

## FOR A RE-ESTABLISHMENT OF INTERNATIONAL FRIENDSHIP.

BY THE EDITOR.

**B**EFORE I use the word "lie" when confronted with an undeniable untruth, I think twice; for it is difficult to prove the conscious intention that constitutes a lie as distinguished from a simple untruth. But before I would fasten the word liar upon a whole nation, be it the mass of the people or their government, I would think thrice. The fact is that during the last two years a great number of untruths, very regrettable untruths, have been told in the German as well as in the American newspapers, and the result has been an estrangement between these two nations, which (together with England) are called upon to work out in harmonious and peaceful competition the ideal of humanity, the Parliament of the World, the United States of the two Hemispheres.

I shall not attempt now to investigate the source of these untruths; nor is it necessary, for untruths originate spontaneously from dearth of sensations, from desire for gain, (now in the interests of the bulls, now in the interest of the bears,) or from secret grudges of a private nature; but they originate anyway, and find a most easy entrance in our, the American, press, which is most careless and most irresponsible in divulging anything that may attract attention and increase circulation. I fail to see that the various untruths and unfriendly utterances in our own, the American, press and in the fatherland were English inventions, and Mr. Vocke has failed to prove it. There is not even a probability of their being English inventions, for the English press contained less venomous articles on these mooted questions than either the German or the American press.

The principle observed in the publication of news is different

here from what it is in Europe. Our papers publish anything and everything, truths as well as rumors of truths, and actual lies, while European papers are more restricted in this direction and can be called to account. This makes a great difference. The American press is irresponsible, we may say unbridled, and we know it. Think of the vile accusations to which our Presidents are exposed before and sometimes even after election! We are at present not concerned with the question whether or not our press is badly managed, but with the fact that when untruths appear in American papers they cannot be of much consequence, because they exercise a temporary influence only.

Now, let us for argument's sake assume that the untruths in the American press were due to British intrigue, what shall we say of the untruths and unfriendly bickerings of the German press in Germany? Shall we believe they too were inspired by British intrigue?<sup>1</sup>

It is a pity that all these incidents and misunderstandings occurred, for otherwise the Philippines (which are, as has been frequently predicted, a white elephant on our hands) might be German by this time. The majority of our people scarcely wanted to keep the islands; but as matters are now, we must keep them and make the best of it; and it is not impossible that our new duties may in the long run widen our range of experience and exercise a wholesome and educational influence upon our people. But if the German navy had not appeared in full force at Manila, the United States might have been glad to leave Spain free to sell the islands to the highest bidder, and we might have saved twenty million

<sup>1</sup> While I do not hesitate to blame American papers for spreading untruths which tended to aggravate the situation, I cannot acquit the very best German newspapers and magazines of the same charge. The climax was capped in an article by Herr Stoerk, professor of political economy at the University of Greifswald, which appeared in *Die deutsche Revue*. His attacks on America are mean and based on gross ignorance. According to the *Hamburger Nachrichten*, the greatest German statesman cherished a great dislike for "the Yankees," whom he characterised as "anti-German," and he is reported to have added, "The German-Americans are just as bad if not worse." The Germans of the fatherland are as a rule sadly mixed up about American conditions, and, having learned through the German-American press something about the corruption of our local politics, think that everything in this country is as rotten as the average conscience of aldermen, "boodlers," and political "bosses." The American victories in the Spanish-American war were therefore unexpected surprises. When, judging from straws in the wind, I felt that America began to be misjudged in Germany, I wrote an article, which, however, was rejected by *Die deutsche Rundschau*, on the plea that they had published similar articles (!) and were fully informed on American conditions (!). In the meantime one of the contributors of the *Rundschau* spoke of the unchivalrous policy of the Yankees. When Professor Evans of Munich wrote me that the *Augsburger Allgemeine Zeitung* would publish the article, the war was practically over my predictions were more than fulfilled, and the article would have needed a revision. But at any rate, it was too late to speak, for the mischief had been done, and there was little use in trying to mend it.

dollars and further war expenses. Then Germany would have the responsibility of keeping order, which weighs now heavily on us, while we should not have lost the advantages of trade, which (as England has found out) are after all the main thing.

Mind, I am not an Anglomaniac. I do not tolerate that foolish imitation of English style (simply because it is English) which is quite fashionable in certain circles. Nor am I blind to all the little national vanities and comical features of the English character which expose John Bull to the humorous comments of other nations, but I desire to be just, and I find not only no evidence of English intrigues in the divulgence of these latest untruths, but on the contrary I am becoming more and more convinced that the English have had nothing to do with them—most assuredly not the English nation, neither the people at large nor the government.

And I regretted all the more the policy of fastening a lie on England, as for the first time in our national history cordial relations have been established between our own people, the United States of America, and the people of England.

