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GERMANS PIN THEIR FAITH TO THEIR HUGE AIRSHIPS

Think That These Aircraft Can Successfully Cross the North Sea and Raid Great Britain

POOR RECORD IN WAR SO FAR

Have Only Dropped Bombs on Unfortified Places and Have Been Beaten by War ships

AN officer of the German navy has contributed to the New York Times some interesting information about the Zeppelins. He predicts that the next great sensation of the war will be an aerial attack upon Great Britain.

That the Zeppelins are likely to make such a raid sooner or later is very probable, for the German people look to their Zeppelins with some such pride as the British people look to their navy. In these huge dirigible balloons Germany excels the world. Millions of dollars have gone to their construction. Honors have been heaped upon Count Zeppelin, their designer, and he is looked upon to prove the deliverer of his country by striking terror to the hearts of the British people, and perhaps by destroying the navy.

The performances of the Zeppelins to date have not been stimulating to German pride. They have dropped a few bombs upon unfortified positions; and when they sallied forth from Heligoland on the occasion of the British raid on Christmas Day they were driven off by the guns of the destroyers.

In Time of Peace.

But on paper the Zeppelins are indeed formidable engines of destruction, and in times of peace it is to be admitted that they accomplished everything their inventor had claimed for them. At the outbreak of war there were thirty Zeppelins carrying passengers in different parts of Germany, and making their trips as punctually as railroad trains.

The German people felt no more sense of risk in taking a trip in a Zeppelin than the ordinary man would feel in a train. Of course in great storms the ships would be laid up, but they were so well handled that in the event of a storm arising when one of them was on a journey it could either mount above the tempest zone or come to earth in safety.

It is a very different thing, of course, to carry a handful of passengers from one German city to another on a calm summer day and to attempt the Channel crossing in winter, exposed to not only the elements, but the guns of hostile battleships and the attacks of swifter aeroplanes. Nevertheless, the German officer insists that the attempt will be made.

Monsters of the Air.

The gas bags of the war Zeppelins are 500 feet long and 50 feet in diameter. These bags are not, as is sometimes supposed, a single chamber of silk and rubber, but a number of compartments, divided and ribbed with tough wood and aluminum. Otherwise a single bullet striking the gas bag would cause the craft to come tumbling to earth. As it is, it would require shrapnel fire to disable the balloon.

Beneath the bag are two cars, the forward one being the bridge of the ship, and the aft one the engine room. Between the two and connected with each by a covered passageway are the cabins, where the crew of twenty-five men live when not on active duty.

The war Zeppelins have another feature unknown to the craft of peace, and this is a third car, which is slung 2,000 feet below the ship. Upon this car are carried the explosives, the idea being that if it happens to be struck it will harmlessly explode without disabling the ship herself.

The Bomb Droppers.

The chief hostile equipment of the Zeppelin is a supply of bombs. They are not dropped overboard, but are discharged, or rather aimed, through a sort of tube that lies on the floor of the car. They are loaded three at a time, and are discharged by means of a pedal. Two can be let go at once, and this is the favorite practice, the third being sent earthward a couple of seconds later. A lookout with a powerful glass reports to the bomb dropper the effect of his fire.

It is said that experiments made in Germany show that considerable accuracy has been achieved by the bomb throwers. Only in unusually favorable circumstances can a Zeppelin come within two miles of the earth when discharging a bomb, and moreover, she must for reasons of safety keep moving, perhaps at 60 miles an hour. At this range it would be pos-

sible to hit a city, perhaps, but hardly a city block.

Fears Armored Automobiles.
The Zeppelin mounts some rapid-fire guns, but these are intended to defend her against the attacks of aeroplanes. The writer in the Times thinks that the enemy that the Zeppelin has most reason to dread is the armored automobile, which can go just as fast as the Zeppelin, and carry guns that will throw shrapnel more than two miles in a vertical direction. Moreover, these cars have a very ingenious apparatus for finding the range, and this makes their fire unusually accurate.

Many of the British warships are equipped with similar guns, and probably the cruisers that drove back the Zeppelins on Christmas Day had these high angle guns aboard.

The officer says that there are now 15 of these craft within striking distance of the British Isles, and that a new one is being built every three weeks. Whether they will make their assault alone or wait and make a joint effort with the German navy is a matter that is causing speculation in British military circles.

