

'We Shall Hate, or We Shall Fail'

If we do not hate the Germans now, says Rex Stout,
we shall fail in our effort to establish a lasting peace.

By Rex Stout

Author, Chairman Writers' War Board

LOVE your enemies. Fight your enemies, shoot them, starve them, kill them, destroy their cities, bomb their factories and gardens—but love them! That may make sense to the Tuesday Evening Culture Club but not to me.

The Christian imperatives and ideals are the noblest expression of man's highest aspirations, but when men shrink from the hard necessities imposed upon them by human defects and stupidities by hiding behind the skirts of those imperatives and ideals, there is nothing noble about that. There is one imperative: thou shalt not kill. There is another: love your enemies. They are equally essential parts of a moral and philosophic whole. If I obey both of them, I may, sadly enough, be a highly impractical man, but at least I am a saintly man and deserve respect. If I violate one of them but insist that the other be adhered to, I am manifestly guilty of sanctimonious double talk and deserve no respect from any one whatever.

Some say that they admit it is impossible to love the Germans, but we must not hate them. That is worse than double-talk, it is plain nonsense. Either the hundreds of thousands of Germans we are preparing to kill deserve to be killed, or they do not. Apparently most Americans are agreed that they do, since most Americans favor a vigorous prosecution of the war. If we are not to kill them while loving them, and not to kill them while hating them, precisely what are our feelings supposed to be during the unpleasant operation? Are we expected to proceed with the bloody task in an emotional vacuum? Or in a state of benign (though murderous) detachment?

Not a pretty picture, that would be; not adherence to a Christian ideal, but assumption of a frigid and phony divinity, usurpation of the prerogatives of God Himself, which, I submit, in the light of current events, would be somewhat impertinent.

Shall we hate Germans? Each of us must answer that question for himself. But to kill them while pretending to love them is dishonest, to kill them and remain emotionally indifferent is abhorrent, and to kill them with an assumption of the attributes of God is inadmissible. As fairly decent and responsible human beings, we cannot and must not kill them unless we do hate them.

Some will say, indeed have said, listen to him, the fiend, he is trying to fill our breasts with blind and vindictive passion. That is one of the oldest tricks of the controversial acrobat, to pretend that your adversary doesn't mean what he is saying, he means something else. "Blind" and "vindictive" and "passion." It isn't a very good trick.

THERE are as many kinds of hate as there are kinds of love. There are people who hate dill pickles; that's the way they put it. There are people who hate labor, those who hate capital, those who hate President Roosevelt or noisy little children or Mr. McCormick of Chicago. The hate I am talking about is a feeling toward the Germans of deep and implacable resentment for their savage attack upon the rights and dignity of man, of loathing for their ruthless assault on the persons and property of innocent and well-meaning people, of contempt for their arrogant and insolent doctrine of the German master race.

If any one, agreeing with all that, wants to pick another word for it, I can't stop him; but, having consulted my dictionary, I call it hate. I see nothing admirable in aiding and abetting the death

by violence of millions of fellow-beings but fleeing in repugnance from a four-letter word. I hate Germans, and am not ashamed of it. On the contrary, in view of what the Germans have done, and of what my countrymen are preparing to do to them, I would be profoundly ashamed of myself if I did not hate Germans.

I am not a born German-hater. In March, 1915, when a visiting British lecturer made biting remarks about the Germans, I arose and left the gathering because I thought he was intemperate and unfair. He wasn't. As I discovered later, I was grossly ignorant. The trouble was that the British hated the Germans not wisely but too little.

ADOLF HITLER is nothing to be surprised at. A close student of German history, if sufficiently acute, might in the year 1900 have predicted a Hitler as the culmination of the deep-rooted mental and nervous disease afflicting the German people. The adoration of force as the only arbiter, and skulduggery as the supreme technique, in human affairs, which is the essence of nazism, was fully expounded by Clausewitz over a century ago; and Clausewitz has been the political bible of four generations of German leaders. A people who dined on Clausewitz for 120

years was bound to have Hitler for desert. And Hitler was bound to say, as he has said, "You can be a German or a Christian. You cannot be both."

