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GERMAN CRITICS

(By W. D. Newton)

While the German military critics, in quest of material, make what capital they can out of what they call "war weariness," a complaint they profess has attacked the Allies, they are apparently unaware that the most painful and striking symptoms of this disease can be found no further away from themselves than in their own writings.

For some time past it has been noticed that the pressure of the Allied armies has had almost as pronounced an effect on the military writers at home in Germany, as upon the German armies fighting in the field. Compelled to work strictly to the Hindenburgian "voluntary elasticity" propaganda creed which lays it down that every trench given up to the Allies is a victory for Germany, these industrious, solemn and self-righteous gentlemen have found themselves unable to meet the continuous strain. Their automatic and semi-official shouts of victory on each and every occasion that their line has been driven back, have gradually become hoarse and jaded, and their judgments have as naturally become as mechanical as their manifestations of joy. Indeed, so mechanical have they grown that their writing is no longer criticism at all, but merely a collection of appropriate military texts to be used to fit every exigency and occasion.

These tired and baffled German writers no longer explain the meaning of a battle. They simply say that the Allies "stared a craterfield," but that they didn't reach Ostend or Lille or Douai or Metz or Trieste, and they are therefore heavily defeated. If the Allies do reach some point which might constitute an objective (as they did at Bapaume, Peronne, Vimy, Mons, Lens, etc.) the German writer has another appropriate tag to fit the case. He says, the enemy has made some advances, true, but he has failed to "break through." This "break through" idea is one of the happiest thoughts that ever came to the journalistic henchmen of the German High Command. No doubt the propagandist knows it means exactly nothing. He knows, if only from his experience of what happened to German attacks at Ypres (both in 1914 and 1915) Verdun and the Chemin des Dames (1917), that the offensives are not in any sense intended to effect a "break through." He is therefore safe. He can appear convincingly optimistic without having to go into explanation which might be dangerous.

Again, if the German line cracks and bends under the stream of power of the Allied attack, the German critic has an argument ready-made to prove that this does not really mean that the Allies are powerful. The strength of gunfire that staggers the German line signifies merely the last desperate attempt of the Allies to throw all their weight against Germany, in the hope of doing something before the submarines cut off the supplies of ammunition and men. They have been making this point obstinately and fully for just eight months now. Perhaps it is because they are Germans that they are incapable of seeing that these "last" blows were somewhat constant, or that the dictum "the supplies of war material are gradually diminishing" (Major Morant, Deutsche Tageszeitung, May 19, 1917), uttered in May, reads rather curiously beside their stories of unprecedented Allied gunfire uttered in August.

Nobody but a German could boast so solemnly and complacently of Hindenburg's "elastic defence" when the only notable thing about it is that it has gone "elastically" backward on all fronts (except the eastern)—the Somme, Vimy, Messines, Ypres, Lens, Arras, Champagne, Verdun, and the Isère—for more than a year. None but Germans could exult over the world to accept, with anything other than smiles, the solemn and almost pontifical suggestion that Verdun, which was rated all in all by Kaiser and Crown Prince in February 1916, is now entirely lacking in importance. There is really something rather wonderful in this shell-proof dullness of the Germans over Verdun. A whole string of critics, the critics of the Lokal Anzeiger, the Frankfurter Zeitung and Baron von Ardenne of the Berliner Tageblatt, among them have set themselves seriously and elaborately to prove that what is glorious victory for Germany is, over identically the same ground, failure or a matter of no moment whatever for anybody else. Not one of these gentlemen has the imagination to see how entirely foolish the whole argument is, and that, even on the lowest basis, what was important for France, and what was glorious for Germany, is equally glorious for France—this quite apart from the fact that France has recovered in three swift forward bounds and at light cost, practically all that Germany took seven months of continuous fighting and enormous losses to gain. Yet the German effort was said to have "bled France white."

The writers, however, are suffering from war weariness. They have received their orders to make the best of Verdun, and being idealists and driven into a corner by the steady and obvious successes of the Allies, they fall back wearily on the old tags. The French have not broken through, they have not attained objectives, the "elastic" defence has again stretched "accommodatingly," Germany in long ground has won another great victory.

How crushing is this sense of re-

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striction which the circumstance of the situation has imposed upon the German writer, can be estimated by the wildness of their language when they get an opportunity or think they get an opportunity, of being really joyous over a victory. The fighting about Langemarck was a point in question. The German report that the British had been driven out of Langemarck on Aug. 16, whatever else it was, was a heaven-sent occasion to the German writer to let himself go. They certainly did let themselves go. The papers were full of the news. The German writer, concerning this splendid German victory. The Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung plunged recklessly at this one chance in a thousand. It wrote an almost lyric account of what the German report had said had happened, and even of what the German report had not said had happened. Not merely did it recapture Langemarck in ringing phrases, but it drove the English back to the old German trenches, and pushed them "in places beyond the old English position." The German report was completely false, but it was not really so romantically false as that. But the Norddeutsche had been carried away. It was not in a temper to mind matter. It finished up its paean of victory on a high note of happiness and prophecy. Langemarck was firmly in German hands.

"To-day the sun is sailing over the heights of Ypres and sunny is the temper of our ranks. Though England should employ against us all the resources of the whole enemy world, her attacks will always break against the will to conquer of our troops and it is to be hoped that the day is not far off on which we shall again, as once before in May 1915, press down the heights upon Ypres. That is the burning wish of all the soldiers fighting here."

