

rec'd  
Nov 24

5403 Reno Road,  
Washington, D. C.,

Nov. 22, 1922.

Mr. Walter Deane,  
Cambridge, Mass.

Dear Mr. Deane,

I am very glad the grasses sent for models please you. Where is Mr. Blatchka located, in Germany? I think there is a heavy tax on everything earned in both Germany and Austria. I was told that the tax on anything sold is 70% in Austria and 60% in Germany. But how is Germany going to pay her indemnity if she does not tax to the very limit? So far as my experience went none of the European countries, not even England, circulate any but their own money. I think all the countries whose money is depreciated forbid taking <sup>any</sup> money ~~of any amount~~ in gold or silver out of the country. On entering France I was given a form to fill out declaring how much money I had and in what form it was. No gold or silver can be carried out even if the gold or silver money has been brought from another country. It is cashed at the rate for that day--and the rate may be much lower next day. Of course it is confiscation--but near-bankrupt governments can not stop at confiscation, (so long as they do not call it that!) I carried my supply in Cook's checks, which are not money until they were signed. Only a fair supply of paper money can be taken out--I have forgotten how much, about \$100 if I remember right. It was the same in Austria and Germany, but in Austria they take one's word for it--France and Germany demand to be shown your last penny. One can keep American money in any of these countries and cash



a little at a time. I paid my board in Vienna and in Berlin in American money because both Frau and Fraulein Schneider wanted money that would keep over night. They are all only too glad to get American paper money--quite naturally, because they can save it, while their own money deteriorates in value. They can cash it at any bank any time, at a very small charge (about  $\frac{1}{2}\%$  I think it was). I even cashed my Cook checks (drawn in American dollars) in both Vienna and Berlin for American dollars. It is not the money that goes into the country that they sieze but the money that goes out. It is safe to send American money by registered mail--that is the way I send it to Prof. Hackel and to a few I have sent to in Vienna, and also to an aged botanist in Berlin that I learned was in great need. There is no tax on gifts of money, but Fraulein Schneider told me that the tax collector comes with the registered letter to see if anything is received for sold articles. Hence it is advisable to state in the letter that it is a Liebesgabe. It certainly seems most unfair that one may receive a gift free of tax but if he gives value received for it he must pay a tax--but is there any system of taxes any where that does not work unfairly in some cases? The tax is, also, cruelly high, but are not we, as one of the Allies, expecting Germany to tax her people to the limit of their power? (Not that we signed the treaty of Versailles.) We are all learning that war is not paid for in war time, the bill comes later. (I have forgotten which of our wise men said that) I learned why Americans are "discriminated against" in buying German periodicals--as we are frequently told we are. According to the reparations arrangements 60% of the amount paid in America for German works goes to the Reparations Commission to pay for damage done by submarines to American ship-



ping. Therefore to get as much as a German pays for a periodical the publisher must charge the American enough to leave that amount after the 60% is taken. I bought some missing numbers of Fedde's Repertorium. The price had gone up atrociously, but they had Mez's grass papers in them and we had to have them. To my surprise Dr. Fedde charged me at the old rate of \$2 a volume. "Für Sie hier," he explained. If I paid him from America he would have to charge me \$8 in order to get \$2. The whole of Europe is so desperately befuddled. The diplomats make provisions without a ghost of an idea of how they are going to work out. Dr. Henrard of Leiden said that the "diplomats around the "peace" table did not know as much geography as a child in the grammar school!" And they know about as much of economics as a dry-goods clerk. Poor France is destroying herself in her determination to destroy Germany. When I think about it I am in despair--it seems as hopeless as our own negro problem. I am so glad to turn to grasses from Homo imbecillus, misnamed H. sapiens. Like you the older I get the more there is to do. I am still working on the rich harvest I gathered in Europe. It is clearing up many puzzles.

With best wishes,

Yours sincerely,

*Agnes Chase*



Chase, Agnes. 1922. "Chase, Agnes (née Merrill) Nov. 22, 1922." *Walter Deane correspondence*

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