

**ENGLAND'S EFFORT,
SIX LETTERS TO AN
AMERICAN FRIEND**

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England's effort, six letters to an American friend by Mrs. Humphry Ward

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MRS. HUMPHRY WARD

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*Per arma, per caedes, ab ipso
Ducit opes animonque ferro.*

ENGLAND'S EFFORT

Six Letters to an American Friend

BY
MRS. HUMPHRY WARD

WITH A PREFACE
BY
THE EARL OF ROSEBERY, K.G.

LONDON
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1916

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PREFACE

I AM bidden to write a preface to this little book, though it is impossible, I think, to add any interest to these vivid and helpful letters. By writing them, Mrs. Humphry Ward has struck an effective blow for our country. What she writes is, of course, sure to find readers. But literary charm is not the purpose of this book, though it lends an incidental attraction. It is intended to inform the mind of Americans as to the efforts and sacrifices of Great Britain in this war. As to these, American opinion is, in some quarters at any rate, said to be not fully informed, and sometimes wholly misinformed. It would appear, indeed, that the branch of organisation in which for a time we were least successful was that of presenting our case to neutral States ; and yet the moral importance of this operation can scarcely be exaggerated. The Prussians, as consummately prepared for war as we were unprepared, have not neglected this branch of business, and have carried it out with their usual unscrupulousness.

The consummate preparation of Prussia for this war is, indeed, at the base of all argument as to its authors. It is of no use then, as Mrs. Ward points out, for their Chancellors and pamphleteers to assert that a perfidious Albion engineered this war for its own base, and it may be added, inscrutable purposes. For the one simple incontrovertible proof of our innocence is that we were wholly unprepared for such a conflict, while Germany was armed to the teeth and prepared in every detail of organisation. It is not for the Army of 150,000 to scheme war against the Army of millions. Our exertions have been since the war began; and from that point of view alone they are superhuman.

Why were we not prepared? In the first place because our Government could not be persuaded of the imminence of the danger. But above all, because democracies never prepare for war. There are always prophets to preach that civilisation has put an end to such a barbarous method of settling disputes, and multitudes to be tickled by so agreeable a doctrine. There are always politicians anxious to postpone military to more popular forms of expenditure.

These letters then are primarily intended to make known to those Americans who are disposed to think of us as laggards the gigantic and unparalleled efforts which we are making in this gigantic and unparalleled war. To the American public we feel that we have a right to appeal. We do not presume to measure or criticise the attitude of the Government of the United States and its anxiety to keep clear of the hideous conflagration. But none the less do we feel that we may claim the sympathy of the disinterested American people for the unselfish but heroic part that our nation is playing in defence of the liberties of the world. For let none mistake. If Prussian ideals should be victorious in this conflict it means the definite abasement of Europe, and an infamous invasion of freedom and public law which would not be restricted to the old world. To mention only one case, it is clear that Prussian supremacy would imply a constant and imminent danger from the 'hyphenated' Americans who preserve Prussian sympathies and methods in the bosom of the Great Republic, methods which have already been abundantly manifest in plot and outrage.