

WORLD WAR ISSUES AND IDEALS

READINGS IN CONTEMPORARY HISTORY
AND LITERATURE

EDITED BY

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AND

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INTRODUCTION

Every generation needs to be addressed in its own language.—Bosanquet

For youth whose education begins upon a momentous day in history, when vast and cataclysmic political changes must needs influence educational methods as well, this book of essays, sketches, addresses, and state papers has been framed. Time-worn ideals and policies of every nation which had become permanent parts of their people's character and established tenets of their constitutional life have been lifted by a great historical crisis into the foreground. They are being subjected to a searching examination by a majority of humanity to prove that they are worth the millions of lives and the billions of wealth that have been spent in their defense. It is especially necessary for American youth, the ideals of whose nation have been suddenly proposed for framing the basic principles of a world democracy, that they understand what is the best modern interpretation of those ideals, and what are the ideals of those nations whom we are to-day influencing and with whom we have been allied. A new program for a cosmopolitan education must be hereafter adopted. We must henceforth cultivate—to use President Butler's admirable phrase—the quality of "international-mindedness."

Experience of some years in instructing college youth, and at present young men in the United States Naval Academy, where, since the beginning of the World War, considerable attention has been given to the study of the underlying causes and the issues of that war, has bred confidence in the belief that in a book of the character here presented may be found the most expedient means and the most effective method of furnishing, in a brief space of time and without the need of elaborate study, a comprehensive and well-rounded survey of those profound ideas whose significance now engages the attention of the entire thinking world. A further result of that experience has bred the conviction that to latter-day youth, in these stirring

times, ideals and issues become living realities only in direct proportion to the respect which is awakened in them for the influence and the character of the writer or the speaker whose works they study. If a man has proved in the present his ability to influence events, if his discussions upon matters of national import show his ability to rephrase old traditions in terms of contemporary life, that man — rewarded with influence and recognized with leadership — is most likely to quicken and invigorate his youthful reader; far more so, indeed, than is the other writer or speaker who, while living a generation before and enunciating principles which have since become classic examples of conduct, has not himself reached the fringe of this vital present day when the whole world has been battling for an Ideal.

In emphasizing the need of making ideas living realities to American youth, the editors feel themselves in accord with certain pedagogical principles which have, in recent years, exerted a considerable influence upon introductory courses in our colleges and universities. Not the least important example of this influence is to be found in the program of the War Issues Course fashioned by the Committee on Education and Special Training for the purposes of the War Department. "The purpose of the War Issues Course," says that Committee, "is to enhance the morale of the members of the Corps by giving them an understanding of what the war is about and the supreme importance to civilization of the cause for which we are fighting." It was intended to make this War of Ideas a living reality to each man. The Committee therefore desired that, so far as the limited time of the course allowed, opportunity should be made for a discussion of the various points of view, the attitudes of life and of society, the philosophy which we have been called upon to defend, and the ideas against which we have fought. The student possessing a knowledge of the issues and the ideals at stake in the international situation and giving some reflection to the various national characteristics and to the conflicts in the points of view — as these are expressed in the literature and the history of the various states — would then realize the full purpose and the international character of the War Issues Course. When one now considers the almost immeasurable

influence which the events of the last several years will have upon our education hereafter, and recalls also the particular influence which the Committee on Education and Special Training has had upon the college and university life in more recent days, one may well predict that however temporary may be the physical place of this particular group of educators, its intellectual influence will be obvious for many years to come.

Altogether in sympathy with this influence, and in order to present the issues and the ideals which have been so significant in these momentous historical times in a form that is compact as well as unqualifiedly authoritative, the editors have made this survey of national and international motives. It has been a peculiar privilege to be able to gather this collection of essays, speeches, and sketches from so many distinguished sources and from the writings of so various a group of statesmen and of men of letters. In spite of the variety of material, it is hoped that the arrangement here will suggest some sense of unity. The editors have sought, first, through the most distinguished spokesmen of the major warring nations, to present the conflicting issues of the war, the spirit which has guided their youth and their citizenry, and the ideals underlying the philosophy and the history of their respective governments. Then, the gains from the war as these are now possible to approximate, the relation of force to peace in a democracy, the conditions which may hereafter make for a permanent peace, the vision of the new Europe which shall henceforth arise — all these it has been thought desirable to reflect not alone from President Wilson's state papers but also from the writings of distinguished educators and scholars. To youthful readers, furthermore, and to nonparticipants generally, no great crisis of a political or social nature can be made a reality by an appeal to the intellect alone. Some reflection of the atmosphere of the war, presenting in its narrative and descriptive sketches a challenge to the imagination and the senses of the reader, has, therefore, also been thought worth including. Finally, since this book of selections is intended primarily for American youth, a reflection more or less comprehensive is necessary to remind the student of certain permanent aims and ideas underlying American character and American politics.

For that reason a handful of recent interpretations concerned with American domestic matters and with American foreign policy has been included. These, showing America from within and from without, will lead the thoughtful person to gather for himself some conclusions with respect to those tendencies in our life which have brought the nation to its present consecration to the cause of democracy and international justice.

