

## MAETERLINCK'S OPINION

(By Maurice Maeterlinck)

At these moments of tragedy none should be allowed to speak who cannot shoulder a rifle, for the written word seems so monstrously useless and so overwhelmingly trivial in face of this mighty drama that will for a long time and maybe forever free mankind from the scourge of war—the one scourge among all that cannot be excused and that cannot be explained since alone among all scourges it issues entirely from the hands of man.

But it is while this scourge is upon us—while we have our being in its very centre—that we shall do well to weigh the guilt of those who committed this inexpiable crime. It is now when we are in the awful horror, undergoing and feeling it, that we have the energy and clear-sightedness needed to judge it. From the depths of the most fearful injustice justice is best perceived. When the hour shall have come for settling accounts—it will not be long delayed—we shall have forgotten much of what we have suffered and a censurable pity will creep over us and cloud our eyes.

## WILL SEEK SYMPATHY

This is the moment, therefore, for us to frame our inexorable resolution. After the final victory, when the enemy is crushed—as crushed he will be—efforts will be made to enlist our sympathy. We shall be told that the unfortunate German people are merely the victims of their monarch, and their feudal caste; that no blame attaches to the Germany we know that is so sympathetic and cordial—the Germany of quaint old houses and open hearted greetings—the Germany that sits under its lime trees beneath the clear light of the moon—but only to Prussia, hateful, arrogant Prussia; that homely, peace loving Bavaria, the genial, hospitable dwellers on the banks of the Rhine, the Silesian and Saxon—I know not who besides—have merely obeyed and been compelled to obey orders they detested, but were unable to resist.

We are in the face of reality now. Let us look at it well and pronounce our sentence, for this is the moment when we hold the proofs in our hands; when the elements of the crime are hot before us and should out—the truth that will soon fade from our memory. Let us tell ourselves now therefore that all