The burning wish of the writer of this gem must now be that he had not been so foolish as to write in this way. It is a sad fact that the effusion appeared on the same day as the German communiqué which told that, after all, the German troops were not pressing down the heights upon Ypres, and were not even in Langemarck, since the British were there. When, next day, the Norddeutsche came out, it had considerably curtailed its eloquence. It felt that "one must, however, regret the loss of Langemarck" but that was all. It turned hastily from what must have been a delicate subject, and gave a very touching story of the bravery of the German troops at Ypres in 1914. The outburst must be decently obscured. The old appropriate tags of "moderate defence" and the like were trotted out.

"Decisions of life and death are being made out here: Our life and our death. Are the people at home fully cognizant of this?" asks Herr Max Osborn, the German field correspondent of the Vossische Zeitung, writing home from the Flanders front. "Nobody here conceals the colossal gravity of this endless struggle," he declared. "On its outcome depends whether England is able to wrest from our hands the strongest weapons (the submarines) we possess to frustrate her calculations."

Nobody at the German front conceals the colossal gravity of the fighting. Only the stout, spectacled, green-buttoned gentlemen sitting at home in Berlin conceal the facts. "Nothing more or less is involved than the world-historic decision as to whether England can crush us and break our backs or not." That is the cry from the field. To the solemn critic in Berlin the only thing that seems to be involved is whether he can persuade his readers that the line is so "elastic" that a "break through" has not occurred, that Verdun, and the continuous encirclement of the Allies are things entirely lacking in importance. To the man at the front Germany is fighting for her life. To the man in Berlin, Germany is winning official victories, in almost every single day. In that difference one can read the whole fatuity of this jaded and officially-stimulated military criticism.

Children Cry
FOR FLETCHER'S
CASTORIA

CHURCH TO SOLVE ASIATIC PROBLEM

Christianization of Orientals Imperative For Dominion's Future

CHURCH WORK IN B.C. Outlined By Bishop of Kootenay at Grace Church Yesterday

A stirring appeal for aid both material and spiritual in the work of the church in British Columbia was delivered in Grace Church yesterday morning by his Lordship the Bishop of Kootenay, who capably outlined the work being carried out there, and of the need of Christianizing the ever increasing Asiatic population of Western Canada, as the only sure solution of the Oriental problem.

Unity of Humanity.
In commencing his address, the speaker dwelt upon the essential unity of the whole human race, which was one of the greatest lessons taught us by the war. "Today we did not look upon the Belgians, the Serbians, the Armenians, or the Jews as foreigners or strangers, but as our own brethren upon whom fell the brunt of the war's suffering. One of the permanent results of the war would probably be a realization of the dangers of nationalism, and a federation of the peoples of the earth where the only line of division would be that separating those working for God from those aiding and abetting the forces of evil. The church was a living organism, declared the speaker, rather than an organization, she was one, with one life and one work, and hence it was that all should respond to any appeal for church work, no matter what part of the world.

War Brings Distress.
His Lordship outlined present-day conditions in British Columbia, painting a distressing picture of the Province, practically depopulated of its men. British Columbia had been essentially a young man's Province, and had given in proportion to its size, more men to the cause of the Empire than any other part of the Dominion. Thus great difficulty beyond the old English position. The small and newly created parishes of British Columbia had benefited least of any part of Canada from the war, for she had no munition works or other industrial booms. The result was a period of financial depression, when all had a hard time to make ends meet. Never was there more pressing need for church work than to-day, and if it were to be done thoroughly, it must be through a considerable increase in the number of clergy, as well as by other material and spiritual support.

Oriental Problem.
The Oriental problem was looming up exceedingly large in British Columbia, in every industry the Asiatics took the places of men who had gone to the front, and to-day the Asiatics were found scattered throughout the agricultural districts of the Province, in all the lumber camps and saw mills, controlling the fishing industry and invading the mines. Their presence constituted not the least of Canada's problems, for a heathen Province on the coast was the greatest peril which the Dominion could face.

Christianize Asiatics.
"It is the duty of the church," declared the speaker, "to see that British Columbia is Christian. Asiatics; we must lift up these people, or they will drag us down, and the only power capable of lifting up and regenerating the life of man or woman is the power of the gospel of Jesus Christ. British Columbia, depopulated and impoverished, passing through a terrible crisis to-day, and as after the war the Province will exercise a distinct influence over the whole Dominion, it is the duty of each and every one of us to see that it is an influence for good and not for evil, to rescue the whole population of the Province from the evil of materialism and the yellow from paganism."

His Lordship spoke in the school-room of Grace Church on Saturday afternoon also, giving a comprehensive outline of the church's work in British Columbia which was heard with interest by a large number. The memorial service, which was conducted on Thursday evening of last week, was by special request repeated last night, with the omission of the reading of the names on the honor roll of the county.

Rippling Rhymes

SOMEWHERE IN FRANCE.
Somewhere in France I would like to be fighting, putting in ticks for the land of the free; oh, it is woman's work, scribbling and writing, when there is scrapping across the blue sea! But I am fat and my whispers are hoarse, and they won't give me the least little chance; other must harvest the laurels and glory, somewhere in France, somewhere in France. When the war's over the boys will be telling, telling of valorous feats they performed; stories of marching and shooting and shelling, barricades taken and cities they stormed. I must be silent; I can't tell a story, I cannot boast of a dauntless advance; I am too fat to be gathering glory, somewhere in France, somewhere in France. Danger appeals to me, and deeply I love it, but I must stick to my rusty old lyre, oh, slender soldier, your fortune I covet, here in my slippers, my feet at the fire! Gladly I'd go to the field red and gory, gladly I'd flourish the shotgun or lance; fat men, however, are barred from all glory, somewhere in France, somewhere in France.

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