



# Defeating the German Spy System in America

By HENRY ROOD

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**L**ONG before the United States entered the war, indeed, as far back as the summer of 1915, those familiar with rapidly developing conditions in Europe and sufficiently level-headed to understand the German menace to America became convinced that should we enter the world conflict, a series of explosions, fires, and other violent acts, especially in seaboard cities, manufacturing towns, munition works, and shipyards might be expected.

Repeated outrages during 1914 and 1915 convinced far-sighted and hard-headed men of the fact that Germany had built up in this country a most efficient spy-system; that one of its main functions would be to throw the whole country into confusion, should we enter the war, and that no measures to accomplish this would be deemed too desperate or too diabolical.

That official agents and volunteer upholders of the kaiser were ready to attempt an era of truly German frightfulness cannot be doubted for a moment by those conversant with the facts. The plans included wholesale murder of hundreds of non-combatants when far at sea. An accompanying photograph shows one of the infernal machines constructed for this purpose. It was found in possession of Robert Fay, who aroused suspicion against himself by running around the harbor of New York in the afternoons and evenings of the summer of 1915. The swift launch he used was carefully observed, and he was kept under surveillance until late in the summer, when, with the infernal machine and two associates, he was taken into custody.

The machine consists of a zinc-lined box

about three feet long, sixteen inches wide, and sixteen inches deep. Part of it contains a combination of springs which, when released, would fire two rifle cartridges into a mass of T. N. T., the most powerful explosive known to science. The box contained space for enough T. N. T. to destroy the largest ship afloat. Fay's plan was to attach the machine to the rudder-post of a vessel, where it would remain unnoticed. When the ship finally sailed, repeated action of the rudder, through altering the ship's course, would gradually wind the spring tighter and tighter until at last it would be released, the cartridges would be fired, and the T. N. T. would explode so suddenly and with such overwhelming power that those on board would never know what happened.

Fay and his assistants were arrested, tried, convicted, and he and his chief assistant were sentenced to the Atlanta penitentiary. The assistant is still there; Fay escaped at the end of six months.

Long ago it became apparent that the United States was infested by German spies, German plotters, German propagandists, and active pro-German sympathizers, ranging from high officials of the German Imperial Government, prominent financiers, and well-known business men down to restaurant waiters. The majority, of course, were underlings whose business was to carry out orders from the comparatively few "higher up." Most dangerous of all were the German spies, who, however, did not become spies in the legal meaning of that word until we went to war with the country they represented; for a spy is a person who is engaged for the time being in obtaining information

for an enemy. In a technical sense Germany was not our enemy until Congress declared that a state of war existed with that power; therefore such of her secret agents as were engaged in gaining information did not become spies until April 6, 1917. This should be clearly understood. If found on or near a military reservation or base or near a naval station or base, a spy is tried by court martial, and, if found guilty, may be shot. Up to the time this article is written, March, 1918, no spy has been shot.

It is apparent at first glance that no single community, no local committee of public safety, no police force of any one municipality, could cope with a spy system on a national basis. Here and there a man might be suspected of being a German spy; but to grapple with the problem as scattered over the whole United States, something was needed far greater than any local organization. The Federal Government alone could handle it.

There are several departments of the Federal Government which maintain bureaus of detection and investigation. For example, the United States Secret Service is a branch of the Treasury Department. The State Department has its own agents. The army and the navy each maintains an intelligence bureau, and a good many years ago the Department of Justice organized its Bureau of Investigation and employed a considerable number of skilled, experienced agents. These last are the men usually referred to as "Secret-Service" operators, although technically this is not correct.

To facilitate its duties, the Bureau of Investigation has divided the United States into districts, placing in each a district commander with a sufficient number of agents under his control. The various district commanders report to the chief of the bureau, who has his headquarters in the Department of Justice building in Washington. Immediately upon the outbreak of the European War in 1914 the Bureau of Investigation began to increase its force of agents, and did everything in its power to prevent violation of neutral-

ity laws while the United States maintained its status as a neutral. Important assistance was rendered by other intelligence branches of the Government, by corresponding agencies of various governments at war with Germany, and by certain private persons.