He might as well have said Hindu or Moslem, instead of Christian. For what he meant was "You can be a German, or you can accept a code of morality. You cannot do both." That was implicit in Clausewitz. It has been stated or implied in a thousand ways by ten thousand Germans. Long before there were any Nazis, a German said a treaty was only a scrap of paper. Before Adolf Hitler was born another German, von Bulow, made a speech to a great audience assembled for a memorial performance of Beethoven's symphonies. He shouted, "To the meaningless French idealisms, Liberty, Equality and Fraternity, we oppose the German realities, Infantry, Cavalry and Artillery!" And the throng of Germans, gathered to honor Beethoven, applauded madly. Sieg heil!

By word, and by deed. After the last war there were well-meaning souls who tried to persuade us that the Germans had committed no atrocities. They will not find it so easy a job this time; there are too many millions of eyewitnesses, and too many thousands of documents already collected. This is condensed from a sworn affidavit now on file in London:

On Nov. 11, 1939, at Torun in Western Poland, a window in a German barracks was broken at night by a stone. Twelve boys of from 11 to 16 years of age were taken into custody and immediately shot. The bodies of the victims remained where they fell for the whole of four days, in spite of pleas of relatives to remove them for burial.

This is from a German official report made in March, 1941, at Tyn, a town in Czechoslovakia:

Josef Flodek, a mill-owner, was given grain to grind for German use. He removed a panful of the flour and gave it to a neighbor. Since it was discovered that his wife was an accomplice in the crime, they were both hanged.

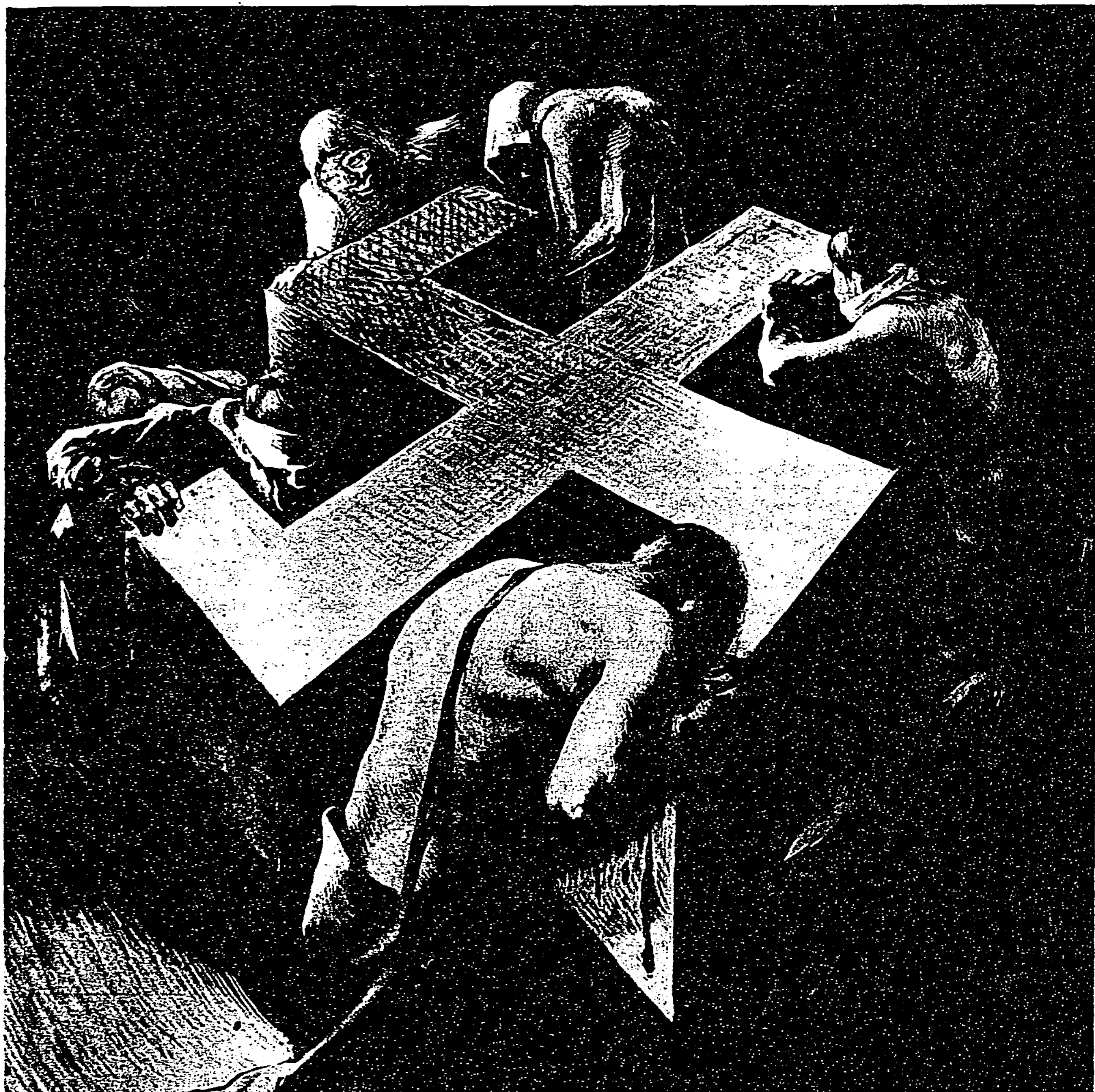
THIS is from an affidavit made by a Russian civilian who was captured by the Germans and later escaped:

