

## BY WAY OF INTRODUCTION

Since 1907 no report of the doings of the Society for the History of the Germans in Maryland has been published; annually a meeting was held, officials elected, and the hope expressed that soon there might be something brought forward to justify the printing. The nestor and chief contributor in the Society's field, Louis P. Hennighausen, was aging, others had passed away; from time to time effort was made to secure some one competent to take up the work of delving into the past and bringing forth into light such fragments as would interestingly show the contribution that those of German blood and origin had made to the cultural and economic development of our State and nation, but all without avail.

Then came the World War which diverted the attention and energy of men, ending in our own intervention and participation.

Through the war years and for a long time thereafter the Society remained inactive.

Now that the world has returned to reason and discovered that the Belgian-German treaty and Wilson's fourteen points were both alike "but scraps of paper" we deem it meet to again resume our labors.

And in this we call upon all of those of German blood and origin to aid us. For, as has been aptly said by Max Otto von Klock in a recent number of the *Stauben News*—

"Just as hundreds of thousands in the land of our ancestors have been converted to a higher conception of their existence and their racial importance by the realization that they are links in the chain that binds the past to the future, a realization brought about primarily by a comprehension that their

own lives, the lives of their forebears, the lives of their descendants are elements of the history of their race, intrinsic and indispensable elements without which history could neither exist nor be imagined, so should our own racials over here realize that that which the German-Americans have done in the past, ought to be and is of the greatest importance to them, just as their own conduct now will be of importance to their descendants; that, since they are links in the chain it behooves them to see to it that the connection and the tradition be maintained in their full strength, and that, if they keep the memory of their ancestors green, their own children will keep green again the memory of their fathers and mothers. That is the other side of what we call the upkeep of the family history. Riehl well says: "Those who preserve faithfully the documents and facts bearing on their own individual families, will also preserve faithfully the history of their race."

"Let me say one more thing by way of conclusion. Do not believe for one moment that there is a single family history that is bereft of features of real interest. Whether your people were peasants or workmen or professional men, whether they were active or passive, there is not a single family whose history is not worthy of being studied and preserved. We draw consolation and encouragement from joy as well as from suffering and not the least prized entries in the church registers are those which show that a forebear, in spite of adversity and trouble, is worthy of the epitaph: 'I have fought a good fight—I have finished the course. I have kept the faith.'"

It is in this spirit that we issue this report and hope to follow it up with more in the future.

K. A. M. S.

