

WAR ADDRESSES OF
WOODROW WILSON



WAR ADDRESSES OF WOODROW WILSON

WITH AN INTRODUCTION AND NOTES

BY

ARTHUR ROY LEONARD, M.A.

HEAD OF DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY AND ECONOMICS
HIGH SCHOOL OF COMMERCE, COLUMBUS, OHIO

GINN AND COMPANY

BOSTON • NEW YORK • CHICAGO • LONDON
ATLANTA • DALLAS • COLUMBUS • SAN FRANCISCO

PREFACE

There are three reasons why the study of President Wilson's war addresses may wisely be included in the course of study of every secondary school in America. The first is their intrinsic literary merit. President Wilson has a happy faculty for expressing his thoughts in remarkably clear and forceful English. His feelings, however provocative the occasion, never obscure his thought. His terse, clear-cut, cool-headed manner of stating facts is worthy of careful study by America's young people, whose thinking, as a rule, is not characterized by these qualities.

A second reason for the study of President Wilson's addresses is their timeliness. Fortunately the day is passed when America's teachers were afraid to introduce the writings of living Americans into the curriculum as literature. Because young people will be more interested in the addresses of President Wilson than in Burke's "Speech on Conciliation," for example, is certainly not a reason for refusing to study them.

The third reason may best be indicated by a quotation from the President's letter of August 23, 1917, to school officers:

The war is bringing to the minds of our people a new appreciation of the problems of national life, and a deeper understanding of the meaning and aims of democracy. Matters which heretofore have seemed commonplace and

PREFACE

trivial are seen in a truer light. The urgent demand for the production and proper distribution of food and other national resources has made us aware of the close dependence of individual on individual and nation on nation. The effort to keep up social and industrial organizations in spite of the withdrawal of men for the army has revealed the extent to which modern life has become complex and specialized.

These and other lessons of the war must be learned quickly if we are intelligently and successfully to defend our institutions. When the war is over, we must apply the wisdom which we have acquired in purging and ennobling the life of the world.

In these vital tasks of acquiring a broader view of human possibilities the common school must have a large part. I urge that teachers and other school officers increase materially the time and attention devoted to instruction bearing directly on the problems of community and national life.

Such a plea is no way foreign to the spirit of American public education or of existing practices. Nor is it a plea for a temporary enlargement of the school program appropriate merely to the period of the war. It is a plea for a realization in public education of the new emphasis which the war has given to the ideals of democracy and to the broader conceptions of national life.

It is the belief of the editor that a study of the President's discussion of the aim and purpose of the war will do more than any other equal amount of study to bring to our young people a realization of the real meaning of the democracy for which we are trying to make the world safe. Clear, cogent thinking is vastly more important as an element of patriotism than flag-waving and cheering, though these latter have their place.

PREFACE

The work of editing these addresses has been a real pleasure. The length of the Introduction is due to an effort to make the setting of the addresses clear to young people who perhaps were not in high school when the war began. The notes are brief, because it has seemed better to let the President speak for himself. The aim of the teacher should be to help the pupil to grasp the real thought of the addresses, to appreciate their clear-cut conciseness, and to arouse a thoughtful, earnest love for the land that fights for no selfish ends.

It may be added that President Wilson has expressly authorized the editor to use these addresses in this manner.

ARTHUR R. LEONARD

COLUMBUS, OHIO

INTRODUCTION

WOODROW WILSON: A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Woodrow Wilson, the twenty-eighth president of the United States, was born at Staunton, Virginia, on December 28, 1856, of Scotch-Irish ancestry. His grandfather, James Wilson, came to Philadelphia from Ireland in 1807 and became the publisher of a chain of newspapers. His wife was Anne Adams, an Ulster girl. Woodrow Wilson's father, Reverend Joseph Ruggles Wilson, was the youngest son of James Wilson, and was born in Steubenville, Ohio. He married Janet Woodrow, of Chillicothe, Ohio, daughter of Reverend Thomas Woodrow, a Scotch Presbyterian minister. In 1855 Reverend Joseph Wilson became pastor of a Presbyterian church in Staunton, Virginia, and here Thomas Woodrow Wilson was born.

