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WAR NEWS AGENCY.

NOTES AND REFLECTIONS BY GENERAL BOOTH

I see that some of the enemies of religion have announced that the war demonstrates the failure of Christianity. All this awful carnage, this blind fury of brute force, this ghastly ruin and death prove, it is said, that the Christian faith has practically failed in the very nations which have longest professed it—which, indeed, are actually called by its name, the Christian Nations! It is now seen to have no real influence, or, at any rate, to have lost any influence it ever had, and to be of no moment in human affairs! Jesus Christ is a back number! **Christianity has failed!**

* * * *

Well, now, it is strange perhaps, but this idea would not have occurred to me. I feel something of the awful horror of this war. I think that I realize the power of the influences which have led up to it, the tremendous consequences, good or bad, or both, which must flow from it which ever way it is ultimately decided. I see what a huge sacrifice of human life it already involves. I see how it must add to the cup of human care and sorrow for at least a generation to come, if the world lasts so long. I see also, alas! all round, in each of the countries concerned, increasing bitterness and hatred, even among the professed followers of Jesus Christ, against their enemies, instead of the love and pity and forgiveness towards them which He enjoined. I see all this; but whether I view it from the standpoint of the nations or of the churches, or of the individual citizen, I should scarcely have come to the conclusion that **Christianity** had any responsibility for it all. Failure there has been—and very serious failure—but we can hardly see in it the failure of Christianity.

* * * *

And what failure the Socialists have to admit. Their theories—so excellent in discussion (and in declamation!), so admirable as views as soon as the storm burst! In no country in the world was Socialism so highly organized or so powerful as in these two countries, about their ability and determination to unite the democracies of Europe and without the assistance of Christ, or, indeed, of and God at all, make war impossible! And yet when their theories came to the test of actual trial they disappeared—lock, stock, and barrel — and have become scarcely more than a fitful memory. The house which they had reared with such labor and so much shouting was built upon the sand; and the rain descended and the floods came and the winds blew and beat upon that house and it fell and great was the fall of it. If it were not so sad—because much that the Socialists desire is splendid and beautiful, and many of them are sincere and generous, even if mistaken, folk—if it were not so sad, it would be laughable.

I need not spend a moment in declaring that Christianity has no blame for **this** failure! It is self-evident.

* * * *

No, it is not Christianity that has failed. **Christianity has not been tried.** To mention only one matter, for my space is gone for this time. Of which of the nine or ten nations engaged in this war can it be said that it has acted towards the rest of the world on **the supreme law of Christianity,** the law of love—the law which says, **"As ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so unto them"?**

* * * *

Yes, failure there has been—that is patent. **The Governments have failed!** Without exception they have all declared again and again that the worst thing that could happen to their respective peoples would be a European war. I do not recall the name of a single statesman of any consequence (unless it be in Turkey), for the last thirty years, who has not loudly professed that peace was the most precious possession and interest of all! And yet they have undoubtedly failed to preserve it. But this failure is surely in no way to be laid at the door of Christianity. The whole machinery of international relationships is arranged and worked on purely human principles. Diplomacy is without God. How many of the great diplomats ever make any reference to Him or His will for man—until perhaps war breaks out, and then they want to drag Him in as an ally in the dreadful business! They do not even invoke the name of Christ, or make any allusion in their despatches and conferences to Him or His teaching or His claims. I do protest, therefore, that their failure to promote the friendliness of nations and the peace of the world cannot be put down to the account of Christianity.

* * * *

The Military Parties—the people who are all for big armaments, and for big taxes on the working mass of the population to pay for them—**they have failed.** The whole world can see now what a doubtful proposition it is—that the best way to preserve peace is to prepare for war! The people who have been piling up the guns, adding ship to ship, and running into millions with the soldiers—all the time increasing the burdens of the poor and telling us **that** was the way of peace—theirs is perhaps the greatest failure of all! To their credit be it said, however, that, right or wrong, they never appealed for support to Christianity, or, indeed, to any other religion, that I know of, except it be Mohammedanism—so that it is not even suggested that their failure is to be set down to the teachings or spirit of our meek and lowly Master!

* * * *

The Educationalists and Scientists have failed. . . . exquisite **tists have failed.** . Their exquisite theories of knowledge as a refining power over the human heart—how they are wrecked in one week of war! Teaching men, training them, as it is called, to think for themselves—as though God had no thoughts about them that mattered!—has it not been vaunted for years as the remedy for those awful elemental passions of the degenerate heart which we have just seen sweep like a flood over a large part of the world? What a failure is there! But one cannot hold Christianity responsible for that! A considerable part of the world of scholarship and science has done its utmost during the last thirty years to destroy all faith in Christ and His teaching, so that unbelief of one sort or another is at this moment entrenched in all the great seats of learning the world over. It is abundantly clear that the failure of the educationalists to lift the world above these appaling strifes and enmities cannot honestly be atributed to the doctrine or practice of the Christian Faith.