As a result of this combined effort the Department of Justice learned of plans for wide-spread conspiracy against the peace and safety of the American people that were being systematically carried out by a multitude of German propagandists, pro-German sympathizers, and potential spies. The police departments of several large cities, including New York, also uncovered evidence of plots and crimes planned or actually committed by order of Germany's officials stationed throughout the country. Consequently, when our own crisis with Germany approached early in 1917, the Bureau of Investigation already possessed a voluminous record of German potential spies, propagandists, and active sympathizers in every part of the land. The spies, of course, would be the most dangerous of all enemy agents, for their business would be to transmit to Germany a continuous stream of information about our military and naval preparations; therefore, in event of war, it would be extremely important to strike such a sudden, stunning blow that the German spy system in the United States would be virtually put out of business. This accomplished, the rank and file of German agents other than spies, who were expected to attempt setting fire to munition plants, etc., and to interfere in every way possible with our preparations, could be dealt with individually as occasion demanded.

Whatever may have been thought by others as to the possibility of war, the Bureau of Investigation had that possibility in mind, and in March, 1917, it sent out from the Department of Justice building in Washington a code message addressed to each district commander of the bureau. This message was brief and simple. It warned its agents throughout the United States to locate certain men and to be

ready to seize them on receipt of a later telegram. The agents for a long time had been carefully watching the entire group of higher German officials here, including Papen, Koenig, Boy-Ed, Rintelen and all of the other principals who had been for more than two years directing their criminal conspiracy against the American people. Not merely were these ringleaders watched, but the Department of Justice had ascertained the names, locations, and business of an immense number of their associates.

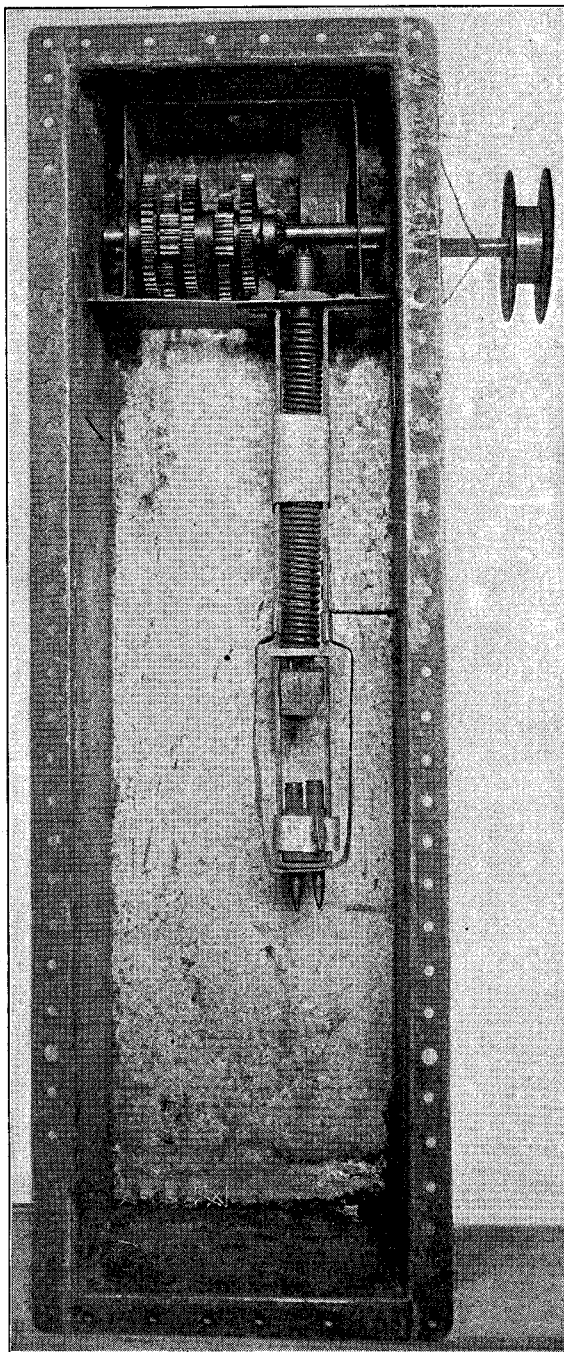
On April 2 the Senate and the House passed a joint resolution declaring that a state of war existed between the Imperial German Government and the Government and the people of the United States. This joint resolution was approved and signed by the President on April 6. Instantly the Department of Justice flashed a second code message to its agents throughout the country, and at once every known German spy in the United States was seized and conveyed under armed guard to the nearest military authorities. This was done so quickly that the spies had no time to turn around in their tracks, much less to execute any plans that they may have been directed to carry out.

