

SACRILEGIOUS HUN INDUSTRY

How Germany Extracts Fat
From Bodies of Her Dead
Soldiers

A copy of the Huddersfield, Eng., Examiner contains the subjoined description of the method used by the Germans to abstract fat from their dead soldiers. The article was translated from the French journal "La Belgique" by Prof. A. Ludwig, French Master at Technical College of Huddersfield, Yorkshire, Eng. He is a noted scholar and his standing is full assurance of the authenticity of the translation. The Editor of the Examiner says in introducing the article: "The details of the subjoined article are gruesome to a painful degree. We give it, however, as an illustration of the pitch of scientific cannibalism to which 'Kultur' reduces its victims." It certainly is a gruesome story, but as revealing the character of the enemy the free world is fighting, it makes significant reading. The article follows:

We have known for a long time that the Germans strip their dead behind the firing line, roll up the corpses in bundles of three or four tightly fastened together with iron wire, and then convey the dismal packages towards the rear for incineration. Until now the trains loaded with soldiers killed on the French front never went beyond the Liege district. They were sent to the blast furnaces in Cockerill's works at Seraing, and towards the north of Brussels, where the corporation had installed furnaces for burning refuse.

These trains, consisting of wagons—a kind of lime truck with doors opening upward—left a fearful odor behind them. Great was the surprise when it was lately discovered that this traffic took the circuitous Cambrai-Tournai-Ghent route doubtless in order to avoid the transports of troops and then proceeded towards Malines, Louvain, and thence to Gerolstein. This attracted attention, as the Elbe tour is without a crematory plant or blast furnace. Moreover, it was noticed that every wagon was marked in chalk, D.A.V.G. (which letters stand for "Deutsche Abfallverwertung Gesellschaft," i.e., German Society for the Utilization of Refuse); and as the traffic was rather heavy during last week, people wondered whether the new Viel-Salin-Saint With line had not been built for the purpose of shortening the track at present followed by these numerous transportations.

After constituting official organizations for the recovery and extraction of fat from dish and residual waters, "German Science" has just taken a new step towards the industrial recovery of by-products, and this time the human body has been made a particular object of human study. Such a scientific and lugubrious idea could germinate in none but a German brain. The results led to the formation of the D. A. V. G., a limited liability company with a capital of five million marks, whose first works were erected within one kilometre of the railroad connecting St. With and Gerolstein. These works are especially intended for the western front, and if the results justify the expectations entertained of them, a second establishment will soon be set up on the Eastern front.

The buildings stand in wooded grounds, in the midst of a large forest of timber trees, which renders them invisible to the rare travellers using this unfrequented line. Electric wires surround the quarters of the working staff—simple dwellings near the main railway line to within 800 metres of the works, where an immense double row of wire netting completely isolates the establishment, which is of rectangular shape, about 210 metres long by 100 wide. The railroad runs around it, and is utilized on the east and north sides for bringing up fuel and corpses.

The trucks are loaded in the north-western corner of the grounds. They arrive chockfull of naked corpses, which are removed by workmen muffled up in what looks like oilcloth, and wearing masks with mica plates. These men, armed with long, hooked rods, push the human parcels towards an endless chain that drags the corpses along by means of enormous crump irons fixed within half a yard of one another.

The bodies enter by a kind of drum into a long, narrow chamber, where, during their passage, they are plunged into a bath that both scours and disinfects them into a drying room, which is likewise long and narrow. Here the bodies are subjected to a current of dry, hot air, from which—owing to evaporation—they emerge considerably reduced in weight. Finally the chain introduces them into the autoclave, where a bigester, a huge metallic receptacle into which the bodies are automatically thrown by an ingenious contrivance that unhooks them. Inside the autoclave, a kneading and shaking apparatus stirs the mass at the right moment. Three contiguous buildings—bath, drying room and vat—occupy about two-thirds of the grounds on the north side, while the out-buildings take up the other third and the southern part of the grounds.

We may mention, by the way, that the disinfection of the bodies takes place immediately after the unloading by means of formal vaporizations followed by superheated jets of steam.

The real utilization and transformation of the corpses into valuable by-products begins only after their arrival in the autoclave. After six or eight hours boiling in steam, the flesh separated from the bones forms only a pulp somewhat similar in appearance to meat extracts, but at

most black. When the mass has stood a while, the bones fall to the bottom, and the pulp is sent by pumps into the installation specially designed for the extraction of fatty matters by the benzene process.

On the other hand the bones and the residues from the extraction of oils are poured into an oven near the boilers and cremated. The extracted fats are pumped into another building, where the stearic elements are separated from the oleic. The stearine is sold just as it is, but the oils emit such an offensive smell that it is necessary to subject them to a refining process.

This operation is simply performed by mixing the oily mass with sodium carbonate. The neutralized oil is then sent to the deodorizing room, where it is distilled, whilst the by-products of the neutralization are utilized. It is believed by the soap manufacturers, who can no longer find the fatty acids necessary for their industry. The neutralized and partly deodorized oil is sent to the tank reserved for "finished

products," whence it is despatched in barrels resembling petroleum casks. Up to now it has not been possible to ascertain precisely what use is made of these oils which had been partly refined. At the ordinary temperature they are liquid, yellowish brown, and nearly odorless. The oil and refinery works occupy the south-eastern corner of the grounds, and the despatch of the oil is effected by the railroad east of the buildings.

It is interesting to record a few technical details in connection with this enterprise. The heat produced by the boilers serves successively to generate the motive power, to heat the cremator for burning bones and refuse, to supply the necessary steam for the autoclave, the oil works, the bath, and the drying apparatus. The chimney of the works is of only moderate height, and the rising of the smoke and the regulation of the draught is effected by electric ventilators. A single group of boilers produces all the heat necessary for the whole installation, over which it

is proportionately distributed. The endless chain does away with unpleasant manipulations, and working staff is reduced to a minimum, owing to the unsparring use of mechanical processes. The smells arising in the various parts of the works are ultimately sucked up by electric ventilators, condensed in the huge serpentine worm of a still, in the northeastern corner of the grounds, and discharged into the sewer along with the residual waters.

There is a laboratory attached to the works. The staff consists of a director, a councillor of commerce, a chief chemist with two assistants, and 78 workmen. The whole staff is militarized and victualled by the 8th Army Corps. There is also an infirmary near the camp of huts, and on no account is an operative allowed to leave the premises.

It has always been held that necessity is the mother of invention, and it is indeed curious to note, not only the novelty of the idea, but the ingenious character of the installation.



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