Marching us to another prison camp, the Germans invented a game. One of them would order us to march by fours, while another ordered us to form by sixes. This naturally resulted in confusion, and then they would shout that we were disobeying orders and open fire on us. In this manner, on the day's march to Uman, sixty-four of us were killed.

Multiply those instances by a thousand, ten thousand—yes, it must be admitted, that is hateful. But can't we somehow squirm out of it?

There are the metaphysicians, both amateur and professional. The people who say, yes, we must hate injustice and cruelty and barbarism, that's all right, but we must not hate our fellow-beings.

That would be a remarkable stunt, and an extremely convenient one, if there were any man or woman alive capable of performing it. It is merely another trick with words. (Continued on Page 29)



"The Germans have made a savage attack upon the rights and dignity of man."

Poster by Xavier Gonzales.

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(Continued from Page 6)

What is "cruelty"? It is a word invented by men to describe a quality of a deed performed by a living creature upon another living creature. Any attempt to treat it as a thing in itself, to separate it in any way whatever, from the deed it was invented to describe, or from the person performing the deed, is tommyrot.

A man murders a child. You see him do it. You say you do not hate the man. Very well, then you have, to put it one way, an exceptionally developed power of detachment. But if you say you hate the "cruelty" but do not hate the man, what do you mean? You simply don't mean anything. You are talking drivel. If no one had ever invented any such word as "cruelty" (and for many thousands of years after man started to talk there were no abstract words), then what would you say? What did men say? Are we to assume that the mere invention of abstract words changed the structure of the human brain and men became miraculously capable of hating words instead of people?

No. A man who tells you he hates evil but not the doer of evil is kidding either you or himself, and in any case is gibbering.

IF we shall hate, shall we hate all Germans, everywhere? Shall we hate Mr. Schulz, who came to America thirty years ago at the age of 12, who now runs the grocery store at the corner of Sixth and Main and despises Adolf Hitler? To ask the foolish question is to answer it. No. Then if we are not to hate all Germans, everywhere, how do we go about the colossal job of picking and choosing?

I find no great difficulty. I hate all Nazi Germans. I hate all Germans who accept, either actively or passively, the doctrine of the German master race, the doctrine which permeated German thought long before Hitler was born, the doctrine by which the Germans justify their contempt of all other people and their domination of other countries by force. I hate all Germans who joined with the Nazis to bring that doctrine to its inevitable culmination of brutal disregard of the rights and dignities which distinguish a man from a beast. I hate all Germans who, reluctant to join the Nazis, nevertheless failed, through lack of courage or conviction, to prevent the Nazis from seizing power and plunging the world into this filthy swamp of destruction, misery and hatred.