The Wilson family removed to Augusta, Georgia, before Woodrow was two years old. Thus his childhood was spent in the South during the Civil War. His first teacher was a Confederate veteran who had returned from four years of soldiering. In 1870 the family moved to Columbia, South Carolina, where Woodrow attended a local academy. At the age of seventeen he entered Davidson College, North Carolina, where he remained less than a year, because of ill health. In 1875 he entered Princeton College and graduated in 1879. He was noted in his college days for his debating and literary ability and was editor of the *Princetonian*. In 1881 he graduated in law from the University of Virginia, and practiced law for a

INTRODUCTION

year in Atlanta, Georgia. Then he entered Johns Hopkins University for post-graduate work in political science. He received the degree of Ph.D. in 1886, his thesis on "Congressional Government" being at once accepted as authoritative. For three years (1885-1888) Mr. Wilson taught at Bryn Mawr College, going then to Wesleyan University, Middletown, Connecticut, for two years (1888-1890). He was called to Princeton in 1890 as Professor of Jurisprudence and Political Economy. In 1902 he was made president of Princeton University, his term of office being noted for many important reforms, all of which were in the direction of the democratization of the institution.

In 1910 Mr. Wilson was urged to become a candidate for governor of New Jersey. He was elected as a Democrat in a state which had been Republican for sixteen years. As governor of New Jersey he was able to put into operation many reforms which his long study of political philosophy had convinced him were wise. Among these were a direct-primary law and a corrupt-practices act which have since met with general acceptance in our political system. A law creating a public-utilities commission and establishing stringent control over corporations has generally been regarded a most salutary reform in dealing with the difficult matter of relationship between the state and the corporations. Mr. Wilson's success in bringing about these reforms was so marked that he soon became a leading candidate for the presidency. At the Democratic National Convention in Baltimore in 1912 Mr. Wilson was nominated on the forty-sixth ballot. A split in the Republican party that year made his election in November almost inevitable. Mr. Wilson received 435 electoral votes out of 531.

As president, Mr. Wilson has acted along the same lines of progressive and constructive statesmanship which made

INTRODUCTION

him so successful as president of Princeton and governor of New Jersey. He was reëlected in November, 1916, for a second term.

HIS LITERARY WORK

The most remarkable and significant accomplishment of Woodrow Wilson's undergraduate college days was an article on "Cabinet Government in the United States," published in the *International Review* for August, 1879. The article is marked by a breadth of knowledge, range of vision, and independence of thought rarely found in a young man of twenty-three. The Princeton University library has an incomplete bibliography of the published writings and addresses of Woodrow Wilson. This list shows seventy-five titles for the twenty-five years between 1875 and 1900.

The following list includes some of the most important of his books and magazine articles:

- Congressional Government, A Study of American Politics. 1885.
- The State: Elements of History and Practical Politics. 1889.
- Division and Reunion. 1893.
- An Old Master and Other Political Essays. 1893.
- Mere Literature. 1896.
- History of the American People (5 vols.). 1901.
- Constitutional Government in the United States. 1908.
- Mr. Cleveland as President. *Atlantic Monthly*, March, 1897.
- The Makers of the Nation. *Atlantic Monthly*, July, 1897.
- On Being Human. *Atlantic Monthly*, September, 1897.
- A Lawyer with a Style. *Atlantic Monthly*, September, 1898.
- Reconstruction of the Southern States. *Atlantic Monthly*, January, 1901.
- Politics, 1857-1907. *Atlantic Monthly*, November, 1907.
- The States and the Federal Government. *North American Review*, May, 1908.

INTRODUCTION

Woodrow Wilson's style is marked by vivacity and incisiveness, and at times possesses considerable literary charm. Mr. Wilson is an independent thinker, of remarkable breadth of vision, and his discussions of political and historical questions are always clear and convincing. He makes few false motions, uses no superfluous words, but like a master workman makes all his strokes tell. Another noteworthy quality of Woodrow Wilson, the writer, is the measured judgment and calm detachment with which he treats of subjects which ordinarily rouse men's passion to the boiling point. An early example of this characteristic is his essay on "Mr. Cleveland as President" written before the end of Mr. Cleveland's second term. His war addresses are marked by the same cool judgment, the same clear independent thinking, the same range of vision, and the same incisive style which are characteristic of his earlier literary productions. One is never at a loss for his meaning: his words ring like steel on flint; his judgment is never swayed by passion.

