

The Philosopher

ABOUT CERTAIN PROPHECIES

In August and September of last year certain magazine writers attracted wide attention by articles written with every appearance of inside knowledge of Germany's preparedness for war. Among the most notable of those writers was Armgaard Karl Graves, who wrote as a former member of the German secret service. He wrote several articles in "Collier's," one of which, telling what the Zeppelins would do, with terrific illustrations, is before the Philosopher as these words are written, together with an illustrated article by the same German person in a New York paper of August 2nd last, in which he predicted that Great Britain would be out of the war "within four weeks." It was the arrival of the German air fleet—perhaps wind flotilla would be a better name—which was to stagger Great Britain with "inconceivable horrors." The Zeppelin, as a means of staggering Great Britain has failed signally to live up to the German predictions made so confidently. In the same article Herr Graves wrote:

"Italy is not likely to enter the war on the side of the Allies, because Italy is too good a judge to prefer the losing side. She must therefore fight with the Teutons and not against them."

What, one may ask, has become of Herr Graves' "fleet of 120 submarines proceeding in double lines as convoy to the long fleet of transports of German invaders to overrun England?" That interesting achievement was to have taken place "three weeks after the German occupation of Antwerp." And long before last Christmas the German fleet will leave the home port "and in one mighty conflict overwhelm Germany's enemies on the seas." It is interesting to think now of those predictions, and the others like them, that were made with so much confidence.

WHEN A REPUBLIC WAS PROCLAIMED AT PORTAGE LA PRAIRIE

This is a new country, surely, but already it has borne no small part in the making of world history. And before Western Canadians had shown their high mettle as fighters on the South African veldt and in Flanders and elsewhere, there were historic happenings in Western Canada. It is a notable example of how even noteworthy things become forgotten that here in this new country not one person in a hundred—it would be safe, indeed, to say not one person in every thousand whose mother tongue is English, leaving out all the others—knows that once upon a time a republic was proclaimed at Portage la Prairie by a number of impatient souls who had long been demanding self-government, instead of the rule of the Hudson's Bay Company, and who were also anxious that an outlet for Western Canadian grain to the world's market should be provided by a waterway to Lake Superior via Lake Winnipeg, Winnipeg River, the Lake of the Woods, Rainy River, and other lakes and rivers and finally the Kaministiquia River, which empties into Lake Superior below the present city of Fort William, on the site of the Hudson's Bay Company fort of the same name. It happened half a century ago. The history of the affair has been written by Professor E. H. Oliver, of the University of Saskatchewan. Mr. Thomas Spence, afterwards Clerk of the Manitoba legislature was chosen president, he and everyone else concerned swearing allegiance to the British Crown. An import tax was levied, to defray the cost of erecting a Council House and jail, and to meet other public expenditures; but the local officer of the Hudson's Bay Company, in charge of the Company's store at Portage la Prairie, refused to pay it. Presently a shoemaker named MacPherson charged that the president and council were spending upon hilarity such money as they could lay hands on by means of the import tax. The accusation may have been wholly false, but it was widely believed. The new-fledged nation of the West perished in its nest. No more was heard of it.

DIFFERENT RACIAL STRAINS IN CANADA

A Toronto paper has been discussing the question, "Where are the English in Canada?" The discussion has resolved itself into a general discussion of the proportions of people of English, Scotch and Irish descent in the Dominion, respectively, and their prominence in the various walks of Canadian life. The last Dominion census showed that there were in Canada in April, 1911, 1,823,150 people of English origin in comparison with 1,260,899 in 1901, that there were 1,050,384 of Irish origin in comparison with 988,721 in 1901, and that there were 997,880 of Scotch origin, in comparison with 800,154 in 1901. Those of Welsh origin numbered 13,135 in 1901, and 24,848 in 1911. The French-Canadians numbered 1,649,371 in 1901, and 2,054,890 in 1911. While we are at it, we may as well make a note of a few more of the totals set forth in Volume II of the series of Dominion blue books containing the results of the last census. The people of German origin in Canada in 1901 numbered 310,510, and in 1911 they numbered 393,320; and the people of Austro-Hungarian origin, 18,178 in 1901, and 129,103 in

