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How Long More Will the Great War Last?

By Major De Breze Darnley-Stuart-Stephens, Military Intelligence Officer and Expert.

My answer to this universal question is, Hibernian-like the asking or another: "Is it so that the war is only now really beginning?" When the "war begins," as Lord Kitchener phrased it, the Western Allies should be fit to make it decisive to the extent of at least driving the enemy on to his own soil.

According then to the layman's Field Marshal's opinion the war may be said to have only really commenced on the 1st of last July, when the process was successfully initiated which K. of K. considered so indispensably necessary to an ultimate victory. Let us then start from this month, with a driving back of the Hun some score of miles on a score of miles front. This achievement has taken a quarter of a year to effect.

Another 25 Miles Before Christmas.
The next quarter will most possibly see with increased men and gun power on our side a further gain of twenty, perhaps with unexpected luck twenty-five miles. "No more?" No. For the increased weight of the Anglo-French attack will be balanced in the scale by the climatic conditions and their influence on trench warfare.

But there is consolation to be found in the fact that the forty-five mile indentation in the enemy line that will have been obtained at the year's end will automatically involve the withdrawal of his whole entrenched alignment to another and previously prepared chain of positions linking up north-west Belgium with the once can non stricken Maubeuge, which the Germans maintain has been converted into a long extended place of arms.

Weather conditions will not interfere with a continuous and even intensified bombardment of the new German stop-gap to their being "chucked" out of fair France, but the plague of torrential rains will preclude the gunners' work being sufficiently co-operated with by the infantryman. Thus we will again be condemned to see the late spring arrive before another "big push" is the order of the day. And it will be a big and mighty one, albeit infinitely costly, the eventual storming of that line of steep hills which has been converted by the German sapper into a series of death slopes for the assailant. The obtaining possession of this real second line of German defence will hardly be accomplished before the end of September, 1917.

The Spring of 1918.
Then will follow the long-delayed cavalry operations on a large scale on both sides while the enemy is sullenly conducting a strategic retirement of his third and last line of resistance in the territory which he has occupied for the last two years. With the approach of the inevitable bad weather will come a temporary conclusion of the work of our mounted arms, which at the very commencement of the war obtained a definite moral ascendancy over the Kaiser's much vaunted troopers, and for a fourth winter we will be compelled to take up our winter quarters in a succession of trenches which will then be almost in sight of the violated Eastern Frontier of our valiant Allies.

The spring of 1918 will find the Germans installed in their third—last and mightiest—line of defence, one which obliquely crosses Belgium, the northern flank of which will be protected by a re-fortified Antwerp, and the southern by Liege and Namur covering the confluence of the rivers Meuse and Sambre. I base this conclusion on my expectation that by this time we shall have arrived in front of what on a large scale will prove to be a Torres Vedras of 1918. Will Germany, in spite of our strangulating naval blockade, be able to maintain life within her Empire until August 1918? I say unhesitatingly "Yes." The Southern States, with their coasts picketed by the Northern, were able to live on their home-grown food for nearly five years, yet the Confederacy was not in possession of an intensely cultivated agricultural area as exists to-day in Germany. I have met in America numbers of veteran general officers of both Federal and Confederate forces, but I have never discovered that south of Dixie's line was put into practice anything in the least approaching the scheme of organized provisioning of the population as now reigns in the German Fatherland.

German Skill and Courage.
Whatever we think of the appalling results of Germany's use of "rightfulness" as a weapon of war, the student of warfare cannot help being lost in admiration for the skill and courage with which she has preserved her people amid circumstances of almost inconceivable difficulty. Her mastery

methods of conserving her resources during her struggle against half the world is in itself an infallible reason for believing that she will succeed in prolonging the contest for even another two years.

Germany's foresight, thoroughness, parentalism and strong direct control of affairs were never more strikingly exhibited than in the manner in which she has regulated the private affairs of her people during the war. In the winter of 1914-15 regulations were imposed for the supply of the staff of life. All the flour in the Empire was inventoried and taken over by Government. Then precise shapes in which bread might be baked, as were prices, were fixed by law. The next step was a limitation upon the amount of bread which might be eaten by the individual.

It was also decreed that a large percentage of all bread must consist of potato flour. Finally, the regulation of the sale and consumption of all food supplies was placed in the hands of a Minister possessing autocratic powers of the most sweeping character. These drastic measures to conserve the self-producing food supplies of Germany have resulted in lean fare as compared with the former German custom of "stuffing," but it has made it plain to the trained observer of the war conditions that count that famine will not end this war. Mr. Lloyd George was singularly correct when in a speech in the House of Commons he declared that "it was the potato-bread spirit of the German people that England had most to fear." At the moment of writing, every crippled man in Germany who is able to use both or even one hand has been mobilized for the work in output of war material and of food. Thus is obtained another source of supply of what German Generals have contemptuously termed "cannon fodder."

