A change of pulse, a flush, a rising of anger, a blaze of eye and contraction of muscle, a flood and tide of loathing and of wrath, which, if you put Zarathustra or even Eraste Geisweid on that Belgian piano, would unite into a formidable "No, not this! The poor pianist, we have seen, will and constantly does play Bach or Beethoven, masters who, though they died a longer time ago, are not less German than Strauss and Mozart, and still more than Brahms. But Bach in his Toccaten-pièces, and Beethoven with his 1820 choker and Byronian hair, let alone both having lived in a nice, friendly, humiliated pre-Bismarckian Germany, do not suggest the idea modern German, as is the case with Brahms's beery beard and presumably green-checkered Loden mantel. Bach and Beethoven belong no longer to "Germany," but to a vague Elysium of pianoforte Classics, not even necessary; (in future that shall be seen to) fingered and monetroned at Leipzig. Bach and Beethoven are not associated with that word (a word we all nowadays avoid, unless, indeed, we gnash or spew it out in impassioned hatred) that word "German." They cause no reviviscence of orgasm in the Belgian pianist's brain, nerves, heart and other visceras; so peacefully he plays them. That, comparing great tragedies with little ones, is like my dear old relative and that road whose aspect and name awake (and that is another curious item in such psychology), was expected to awaken, the horror and misery of the run-over dog. They are both cases of subjective, of emotional association, not between things and happenings such as makes us say, "It is," but between things or happenings or their bare look or name and a particular inner state of our own, making us say, "I love, I desire," or in the present year 1915 more frequently "I loathe, I execrate, I abominate; shrink from or trample on them."

This latter kind of association has stood the human, and the animal, race in very good stead. If any of us are now alive, it is because our parents or grandparents, and dimmest stone-age forbear thus associated outside things and happenings (and their aspect and name) with some such more or less violent inner state and intimate perturbations as are called desire, fear, or rage. But useful and indispensable though it be, this tremendous association of things and names of things with our inner states, passions, or moods is nevertheless that which has longest and most obscured our knowledge of what concerns most closely our practical guidance to wit the relations, the associations, of things and happenings observable irrespective of our feelings; in other words, the macroeconomic and microwork order of the universe, by whose consent alone we and our feelings are there at all. Our knowledge and our power are proportioned to the degree to which this objective association of things and happenings irrespective of ourselves (even in ourselves when contemplated or analysed by our reason), objective association which is called experience, fact and law, hence also foreknowledge and plan/succeeds in emerging from the fluctuating, warm, violent chaos of that other kind of association which we call desire, hope, fear—in short, passion or mood, and in so far largely delusion. The Maya's veil thrown over the intelligible universe is nothing but the network of his own temporary and accidental, individual or collective, but always inner and emotional associations; the Maya's veil which makes Brahms's love-songs stir up the horse and hatted bred by massacre and arson, even as that lovely Italian riverside road, with peasant's chant and scent of rye flower or flowering vine were wafted from its solitary fields, meant for my poor old friend nothing but what she had felt when the poor little dog lay crushed under her ear. And since a time of war is a time of constant and concentrated and contagious emotional effort, it is quite natural that, while it lasts, people should see and judge and act and speak all through that Maya's veil of passionate delusion. Nor must there be brevity words—for what is prettier than a face seen through a veil, and what more looks like a god's name than this Maya?—make us think that way-delusions are at least in degree pretty. Those Sweden-Nobel Committee, somewhat at a loss what next to give its circumspectHerr Pil. Dr. Helmer Key, with their access to Swedish newspapers, reviews, pamphlets, Jurys, protests, and sundry utterances, signed or unsigned, individual or collective, of all the intellectualls of the Swedes in all nations, are probably clear on that point. What they now ask us to tell them is how much of it all is going to remain. How long, when millions of poor mangled corpses shall have transmuted into horrifying bush vegetation, how long will the silly evil words continue to be bandished about, or that, the ghosts, glowing silence prevail in all the corners? Dear Swedish neutrals of the Svezia Daciaque antiquitate, it is not for us to tell you: it is for you to help us...

For as the country which protects its material corn from foreign competition is reduced, like my dear Italians, to a smaller and smaller loaf, so also the countries which this war's evil passions shall have surrounded by spiritual custom houses will assuredly eat less and less of the spiritual bread of life, and very ill-baked and innutritious at that! Vernon Lee.