At this point the question naturally arises as to what became of German spies who had not been discovered, who had not been located, and consequently were not seized in that extraordinary round-up during the late afternoon and evening of April 6.

It was not supposed that every German spy had been discovered. Such a thing would be in the nature of a miracle, considering the secrecy and the comprehensiveness of Germany's system of planting innumerable spies throughout friendly countries.

Yet the very elaborateness of that German system, its extraordinary organization, proved its undoing in the hour of crisis.

In a single office of a railway company or other large American business establishment employing one or two hundred



FAY'S INFERNAL MACHINE FOR BLOWING UP STEAMSHIPS



men there might have been three or four German spies working in the same room for years, and not one of them even suspecting that any of the others was a fellow-spy. In the United States at least, a German spy never knows who is just above him in rank or who is just below him. As a matter of fact, each one is ordered to report to just one man in the United States and to receive instructions only from that man. To understand the wrecking of the system on April 6, 1917, take the entirely supposable case of a German spy located in Omaha who had not been discovered by the Department of Justice, and consequently was not seized during the round-up on April 6. He would have known just one other German spy in the United States, this being a man in Chicago, perhaps, to whom he reported and from whom he received orders. But while the Omaha man escaped arrest, his superior in Chicago was seized. Of course the Omaha spy had no means of knowing that the Chicago man had been seized; all he knew was that after April 6 he did not hear from the Chicago spy and could not get into communication with him. The Chicago man had simply disappeared without leaving a trace of his whereabouts. Here, then, was the Omaha spy completely isolated, still at liberty, but marooned in a foreign land, not knowing or even suspecting the identity of a single other spy planted here by the German Government. He had nobody to turn to, nobody whom he could trust, nobody from whom he could receive instructions. The German spy machine had been organized with such elaborate secrecy that when a single link was broken, the chain fell to pieces.

While the spy system thus fell to pieces, one must not imagine that individual spies who escaped arrest remained inactive. Abundant evidence shows that the more enterprising of these secret enemies of the United States lost no time in taking independent steps whereby, through indirect routes, information of great value could be communicated to Berlin. Many of these methods have been discovered and

broken up. Privately owned wireless plants have been dismantled, thousands upon thousands of letters have been examined by experts in detecting and interpreting various code systems, while passengers on outgoing ships and members of crews have not been exempt from painstaking and thorough examination of their personal belongings.

Since the United States entered the war one difficulty after another has arisen, to be disposed of as promptly as possible, and sometimes by sheer ingenuity, because no means had been provided for protecting the country against the machinations of a German spy system. We had not been engaged in a carefully organized, systematic campaign to conquer the world by financial and commercial "penetration," by political intrigue, by implanting in the minds of generation after generation the belief, amounting to a religious obsession, that among all nations of the earth the Lord had personally selected Americans to rule over the whole world. For example, we did not place American secret agents in every nook and corner of Germany to see that children in the public schools throughout that empire were taught English; that the text-books they studied contained passages skilfully woven into various chapters which left in the pupil's plastic mind an almost ineradicable impression that American culture, American statesmen, American writers, composers, painters, scientists, inventors, etc., were superior to those of any others of the human race.

Having no such organization of American secret agents throughout Germany, we went our way, paying no heed to the fact that just across the Atlantic lay a great power which for forty years had been getting its huge military and naval establishment in readiness to strike mercilessly, without warning, and with crushing force. Therefore it was that shortly after April 6, 1917, we found ourselves confronted with numerous and unexpected difficulties, some being of large, some of minor, importance.