THOSE are the Germans I hate from the bottom of my soul. Ninety-nine per cent of them are in Germany. As to what proportion they are of all Germans in Germany I do not know and have no way of finding out.

In 1934 the German Minister of Education issued an order which contained a list of slogans to be permanently displayed on the blackboard of every schoolroom in Germany. One of the slogans read, "The Ten Commandments are the deposit of the lowest human instincts." There is, I suppose, no argument as to our opinion of the German minister or of the government which gave him his job. But what of the parents, all of them, who sent their children, day after day and year after year, to those schoolrooms and made no effective protest?

'We Shall Hate, or We Shall Fail'

Who did not, by force if necessary, by stealth if courage was lacking, invade those schools and make the blackboards clean? They have shown no squeamishness about invading the schools and homes and factories of all the rest of Europe. But day after day, year after year, they washed and dressed their children, fed them, and sent them to sit on their school benches facing that brazen denial of the very foundation of civilized society. Because the Germans are the master race! Phooey! Have they earned my hate? They have; they've got it.

Are we, then, to go on hating Germans forever? I hope not. It is not unreasonable to suppose

that the disease of which the German nation is sick can in time be cured. It is likely, and perhaps regrettable, that the Poles and Greeks and Norwegians who have seen their loved ones murdered, tortured and goaded into suicide carry within them certain personal emotions of the kind that distort men's features and warp their minds. We have not had that experience. With us it is not a question of vengeance, vindictiveness, punishment, irremovable enmity. It is a question of facing realistically the ugly fact of the German doctrine—not the Hitler or the Nazi doctrine, the German doctrine—of the master race, and the resulting deep-

rooted German attitude toward all other nations and peoples.

If we do not face it, and hate it with every drop of our blood, the chance is slim that we shall do what must be done to eradicate it. It will remain through our lives and, after we die, a menace to our children and grandchildren, an impassable barrier to the organization of a decent and workable world.

It is not true that if we hate the Germans now we are helping to fill a reservoir of hate-poison that will infect the future beyond all hope of antiseptics. On the contrary. If we do not hate the Germans now, we shall inevitably fail in our purpose to establish

the world on a basis of peace. If we do not see the evil clearly enough to hate it as it deserves, which means, make no mistake, hating those who do or tolerate the evil, the temptation will be irresistible, at one point or another, to compromise with it instead of destroying it.

There never will be a world in which there is nothing and no one that is hateful. But it can be better than it is if we are sufficiently resolved to make it better. That resolution can be strong enough for its job only if it has emotional motivation and support in an uncompromising hatred for those evils with which there can be no truce, and for the people who are the champions of those evils, or the servants of the champions.

We shall hate, or we shall fail.



A British soldier distributes food to a group of Axis prisoners, behind the fighting lines in North Africa.

'Hate Is Moral Poison'

Professor Bowie repudiates the thesis of Rex Stout, that we must hate the Germans or we shall fail to make a lasting peace.

An article by Rex Stout, entitled "We Shall Hate, or We Shall Fail," published in THE TIMES Magazine of Jan. 17, has provoked sharp controversy and brought a number of letters to the editor, several of which have been printed. Here is an answer to Mr. Stout's article.

By Walter Russell Bowie
Professor of Practical Theology
Union Theological Seminary

IT was of the African Congo that Vachel Lindsay was thinking when he wrote his wild, exciting lines:

*Then I heard the boom of the blood-lust song
And a thigh-bone beating on a tin-pan gong.*

But nowadays it is not so much in Africa as here in America that the blood-lust song is beginning to echo, and that the "skull-faced, lean witch doctors" are finding a contemporary chorus.