HOW THE GREAT WAR BEGAN

Underlying Causes. The murder of Archduke Francis Ferdinand, heir to the throne of Austria-Hungary, on June 28, 1914, set in motion a train of events which culminated in the terrible catastrophe of a great world war. It was clear, however, to everyone familiar with history that this crime was not the real cause of the tremendous struggle which many of the statesmen of Europe had expected and feared for years. The underlying causes of this great world war reach far back into the past and cannot easily be reduced to simple statements. A thorough knowledge of the important political and economic forces which have shaped the history of Europe for a

INTRODUCTION

century past would be needed for a full appreciation of these causes. Of all this network of clashing interests and antagonisms, there are three causes which seem to have contributed most largely toward bringing about the war. These are (1) the clashing of national interests and ideals in Europe; (2) the maintenance of a system of secret military alliances; and (3) the economic rivalry of the nations of Europe.

National Antagonisms. The history of Europe since the downfall of Napoleon has centered around two movements: the growth of democracy and the realization of national ideals. Here we must distinguish clearly between the ambitions of RULERS in Europe and the national ideals and desires of the various groups of PEOPLE having a common language and tradition. Italy achieved independence and unity between 1859 and 1870; German unity was accomplished between 1864 and 1871. The success of these two nationalist movements aroused other nationalities likewise to aspire to national unity and greatness. But there remained at the close of the nineteenth century a number of situations which clearly violated the principle of national sovereignty. The completion of German unity in 1871 had been accomplished by the forcible annexation of Alsace and Lorraine, two provinces inhabited largely by persons of French blood and language. This was an ever-present challenge to the French to attempt to regain these lost provinces. The Italians had a grievance against Austria because certain strips of territory inhabited by Italians remained in Austrian hands. Poland since the eighteenth century had been divided between Prussia, Russia, and Austria. Austria-Hungary herself presented the nationalist problem in its most acute form. The Hapsburg dynasty, with its capital at Vienna, rules over a great number of countries and

INTRODUCTION

provinces inhabited by many races speaking not less than ten distinct languages. One of its greatest difficulties has been to reconcile the interests of the German population of Austria proper with those of the Hungarians on the one hand and of the various Slavic peoples — Bohemians, Poles, Croats, Serbs, etc. — on the other. In 1867 the Empire was divided into two practically independent countries: Austria, dominated by the German element, and Hungary, where the Hungarians are the rulers. This arrangement has been bitterly resented by the Slavs in the Empire because it has kept them in an inferior political position. The Austrian authorities, realizing that the triumph of nationalism would mean the disappearance of the Empire and its parceling out among the surrounding nations, have been fearful of all nationalist movements, — especially that of the southern Slavs.

One of these groups, the Serbs, has been particularly active. Part of the Serbs lived in the provinces of Bosnia and Herzegovina, which, since 1908, have been a part of Austria. Others lived in the kingdoms of Serbia and Montenegro, still others in Turkey in Europe. The ambition of the Pan-Serbian movement was to unite all these people of the Serbian race under one government—Greater Serbia. This Pan-Serbian movement was closely identified with the assassination of the Crown Prince of Austria. The fear of Austria that the movement might succeed was an important motive in causing her to declare war on Serbia on July 28, 1914.

Military Alliances. Bismarck, whose policy of "blood and iron" had brought about the German Empire, believed in a system of firm alliances as a guiding principle of statesmanship. In an effort to isolate France, he strove to unite Russia, Germany, and Austria-Hungary in a defensive alliance (1872). Russia withdrew from this alliance in

INTRODUCTION

1878 because of differences with Austria-Hungary. Later (1882) Italy joined with the Central Powers to form the Triple Alliance. This organization of the states of Central Europe into a strong military alliance was an invitation to the other states of Europe to create an opposing alliance in order to maintain the balance of power. France and Russia, drawn together by common distrust of Germany, formed a Dual Alliance in 1891. Later, in 1904, Great Britain, aroused by the threatening naval policy of Germany, abandoned her policy of isolation and made an agreement with France, and later another with Russia, thus forming what is generally known as the Triple Entente. The existence of these two rival military groups created a situation whereby every political or diplomatic disturbance brought on a crisis.