One of the latter thrust itself in the

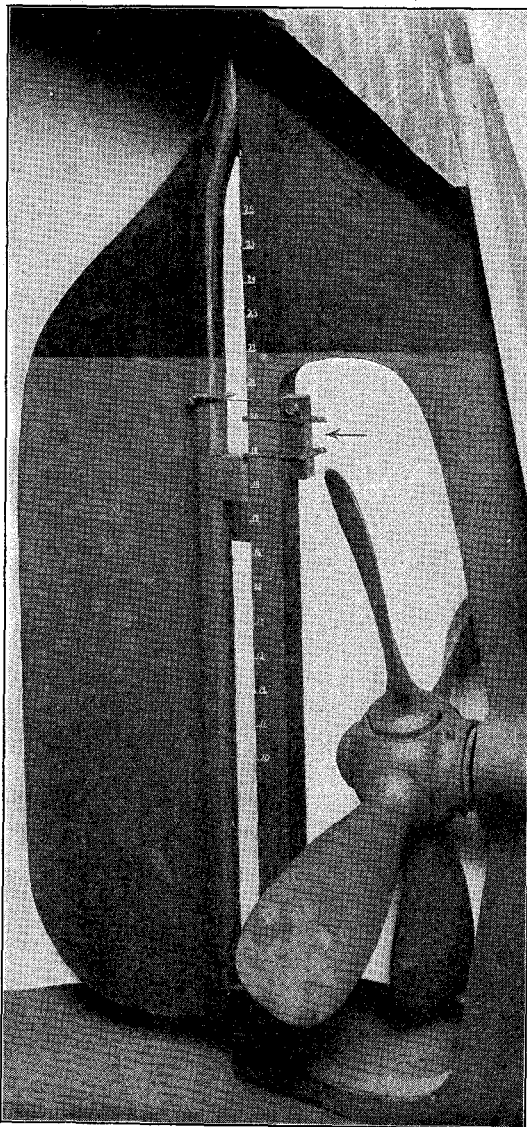
foreground immediately after war was declared by the United States. At that time a large number of German ships lay in various American ports, where they had remained in safety ever since the European War broke out in 1914. Other German ships on the high seas in August, 1914, ran for American ports to avoid capture by British or French men-of-war. Virtually all of them were still tied up in American ports on April 6, 1917. During the period between August, 1914, and April 6, 1917, officers and crews of these ships felt themselves safe in a land where neutrality was observed and international law rigorously adhered to. For the most part they lived on board or close by their ships.

These men had come here on a peaceful errand, that of handling ships engaged in mercantile and passenger service. They could not be classed as enemies seeking entrance to this country in time of war, because they arrived a long time before we were in the war. Yet, although marooned in American ports, they were trained men and virtually all of them German reservists, identified with their fatherland. Notwithstanding the special conditions, however, they could not be allowed to continue at large once the United States was at war with the sailors' government, to which they owed and professed allegiance. They were seized and confined under jurisdiction of the United States immigration authorities for about six months, and then were transferred in relays to Hot Springs, North Carolina, where all sorts of mechanics and artisans, upon arriving in small detachments, were put to work building their own internment camp. The Government supplied the lumber, the German seamen went to work, and in a short time a camp, surrounded by a high stockade, was ready for the sixteen hundred men who were later brought there from different immigration stations throughout the country.

Many do not understand why interned

alien enemies are permitted to lead a comfortable life; but it is in accordance with the provisions of the Hague Tribunal framed to protect the prisoner of war. Though deprived of liberty he has certain rights.

At the present writing there are in various internment camps, federal prisons, and military barracks possibly five thousand



FAY'S INTERNAL MACHINE FASTENED ON RUDDER-POST OF SHIP AT LEFT OF PROPELLER BLADE

war prisoners, some of them alien enemies, others enemies who are not aliens. Among the latter are approximately two hundred farmers of Oklahoma alone, tried

and convicted for interfering with the draft and otherwise opposing the Government of the United States. These men are now serving sentences running from seven to twenty years. Avowed anarchists seeking to break the laws, as well as men and women engaged in conspiracy to destroy or to hamper our war preparations, have been arrested almost daily throughout the country. On January 19, thirty-six German agents and propagandists were taken from Ellis Island, New York Harbor, under military guard, to a prison camp near Fort Oglethorpe, Georgia; among them Hugo Schmidt, paymaster of the Bolo-Pacha-Bernstorff plot to debauch the press of France in behalf of Germany; Rudolph Hecht, an able German financier who directed the flotation of German imperial treasury notes in the United States before we entered the war; Baron von Seebeck, son of a German general who helped to overwhelm Belgium in 1914; Otto J. Merkel, a master-propagandist, who spread German-colored information through the assistance of certain friendly professors in colleges and universities. As these men, on a ferryboat, steamed past the Statue of Liberty they made contemptuous remarks about the emblematic figure and what it stands for; and, to show further their defiance of the United States, sang roaring choruses of German patriotic songs, including "Die Wacht am Rhine" and "Deutschland über Alles."