Plenty of Cannon Fodder.
But the supply of "cannon fodder" is by no means perilously near depletion. Careful examination of the casualty lists in the German papers reveals the fact that the young men of the last drawn classes are being withdrawn from the fighting line in order to give them more time to mature. This is in view of the strenuous fighting that Germany knows she will be called upon to endure next summer and the following one. Always looking ahead are our enemies. I have written with entire confidence on this question of the duration of the war. Here is what I wrote three years before it commenced, and every line I then wrote has justified itself.

My Prophecy in 1911.
When in relation to the Agadir incident war was popularly supposed in this country to be inevitable between France and Germany, I as special military correspondent of the London Evening Times, wrote in September, 1911: "The Teutonic menace of an attack on France is a piece of gigantic bluff. The hurricane of a world war will not overwhelm Europe until another three years of periodical scares will have passed. Midsummer, 1914, will see the completion of the Aix-la-Chapelle strategic railway system which is being, with well-kept secrecy, extended like the tentacles of an octopus towards the Belgian frontier city of Liege. When the last spike has

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UNDER the Provisions of the Stamp Duties Act, 1914, and the Act in amendment thereof and the Regulations issued thereunder, all receipts for any sum of money exceeding Ten Dollars must be stamped by the issuer hereof.

Any person issuing a receipt without a stamp for the amount of the duty payable thereon, shall be subject for the first offence to a fine not exceeding Ten Dollars, or the second offence to a fine not exceeding Fifty Dollars and for the third and subsequent offences to a fine of Two Hundred Dollars, and in default of payment of such fine shall be subject to imprisonment not exceeding One month for the first offence, Three months for the second offence and One Year for the third and every subsequent offence.

JOHN SULLIVAN,
Insp. Gen. of Constabulary,
November, 18th, 1916.
nov18,61

been driven into the last 'chair' of the Melmedy-Stanelot line, a secret mobilization of German reservists, both within the European continent and overseas, will be ordered, to be followed, as is the annual practice, by open mobilisation for the Grand or 'Kaiser Manoeuvres.' The mimic game of war will suddenly be converted into the real thing on Bank Holiday, August 1914, when the Cabinet of Great Britain will be dispersed and absent from the Empire's centre, and when the whole railway system of the country will be momentarily suffering from the congestion of Bank Holiday traffic. On that day will have commenced the forward movement against Liege, based on Coblenz, Bonn, Cologne, and Gladback.

Gun Trucks and Super Shells.
"The platform area of Air-la-Chapelle will permit of the immediate despatch of 25,000 bayonets and 82 guns as an advanced guard to mask the six eastern forts of Liege's perimeter. Simultaneously with the departure of the pilot trains of the advance guard from Aix, a mounted brigade composed of 2,400 sabres and sixteen horse artillery guns will start for Libremont, which at a trot ought to be reached in six hours and captured by a coup de main. The immediate holding of this little frontier station would release from dangerous congestion the line of troop trains destined for Chaudfontaine." (One of Liege's strongest forts.) In an article in the same journal I wrote on September 9th under the heading of 'Super Shells for Namur,' "as the German plan of campaign is based upon the occupation with lightning swiftness of south-eastern Belgium, it may be taken for granted that the gun trucks, which are exaggerated editions of those secretly constructed in the Transvaal in 1899 for the movement of 'Long Tom' and his brethren will immediately after the fall of Liege be forwarded to a position just out of range of the Namur eastern crescent of forts. No vast number of 'les portanteaux' (17-inch howitzer projectiles) need be dropped before Namur is in possession of the invading host, which will then pass through the open door for the short cut to Paris. . . . When there is war, Belgium will of a surety at once go under."

And supplementing those extracts in which are specified the dates of the military movements, the strength and composition of the enemy's force, and the monster ordnance surprise, all the exact and novel features of the events of three years ahead, I may add what I, as military correspondent of the Manchester Daily Dispatch wrote four days before the actual outbreak of hostilities: "Although to the people of England and a piratical attack upon this neutralised state is unthinkable, yet I say here that they are hardly in this respect less optimistic in France, and this state of deplorable blindness will result in the clattering down the Stanelot road of a Zug of German Uhlans, before there is time to sound the French cavalry 'Alerte' in Sedan."

CALIFORNIA REJECTED TEMPERANCE MEASURE
San Francisco, Nov. 10.—Complete prohibition in California was defeated in Tuesday's election. A measure (amendment No. 2), comprising many restrictions on the sale, possession and use of alcoholic, appeared on available returns, to have lost. Its opponents, on the strength of a canvass of the state to-day, claimed a majority against it of 40,000. The California Dry Federation refused to concede this charged fraud, and claimed that an honest count would carry the measure through. No figures were available in support of the contention.

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Do you know of a wedding, a death or an accident?
Has there been a concert or entertainment of any kind given in your locality?
Has there been a lodge or any other meetings in your locality?
Has anyone moved in or moved out?
We would like to tell our readers all these things, but we are not mind readers.
If you tell us we will do the rest.

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"Did you lay the breakfast table, Angela?"
"Ah! but the eggs, sir."
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