The first of these crises came in 1905 in a dispute over Morocco. Germany, after the downfall of Bismarck in 1891, had abandoned his policy of opposition to colonial expansion and was looking about for such stray bits of undeveloped land as had not already been appropriated by France and Great Britain. Germany had to choose between two courses. Either she must accept the results of her late entrance into the field as a colonial power, or she must challenge the longer-established world powers and try to create for herself a "place in the sun." She chose the latter course. On March 21, 1905, the German Emperor, while on a voyage to Constantinople, stopped at Tangier and encouraged the Sultan of Morocco to reject the scheme for reform which had been proposed by France. Russia was in the midst of the political upheaval which accompanied the Russo-Japanese War and in no shape to aid France. So France was forced to submit to Germany's terms with reference to Morocco. A second Moroccan crisis occurred in 1911. France made disorders in

INTRODUCTION

Morocco an occasion for penetrating into the interior, and Germany sent a gunboat to Agadir in Morocco as if with hostile intent. Matters came very close to war, but were settled by a considerable cession of Congo territory by France to Germany.

Another phase of Germany's policy of expansion was the *Drang nach Osten*.¹ This policy contemplated the creation, in conjunction with Austria-Hungary, of a great economic sphere of influence extending through the Balkans to Constantinople and thence through Turkey to the Persian Gulf. So the German Emperor cultivated the friendship of the Sultan of Turkey; German officers trained the Turkish forces; German engineers and German capitalists began to develop Turkish resources. The whole scheme was crystallized into a plan for a Berlin-to-Bagdad railroad, which was in process of construction when war broke out in 1914. Following the revolution of 1908 in Turkey, Austria-Hungary, in furthering this eastward expansion, took the opportunity to annex Bosnia and Herzegovina. Russia protested against this violation of the Treaty of Berlin (1878); but Germany stood by her ally, and Russia, unready for war, was compelled to submit.

For the neighboring state of Serbia this annexation was a serious blow. The annexed provinces were peopled with Slavs, and the Serbians had cherished the ambition of uniting with them and Montenegro in a new Slavonic state, Greater Serbia. Moreover, Serbia was now apparently shut off from the sea for all time to come, and so would be dependent for a market for her farm produce on Austria-Hungary. This would keep Serbia a weak and somewhat dependent state, which was what Austria

¹ *Drang nach Osten*, a German phrase meaning "push toward the east."

INTRODUCTION

wanted. In the Balkan War of 1912-1913, however, Serbia burst her boundaries to the south and gained considerable territory. But her ambition to secure a seaport on the Adriatic was blocked by her ancient enemy on the north. The Serbians were bitterly angry at this frustration of their plans by Austria.

Nevertheless, Serbia gained considerable territory and greatly increased her power and influence by the Balkan War. It was Turkey, the friend of Germany, and Bulgaria, the friend of Austria-Hungary, that were defeated and lost prestige. That Germany appreciated the serious blow which had been dealt Teutonic influence in the Balkans was indicated by the passage in 1913 of a new army bill appropriating over \$250,000,000 to increase Germany's standing army to a peace footing of over 700,000 and a war footing of nearly 10,000,000. Then it was the turn of France to be alarmed. She lengthened the term of compulsory military service from two years to three. Russia and Austria made similar moves, none of them completed in 1914.

Economic Causes. Some people have declared that the present war is a dispute over pigs, meaning that Serbia's market for her principal product was under the control of Austria-Hungary. This is a very much exaggerated way of saying what many economists believe, that this war, like many others, has been produced chiefly by economic causes, and is, in essence, a struggle for markets. The Industrial Revolution, which introduced the factory system into England in the eighteenth century, had helped make Great Britain the leading commercial nation of the world. The effects of the Industrial Revolution were not felt in Germany until after 1880, since which time German industries have made marvelous progress, and goods "made in Germany" have appeared in every market.

INTRODUCTION

Great Britain and Germany thus became dangerous commercial rivals. Germany's *Drang nach Osten* was interpreted as an effort to secure some or all of the rich trade with India. Germany's increasing navy was undoubtedly intended to dispute Great Britain's supremacy on the seas and help German merchants secure wider markets. Likewise, the hostility between Russia and Germany may be partly explained by the conflict of economic development. Russia, seriously needing more seaports to develop her resources, has long coveted Constantinople, whose control or possession was also a keystone in Germany's eastward expansion. In pursuance of her policy Russia has played the godmother to the various Balkan states and could hardly be indifferent to their humiliation or extinction.

