

THE RUSSIAN RETREAT

the field, yet these bronzed, bearded, thoughtful-looking men seemed just as familiar with the details of their present job as with the work they had left behind.

Ever since we had crossed into Poland this sober, steel-gray stream had been mingling with and stiffening our lighter-hearted, more boyish, blue-gray stream of Austrians and Hungarians. Here were men who knew what they were doing, believed in it, and had the will to put it through. One thought of Emerson's "Earnest of the North Wind" whenever they came in sight.

Those who talk of "frightfulness" and get their notions of German soldiers from the vaporings of sedentary publicists, who know no more of them than may be seen through the pipe smoke of their own editorial rooms, are destined to a melancholy awakening. You may prefer your own ways, but you cannot make them prevail by blackguarding the other man's weaknesses; you must beat him where he is strong.

Lies and the snobbish ridicule with which our magazines and papers have been full, run off men like these like water off a duck. These men are in earnest. They have work to do. No one who has heard them singing the "*Wacht am Rhein*" through the starlight of garrisoned towns all the way from the Channel to the Carpathians, will talk of their being "stolid"; but they have, it is true, no coltishness. They are grown up. And this discipline of theirs does not mean, as