

IS GERMANY SUFFERING?

An Attempt to Discover the Point at Which the German Machine Will Break Down

By NORMAN PATTERSON

HAVING been asked by the Editor of the Courier to answer the question, "Is Germany suffering?" I have touched every source of information—and they are not many. There are books, and magazine articles, special correspondence in the newspapers, and a few people who get letters direct from Germany. But even all these tell us little. Indeed, if one were asked the same question about Canada, one might conceivably be dismayed by the difficulties of arriving at a just and well-proven verdict. It is difficult here to distinguish between those grumbles and ills which are the result of economic conditions and those sufferings which directly emanate from the war. To make a similar examination of German conditions, and do it from the outside is even more difficult. Nevertheless, there is much interesting testimony.

GERMAN SHIPPING.

FIRST of all, everybody knows that Germany's ships have been driven from the High Seas. To get some idea of what that means, imagine Halifax and St. John harbours closed up and the docks deserted. Imagine Quebec and Montreal harbours closed down and no wheat, coal, lumber or merchandise coming in or out. Figure out what the effect would be if all the dock employees, all the men connected with the steamers and warehouses, were thrown out of employment. Would that cause suffering in Halifax, St. John, Quebec and Montreal?

When you have got that picture in your mind, multiply it by five. Then multiply it again by two, and you will get some idea of what has happened in the big German seaports, especially Hamburg and Bremen. Perhaps it would help you to figure out what would happen in England if Liverpool, Bristol, Plymouth and Southampton were closed and the harbours were deserted.

Hamburg was visited by more than 18,000 ships a year—no little ships, alone, but the greatest ocean liners in the world. It imported and exported three and a half times as much goods as all the Canadian ports on the Atlantic and Pacific put together. Canada's total exports and imports are about a billion—a thousand million dollars. Hamburg's were three and a half times that. And yet Hamburg docks to-day are but miles and miles of deserted property.

The Hamburg Amerika Company, the largest shipping concern in the world, has 215 vessels on its list, aggregating over 1,100,000 tons register, and where are those ships to-day? Some are tied up in British harbours, some in French harbours, some in Italian harbours, and some of the biggest of them at New York. To-day this Company has only a few small vessels doing a coasting trade or occasionally taking a trip to Norway and Sweden.

A neutral journalist in Germany has been writing a series of articles for the London Times, which are most informing. In that on the shipping situation, he says:

"Except on the Rhine and Elbe, where steamers freshly-painted and the long strings of barges ply as

usual, shipping in Germany is now conspicuous by its absence. No industry has been so hard hit as that of shipping, and nowhere is the economic isolation of the Empire so evident as in the two great Hansa cities, Hamburg and Bremen. A year ago they were the proud centres of Germany's world-wide seaborne commerce. To-day they are all but lifeless.

"This has been achieved by Great Britain in a much shorter time than Germans thought possible, especially those Germans who believed in their fleet. One consequence has been the conversion of Hamburg, the second city in the Empire, into a town commercially insignificant. I went to the harbour and made a round of several docks. The wharves were practically deserted. There were many ships still in the docks, but they had been idle since the outbreak of war. A weird silence reigned where hundreds of small craft used to ply across and along the river between the docks, where the sound of sirens and steam whistles, the constant rattle of cranes, the thousand noises of men at work ashore and afloat, were formerly merged into an anthem of wealth.

"The burly dockers, who crowded the quays a year ago, had totally disappeared. I met several of them in uniform as Landsturm guards in the prisoners' camps, far away in the country."

THE FARMERS—A CONTRAST.

WHILE the shipping has stopped the export and import business of the nation, there is a different story when we turn to agriculture. Germany to-day is one big farm, and all the men, women and children have turned farmers. Even the armies have planted corn and potatoes in the captured fields of Belgium, France and Poland. The German crop of 1915 will be the largest in its history. A million prisoners, Russians, Belgians, French and British will help to garner that enormous wheat and potato crop.

Unlike Canada, Germany is a land where cultivation is scientific and concentrated. Germany produces more from the acre than Canada produces from two. About ten million people are normally employed in agriculture, or about 31 per cent. of the workers in the country. The only branch of human endeavour which employs more men is manufacturing, and there are only eleven million in that. And because agriculture is scientific the German farmer produces much more per acre than in Canada. The average yield of wheat is 30 bushels to the acre, as against Canada's 20. Most of the farmers have been to farm schools, the chief of which is the winter school, with two terms of six months each. There are nearly three hundred of these scattered throughout the Empire.

