

1870—1914.

A COMPARISON WHICH MAKES THE ARCH HUN SICK.

During a two years' trip through the Far East in 1903-1905, the writer was brought in contact with hundreds of British and German officials and Naval and Military officers, and brought home to Canada the fixed impression that war with Germany within ten years of the latter date was inevitable.

The Britishers were certain of it, and the Germans were drinking toasts to "The Day."

A careful following of events showed the absolute certainty of war just as soon as the Germans felt they were again "ready to the last button on the last tunic" as in 1870, and that the moment was opportune.

It was the accession of William II of Prussia in 1888, the dismissal of the Imperial Chancellor Bismarck and the marvellous and, to a certain extent, unnatural growth commercially of the German Empire, which made war at some time with Great Britain absolutely inevitable; and to the statesmanship and ability of the public men of Great Britain who steered the ship of state during the last fifteen years is due the fact that when war was thrust upon us in 1914 it found us not only as well prepared as it is possible for a people such as ourselves to be but hand and glove with our Allies of France, Russia and Italy, two of the first two of whom we were bound by the Anglo-French agreement of 1904 and the Anglo-Russian agreement of 1907.

For the last fifteen years the Germans have tried, unsuccessfully, to force Great Britain to be the aggressor, and in 1905 and again in 1911, Great Britain stood by France and prevented war.

While the ostensible cause of the present World Conflict was the assassination of the Archduke Francis Ferdinand and his Duchess at Sarajevo, Bosnia, on June 28, 1914, everyone realizes that this was a mere pretext and that the responsibility for the assassination might more justly have been placed in Vienna than in Belgrade, and that the entire affair

leading up to the present world crisis was handled from Berlin.

Having sown the wind, Germany cannot now complain when she reaps the whirlwind.

Under William I who was a veteran of the wars with Napoleon, and Von Moltke the older, who was a great soldier, Germany had become a European power but, the Arch-Hun, William II, immediately on coming to the throne, threw over the strong man, Bismarck, and began to dream of world power, which will be the cause of the downfall of the German Nation.

With a population of 67,000,000, a strong navy and an immense well-equipped army, the Kaiser imagined himself an all-powerful and superior being who could dictate to the world, one who could make and break treaties and forswear his word of honour at a moment's notice—alas for his awakening from his pipe dream.

Having decided to make war on France and Russia and having failed to coax Great Britain to remain neutral, the Arch-Hun proceeded to annihilate brave little Belgium, who stood in the way of the War Lord's plan to smash France quickly and then to rush his forces to meet the slow mobilising Russia.

He met the first of a series of surprises at Liege, where the little band of 40,000 Belgians held up 120,000 of his best troops and killed them by thousands; and next he bucked up against the "Contemptible little army" of the British Expeditionary Force which gave him such a severe lesson during the heart-breaking days of the retreat of the Allies through Mons on to the Marne and the Seine.

This is where the Prussians missed the cool head of the veteran William I and the genius of the older Moltke, and suffered for the lack of them.

Owing to the magnificent showing made by the gallant men who composed the 120,000 of the first British Expeditionary Force, it may be interesting to glance at its composition.

The whole British Expeditionary Force as organised in 1914 consisted of six divisions, one cavalry division and one (or two) unallotted cavalry brigades, with additional troops styled "Army troops" at the disposal of the higher commanders, beside the line

of communication troops, both for administration and for the defence of the line.

The "Army troops" included squadrons of the Royal Flying Corps, with their attendant motors and stores

Taken all in all, the organization and equipment of this force was on a more elaborate scale than that of continental units of corresponding strength.

This and the high professional character of the force, coupled with the magnificent bravery of the troops, account for the splendid work done from the day it took the field, and especially during the trying days of the retreat through Mons, back to the Marne and the Seine, when by their accurate shooting, coolness under fire and pluck and vim in the trenches, the British Tommy made a name for himself which will go down to history.

IS THERE ROOM OR REASON FOR PESSIMISM.

When one looks over the results attained during the past sixteen months, one realizes that things have gone very well indeed considering our initial handicap of unpreparedness, to tackle an enemy who has spent forty odd years in getting ready for his world conquest.

Poor old "Tirp" is locked up in his Canal, and the barnacles must be pretty thick on him by this, to say nothing of the fact that he must be weighted down below the Plimsol mark with "Iron Crosses."

We have grabbed the dam near the whole German Colonial Empire, with a few insignificant exceptions; and our splendid navy has swept the German Naval and mercantile flag off the race of the ocean.

We have put his fleet in quod, met his submarine attack and beaten him at his own game.

We knocked the attempted invasion of Egypt into a cocked hat and helped to save Paris.

Mainly by our own exertions, but assisted by the French and Belgians, we stopped the advance on Calais and inflicted upon the Germans a loss of several hundreds of thousands.

By our help at Antwerp we assisted to extricate the Belgian Army, and finally we have raised an enormous voluntary army, large enough to turn the scale between the European forces in our favour; and, lastly, the way we turned ourselves into a factory and munition store for ourselves and our Allies, reads like a fairy tale.

The Dardanelles was a tough proposition but, when we have finished up the Germans to our satisfaction and the full facts are known, may it not be shown that relief of the pressure in Egypt and Mesopotamia and against the Russians in the Caucasus was well worth the price paid for this operation; and again we have not failed in the Dardanelles yet by a dam sight:

In spite of losses, our navy is stronger to-day than it was when we began. Our armies are increasing in numbers and efficiency day by day, while the German Navy seems to have pulled the hole in after it, and his armies are decreasing both numerically and in morale as time goes on.

Our munition factories can now, not only supply our daily needs, but is laying up a surplus of perfect shells, whereas the Germans are not only facing a shortage but the quality of 5 per cent. of their shells show the falling off in both material and workmanship.

So taking it all, big and large, have we much to reproach ourselves with, and have we not a great deal upon which to congratulate ourselves up to the present, and are we not daily gaining the upper hand in a way that, while not evident to the onlooker is plainly evident to those in the firing line? We are!

A good watchword—"Anticipation."

Determination is a better asset than a rich father.

Health, Honesty, and Courage are the only needed capital for success.

Loyalty, will power, and reliability counterbalance lack of learning and affluence.

Health is far more essential than capital.