

## A STATEMENT BY DR. LEVY.

This war will result in greatly strengthening the opposition to democracy. The democratic parties announce that a war like this will never happen again, but their announcements will now be distrusted by most thinking men. They have had their chance for over a hundred years now, since the French Revolution, and they have made a mess of it. The more numerous they got, the worse matters went, until it finally came to this war.

The democratic play is over. It was the greatest theatrical swindle ever produced by any manager. On the billboard, outside the theatre, was announced a play entitled, "Fraternity, Brotherhood, Peacefulness, and Mutual Understanding," and when you had paid your money, gone in and sat down to see the play, you saw the blood-thirstiest melodrama ever acted, and, worst of all, it was not even melodrama, but a dreadful reality.

Democracy has been caught red-handed in connection with this war. The peacefulness of democracy does not arise from strength but from weakness, its teachings increase the number of weak people in responsible positions, and experience proves that weak people are prone to quarrel. The presence of one Bismarck or Disraeli would have prevented this war. Democracy suppresses great men. It claims to wish to give every one a chance. By giving every one a chance, you give no one a chance. If everybody is somebody, nobody is anybody! If you educate all, you suppress genius which can seldom flower under a "popular" or "democratic" education.

This war is a war of nation against nation—the first of its kind in history; Henry Ford, the American philanthropist, recognized this fact shortly after he landed in Europe. "This is not a war of Kings and Emperors," he said, "this is a war of people against people, hence no single man can stop it"; then promptly and quite rightly he returned to America. This war will teach people the world over to distrust their old values. It will warn them against longer trusting their teachers and philosophers and their politicians as well. It will undermine the belief in the people and also that of the people in itself. It will illumine the absurdity of government by the slaves for the slaves. It will in short shake the faith in democracy to its foundations.

Americans can well take heed of present conditions on the Continent. The misfortunes of Europe today may be the misfortunes of the United States one day. The future has plenty of wars and revolutions in store for us all. An unbiased viewpoint is a necessity for those of us who will have to face life one day in a responsible position. The old Romanticism will not do any longer; the future belongs to Friedrich Nietzsche.

OSCAR LEVY.

Dr. Oscar Levy is recognized as an authority on Nietzsche's philosophy, having translated into English and published the entire works of that writer in an edition of eighteen volumes. The one volume of Nietzsche that has been so widely circulated in the United States is made up of a compilation of excerpts selected from Dr. Levy's English translations.

By Franz Hugo Krebs.

THE most interesting and remarkable man, from an intellectual standpoint, that I met on the Continent during my two trips abroad, since the war began, was Dr. Oscar Levy of London. Although Dr. Levy had lived in London for many years, on account of the fact that he was born a German subject and had not become a naturalized British subject he was forced to leave Great Britain shortly after the war broke out.

I first met him in Berlin in 1915, and we saw a great deal of each other. Dr. Levy is not only beyond question the greatest authority on Nietzsche, believes in his teachings, and considers him the prophet who will ultimately lead the world to a higher and nobler civilization, "one in which the keynote will be self-control and self-sacrifice," but he is also one of the greatest living psychologists.

He spent a few weeks in the United States in 1892, but says "a psychologist does not need to travel in order to know the peoples of the earth; he need only study their literature."

He has translated into German two of Disraeli's novels, "Contarini Fleming" and "Tancred." "Contarini Fleming" was prefaced by Dr. Levy with an essay on Disraeli in which he pointed out his subconscious Nietzschean mentality, "the mentality which was the dread of his lifelong opponent, Gladstone." He frankly says that these two books were failures in Germany.

After my interview with him, but before it was written, Dr. Levy left for Switzerland and, as I was shortly to return to the United States, it was agreed that I should mail him a copy of the interview and that he would send me a signed statement, to be published with it, on the war from a Nietzschean point of view. Dr. Levy mailed me the signed statement on July 6 last, and it reached me a short time ago. It had been opened by the French censor; whether he had held it all this time because he liked it, or because he thought it an incendiary document that might inspire thought along other than conventional lines, only the censor can tell.