To indicate the wide-spread extent of pro-German activities in this country nearly a year after we entered the war, three instances may be cited, accounts of which recently were printed in a New York daily paper. One despatch, from Houston, Texas, related that the mayor and ten citizens of a near-by town, Fayetteville, had been arrested for displaying the German flag at the Fayetteville Germania Club. A second despatch, from Philadelphia, told how agents of the Department of Justice had raided the residence of Adalbert Fischer, previously interned at Fort Du Pont, Delaware, and that the raid disclosed large quantities of

documents linking Fischer with German activities in this country and with officials high in the German Government. The third despatch, from Cleveland, Ohio, recorded the arrest there of twenty-seven Germans, fifteen of whom had refused to take out zone-permits as directed by the Federal Government, the other twelve being held for failure to have permits in their possession. In order to show the utter contempt this type of German has for the American people, American institutions, and American law, one other instance may be quoted from the same daily, an especially flagrant case of defiance by a German named Paul Jaeger, of Hoboken, New Jersey, who refused to have his photograph taken as the registration act commanded, and calmly walked into police headquarters at Hoboken and asked the police what they were going to do about it. They put him in a cell.

Contempt for American law, defiance of American government, is by no means a new manifestation on the part of Germans residing or sojourning here. From the time hostilities broke out in Europe in 1914, and until the United States entered the war in April, 1917, this country and Germany supposedly were on friendly footing. Ambassador von Bernstorff and his staff, as well as German consuls and consuls-general throughout the land, enjoyed all protection and all privileges accorded representatives of friendly powers. They were official and honored guests in our national household; yet they betrayed our hospitality to such extent, they tried so constantly to disrupt our people, to destroy our industries, to embroil us in bitter quarrels with neighboring countries, that finally we were forced to set detectives on their trail.

The activities of Germany's spy system, Germany's attempts to corrupt public opinion, German conspiracies, and German efforts to destroy our industries during the years from 1914 to 1917, were so great in number as to preclude even a brief listing of them all in a single magazine article; but it is worth while to recall certain items in the long list, certain



representative instances, and to keep these in mind when once more imperial Germany invites offers of "an honorable peace" from the Entente Allies and the United States. The information which follows cannot be questioned; it is set forth in official documents of the Federal Government.

Koenig, chief of the Hamburg-American secret service, passed under thirty-one aliases while serving as a spy in this country and Canada. He was active in passport frauds, induced Gustave Stahl to perjure himself by declaring that the *Lusitania* was armed, and plotted destruction of the Welland Canal in Ontario.

Attempts to corrupt public opinion in the United States proceeded steadily from the earliest days of the European War. Dr. Dernburg, driven from this country by a wave of indignation caused by his attempted defense of the *Lusitania* crime, previously had been traveling up and down the country, with other professional propagandists, trying to win American support for Germany. Newspapers were started with German money, while others received secret subsidies from the German Government. A check for five thousand dollars was discovered that Count von Bernstorff had sent to Marcus Braun, editor of "Fair Play." A letter was discovered which George Sylvester Viereck, editor of "Fatherland," had sent to Privy Councilor Albert, the German agent, arranging for a monthly subsidy of \$1,750, to be delivered to him through the hands of intermediaries, women whose names he abbreviates "to prevent any possible injury." There is a record of three thousand paid through the German embassy to finance the lecture tour of Miss Ray Beveridge, an American artist, who was further to be supplied with German war pictures. German sympathizers tried to obtain control of at least one New York daily newspaper, and about half a dozen weekly papers devoted themselves almost wholly to German propaganda. On January 22, 1917, Ambassador von Bernstorff cabled his Government, asking authority to expend fifty

thousand dollars, "in order, as on former occasions, to influence Congress through the organization you know of." This interesting message is one of many at present reposing in the archives of the State Department.