In times like these, when all public matters are painted before the national consciousness in huge brush-strokes, there is offered to the college instructor and to the teacher generally a fortunate opportunity to combine the study of great ideals and momentous acts with the work of composition. How significant the use of the vigorous writing of these stirring days is for the service of English-composition courses may be seen not only in the adoption of the practice by many schools and colleges but also from the recommendation of its value by educators now directly serving the government. One need scarcely reassert — what these educators have already so well emphasized — the supreme value of classroom discussions, arguments, reports, speeches, and written exercises in which there is evidence of the student's own reflection upon matters debated in the classroom, and proof that he has grasped the intent of the various ideals and ideas which this war of contrasts presents. It is for these objects that any effective introductory course must be planned. It is the hope of the editors that teachers of English may find within this large variety of material — the vigorous writing of distinguished men who almost invariably express themselves with force and with character — not only ideas but also those models of literary style and facility of expression without which no course in English composition can be taught constructively. Among the many models here of undoubted literary excellence are speeches, essays, after-dinner addresses, orations, persuasive expositions, sketches, personal narratives, and magazine articles, written for different occasions and for a large variety of objects, a very large number of which — in the opinion of competent critics — must remain, both for the forcefulness of their ideas and for their intrinsic literary excellence, permanent models of prose composition.

Bearing in mind the compressed character which introductory courses must necessarily have, and the consequent need of selections that can be mastered in not more than one or two assignments, the editors have purposely avoided abstruse ideas and the use of the extended selections so frequently found in books of this nature. In adapting, therefore, the various articles for present requirements, they have found it necessary, much as they would have desired not to do so, to omit parts of many articles. The larger gaps in these articles have been indicated, but in every case the author's ideas and his methods of presentation have been scrupulously preserved. To indicate every omission of material would have made the selections appear fragmentary, and lacking in that very unity which the editors feel each article still possesses.

It is but a commonplace to observe that a book of selective readings must serve, at best, as a mere introduction to that major study of those historical backgrounds, philosophies, and literatures which together constitute the true and permanent material for an understanding of the ideals and the national characteristics of peoples represented. With the requirements of effective teaching in mind, and the importance of opportunity for choice by the individual teacher before them, the editors have tried to present, within the space of a single volume, as large a variety of ideas and from as many points of view as possible. Life in a national institution during a period of great historical importance offers a unique opportunity for studying the most expedient way to meet the needs and requirements of young men who must be trained quickly but efficiently for public service. The editors entertain the hope that this compendious reflection of ideas affords at least one practical solution to the problem which such an exigency presents. The purpose in gathering this group of essays, sketches, and state papers will be completely fulfilled, however, only when the articles in this collection shall prove of such significant value that the student, either of his own accord or through the stimulus of his instructors, shall be led to investigate the larger and more important works of the writers. When, by so doing, the American youth becomes awakened into a reflective, vigorous, and useful American citizen, may we then hope that the master

spirits of the present will furnish him with the inspiration for a study of the master spirits of the past. The editors have, for this reason, indicated in the biographical sketches the names of many of the better-known works of the various writers. In the references for collateral reading, to be found in the back of the book, are noted, furthermore, short but comprehensive articles by writers and speakers of distinction, furnishing additional light upon the subjects discussed in this volume. These articles, as well as the standard reference books which quickly define terms not mentioned in the notes, can be found in any fair library.

To the various authors and to the publishers, without whose sympathy and interest in the purpose of this book its creation would have been impossible, the editors desire to express their profound gratitude. For generous information in regard to the War Issues Course and the new conditions now existing in colleges and universities, the editors would express their indebtedness to Professor Frank Aydelotte, the Director of the War Issues Course, and to those coöperating with him.

M. E. S.
W. B. N.

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WORLD WAR ISSUES AND IDEALS

I

THE ISSUES OF THE WORLD WAR

A WAR FOR DEMOCRACY

(Message to Congress, April 2, 1917)

WOODROW WILSON

[Woodrow Wilson (1856-), President of the United States since 1913, was educated at Princeton, the University of Virginia, and at Johns Hopkins, and later taught history and political science at Bryn Mawr, Wesleyan, and Princeton. From 1902 to 1910 he served as President of Princeton University. He was then elected Governor of New Jersey. His most important writings are "Congressional Government" (1885), "The State" (1889), "History of the American People" (1902), and a life of Washington. The best examples of his essays are "Ideals of America" (*Atlantic Monthly* for December, 1902) and "When a Man Comes to Himself" (1915). The present selection is from his Message to Congress on April 2, 1917, in which he recommended the declaration of war against Germany. Its sentence, "The world must be made safe for democracy," has become the rallying cry of all the nations fighting Germany, and best expresses the causes and underlying aims of American participation in the World War.]

GENTLEMEN OF THE CONGRESS:

I have called the Congress into extraordinary session because there are serious, very serious, choices of policy to be made, and made immediately, which it was neither right nor constitutionally permissible that I should assume the responsibility of making.