In speaking of the war Dr. Levy characterized it as "stupid and hopeless." He said:

"It looks more like a draw than anything else, and whoever may be the winner, assuming that there is one, the old

balance of power will be maintained in Europe. Yet, Europe does not inwardly wish any longer for this balance of power. It wants to be united, as Nietzsche has already pointed out.

"I do not doubt that one day we will have this unity of Europe, but I most decidedly doubt whether we shall have it through this war. I am very much afraid that it will turn out to be a senseless and fruitless affair; that is to say, a war without that one result for which all good Europeans (this again is Nietzsche's phrase) are yearning: The United States of Europe.

"The one innermost secret thought of every cultured European of today is the thought of and the wish for the strong man who will unite this miserable lot of ours over here, never mind by what means. And there is only one teacher who thinks the means indifferent, if the goal be sublime, that is Nietzsche."

In answer to my question, Was Nietzsche liked in Germany during his life? Dr. Levy replied:

"Nietzsche was absolutely hated in Germany while he was alive and the hatred did not diminish after his death. No great psychologist was ever popular during his life. Think of Dostoevski, of Gissing as well as Nietzsche; it is only when they are dead that they are acknowledged, because then people think that their judgment was passed on a former generation, which by inference proves the superiority of the present generation.

"Nietzsche made many caustic remarks about both the Germans and the British because he disliked the materialism of both countries, and when the war broke out the Cologne Gazette quoted him as to the British and The London Times as to the Germans, thus furnishing one of the many literary incongruities of the war.

"Yet, at the beginning of this war, Robert Bridges, the British Poet Laureate, actually dared to say that this was a war of Christ against Nietzsche, Nietzsche being represented by Germany and Christ by England.

"The great strength that Germany has revealed compared with Great Britain is largely due to the fact that the ruling classes in Germany have realized how important it is for the State that all the people shall be as far as possible well housed and nourished, so that when the time comes that they are needed they will be in fit condition to respond to their country's call.

"Lloyd George knows his England, Wales, and Scotland and even shows much more than a glimmering of understanding of Ireland. He recognized the tremendous physical deterioration in the 'submerged tenth,' due to generations of slum dwelling and excessive use of alcoholic stimulants, and stated long ago that 'nothing but root and branch methods would be of the slightest avail

# Democracy Doomed,

Asserts Dr. Oscar Levy of Germany,

## Noted Nietzschean

Scholar Who Translated Into English Entire Works of the Philosopher Says "Future Belongs to Nietzsche"

in dealing with the evil.' I doubt whether the British distilling and brewing interests can be dealt with effectively in time to perceptibly add to Great Britain's vigorous prosecution of the war.

"As political psychologists the British are wonderful. Although there is supposed to be a truce in party warfare in Great Britain, The London Times most cleverly busies itself with tearing down the Liberal fences and none could be more skillful than its writers in veiling this purpose. For instance, consider its famous editorial of March 8, 1915, headed 'Why we are at war,' in which it openly abandoned the claim that Great Britain had declared war on Germany on account of the violation of the neutrality of Belgium.

"Although my sympathy has always been with the Tory Party, as the party of the aristocracy, I realize that Lloyd George is an idealist and that he and the masses of the Liberal Party would not have supported the war had it not been for the violation of the neutrality of Belgium. The Times knows this also, but publicly abandons that position in order to try to shatter the confidence of the masses of the Liberals in the honesty of their leaders."

In answer to the question, Who are the greatest German psychologists? Dr. Levy said:

"There are no German psychologists; that is, of pure German blood. Schopenhauer had Dutch blood from his father, Heine was of Jewish blood, and Nietzsche's Polish blood gave him to the world."