HEROIC SISTER WAS DECORATED

French President Confers Legion of Honor on Brave Hospital Superior

M. POINCARÉ, accompanied by M. Viviani, the Premier, and MM. Deschanel and Dubost, the President of the Chamber and Senate respectively, went to Fort Gilville and there visited the works on the outer lines of the fortress of Toul. The party went into the trenches, and made their way by the small galleries to the shelters constructed behind.

The President warmly congratulated the Governor, the officers, and the troops on the construction of the various works, which had more than doubled the defensive strength of this vast entrenched camp.

The party went over the greater part of the Grand Couronne de Nancy, stopping to inspect several villages which had been destroyed by bombardment or fire. The village of Crevic showed the greatest signs of devastation. The party then pushed on, and inspected the advance posts in the Seille Valley along the old frontier. Thence they proceeded to Lunéville, and finally to Gerbevillers.

At the request of the Prefect of the Department, M. Poincaré, after consultation with M. Viviani, announced his intention of conferring the Legion of Honor upon Sister Julie, the superior of the hospital there.

She has already been mentioned in an army order for having, by her presence of mind and courage, defended and saved the hospital, which had been transformed into an ambulance station, and for securing food for the wounded occupants during the bombardment.

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PRES. WILSON MADE PROTEST

Early in October he Reminded Germany of the International Regulations

IT is now taken for granted that President Wilson personally protested "against attacks on cities occupied by non-combatants by means of bombs dropped from aircraft." The protest was made early in October last.

So far Dr. Wilson has not discussed the subject of publication, and has confined himself to conferences with diplomatic representatives of the belligerent Powers, who were reminded of the article in The Hague Convention which provides for a notice of twenty-four hours of the purpose to attack a zone inhabited by non-combatants, to enable such persons within that time to remove themselves from the danger zone.

"If this is true," comments the "New York Sun," "it is, perhaps, the most important news concerning America's relation to the war in Europe that has appeared since the beginning of August. Its surpassing importance is due to the fact that, if true, it would indicate the Administration's acquiescence in the urgent demand of thousands of well-meaning persons throughout the country that this Government, as one of the signatories of the Conventions of The Hague, shall do its duty with regard to infractions of the rules of warfare supposed to be contained in these conventions."

Simultaneously with the appearance of many editorials approving the President's protest, there is a striking technical article printed yesterday in the proceedings of the United States Naval Institute declaring that Zeppelins had proved a great failure.

"If more serious attacks should be attempted by the remaining Zeppelins that Germany possesses, they will be met as those already have been met, or as a last resort by concerted action of a handful of aeroplanes. Aeroplanes have proved themselves better aerial scouts than Zeppelins. There can be no doubt that a few desperate pilots who were willing to throw their lives away could successfully ram and destroy any airship that ever sailed."

FRENCH CHARGED GERMAN POSITION SLIDING ON SKIS

And, by This Novel Method of Advancing, They Succeeded in Routing the Enemy and in Forcing Him to Retreat

St. Die, Department of Vosges, France, via Paris, Jan. 8.—A brilliant exploit by French Alpine troops, who charged on skis down the snow-covered mountain slopes at Bonhomme, a post on the Alsatian frontier, forced the Germans to retire to Arbey, five miles down the valley of the River Weiss toward Colmar.

The Germans held the railroad from Ste. Marie to St. Croix, menacing St. Die, where the French heavy artillery opened fire on January 3. This led the Germans to expect an attack from the direction. At the same time the Alpine troops, leading the way for French infantry, advanced on the German Customs-house at Diedolshausen, near Bonhomme.

A strong German detachment with quick-firers held the route, but the winding nature of the road prevented the Germans from firing more than seven hundred yards along it. The French advanced to within this distance of the Germans, while the Alpine troops began to climb the heights to attack the Germans on their flank.

Progress was slow, and the darkness of the soldiers, outlined against the snow, made excellent marks for the German sharpshooters. Many of the men rolled down the steep slopes, leaving crimson stains behind. The survivors pushed forward until they reached the shelter of the pines at the summit.

Then began an exciting charge on the Germans at Diedolshausen. The Alpine soldiers on their skis slid down the mountainside at a dizzy pace, while the infantry in the road below opened fire on the Germans.

Caught between two fires, the Germans gave way, fighting obstinately along the five miles of their retreat.

WE SHOULD WORRY!

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