



## Lessons for Pacifists

AS soon as this war is over, it is entirely apparent that we will have a school of smug "pacifists" who will be telling us, with quite their old unction, that the civilized world has now had its lesson, and that it will never again permit war to occur. Indeed, they are already singing this soothing psalm of supine surrender. These are largely the same men who told us quite confidently, when we predicted an attack upon the British Empire by the great German military machine, that we failed to take into account the growth of civilizing influences; the internationalizing effects of trade, commerce, and finance; the beneficent work of literature, music and the drama; the elevating and humanizing forces of our common Christianity. Were not the Germans a "cultured," commercial, Christian people; and why should they do this awful thing? Did not their splendid prosperity rest upon peace; and why should we imagine that they would tumble it all into the bloody dust of a great war? The "pacifists" are, of course, anxious to-day that we should forget all this false teaching, now that German guns are thundering against the forces of the Allies; but I am sure that you all remember its glib and superior optimism, down to the last silly syllable.

WE, who predicted war, were "barbarians," "cynics," "worshippers of brute force," "blind to the higher influences," to the "spiritual forces." We were, in fact, a reactionary and degraded lot, our feet sodden with the mire of earth, our eyes holden from the glories of the new day. Our minds were fixed on things of the flesh, whereas these noble prophets were possessed of a lofty devotion to the better things of the spirit. A well-known Canadian clergyman wrote me one day that I was worse than "a Pagan philosopher"—that, in fact, he could find far nobler sentiments in Pagan philosophy than in my writings. I don't doubt it. The Pagans who dreamed the white and glorious dream of the Parthenon, dreamed other dreams of perpetual peace; but the war chariot of Imperial Rome rumbled through their streets, and for nineteen oppressive centuries "the glory that was Greece" was in squalid eclipse—and its revival came only the other day when the latest sons of Greece learned to shoot straight and take cover.

BUT I am not troubled now about the past. The events of last August, set forth in the "white paper," sufficiently justify my "cynicism," my "low, material outlook," my "Paganism." I said that Germany, in spite of her "culture," her civilization and her Christianity, would attack us when the hour came. Was I right; or was I wrong? But what I am troubled about is the future. These same impractical, dreaming, visionary "pacifists" are tuning up their lyres to lull us once more into a condition of comatose imbecility, in which we will prematurely beat our swords into ploughshares and our spears into pruning-hooks, while the Hun sullenly re-arms in his fastnesses to renew the attack the moment he dare do so. We are to disarm—we to depend upon Truth and Righteousness—or that far more dangerous delusion, international opinion supported by an international "police."

NOW, I am the last man to say a word against an international "police" which shall "hold a fretful world in awe," just as soon as such a step forward is possible. But to talk about it under existing conditions, as an immediate consequence of this present war, is even more stupid and shortsighted than it was to assure us last winter that there never could be another European war, so intimately were the interests of the various civilized nations now bound together, and so high a plane of morality had we now reached. I venture the assertion, while the armies are still in the field, that, when this war is over, we will find less excuse—and not more—for predicting permanent peace than the "pacifists" had to go upon before this war broke.

THE lesson of this war," The "pacifists" say blandly that this "lesson" is that war is so terrible and hideous a thing that we can never permit it again. For masterly misinterpretation, commend me to that! Here is the position. The "pacifists" said that war simply could not come. It came. What is the "lesson" which any school-boy would draw? Surely that they were wrong—that war could come under conditions they thought impossible—that, therefore, it might come again under conditions they would again regard as impossible. The

"lesson" surely is that they do not understand human nature; and that they are failures in the prediction business. But the "lesson" they seek to draw, is that the coming of this unexpected war has proven so annoying to all concerned that they may now fairly renew their failed prediction and assert that war can never come again.

THE case is as if a cock-sure child should insist that fire, having become civilized and Christianized, will not burn. You point to universal experience. The child calls you "a back number." In the brutal days of old, it did burn. But not now. So he puts his finger in the fire. It burns. He howls with pain. It is far more terrible than he thought. You say, warningly—"Now you see, my son, fire does burn." "Oh, no," he says, even before he has

stopped dancing with pain. "It is true that it burned this time. I did not think it could be so brutal and Pagan. No one could have calculated on such wickedness. Therefore, I was really right as a matter of logic, still I confess that this particular fire did disappoint me most dismally. But after this terrible experience, it will never, never burn again. We can all play safely with the next fire as soon as this barbaric blaze—the last of its kind—dies down."