In this connection it is interesting to know that Dr. Levy believes the stomach has a tremendous influence over one's mentality, and that he thinks the large amount of hearty food eaten by the Germans and their very general consumption of beer have a decided effect in making their mental processes slower than they otherwise would be. Dr. Levy smokes, but only three cigarettes a day—after luncheon, dinner, and just before going to bed. He is not a large eater, drinks a small glass of Italian vermouth shortly before dinner, and with his dinner one glass of wine, usually a vintage champagne. In this way he feels that he preserves to the fullest extent his mental poise and balance.

To the question, Are there any men now prominent in American public life whom you would consider supermen? Dr. Levy replied:

"That is a question that I am not prepared at present to answer definitely. There are questions that President Wilson has yet to deal with that will have great bearing on how it should be answered. President Wilson is not only a man of high intellectual attainments, but he is a man of remarkable mental power and force. He is a bit of philosopher, and has great will power. That is important for your country at this time, as there is little doubt that, were it not for President Wilson, the United States would have been swept into this war.

"As far as I have had an opportunity to study President Wilson's policy and writings, it has seemed to me that he has done his best to maintain the strictest neutrality; the pro-German and pro-Allies criticism that I have read of his policy was all unjustified by the facts, and much of it was of a stupidity almost inconceivable."

"How about Theodore Roosevelt?" I inquired.

"I can only repeat to you what I said about Roosevelt last year," Dr. Levy replied. "Roosevelt could not be called a superman, unless it were of the obvious. Up to the time that his desire for political office became so strong as partly to

obscure his mental vision he was very skillful in finding out the average American thought and then announcing it as his opinion.

"In America such a policy would inevitably lead to a certain success, but it carries with it a silent valuation of the adoption of such a standard. Also Roosevelt has lost whatever vision he had of big things, his judgment has been dwarfed by the exigencies of political necessities.

"At the beginning of the war President Wilson evidently realized that here was an opportunity to mentally weld Americans—of so many different race stocks—into one composite thinking whole, that, however it might differ in its sympathies and wishes regarding the outcome of the war, would become vividly alive to its Americanism and what America should stand for, what it ought to mean.

"This vision of infinite grandeur Roosevelt has apparently passed by with unseeing eyes. He has spent his time in beating the tomtoms of partisan criticism, and has exhibited such a lack of generous appreciation of President Wilson's broad-spirited and conscientious dealings with the momentous questions he has been called on to face that I am inclined to think, in spite of the fact that he is generally 'supposed to be endowed with a genius for gauging public sentiment,' that Roosevelt has again overstepped the boundaries of good taste that a democracy which admires fair play instinctively sets for those of its public men who would continue in its favor."

Dr. Levy is a great friend of Nietzsche's sister—Elizabeth Foerster Nietzsche. He has visited her frequently at Weimar. "A remarkable woman," he said, "who has done much to propagate her brother's ideas and is likewise his biographer."

In conclusion, I said: "Doctor, after the war is over, why don't you come to the United States and deliver a course of lectures on Nietzsche? Americans have heard much about his writings and I am sure there would be great interest in your interpretation of his ideas."

"While it is true that there is a dire need in America of creating a mental aristocracy, whose aims and ideals will be far above those of the masses of their countrymen," he replied, "I do not feel that Nietzsche has at present a particular message to any but a limited number in America.

"You are passing through a violent reaction against an unbridled and unrestrained commercial domination and are apparently on the verge of graduating into the silliness of a movement, the extremists in which seem almost prepared to contend that there is mental equality of judgment on the part of even the obviously unfit.

"The day will come when Nietzsche will be a vital force in the United States, but at present America has evolved the greatest area of middle-class mentality that the world has ever known—with all the virtues and all the smallness characteristic of a middle-class mentality.

"Besides, in order to be successful in the United States, as a writer or lecturer, one ought to be prepared to subordinate, if necessary, one's vanity or pride to the vanity and pride of the American people. The vanity or pride (whichever you choose to call it) of a psychologist is in speaking and writing the truth as he sees it. For such, at present, there is little recognition in America, unless among a chosen few, in some out-of-the-way nook, sheltered from the noise and clamor of your yellow press and the general welter of commonplace thought."