

and by France and had bound herself by treaty to attack whichever nation should violate it. She took the same stand in 1914. France thereupon pledged herself to observe and respect the neutrality of Belgium. The same pledge was demanded of Germany; and Germany's contemptuous answer was the invasion of Belgian territory.

German apologists have the temerity to declare that under the circumstances it was the duty of Belgium to permit without hindrance the peaceful passage of German armies through her territory for the purpose of attacking France. Under the law of nations, as established by The Hague Peace Conference in 1907, a neutral power cannot allow any belligerent to move across its territory troops or convoys either of munitions of war or supplies. Belgium, by permitting the course which Germany demanded, would herself have committed an act of war against France. Imagine for one moment the situation: German armies pass through Belgian territory to attack France without hindrance from Belgium; they emerge upon French territory and are attacked and perhaps driven back; they take refuge in Belgian territory and emerge again. The wild unreason of suggesting that Belgium could permit this and maintain the status of a neutral and independent state will not bear and does not merit discussion.

An American citizen who had received one of the innumerable German pamphlets that are being circulated in the United States, wrote back in answer, "If you desire to justify your cause, tell me first of all why you are in Belgium and what you are doing there."

The habit of German thought toward problems of government is entirely different from and indeed antagonistic to the conception which is entertained in English-speaking countries. They theorize upon the weakness of a government, such as ours, subject through responsible ministers to the will of Parliament and the control of the people. The Emperor's advisers are selected by himself and are responsible to him alone. It is the German ideal that the individual exists for the State and not the State for the individual. They sincerely believe that the German ideal is the true one and that the systems of democratic government which prevail in English-speaking countries are of a temporary and evanescent type. Their great modern historian has declared that just as the greatness of Germany is to be found in the governance of Germany by Prussia so the greatness and good of the world is to be found in the pre-dominance there of German culture and of the German mind,—in a word, of the German character.