"We Shall Hate, or We Shall Fail": that is the title of an article by Rex Stout, chairman of the Writers' War Board, in THE NEW YORK TIMES Magazine of Jan. 17. Then the subtitle goes on to say, "If we do not hate the Germans now, we shall fail in our effort to establish a lasting peace."

That is meant for patriotic fervor. Actually it is moral poison. If those words were listened to, they would twist this war away from any hope of a decent result, and turn it into a kind of frenzied dervish dance, or a voodoo incantation of the instincts of the jungle.

Mr. Stout ostensibly defines his terms. He says that by "hate" he means "a feeling toward the Germans of deep and implacable resentment for their savage attack upon the rights and dignity of man, of loathing for their ruthless assault on the persons and property of innocent and well-meaning peoples, of contempt for their arrogant and insolent doctrine of the German master race."

What those words *seem* to mean is a deep and implacable resentment against what Germany under its Nazi masters believes in and has done. In that judgment there appears to be discrimination, and therefore moral dignity. But Mr. Stout's argument runs to an indiscriminate ferocity. "I hate Germans and am not ashamed of it," he declares; and he will not be content until all the middle-aged gentlemen in their clubs and ladies at their knitting try to see how hard they can hate, "which means, make no mistake, hating those who do or tolerate the evil."

That is to say, not only what Germany now represents but "all Nazi Germans" must be hated. To "hate injustice, cruelty and barbarism" is not enough. Everybody who has been connected with these must be hated too. To hate the wrongs and "not hate our fellow-beings," says Mr. Stout, "would be a remarkable stunt and

an extremely convenient one, if there were any person alive capable of performing it." But to suggest that there is any person alive capable of doing that would be "merely another trick with words."

That would be important, if true. But it is not true. What it says is that there is no possibility of fighting evil unless you fight vindictively. What it says is that a nation cannot espouse a great cause and carry it through victoriously unless the tom-toms of primitive passion keep beating louder and louder. That is as unsound in fact as it is atavistic in morals.

WHAT has a man been accustomed to who argues like that? Has he never happened to see a policeman—the actual everyday policeman who will pit his life at a moment's notice against crime and savagery, but who has never had it enter his head that in order to do that he must first work up an indiscriminate rage against every human being who has been a criminal and against all criminals' families besides? Has nobody ever suggested that there is such a thing as modern penology, and that the reason why its civilized process is different from the senseless rage of savages is precisely that civilized persons—judges, policemen, pris-

on officials—do every day what Mr. Stout asserts that nobody is capable of doing? They do hate crime without losing the controlled intelligence which can discriminate among those who are classed as criminals.

BUT what has all this to do with war against the Nazis? it might be demanded. What is this but "another trick with words"? Well, it is not a trick with words; and it leads on directly to the question of war, and this particular war against Nazi Germany, and against Japan too, for that matter. Do men fight better by getting all frothed at the mouth with fury?

Look at England. Did the almost incredible courage of the little ordinary people of bombed London need to be kept up by harangues from hate-mongers? Most of them did not bother their heads about hating: they have sense enough and humor enough to keep their wits, and coolly to get on with the job. Now and then, it is true, some excited military leader in England and America does urge the inculcation of hate. An American general here at home exclaimed, "We must hate with every fiber of our being. We must lust for battle." At one of the training centers in England there was a so-called hate room, with elaborate equipment to whip up the passions of men. When the news of that came out the Moderator of the Church of Scotland immediately protested and General B. C. T. Paget officially replied:

"Such an atti- (Continued on Page 31)

'Hate Is Moral Poison'

(Continued from Page 15)

titude of hate is foreign to the British temperament, and any attempt to produce it by artificial stimulus during training is bound to fail, as it did in the last war. Officers and NCO's must be made to realize the difference between the building up of this artificial hate and the building of a true offensive spirit combined with the will power which will not recognize defeat." And a high officer of the American forces, commenting on General Paget's instructions, wrote: "He exactly states my feeling, which has already been embodied in instructions issued to my officers * * * designated to strengthen the soldier's personal resolution in this great fight for liberty and decency in the world. Put forward the rightness and the importance of the cause."

