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Letters to the Editor

ENGLAND AND GERMANY

THE BETTER WAY

TO THE EDITOR OF THE TIMES

Sir,—I do not wish to take up your space by replying to all the criticisms which have been made, but there are just two things I should like to say.

(1) I should, like the Admirals, be very glad to see Pastor Niemöller released from his confinement, but I do not think it is likely to happen so long as the Bishop of Chichester and his friends irritate the authorities in Germany by the constant stream of resolutions that they pass. There was one at Oxford which did a good deal of harm; there was one at Edinburgh, and one at the next meeting of Convocation. I have been strongly advised in Germany that this action does not do any good to those it is intended to benefit. Moreover, the many enemies of National-Socialism must cease to use Pastor Niemöller for propaganda purposes, for we are largely at the mercy of a persistent and unfair propaganda. I receive constant publications such as "The Friends of Europe," as it is called, and "Kulter-kempf," and many others. Whether their statements are true or untrue, they certainly give an unfair picture of the state of Germany.

(2) What I want to suggest is a more excellent way. My own experience (and that of almost every visitor to Germany) is that of very great friendliness. The people desire friendship with this country. They dread the thought of war. In the religious circles in which I moved they constantly expressed their friendliness and desire for closer intimacy with the Church of England. I read their papers regularly while I was in Germany. They were obviously full of interest in this country. Any criticism I came across was fairly expressed. Their report of English political events was very good. Their whole attitude was different from what might be gathered by the extracts from them occasionally published in this country. Would it not be desirable that we should reciprocate this friendliness? The mass of the German people are in no way responsible for what we complain of. They rarely are aware of what is happening: if they know they often condemn it strongly. But there can be no peace without good will. Would it not be wiser and more Christian if we were to attempt to show good will instead of indulging in a continuous and often unfair criticism, which seems so often dictated by political animosity, and is expressed in language which is neither diplomatic nor charitable?

If we were to adopt such a course we should probably accomplish a great deal of what we desire much better than by the present methods. If we persist in these methods we shall injure those whom we profess to sympathize with. We shall certainly exasperate the authorities of the country, and we may very possibly plunge the world into disaster.

I am, &c.,

A. C. GLOUCESTR:

The Palace, Gloucester, Aug. 3.