1911. The only other large total is that under the heading "Scandinavian," which from 31,042 in 1901 rose to 107,535 in 1911. But to return to the discussion of the parts played by people of English, Scotch and Irish origin, respectively, in the life of Canada, it is claimed that the Scotch figure most numerous in public life, in the law, in the medical profession and in business and finance, with the Irish coming next. In this connection it is pointed out that Irish and Scotch emigration to Canada was under way for several generations before any considerable volume of emigration from England began. It is, in fact, only within the memory of middle-aged people that steady English emigration to Canada began. It is interesting to speculate on the question of how the different strands in the strong cable of Canadian national life will be mingled together a quarter of a century, a half-century, from now.

THE EMPIRE WORTHY OF ITS GREATNESS

No truer account of what British sea power, British military strength and British wealth have achieved and are achieving in the war, and no more glowing tribute to British character and British ideals as they are giving proof of themselves in this war, has been published anywhere than in a most remarkable editorial article in the Chicago Daily News, the paper with the greatest circulation in that city. After a comprehensive setting forth of the facts, the article closes with these words: "Britain—this old and proud democracy—is unfolding, is applying a material strength and a moral splendor that for countless ages after this conflict is stilled will be shining undimmed amid the first glories of history."

OPEN-AIR HOSPITALS IN WAR

It is announced that both in England and in France open-air hospitals for the wounded are proving to be incomparably better than hospital buildings. A leading medical journal, commenting on this, recalls that in the Civil War in the United States there was a remarkably higher percentage of recoveries among the wounded who were cared for in tents than among those in hospitals. After the battle of Missionary Ridge, the wounded of General Thomas's army were treated in hospitals at Chattanooga, with many comforts and great care. The mortality among them was frightful. On the other hand, the wounded of General Sherman's army, which had just arrived from Mississippi, had to be treated in the field, and the proportion of recoveries was astonishingly great. Fresh air, and the absence of the danger of infections made the difference. It often happens in war that many cases must be left largely to the operation of Nature, which ordinarily a surgeon would treat quite elaborately.

DISTORTED REASONING

Worthy of a place in history by the side of the immortally infamous utterance of the German Chancellor about "a scrap of paper" is this sentence from the latest German reply to President Wilson's remonstrances:

"The case of the Lusitania shows with horrible clearness to what jeopardizing of human lives the manner of conducting war employed by our adversaries leads."

Every mind that is not German is struck dumb on reading these words, with wonder as to whether the German Emperor and other Germans can be really so distorted that these words seem to them to be truthful and severe. British sea power, without sacrifice of the life of even a single non-combatant man, to say nothing of women and children, has swept German commerce from all the seas. But, according to the above-quoted words in the state document from Berlin in reply to the gravely and explicitly expressed protest from Washington, the British methods of conducting war is responsible for the atrocious murder of more than a thousand peaceful people on the Lusitania, including hundreds of women and children. Is not this staggering? What words could do justice to such a manifestation of the workings of the German mind!

AN ULTRA-CONSERVATIVE PEOPLE

One of the most interesting volumes which have come to the Philosopher's table of late is the report of the John D. Rockefeller China Medical Board. It sets forth some strange facts about that vast Empire, whose population is estimated to be 421,000,000. In spite of famine, flood and disease, the population of China increases in number steadily. The death rate is, perhaps, the highest in the world, on account of the lack of sanitation and the crude methods of the Chinese medicine men, over whom there is no form of control whatever. In China anyone is at liberty to declare himself, or herself, as the case may be, a physician, and may practise as he, or she, pleases. This does not necessarily mean that all Chinese medical practitioners are without skill in healing, for in many cases the art is hereditary, and remedies have been handed down from father to son in a family for many generations. Among the curiosities of Chinese medical practice is puncturing

with a needle, which is resorted to for very many complaints. There are Chinese medical charts showing seven hundred places on the human body where a needle may be inserted without danger. There are only eighty-eight hospitals in all China, and of these fifty-nine are conducted by missionary organizations. It is not to be wondered at that epidemics carry off their victims by legions. To introduce foreign ideas into China is a slow and laborious process, the Chinese being the most conservative people in the world.