What has been said ought to make it clear that the European situation in 1914 was a hair-trigger situation, which needed only a slight disturbance to produce tremendous effects.

Outbreak of the War. The hostility of the Serbs against Austria because of her annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1908 and her attitude toward Serbian expansion in 1912-1913, has been noted. In spite of this hostility toward everything Austrian, on June 28, 1914, the Austrian Crown Prince and Princess made a visit to Sarajevo, the capital of Bosnia. While riding through the streets of this city they were both slain by the bullets of a young Austrian Serb, who was an enthusiastic supporter of the Pan-Serbian ideals. This murder of the Austrian Crown Prince was interpreted in Austria-Hungary as a part of the Pan-Serbian movement, which aimed at the inclusion of Bosnia and Herzegovina in a Greater Serbia. In what followed, two motives actuated the Austrian rulers: (1) Serbia, much stronger as a result of the Balkan Wars of 1912-1913, lay in the path of the *Drang nach Osten*

INTRODUCTION

ambition; (2) the success of the Pan-Serbian movement might encourage other racial groups to seek independence and completely disrupt the Empire. Some have said that Austria's choice thus lay between a civil war and a foreign war. Austrian investigators "satisfied" themselves that the murder at Sarajevo had been planned in Belgrade with the knowledge and connivance of high Serbian officials. Wherefore, on July 23, 1914, Austria presented to Serbia an ultimatum, couched in the most vigorous language and demanding compliance within forty-eight hours. It was the sort of ultimatum which no nation presents to an equal unless it desires war; presented to a smaller nation like Serbia it could mean only war or the reduction of the smaller state to the position of a dependent vassal.

Realizing that another crisis had arisen, the statesmen of Great Britain, France, and Russia strove first to secure an extension of time. It is a striking fact that all three of these countries were confronted by serious internal difficulties. Great Britain was threatened with civil war in Ireland over Home Rule; Petrograd was involved in a great strike; in France a government scandal had called from the Minister of War a declaration that the army was in a deplorable state of unpreparedness. Austria flatly refused any extension of time, and the British and Russian ministers persuaded Serbia to make as great a concession as possible.

The Serbian reply was presented just two minutes before the expiration of the time limit. It yielded practically everything which Austria had demanded, so much so that the Russian minister declared that the crisis was over. The demand that Austrian officials should be allowed to sit in Serbian courts at the hearings was not yielded, but even this question Serbia offered to submit to the Hague Court for arbitration. Austria professed to find the answer

INTRODUCTION

unsatisfactory and on July 28 declared war on Serbia. In the meantime the Russian ambassador in Vienna had stated that "any action taken by Austria to humiliate Serbia could not leave Russia indifferent." Austria's action in declaring war, then, is explicable on only two grounds: either she was convinced that Russia was bluffing and would back down, or else Austria was prepared deliberately to bring on a general European war.

Germany and Russia. Throughout all these negotiations Germany had backed Austria fully, refusing to make any move which might have helped in preserving the peace. Now Russia began to mobilize her armies. It became plain that the only hope for peace was to secure some agreement between Russia and Austria. Many efforts to this end were put forth, and on July 31 Austria finally agreed to discuss with Russia the terms of the ultimatum to Serbia. This slim chance of preventing a break at the eleventh hour was immediately nullified by an ultimatum delivered by Germany to Russia at midnight on July 31, demanding that Russia should cease military preparations and begin to demobilize her armies within twelve hours. Russia made no reply; and at 5 P. M. on August 1 Germany declared war on Russia. This action necessarily involved war also on France, for France could hardly refuse to aid her ally.

Germany and Belgium. In 1839 Great Britain, France, Austria, Russia, and Prussia joined in guaranteeing the independence and perpetual neutrality of Belgium. Treaties between Great Britain and France and between Great Britain and Prussia, signed just before the Franco-Prussian War of 1870, pledged Great Britain to aid in defending the neutrality of Belgium if either belligerent violated it. In July, 1914, when war again became imminent, Great Britain tried to secure a renewal of this agreement of 1870.