We Americans as a nation are the product of the entire European civilisation. All the various peoples of the old world have contributed to the make up of this country in proportion to their own importance, and I do not hesitate to say that two nationalities stand foremost as parent-nations of ours; the one is Great Britain, the other is Germany. Let us not forget what we owe to either one of them. To Germany we owe the best impulses of our scientific and educational aspirations, the spiritual, intellectual, and philosophical character of our nation; to Great Britain we owe our political institutions. The influence of German thought and German method on this country cannot be underrated, and a dear old friend of mine, a German university professor, wrote me not long ago when groaning under the oppression of a temporary reaction that overshadowed the fatherland as with a black cloud: "I will not lose hope. Should it come to the worst, the spirit of German thought will be resurrected on the other side of the Atlantic unhampered and with wider outlooks."

I was born in Germany and I have good reasons to be proud of it. I believe in the power of German thought, and my own family has produced several men who rank very high in the history of German science; but at the same time I always believed in freedom and in the wholesomeness of freedom. I believe that the spirit of American institutions is good. There is of course a good scope for improvement in all branches of our political life, espe-

cially in local city governments, but for all that the principle of freedom is right. Mistakes are made by paternal governments as well as by the administrators of free nations; mistakes will always be made; let a free people enjoy the benefit of making mistakes. Such is the school of life. That is the way of educating the people and teaching them the right use of liberty. I believed in freedom while still living in Germany and was drawn to this country by the congeniality of its institutions. I am wont to say, that I am a native American born in Germany, and I venture to say that this is true of the great majority of German-Americans. They love Germany, but they love at the same time the bracing air of American freedom and of the free institutions of this country. It is universally recognised that Germans make the best American citizens, and the reason is that even before they come hither, they are in sympathy with the free institutions of this country.

Many of our best German-American citizens are refugees from their old home for the very reason that they fought against the German authorities, sword in hand, for the establishment of free institutions. Their American patriotism is of the same type as the patriotism of the colonists, who for the sake of freedom did not shrink from taking up arms against their own mother country.

And this is the reason why American patriotism is more intense than any other patriotism. It is not merely the natural attachment to the place where one happens to have been born, but it is a love of freedom, of cosmopolitan ideals, and of the humanitarian breadth to which the fathers of our nation have pledged the further development of the United States of North America.

A cosmopolitan attitude toward other peoples is an important feature of our national ideals. Our policy therefore must be peaceful except when we are attacked, or when our independence or honor is endangered.

As to the German-Americans, to whom I myself belong, I deem it as a matter of course that it is in our interest to preserve the good *entente* between the two nations to which we are related, to the one by birth, to the other by adoption. But our German brothers in the fatherland must also learn to appreciate the spirit of this country and not to think lightly of our love of American ideals. Their worth will finally be justified in spite of the unavoidable accompaniment of nuisances and prurient excrescences of freedom. And at the same time let us bear in mind that England must be the third nation to whom our cordial friendship should be

extended. In fact, England has extended her hand of friendship to us first and she did so in an outburst of popular sympathy which cannot be suspected of any sinister motives and was then and at once officially endorsed by the English government. Let us not without very grave and sufficient reasons run England down or stir popular indignation against it. In the present case the offence cannot be charged to the country even if it could be proved that English reporters were found guilty of having invented the mooted falsehoods. England is very near to us, as it is also to Germany, kin in blood, kin in language, and cherishing similar, perhaps the same, ideals of the further commercial and industrial development of mankind.

We can learn many good things from England, for she is the country that has produced the prototype of liberal institutions all over the world, for our country not less than for Germany.

There is one point where there seems to be a disagreement between Mr. Vocke's and my own political views, but the difference may be due to the different usage of the word "alliance." He is opposed to the triple-alliance of the three Teutonic nations, the Germans, the English, and the Americans, which I have advocated, and I have quoted by way of explanation what I understand alliances of such a nature to be. When the Anglo-Saxon Alliance was the topic of the day, I said in *The Open Court*, Vol. XII., No. 9, p. 375 :

"The Anglo-Saxon alliance is not a diplomatic treaty ; nor should it be. It is the recognition of a deep-seated sympathy between two powerful nations, kin in blood, the same in language, similar in institutions, and cherishing peaceful ideals of civilisation. It is not in opposition to other nations, but simply indicates that the United States and Great Britain have become conscious of a solidarity of interests and would regard a war that unfortunately might break out between them as a civil war, deplorable under all conditions. The Anglo-Saxon alliance finally tends toward the establishment of a parliament of the world."

This kind of alliance, this recognition of a deep-seated sympathy, should not remain limited to England and the United States, but should be extended to other nations, above all to Germany, the second mother-country of the United States. There need be no fear of entanglements, but there ought to be the establishment of mutual confidence and good-will. I am aware that alliances of this kind cannot be made by the governments, but must grow from acts of international friendship, and the first step towards it consists in pointing out the desirability of such a relation. Mr. Vocke will probably not dissent from me on this ground, when he

bears in mind the significance which I would give to the word "alliance."

In conclusion I must express to Mr. William Vocke not only my thanks for giving a detailed exposition of his views to our readers, but also my satisfaction at our agreement on the main point in question, that it is "the high mission of our German-American citizens . . . to preserve for all times the former esteem and cordial relations between the two nations."