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PHONE 379

A Tug of War Between the Fighting Nations

By STODDARD DEWEY in "The Nation"

In France, it is commonly felt that the tug of war—the last strain, in which it is hoped the sinews of Germany will give way—is just beginning. Now this is a "wearing-out war"—guerre d'usure—like our four years' Civil War, as Gaston Rouppel has just explained at length. Why do the French think the Allies' sinews of war will outstand the German, this year, and next it needs be, and yet another?

The old metaphor has changed with the old order of war. In this last strain, triple sinews must tug and hold out to the end—men, munitions, and money. Not one must give way. Why does a premature English song hum now less boastfully, more confidently through the French consciousness?

We've got the men, we've got the ships, we've got the money, too!

Only to ships have now to be added guns and ammunition, big and little, and these England had scarcely at all in the beginning, and France has had none too much until now. Russia's disasters from sheer lack of munitions are still on every man's tongue. All have had money—among the Allies.

Gen. Cousin has tried to reason out the French faith in their men—"effectives"—soldiers fit for duty. He takes it that Germany and Austria are each able to mobilize eleven per cent. of the population; and that Turkey in Europe and Asia may call out seven per cent., and Bulgaria the same. This gives a grand total of men who have been or may be called to arms by what we may well call for short—major pars traitit ad se minorem—Germany: 14,262,999 (percentages of this census are not in round numbers).

Suppose that Russia mobilizes five per cent. of her population (150,000,000) and Great Britain five per cent. of her home population (45,184,500) and receives 400,000 soldiers from her colonies; that France calls into the field ten per cent. of her population, with 100,000 men from her colonies; Italy ten per cent.; Belgium three per cent.; Serbia seven per cent.—and ten per cent. for Montenegro; then the Allies have a total of 18,052,000 fighting men. This gives the Allies an advantage of 3,789,000 soldiers.

Of course, in the long run, there is much to give and take. Mere losses—killed, wounded, prisoners—in any calculation will not lessen greatly this advantage in favor of the Allies. Suppose, however, that Russia in Poland has lost more than her proportion, and count an extra 500,000 to her detriment. We shall still have 3,289,000 excess of men on the Allies' side. On the other hand, the number of men that can be drawn from the colonies is certainly underestimated, at least for France. So far the experiment has been successful beyond all expectation. There is no reason why it should not be repeated several times over if the war drags on—to the number of 700,000 good dark warriors some day. Certainly, Arabs and Kabyles, Moroccans and Senegalese have acquitted themselves like men so far; and this brotherhood of arms will have yet further-reaching consequences with the coming of peace—which is better.

Again, if universal combustion keeps up, Russia can draw on the five per cent. left at home in the French general calculation—7,500,000 more. And any that now seem neutrals and late gravitate to Germany may ultimately have Japanese to face. In summing up when Germany and her satellite nations have used their last man, the Allies will still have more than 3,000,000 men left. And by 1st June, 1916—which is more easily imaginable date—the Allied Powers will still have 3,000,000 soldiers in reserve, while Germany will have—what?

Little is to be added to the known story of munitions during this war. The question has been threshed out in the press of all countries. It is known that Great Britain's producing capacity at the beginning was, perhaps, 600 shells a day, while 1,000,000 is short rations along the single French front where fighting has been going on lately. France was better off and long had to help the others, but was not above the safe limit of defence. These nations had not Germany's forty years preparation. Now serious "drives" have been made and soon neither guns nor ammunition, big and little, will be wanting to the Allies for their "great offensive." Whether, in the long run, there will be the same inequality in munitions of war as in men in favor of the Allies may depend in part on the effectiveness of the Allies' blockade of Germany—but not entirely. Here, too, the human superiority counts as much as the abundance of material—and the French are confident that, with all the problematic help from Turkey, the wearing out of Germany will go on apace.

It must be the same for the provisions to keep the human machines going. In all that concerns food, it is not only their free commerce of the sea which tells in favor of the Allies. Americans have not noticed sufficiently what her own intensive agriculture is doing for France in the way of supplies to the army and civil population. Senator Melne, who did most for such agriculture years ago, is the new Minister for this. Under this heading, no calculation of time could be even approximate, for the human factor of endurance of privations would upset all calculations as it is doing with the Serbians. But it is certain that time will favor accumulatively the Allies.

As to money, the general idea is that Germany is forced to indulge more and more in paper promises to pay, while the Allies have, to say the least, their credit on a gold basis. I can only point in passing to the self-sufficiency in gold which the French people have been showing all along, putting their hoarded gold by hundreds of millions of dollars into the Bank of France so soon as their country appealed and without need of any exercise of pressure, taking up from the start successive short loans—and now the first long loan which France has put out since the war began, after sixteen months. So the French did after the war in 1871, when Thiers, who knew his people, said, "Everybody will want it."