* * * *

And the Humanitarians—have not they failed? Their great hope for the world has been that the kind feelings, dispositions and sympathies which belong to human nature, if only they are encouraged and suitably tutored, will **soften and subdue** and purify that which is hard and cruel and vicious in mankind. In other words, they proclaim that man can improve himself—that, after all, there is no actual need to seek help from his aker, even supposing that he has One. They do not want any King or Temple. They see no need for either a Savious or a sacrifice As for loving God, the first great Commandment, it is quite sufficient to love your fellows.

Well, their notion that love, flowing out of hearts improved after this fashion, will bring calm and peace wherever it passes, that it will change the deep-rotted evil of the fallen human spirit, has indeed met with a rude shock. To state it moderately, their theory has broken down. We see now that men, leaning upon man, is leaning upon a broken reed. That unless he gets help from God, all his self-reformig, self-subduing, self-raising schemes are destined to complete and irrevocable failure. To put it in a word, men left to themselves are warms—and all flesh is grass, and all the beauty thereof is as the wild flower—grass which today is and to-morrow, with all its goodliness, withereth and fadeth for ever.

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WILL DRINK ICE WATER

The Parliament of Iceland, thirty-four of whose forty members are elected by popular suffrage, has passed a measure forbidding the sale of alcoholic liquors. All the remaining stock in the Danish dependency has been exported.

THE BATTLE CALL

(From the Moose Jaw News.)

Over the world I have called you,
Even in the still of the night;
Speeding my message about you,
With bugle and sabre bright;
Searching the uttermost corners,
Forgotten parts of the world,
Bidding you come with your war-paint,
Bidding your flags be unfruled.

Mothers, first, I have need of,
It is you who must pay the price;
You who shall fashion the altar
Bringing your sacrifice.
Out of the strength of ages,
You with your stalwart sons,
You can keep the weaklings about you,
I want of your strongest ones.

Bring me the years of your labor,
The son you have cherished from birth.
Yes, you have fashioned him bravely,
He's fit with the best of the earth.
Back in the years of his play-time,
You taught him at dusk to pray;
Well, I shall make him a soldier,
And use him, perhaps for a day.

Cities shall fear at my message,
Start at the sound of my drum:
As the echoes ring over the house-tops
Bidding the strongest to come.
Out from the store and the court-room,
Each household shall give of its best;
You can keep of your old and palsied,
I demand as my own—the rest.
Men who are strong for the battle,
Men who are keep for the fray;
Who will fight with the world 'gainst them.
Will not be drowned in a day:
Men who are strong in their manhood,
Men with their courage high.
Who will fight in the last long battle,
And smile when they have to die.

So, with my bugle I call you,
Will you answer the soldiers' roll?
I shall have need of your bodies,
God will take care of your soul!
So fasten your armor about you,
Forward! Quick march and away!
Farewell to our —loved and before us
The marching, the fighting, The Day!

E. Jaques.

Briercrest, Sask.

ROCKEFELLER FOUNDATION

Makes Report on Condition Belgium—State of That Country Without Parallel in History

New York, Feb. 18.—Belgium's population has been reduced by about 600,000 as a result of the war and her condition presents a situation without parallel in history, says a report issued to-night by the Rockefeller Foundation from its War Relief Commission sent to investigate the effects of the war upon noncombatants It is the first report from this Commission, which went to Belgium last November.

After detailing how means of transportation, communication and banking exchange have been destroyed, commerce and industry paralyzed, homes and other buildings laid low, the agricultural districts devastated and the food supply virtually cut off, the report says:

"Yet if one is to understand the Belgian problem, it is perhaps necessary to emphasize, not the destitution of a few hundred thousand, but the suddenly enforced inactivity of a strong and healthy nation of 7,000,000."

After stating that there are 320,000 Belgian refugees in Holland, and 100,000 in England, the reports says that the number of people who are still in Belgium, but who have been driven out of their homes, has not yet been estimated. The army, it says, has drawn off 250,000 men.

Of the destruction of homes and property the report says: "We found people living in cellars under the ruins of their homes; in lofts over the cowstalls; saw children that had been born in hen coops and pig styes, and learned of one man who considered that he was doing well when the population of his poultry house was reduced from 22 to 18 refugees.

Regarding the agricultural situation, the Commission found that autumn planting has somehow been done, and that it is conceivable that Belgium may continue to raise most of her own potatoes, fruits and fresh vegetables.

In connection with the destruction of houses and property, the report says that no estimate can be obtained of the total, either of the military requisitions and levies, or of the destruction of property, but that this total must be enormous.

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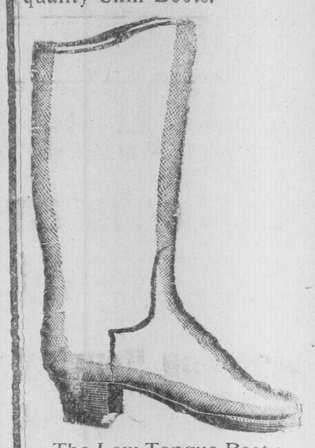

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