Conspiracies almost without number have been brought to light, guided, directed, financed by Boy-Ed, Papen, Rintelen, Tauscher, and Igel, all of whom were directly connected with the German Government. For example, the federal authorities have in their possession a check made out to Koenig's order and signed by Papen, identified by number in a secret report of the German Bureau of Investigation as being used to procure \$150 for the payment of a bomb-maker who was to plant explosives disguised as coal in bunkers of merchant ships sailing from New York. In defiance of our customs regulations, food supplies, coal, etc., were sent to German raiders at sea by Boy-Ed, Dr. Buenz, formerly German minister to Mexico, the German consulate at San Francisco, and officials of the Hamburg-American and North German Lloyd steamship lines.

Papen and Igel supervised the manufacture of incendiary bombs on the *Friedrich der Grosse*, then in New York harbor, which were later stowed away on outgoing ships. Rintelen financed the Labor's National Peace Council, which tried to corrupt legislators and labor leaders. Through an anti-British agitator in New York, one John Devoy, relations were maintained with the Irish revolutionaries, and money was paid to Sir Roger Casement, afterward executed in London for treason. German diplomats in the United States were implicated in the Separatist movement in the Province of Quebec.

A small volume could be written about schemes and plans of German agents to destroy American industries by bringing on strikes and inducing men to quit work. German sympathizers tried to bring about a strike of 23,000 longshoremen in order to prevent ships from being loaded with supplies for France, Belgium, and En-

gland, and that was not the only attempt. Ambassador Dumba and Consul-General von Nuber published advertisements in American newspapers calling upon all loyal Austrians to quit work in munition factories. German official documents, in possession of federal authorities, exposed a pretended labor bureau as being in reality a branch of the German Secret Service, which had been eminently successful in fomenting strikes and other disturbances in American munition plants. The British, it will be remembered, seized Dumba's letter to Archibald, wherein were explained Dumba's plans to bring about disturbances in the Bethlehem Steel Works.

Two years before we entered the war ninety-eight persons were arrested in San Francisco, among them German consuls and consuls-general, charged with fomenting a revolution in India, recruiting and sending men to India, and obtaining large quantities of arms and ammunition paid for with German funds. Three of the principal German defendants at this trial pleaded guilty.

The most extraordinary of all Germany's efforts to disrupt the United States into several small sections, with the intention later on of conquering section after section, as recently undertaken in Russia, was made public by the secretary of state in February, 1917, through disclosure of a note addressed by Doctor Alfred Zimmermann, then German foreign minister, to the German minister in Mexico. The note is dated January 19, while Germany and the United States were still ostensibly maintaining friendly relations, and twelve days before Germany announced her intention to resume unrestricted submarine warfare. The note proposed that in the event of the United States ceasing to remain neutral, an alliance should be entered into between the Imperial German Government and the Republic of Mexico, whereby Germany was to furnish general financial support, and Mexico was to send armies across the border, attacking and defeating armies of the United States there situated,