This is the sum of Finance Minister Ribot's speech which he made to Parliament a week ago, and which today is posted up in every commune in France:

"I appeal to all, to the rich as to the poor, to the lowly as to the powerful. Let them all come and seal the unity of the French nation in the face of danger and prepare to-morrow's victory! Let the army of French savings rise up! Like that which fights, it is the army of France, or rather it is France herself. It is that which shall help us to combat and to conquer!"

From the 1st of November, 1915, to the 31st of October, 1915, Minister Ribot said, Frenchmen have given to Government more than twelve milliards of francs (\$2,400,000,000)—twice and a half the war indemnity which Germany exacted from them in 1871—and gasped at its speedy payment. The last month of October alone, the French Treasury received from citizens of the Republic—in money—1,097,000,000 francs! Of the 26 milliards paid out in all by France since the first day of war, only four (\$800,000,000) went to foreign creditors for all purchases of the army and civil population. All the rest has been spent in France, and it is in no wise a war loss.

This is the remark of Edmond Thery, who knows figures and finance professionally, and Senator Clemenceau has put it in plain words: "I ask of my fellow-citizens only to forget, for a time, that a righteous calculation even while losing nothing (just the contrary) to the height of a disinterested act!"

By next June, we shall see whether here, too, there is not a definite superiority of the Allies, of whom France is a great part!



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READ THE MAIL & ADVOCATE

THE BRAVEST BATTLE.

The bravest battle that ever was fought!
Shall I tell you where and when?
On the maps of the world you will find it not.
'Twas fought by the mothers of men.

Nay, not with cannon or battle shot
With a sword or noble pen;
Nay, not with eloquent words or thought
From mouths of wonderful men!

But deep in a walled-up woman's heart—
Of a woman that would not yield,
But bravely, silently bore her part—
So, there is that battlefield!

No marshaling troops, no bivouac song,
No banner to gleam and wave;
But oh; these battles, they last so long—
From babyhood to the grave.

Yet, faithful still as a bridge of stars,
She fights in her walled-up town
Fights on and on in the endless wars,
Then, silent, unseen, goes down.

Oh, ye with banner and battle shot,
And soldiers to shout and praise!
I tell you the kingliest victories fought
Were fought in those silent ways.

O spotless woman in a world of shame
With splendid and silent scorn,
Go back to God as white as you came,
The kingliest warrior born!
—JOAQUIN MILLER.

BY ORDER OF THE PEOPLE
(By Marion Couthouy Smith in the Outlook.)

For what, in the sight of Heaven, do the young soldiers die—
The flower of France and England—
think you they know not why?
On the stormy floods of battle like straws their lives are tost,
That the rule of the just free peoples be not forever lost.

And we, who have wrought our freedom, see we no sign, no light?
Shall the reek of carnage blind us to the white star of right?
Where are the souls of our fathers,
Full-statured men, who saw
That Christ, who died for the people,
had left to the world a Law?

This is the law to bind us, when sense and self go wild—
That the sword be strong for mercy,
that the shield be over the child,
That the great eternal standards ride high above the strife,
And the soul of a mighty people be dearer than blood or life.

AIR RAID ON KIEL CANAL IN THE NEAR FUTURE

NEW YORK, Dec. 29.—G. O. Robinson, of the Curtiss Aeroplane Company, who returned to-day by the American liner St. Paul, said he had been assembling aeroplanes at Hendon for the British army, and intimated that there might be a colossal raid by air on Germany. He said the world would be astounded soon by several developments in aerial warfare, but refused to hint what they might be on the ground that he had been enjoined not to talk of what he had seen in England. His intimation caused a revival of the rumour that the objective of the great aerial fleet making ready at Hendon was the Kiel Canal.

Another passenger was Gen. Wilfred Ellershaw, who will inspect ordnance and ammunition being manufactured here and in Canada for the allies.

A PATHETIC STORY

The following pathetic story is from an English paper:—

"In the compartment which she entered were two young girls, and afterward a man came in, accompanied by his wife. No sooner was the latter seated than she began counting slowly on her fingers. 'One, two, three'—and continued to repeat the words at short intervals.

"The young girls giggled, and whispered to one another about the singular conduct of the woman, though one could easily see that some grave event was the cause of her behaviour. At last the man could contain himself no longer, and he addressed the girls: 'Perhaps you will stop your silly laughing when you learn that my wife has lost three sons at the front. I am now taking her to an asylum.' A sinister stillness at once made itself felt in the compartment."

There may be plenty of food for thought in this broad land of ours, but the difficulty is to obtain the other kind.

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