This same neutral correspondent of the London Times gives a picture of the efficiency of German agriculture in these words:

"The contrasts between Germany and England are striking and instructive. One such is afforded by a comparison of the wide and fertile lands of England, where grass is grown, and broad parks stretch for miles in wonderful summer beauty, with the sandy soil of Brandenburg, where one travels, mile upon mile, through well-cultivated fields, covered with green wheat and

rye, and where old folks and children plant every spare foot of ground with potatoes. This is an object-lesson in waste and economy, in the absence and presence of control of national energy, and in the subordination of everything to the needs of the war."

The farming population is suffering only in so far as its sons have been called to battle. Its fields are untouched otherwise by war, and its activities are even greater than usual and prices high. Its only lack is fertilizers, of which large quantities are imported.

OTHER INDUSTRIES.

SHIPPING has been killed and agriculture has been stimulated; what of the other fields of activity? Germany's men and women are employed as follows:

Agriculture	9,732,472
Forestry, Hunting, Fishing	140,785
Manufacturing and Mining	11,256,254
Commerce and Trade	3,477,626
Domestic Service	1,736,450
Professional occupations	1,738,530
Other employments	3,404,933
	31,497,100

Manufacturing and mining is the occupation outside of agriculture and commerce. Mining must be as active as ever, because this is a coal, oil and metal war. That part of the industry may therefore be considered normal. But there is a large portion of manufacturing which depended upon foreign trade and which must be hit hard. Germany exported 25 per cent. of her manufactured goods, as against Canada's five per cent., and that is entirely lost. This would throw over two million of people out of employment, and they have probably gone to the front. Another 25 per cent. will be stopped because of lack of raw material from abroad. At least half of Germany's normal manufacturing must be dead.

On this point, the Times' correspondent writes:

"The weakest spot in the economy of Germany is evidently in her industrial and commercial situation. The greatest efforts are made to keep up the work of production and distribution. While the small towns and the agricultural districts are depleted of young men, large numbers of able-bodied men of military age are to be seen in the big towns and industrial districts. They are allowed by the military authorities to follow their callings as civilians whenever their work is of importance in industry or trade. Thus business is kept going, though of course with a greatly-reduced personnel. One merchant told me that he carried on his business with five clerks instead of between 50 and 60. This reduction naturally gives an idea of the losses which German business men must be suffering.

"Despite all these efforts, and notwithstanding the efficiency of German organization, it is undoubtedly true that important raw materials are becoming increasingly scarce. Thus the textile industry of the Chemnitz district is affected by lack of cotton, and the electrical industry by the deficiency of copper and other metals. As far as I could ascertain, there is no real lack of copper or other metal for the manufacture of ammunition. There are considerable stocks for that purpose in the country."

Many of the factories have been turned into places for manufacturing munitions of war, as in Britain, France and Canada. This has been done on a well-ordered system, because the German is nothing if not scientific. He hoped to win this war by superior organizing ability. His machine guns are more numerous than those of the Allies, and four machine guns will do the work of one thousand men. His big artillery has pounded a way through the Allies' lines on many occasions, especially against the Russians. His aeroplanes are growing in number and are standardized so that they can be repaired quickly. If a wing is broken, a telephone message brings a new one with despatch. Every service is similarly organized at the front, at the numerous "bases" and at all the manufacturing centres. Systematized, organized, systematized and organized—this is the German character.

A correspondent of the London Daily Mail writes recently from France, after many conversations with German officers, and attempts to explain their optimism. One paragraph is apropos:

"The grounds of the German confidence rest in the belief that they can make good any human loss or inferiority by work, organization, and by material aids. Since Neuve Chapelle the German lines have become one long factory of concrete. Trenches are concreted and dug-outs are concreted. Pits for machine guns are ferro-concrete forts. 'A caretaker and his wife could defend some of our trenches,' is one of the German boasts. Or again, 'When we want to move a hundred men to another part of the line we just establish five or six machine guns in their place.' The truth is that up to the present the Germans have everywhere a superfluity of these weapons, especially the smaller machine gun, which can be carried by a man, and the shell-throwing Maxim, which is set on a tripod and swings as easily and smoothly as a large telescope."

What Britain is trying to do in nationalizing and organizing its production of war material, Germany did last August. Every factory that was needed was taken over by the government and set to its specific

CIGARETTES, COMPLACENCY AND GALICIAN MUD



Whatever pictures we get of the German officers, they are always sleek and smooth and seemingly unperturbed.