THE lesson of this war for the British Empire is to arm on land as well as on sea. We have learned that our Empire can no longer be defended upon the water. We must, of course, be supreme beyond challenge at sea. That is a vital necessity of our existence. The war would be over now—for us—if our navy were not supreme. But that is not enough. We must have an army, worthy to be the sword of a first-class power. We owe it to our Allies as well as to ourselves. We are escaping luckily this time. The Triple Alliance broke to pieces. Not one of Germany's semi-detached "friends" has fought for her. The Triple Entente has had the support of Belgium, Japan, Serbia, Montenegro and possibly Portugal. But we cannot calculate that German diplomacy will so utterly fail on the next occasion.

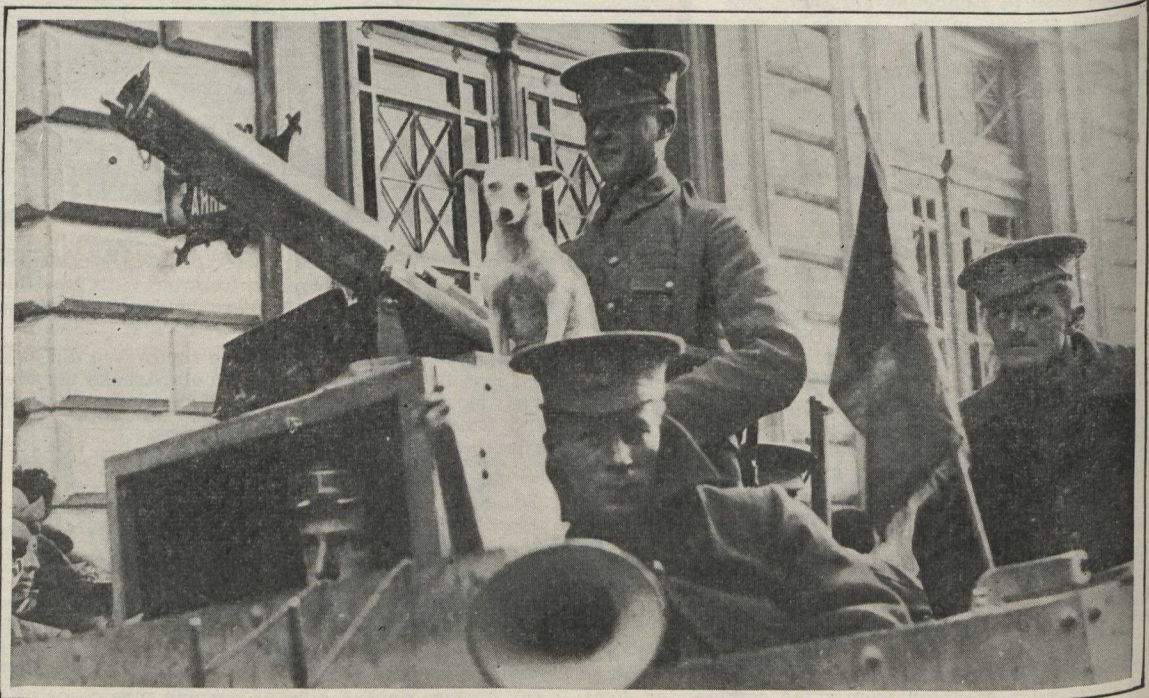
THE MONOCLE MAN.

## A COMMANDEERED WINDMILL AND A DEATH MACHINE



A BELGIAN WINDMILL USED AS A RED CROSS STATION.

A section of the Royal Army Medical Corps starting with a stretcher for the battlefield to bring in the British wounded.



BRITISH ARMOURD MOTOR-CAR IN BELGIUM.

These terrific death-locomotives are in use by hundreds on both lines of battle.