

AN APPEAL TO THE UNIVERSITIES OF AMERICA.

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WHEN half the world is falling upon Germany in a spirit of hatred and envy, it is a comforting thought to us Germans to feel that we may be sure of the sympathy of the American universities. It is to them, if anywhere in the world, that we must look for a correct comprehension of the present situation and the present attitude of Germany. Many American scholars have been educated at our universities and know of the excellent quality and the peaceful tendency of German work; the exchange of professors has increased the mutual understanding, and continuous intercourse in scholarly research makes us seem like members of one great community. This is why we entertain the hope that the scientific circles of America will not give credence to the slanders our enemies concoct against us.

Those calumnies accuse Germany above all of having brought about the present war, and of being responsible for the monstrous struggle which is extending more and more over the whole world. In reality exactly the opposite is the case. It is very much against our will that our foes have disturbed us in our peaceful work and forced the war upon us. We are engaged in a righteous war for the preservation of our existence and at the same time for the sacred ideals of humanity. The murder of Serajewo was not our work, it was the outcome of a widespread conspiracy pointing back, however, to Servia, whence for many years a strong feeling against Austria had originated which was supported by Russia. It was Russia therefore that took the affair of the assassination and the assassins under her protection and weeks before the war broke out she had promised her assistance to that bloodstained state. It was Russia alone that gave a critical turn to the event, and Russia alone is to blame for the outbreak of the war. The

German emperor has proved his love of peace by a peaceful reign of more than twenty-five years in the face of increasing danger. He tried most zealously to mediate between Austria and Russia; but during his negotiations with the Czar, Russia was engaged in mobilizing a gigantic army along the German frontier. This necessitated an open and decisive inquiry that led to the war, but war followed only because Russia wanted it so, because she wanted to rouse the Moscovites against the Germans and Western Slavs, and to lead Asia into the field against Europe.

France too might have remained at peace, as the decision rested solely with her. The security of Germany demanded that she should inquire what France would do in the impending war; the answer of France unmistakably betrayed her intention of taking part. As a matter of fact it was not Germany but France that commenced the war.

Before the war England was closely allied to France. From the very beginning she has clearly shown that she by no means wanted to keep absolutely neutral. From the very beginning she has endeavored to protect France against Germany. The German invasion of Belgium undoubtedly served England as a welcome pretext openly to declare her hostility. In fact neutrality had been violated by Belgium in favor of the French before the German invasion. It has been officially stated, for instance, that not only before but also after the outbreak of the war French officers were in Liège for the purpose of instructing Belgian troops in the defence of fortifications. England's complaint of the violation of international law is the grossest hypocrisy and the vilest Pharisaism. Just as English politics have without scruple always disregarded all legal standards as soon as England's interest was touched, so during the last few weeks has the same method been sufficiently manifest in the unlawful capture of the Turkish warships, and still more in the instigation of the Japanese to undertake the detestable raid upon German territory in China which can only end in strengthening the power of that Mongolian nation at the expense of Europe and America.

How is it possible for a nation that has so betrayed valuable interests of western civilization as soon as it could benefit thereby—how is it possible for such an accomplice of Japanese depredation to assume the rôle of guardian of morality?

We Germans did not want this war, but as it has been forced upon us we shall carry it on bravely and vigorously. In the face of all envy and hatred, all brutality and hypocrisy, Germany has

the firm conviction that she is serving a righteous cause, and in the struggle for self-preservation as well as for the sacred ideals of humanity, that she is indeed defending the progress of true civilization. This consciousness gives her inflexible strength and the absolute certainty that she will repulse every attack of her enemies. In this conviction our people do not stand in need of any encouragement from abroad, but rely absolutely upon themselves, trusting in the justice of their cause.

Nevertheless it is important and comforting to us to know that the thoughts and sympathies of our American friends are with us in this gigantic struggle. We feel fully justified in expressing this openly as the conviction of all German scholars, since both of us are closely bound by so many scientific and personal relations with the universities of America. These universities know what German culture means to the world, and so will stand by Germany.