FOR the most part, where is it that we hear so much about hate? Do we read of it in letters from the men at the battle-fronts? Would we have it dinned into our ears if we were there? We would not. Of course, there is hot blood and the terrible instinctive impulse to kill rather than be killed. (That is the curse of war in any case.) But the real soldiers have an outlet for their emotions in costly courage; they have too much respect for men fighting like themselves on the other side to bother about emotional histrionics. That can be left to the professional pamphleteers who must get their emotional release in words.

Perhaps the pamphleteers were shocked when General Montgomery took the captured General von Thoma of the Africa Corps into his tent for breakfast; presumably what he should have done was to beat out his brains with a hatchet. On the day when these words are written there is in the newspapers an Associated Press picture of an Australian soldier putting his canteen to the lips of a wounded Japanese; presumably what he should have done was to strangle him. For to win the war, we must hate, hate all the time, hate everybody, hate as much as we can, and then learn to hate some more.

SO! How do people who talk thus get that way? Have they ever stopped to consider the picture they present? They might well look at the cartoon which the invincible British common sense and triumphant humor put on one of the pages of Punch. It was a drawing of a fat father and mother and a group of children sitting around a breakfast table, grimacing furiously; and it was entitled, "German family having its morning hate." Yes, if anybody has to have that sort of insanity, why not let it be the Germans? Hitler and Goebbels in their screaming frenzies can be crazier than we can.

"We shall hate, or we shall fail." There is one word used in the article which has those words for its heading which may appropriately be borrowed and used right here. "Tommyrot!" The truth is that wars are not won by dosing people up with a lot of synthetic hatred. They can be effectively lost that way, as Hitler will find out. This nation had better take its chance of winning,

not by glandular virus, but by clear thinking, positive purpose and intelligently disciplined will.

AND suppose we did persuade everybody, the men at the front and the people at home, to do more hating. What would happen after the war? Is nobody to consider that? Hatred is not something that discharges itself upon one object and then conveniently disappears. It is a poison in the blood, an emotional debauch, which is not quick to disappear. People who should get the habit of hating all German Nazis, man, woman and child, would get so that they would just have to hate somebody. Like the drunkard, if they lose one bottle they will look for another; and if they can't have whisky, even wood alcohol will do. There may be plenty of demagogues in America after this war who would feed people who had got the taste for hating with new brands of hate: race hatreds, class hatreds, religious hatreds.

On the same day when Mr. Stout's article appeared, there appeared in the news columns a statement by the Educational Policies Committee of the National Education Association. Even if "hatred of the enemy and desire for revenge" were inculcated among the fighting men, the committee said:

We especially deplore the cultivation of such traits among the younger children and others who are not likely to see military service. The spiritual casualties of war will be great enough and lasting enough without any help from the teaching profession.

We must certainly feel an intense aversion to the evil men who have betrayed their compatriots and who, by their vicious policies and wicked actions, have brought needless misery to so many innocent people. Nevertheless, intense and revengeful rancor toward the great mass of the people of the enemy countries is not likely to hasten our final victory. These violent and confused emotions, these malignant indictments of entire nations and races are the characteristic weapons of dictators. They are not suitable weapons for nations conducting a great crusade for the extension of liberty and justice to all peoples everywhere in the world.

After the war, then what? Will the overthrow of Hitler and the Japanese warlords amount to anything? Will the accomplishment of that, and only that, be worth this war's horrible cost? Of course not. Their overthrow would at best do no more than clear the ground—clear the ground upon which slowly we may begin to shape the fabric of a world order conceived and built according to those principles of justice and human consideration which alone could make it fit to last. That kind of world cannot be created by men still stupid and truculent with the hangovers of deliberate hating. It will require men whose souls have been big enough to keep sober in a maddened time.

SOMETIMES we can see the truth when we get it in perspective—see the truth which we might not see at all when it is blurred by our own near passions. The real dignities of the mind and heart emerge, and other

things which might have seemed desirable are revealed as near indecency. In our Civil War here in America there were plenty of people who preached hatred as though men's souls depended on it. Thaddeus Stevens, haranguing the Congress at Washington, shouted that it "must treat those States now outside of the Union as conquered provinces, and settle them with new men, and drive the rebels as exiles from this country."

