

Thus Germany endeavours to corrupt the honor of Belgium, for how could Belgium regard an invasion by another country as a "kind neutrality"? Not only by international law but by faithfulness to the other powers who signed the treaty of neutrality in 1839 and confirmed it in 1870, Belgium was practically bound to offer resistance to any kind of hostile action displayed by Germany. The Belgian minister in response to Germany's note stated that "Belgium has always been true to her international obligations. She has fulfilled her duty in a spirit of loyal impartiality, and that the government of Belgium firmly intend to repulse by all the means at her disposition any attempt against their right."

But the German Government replied that if Belgium did assume a hostile attitude toward her armies and even opposed them, then it would "be necessary for the Imperial Government, with very much regret, to take such measures which he (the Emperor) may consider indispensable, even by force of arms." In this last assertion we have, pure and simple, a threat that Belgium as a kingdom would cease to exist after the war. The art of diplomacy, at least, should have prompted the German minister to refrain from such an assertion.

Many there are, however, who will claim that Germany was not obliged to observe the neutrality of Belgium, and that Belgium itself was not strictly bound to make opposition to the German advance. They try to force the opinion that England took the violation of the neutrality of Belgium as a pretext to humble Germany. But such ideas are absolutely false. Their falsity can be demonstrated by the treaty concluded in 1870, when Great Britain, France, Austria and Russia, Prussia and the German Confederation bound themselves to enforce by arms the guarantees of the treaty formed in 1839. In this same treaty of 1870, Britain promised to join France in war against the German invasion of Belgium, while she also engaged herself to Germany in case France should violate Belgium neutrality.

Belgium was perfectly justified in the resisting of the German invasion, for no neutral country can in justice permit an enemy to occupy her land as a base to direct her arms against a foe. Belgium is on the just side of the well defined principles of international law, respecting her neutrality, and her magnificent resistance was but the part of her duty.