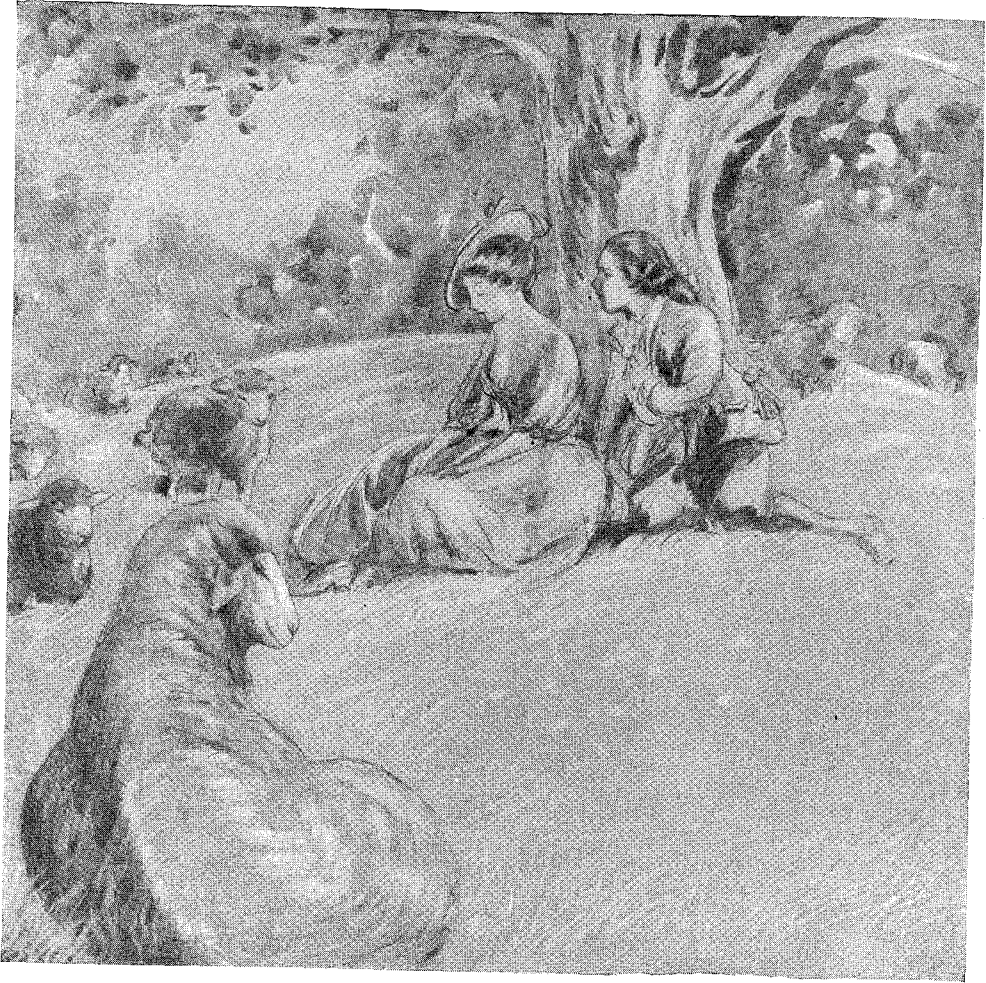
the Mexican forces to push northward until they had wrested New Mexico, Texas, and Arizona from the Union. The Zimmermann proposal directed the German minister of Mexico to inform the President of Mexico of this plan in the greatest confidence as soon as it was certain that the United States would enter the European War, and included a plan for the President of Mexico to bring Japan into the deal.

Dr. Zimmermann's note is as follows, the text corresponding exactly with that in possession of the State Department:

On the 1st of February we intend to begin submarine warfare unrestricted. In spite of this it is our intention to endeavor to keep neutral the United States of America. If this attempt is not successful, we propose an alliance on the following basis with Mexico: That we shall make war together and together make peace. We shall give general financial support, and it is understood that Mexico is to re-conquer the lost territory in New Mexico, Texas, and Arizona. The details are left to you for settlement. You are instructed to inform the President of Mexico of the above in the greatest confidence as soon as it is certain there will be an outbreak of war with the United States and suggest that the President of Mexico on his own initiative should communicate with Japan suggesting adherence at once to this plan; at the same time offer to mediate between Germany and Japan. Please call to the attention of the President of Mexico that the employment of ruthless submarine warfare now promises to compel England to make peace in a few months.

Despite innumerable proofs of the utter perfidy and dishonor of Germany in her international relations, German propaganda is still being continued insidiously, though often unconsciously, by thoughtless pacifists who are ignorant of the true situation. It is intimately bound up with the entire intricate situation directly affecting the peace and safety of the American Republic.





## To a Sheep

By OLIVER HERFORD

Why is it when we come to recognize  
Defects we deemed peculiarly our own  
In some one else we are unduly prone,  
Instead of pardoning, to criticize?  
Why are we ever ready to despise,  
Who should, instead, be eager to condone?  
Instead of being first to cast a stone,  
Should we not be the first to sympathize?  
Wherefore men call the sheep a silly beast  
Because, manlike, he follows where he's led,  
Manlike obeys a crook, manlike is fleeced,  
Like man, too, he has sheep's eyes in his head  
To cast upon his kind, and last, not least,  
Like man the sheep is honored when he's dead.