

A Memorial

AGAINST THE USE OF ARMED AIRSHIPS.

WE, the undersigned, protest against the use of aërial vessels in War. We appeal to all Governments to foster by every means in their power an international understanding which shall preserve the world from what will add a new hideousness to the present hideousness of Warfare.

Without universal agreement, no single Power can stay its hand: every day of ingenuity and every pound of money spent diminishes the chance of such agreement.

The occasion is unique. The civilised world is now alive to the ghastliness and economic waste of War; the Hague Conference is an established fact. For the first time, in the face of a new development of the arts of fighting, Nations possess both the conscience and the machinery necessary to check that development effectually.

All Civilisation protests its desire for Peace and Goodwill; protests its wish to reduce the already grievous burden of armaments. Unless its protestations be those of a hopeless hypocrite, it cannot stand and watch the conquest of the air, that most glorious of men's mechanical achievements, callously turned to the usages of destruction; it cannot idly acquiesce in a new departure that must heavily increase this burden of armaments.

There are many who believe that aërial warfare, by reason of its sheer horror, must prove a blessing in disguise, frightening men from War. To those we say: Civilisation does not sanction the ravages of a new and arrestable form of disease, in order that men through horror may be the more eager to join hands in stamping out all forms of sickness. And further: You under-rate the fortitude and adaptability of human nature, which has long proved that it can endure all forms of terror.

There are some who insist that the art of flying will never reach full development without the stimulus of War. To such we suggest that the story of mankind does not leave us without hope that where there is demand, even when only for the purposes of peaceful life, there will also be supply. If the art of flying be delayed a few years by the resolve of men to use that art for mutual help, and not for mutual destruction, the world will be no loser.

There are many who argue that because men fight on earth and water, they may just as well fight in the air. To these we answer: There has never yet been a moment when it was practically possible to ban the War machines of earth or water. There is a moment when it is practically possible to ban those of the air. That moment is now—before the use of these machines is proved; before great vested interests have formed.

Governments are Trustees not only of the present, but of the future of mankind. Fortune has placed this moment in the hands of the Governments of to-day. We pray of them to use it wisely.

(Signed)

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NOTE—*Invitations to sign were not sent to Members of either House of Parliament.*

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