et dissipati sunt*. At the call of the Deity arose the mighty storm, which scattered the ships of the oppressor.

We may well ask the question as to when these epoch-making events will be revealed to the young German in another light? The naked reality of historical facts shows the matter to have had a very different aspect.

About the year 1500 Spain and Portugal were the two World-Powers. According to a decision of the Pope, the globe had been divided by a line of demarcation into two halves, of which the one belonged to Spain and the other to Portugal. Viewed in the light of those times, this somewhat naïve division of the globe was not an unjust one. The great discoveries of the preceding century had been made by Spain and Portugal, and they had opened out immense perspectives. Neither Power, however, grasped the fact that what was necessary to enable them to maintain their world-

empires was not a mere Papal decree, but an ample armed force. They neglected their fleets; only too late did they perceive that in the North of Europe a nation had arisen, which instinctively recognised in piracy on the high seas the instrument adapted to its need of expansion. That nation was England.

Not a single Englishman is to be found among the pioneers who prepared the way for the great discoveries of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Neither do we find among the English any record of journeys like those accomplished by the Vikings of old—journeys undertaken for the sole pleasure of adventure, and of exploring unknown and distant regions. We find, on the other hand, alike in the English nation and in its rulers, an extremely shrewd comprehension of the value of gold and silver—a comprehension already highly developed at that period. The news of the incredible wealth derived by Spain and Portugal from those oversea possessions which the genius of their citizens had permitted them to discover, gave the English chronic insomnia. They had themselves neither discovered nor taken possession of anything. What, therefore, more natural for them than the idea of stealing from others what these others possessed? The idea was, indeed, the more natural, seeing that Spain and Portugal had neglected to build up their fleet. Thus began, as British historians solemnly tell us, the “heroic age” of the English people. It was an age characterised by organised piracy and highway robbery; which was at first tolerated, and subsequently sanctioned, by the English sovereigns—especially by the Virgin Queen, the champion of Protestantism.

English piracy sailed under the flag of Protestantism, and of the liberation from Rome. Leaders such as Hawkins, Frobisher, and Sir Francis Drake fitted out expeditionary fleets and sailed over the ocean to the Spanish and Portuguese possessions in America. But

their favorite trick was to lie in waiting for the Spanish ships filled with gold and silver, which they captured and brought in triumph to England, where these pirates were welcomed by Queen and people as champions of the Protestant faith, no less than of civilisation and progress. Or else they sailed to Spain herself,—without ever war having been declared,—and flung themselves like a pack of hungry wolves on the vessels at their moorings in Cadiz or Vigo, which they promptly robbed, burnt, and sank; they then destroyed docks and warehouses, and massacred everyone they could find. This went on for years. But woe betide any “naval commander” who dared to return home without a rich booty in gold, silver, or colonial produce! Even if his life was spared, he could be sure of a long term of imprisonment, and of the lasting dislike of the Queen. In return for their heroic efforts on behalf of religious freedom, the English wished to have at least plenty of ships filled with gold and silver.

Spain at last resolved to put an end to English piracy, and the Armada was built. The English did not succeed in preventing the construction of the Spanish fleet by their attacks on Spanish ports, and by burning docks and vessels at anchorage therein—albeit Drake destroyed 150 ships and an immense quantity of provisions in Cadiz in 1587. The following year Philip of Spain endeavored, by means of the Armada, to punish the English pirate nation, and to ensure once for all the safety of Spanish property. The unsuccessful result of the expedition is well known; we would only recall the fact that the Duke of Parma was waiting with an army in the Spanish Netherlands, and that a fleet was at his disposal in order to permit of his rejoining the Armada, and of landing in Great Britain. England did not adopt the only attitude suitable for her, namely that of the ambushed highway robber—but adopted

instead the attitude of a defender of the Protestant faith. We still read to-day, in English history books, that Philip of Spain fitted out the Armada in order to force the doctrines of Catholicism down the throats of the English. The good Continental Protestants were full of admiration for the sacrifices endured by England in order to prevent a disaster to the pure doctrine.

All the fundamental principles of Great Britain's insular policy were manifested during the long years of war between England and Spain—war which resulted finally in the destruction of the Armada, and the complete upsetting of the plan to invade England by way of the Netherlands. British policy, from the earliest times of British expansion, has always remained the same, even if (according to Clausewitz) it has subsequently adopted different means for attaining its ends.

When English sailors, under the protection of the Queen or on her suggestion, systematically pounced upon Spanish property; when they attacked, in time of peace, the Spanish coasts, or Spanish ships on the high seas, or Spanish oversea possessions, there was never any sort of question of British rights, or of legitimate British interests, or of the defence of British homes, or of the protection of the Protestant faith. The English simply coveted that which others possessed; and they were angry that others had it, and not themselves. Above all things they wanted gold. Not only the ancient English historians, but also the modern ones, admit this as something which is self-evident. Whenever an English "naval commander" cruised during months, or even years, on the high seas, in order to capture a fleet of Spanish galleys carrying gold and silver; when, in the midst of peace, he undertook a marauding expedition against Spanish or Portuguese ports, in order to rob, burn, and massacre to his heart's content, he was received on his

return as a hero of the Protestant faith—provided he had been successful. If he came home with empty hands, he was despised. The “treasure-ships,” i. e. galleys laden with gold and silver, play an extraordinary part, which the German reader can at first hardly understand, in the descriptions of that “heroic age.” But the ambitions of the English heroes of the faith were not limited to the ships alone; with the sure instinct of the bandit *de grand style*, they soared beyond them, as far as the countries from which the precious metal came. Drake’s “voyage around the world,” which is still admired in Germany as the deed of prowess of an idealistic pioneer of civilisation, was nothing else than a thieves’ raid. Admiral Freemantle wrote a few years ago concerning it: “Drake undertook an extensive cruise, in the course of which he burnt and plundered the wealthy coast towns of the Spanish colonies, beginning with Valparaiso, the capital of Chili. He continued his journey, seizing all the treasures he could lay hands on.... He returned to Plymouth in triumph, the first Englishman who had sailed round the world, and laden with a million of pounds’ worth of booty. Honored by his Queen, beloved of his countrymen, he then put to sea once more, in order, as he expressed it, to singe the King of Spain’s beard. This time he left England, not as a private adventurer, but as an English Admiral, backed up by the authority of the Queen.”

Drake embodied the English ideal of heroism, and still embodies it to-day. The form alone under which that ideal incorporates itself has altered, although even the alteration of form is less great than is generally supposed.

Throughout English history, and up till the present day, we can trace the constant application of three methods: firstly, destruction of the means which the nation whom it is intended to rob possesses

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