On the third of February last I officially laid before you the extraordinary announcement of the Imperial German Government that on and after the first day of February it was its purpose to put aside all restraints of law or of humanity and use its submarines to sink every vessel that sought to approach either the ports of Great Britain and Ireland or the western coasts of Europe or any of the ports controlled by

the enemies of Germany within the Mediterranean. That had seemed to be the object of the German submarine warfare earlier in the war, but since April of last year the Imperial Government had somewhat restrained the commanders of its undersea craft in conformity with its promise then given to us that passenger boats should not be sunk and that due warning would be given to all other vessels which its submarines might seek to destroy, when no resistance was offered or escape attempted, and care taken that their crews were given at least a fair chance to save their lives in their open boats. The precautions taken were meager and haphazard enough, as was proved in distressing instance after instance in the progress of the cruel and unmanly business, but a certain degree of restraint was observed. The new policy has swept every restriction aside. Vessels of every kind, whatever their flag, their character, their cargo, their destination, their errand, have been ruthlessly sent to the bottom without warning and without thought of help or mercy for those on board, the vessels of friendly neutrals along with those of belligerents. Even hospital ships and ships carrying relief to the sorely bereaved and stricken people of Belgium, though the latter were provided with safe conduct through the proscribed areas by the German Government itself and were distinguished by unmistakable marks of identity, have been sunk with the same reckless lack of compassion or of principle.

I was for a little while unable to believe that such things would in fact be done by any government that had hitherto subscribed to the humane practices of civilized nations. International law had its origin in the attempt to set up some law which would be respected and observed upon the seas, where no nation had right of dominion and where lay the free highways of the world. By painful stage after stage has that law been built up, with meager enough results, indeed, after all was accomplished that could be accomplished, but always with a clear view, at least, of what the heart and conscience of mankind demanded. This minimum of right

the German Government has swept aside under the plea of retaliation and necessity and because it had no weapons which it could use at sea except these, which it is impossible to employ as it is employing them without throwing to the winds all scruples of humanity or of respect for the understandings that were supposed to underlie the intercourse of the world. I am not now thinking of the loss of property involved, immense and serious as that is, but only of the wanton and wholesale destruction of the lives of non-combatants, men, women, and children, engaged in pursuits which have always, even in the darkest periods of modern history, been deemed innocent and legitimate. Property can be paid for; the lives of peaceful and innocent people cannot be. The present German submarine warfare against commerce is a warfare against mankind.

It is a war against all nations. American ships have been sunk, American lives taken, in ways which it has stirred us very deeply to learn of, but the ships and people of other neutral and friendly nations have been sunk and overwhelmed in the waters in the same way. There has been no discrimination. The challenge is to all mankind. Each nation must decide for itself how it will meet it. The choice we make for ourselves must be made with a moderation of counsel and a temperateness of judgment befitting our character and our motives as a nation. We must put excited feeling away. Our motive will not be revenge or the victorious assertion of the physical might of the nation, but only the vindication of right, of human right, of which we are only a single champion.

When I addressed the Congress on the twenty-sixth of February last I thought that it would suffice to assert our neutral rights with arms, our right to use the seas against unlawful interference, our right to keep our people safe against unlawful violence. But armed neutrality, it now appears, is impracticable. Because submarines are in effect outlaws when used as the German submarines have been used against merchant shipping, it is impossible to defend ships against their

attacks as the law of nations has assumed that merchantmen would defend themselves against privateers or cruisers, visible craft giving chase upon the open sea. It is common prudence in such circumstances, grim necessity indeed, to endeavor to destroy them before they have shown their own intention. They must be dealt with upon sight, if dealt with at all. The German Government denies the right of neutrals to use arms at all within the areas of the sea which it has proscribed, even in the defense of rights which no modern publicist has ever before questioned their right to defend. The intimation is conveyed that the armed guards which we have placed on our merchant ships will be treated as beyond the pale of law and subject to be dealt with as pirates would be. Armed neutrality is ineffectual enough at best; in such circumstances and in the face of such pretensions it is worse than ineffectual: it is likely only to produce what it was meant to prevent; it is practically certain to draw us into the war without either the rights or the effectiveness of belligerents. There is one choice we cannot make, we are incapable of making: we will not choose the path of submission and suffer the most sacred rights of our nation and our people to be ignored or violated. The wrongs against which we now array ourselves are no common wrongs; they cut to the very roots of human life.

With a profound sense of the solemn and even tragical character of the step I am taking and of the grave responsibilities which it involves, but in unhesitating obedience to what I deem my constitutional duty, I advise that the Congress declare the recent course of the Imperial German Government to be in fact nothing less than war against the government and people of the United States; that it formally accept the status of belligerent which has thus been thrust upon it; and that it take immediate steps not only to put the country in a more thorough state of defense but also to exert all its power and employ all its resources to bring the Government of the German Empire to terms and end the war. . . .