In so far as Thaddeus Stevens had his way, the Civil War was carried on into a long aftermath of bitterness and sadistic vengeance. Against such men as Stevens—and sneeringly opposed and repudiated by him—stood the spirit of Abraham Lincoln, who said in his second inaugural:

"With malice toward none; with charity for all; with firmness in the right, as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in; to bind up the nation's wounds; * * * to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and lasting peace among ourselves, and with all nations."

LOOKING back upon these two types of men, can anybody fail now to see which the nation is proud of and which it would want to forget? Does anybody doubt that all that is wholesome and strong in this united country is due to the fact that slowly the spirit of Lincoln prevailed and the spirit of hatred was repudiated?

The same truth invites us now. We do not need a new crop of Thaddeus Stevenses. We need men "with malice toward none, with charity for all," who shall be big enough in spirit to show us how to deserve, and then to create, "a just and lasting peace among all nations." For this great task which will confront us, we may well listen to the words which Philip Gibbs, most discerning among the front-line correspondents, wrote as he surveyed the First World War:

"Let us exorcise our own devils and get back to kindness toward all men of good will. * * * Let us seek the beauty of life and God's truth somehow, remembering the boys who died too soon. * * * By blood and passion there will be no healing. We have seen too much blood. We want to wipe it out of our eyes and souls."

Comment on Dr. Bowie's Article

The question whether we must hate the Germans if we are to win the war and win a lasting peace was raised by Rex Stout in THE NEW YORK TIMES Magazine on Jan. 17. Mr. Stout took the affirmative view. In last Sunday's Magazine Professor Walter Russell Bowie of Union Theological Seminary defended the opposing position. Both articles provoked many readers to write the editor. A selection of the replies to Mr. Stout has already been published. From the letters stimulated by Professor Bowie's views a selection is printed below.

Mr. Stout Replies

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NEW YORK TIMES:

In THE NEW YORK TIMES Magazine for Jan. 31 Professor Walter Russell Bowie, replying to my recent article about hating Germans, fails to reply at all. Instead, he constructs a straw man of hideous form and repulsive feature, furiously tears it to bits, and seems to be under the impression that he has answered something.

That's true of the entire article; I give one example. He admits that I defined my terms, which I did as follows: "A feeling toward the Germans of deep and implacable resentment for their savage attack upon the rights and dignity of man, of loathing for their ruthless assault on the persons and property of innocent and well-meaning peoples, of contempt for their arrogant doctrine of the German master race." Then Professor Bowie goes on to denounce vindictiveness, blood lust, ferocity, primitive passion and mouths frothing with fury. All of which has nothing to do with me or the piece I wrote.

Indeed, the very title of Professor Bowie's "reply" is a dead give-away: "Hate Is Moral Poison." I wonder what John Brown, William Lloyd Garrison, Oliver Cromwell, Martin Luther would think of that? Those men, and numerous other powerful and effective haters, knew quite well that hate is not only not always a moral poison; it may be and sometimes is a moral necessity. It is merely silly for Professor Bowie to argue that all hate is alike regardless of its motivation and its target, and that all hate is ugly and poisonous. There was nothing ugly about the fierce light that blazed in the eyes of Joan of Arc and she called the emotion behind it by its right name. She called it hate.

There are various other curiosities in Professor Bowie's article. The plain implication of his nineteenth and twentieth paragraphs is that the Germans, as they are today, are no worse than the people of our Southern States at the time of the Civil War. Since that is plainly implied, I suppose Professor Bowie believes it. That is why he, and people like him, represent a real peril to the attainment of our objectives in this war. We cannot win what we are fighting for, a world fit to live in, unless after the military victory we handle the German problem realistically and competently; and we cannot do that unless we are aware of the utter hatefulness of Germany and the Germans.

REX STOUT.

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