WOMEN AND THE WAR

It is with a shock that one learns that any women in the United States have Kaiser sympathies, or have even neutral feelings in regard to the Great War. The men of the United States have reason to be proud of their well-deserved reputation for respecting women. In the war between North and South half a century ago, which continued for years and was desperately fought, each side brought many accusations against the other for things done in passion, but never were either Northern or Southern soldiers charged with outrages upon women. In all the records, all the literature, all the traditions of that war—in the official reports, in the newspaper reports, in the books of history, of fiction, of poetry, in all the bitter political soaking and writing, in the recollections which have passed down by word of mouth—there is nothing of the sort of bestialism and devilry committed by German soldiers in Belgium, as an essential part of the policy of Schrecklichkeit, or "terribleness" deliberately planned by the Kaiser and his General Staff. Germans and German-Americans fought in the American Civil War, but without any of the atrocious practices of the Germany army in Belgium and France, whose devilish orgies of blood and lust are the fruit of the Prussian system of militarism. The facts stand unanswerably proved before the world, in the Bryce report.

A TRUE VIEW

Fine and true words are those recently uttered by the Bishop of London. "I think of what Christ died for," he said. "It was very much like what our boys are dying for out there in Flanders. Christ died for freedom, honor, purity and love. Our boys out there are martyrs for the same cause, as truly as Saint Stephen was martyred, who fell after his Captain. If God loves freedom, honor and chivalry, then I say the contest we are fighting to-day is on the side of God, and will become God's holy way." Bishop Ingram has been at the front with one of the London regiments, and it was on a brief return to take part in recruiting that he spoke these words, before going to the front again. Never has there been a war fought for a better cause. Never have men made the supreme sacrifice for a higher purpose.

THE CATALO

On seeing the word "catalo," you might think, at first glance, that it was a printer's error. You might think that "gue" had fallen off the end of it. But the catalo lives and moves and has its being. Of late we have been hearing more of it than at any time since first it took its place among the creatures of this continent; and possibly we are destined to hear a great deal more of it. Catalos are a cross between domestic cattle and buffalos. They are said to thrive in places where the buffalo was too hemmed in to do well, and where domestic cattle could not stand the exposure and the privations. Catalo meat is said to be quite as valuable a food as beef. The animal has a hump, like the buffalo, and like the buffalo's hump, it is said to make an exceptionally fine roast. The old-timers who can tell of seeing the buffalo herds and of eating buffalo meat, always speak of the hump as a delicacy.

A MESSAGE DEEPER THAN WORDS

Several weeks have past since the last military funeral in Winnipeg, and a hundred times since that solemn procession moved along Portage Avenue and Main Street, with the coffin borne upon a gun-carriage, and the band playing the "Dead March in Saul," the Philosopher has wanted to try to give expression to the feeling produced in every mind by that noble music. It is music for all the dead, high or low, young or old, so that when we hear it we feel their equality; and it is music for the hearts of all those who mourn them. When it be the funeral of a great statesman or general, or of a young soldier in the ranks, that music expresses all with perfect fitness. When men are alive we are aware, sometimes too keenly aware, of the differences between them, and few seem adequate to the highest conception of the dignity and worth of humanity; but the thought of the brave men who have met death fighting for justice and freedom and the future welfare of the race thrills and uplifts us with a quickened sense of the nobility of man. And their memory will live and be an uplifting power for generations yet unborn. Strange it is how the "Dead March in Saul" can say all this, and vastly more than this, in a manner utterly beyond the power of words.