

with a British Red Cross nurse, and Mrs. Grundy looked on with approval.

"Kindly retire to the tea-rooms in the Palm Garden below, and unmask," announced a gentleman of the 16th Century, from the platform.

"Why art thou so pensive," lightly queried a hooded Dervisher, addressing for the first time a demure little Quaker maid seated opposite him at the tiny table.

She snatched the mask from her face like a flash and grasping the table with both hands, looked at her partner with startled, expectant eyes.

"Who are you?" she demanded, agitatedly, as he fumbled clumsily with his mask. It suddenly fell on the table between them. Betty Brown and Alec Reid faced each other. The bursts of hilarious merriment that resounded from every direction as unexpected discoveries were made, fell upon deaf ears. The quaint Japanese maidens fitting here and there bearing daintily arranged trays were unnoticed.

"Betty!" ejaculated Alec, his fine face aglow with

surprised delight as he impulsively grasped her hands, entirely unmindful of his surroundings. His caress was unheeded. Without once removing her eyes from his face she extricated one hand and placed it upon his arm, groping gently, half-fearfully down to his wrists.

"You—you have been invalided home!" she questioned, in an awe-struck voice.

"No, I've been here all the time," he doggedly returned. "Good heavens, let's get somewhere where we can talk," he suggested, desperately, rising from the table.

"Then you and your friend in England have been making a fool of me ever since?" she questioned, with ironical deliberation, as they entered the deserted ball-room.

Alec shrunk from the scornful, flashing eyes.

"No, you are mistaken! Listen, Betty," he entreated, throwing back the black hood from his head as if it stifled him.

"You played with me, laughed at me, and no won-

der—thrusting my friendship upon you as I did!" Her voice shook with suppressed emotion as she sat apathetically on a chair. "But—I didn't know—I thought all soldiers were gentlemen." Her eyes filled with tears of disappointment as they rested upon the culprit.

"Betty, you must listen to reason," implored Alec, impatiently. "Why, where did you get that?" he enquired, pointing in amazement at a letter she clutched in her hand.

"I—I remember picking it from the floor just as you spoke to me first," she replied, abstractedly, as she took it in her other hand and glanced at the inscription. Her eyes dilated as she saw her own name written in Alec's familiar scrawl.

"Read it," he said, abruptly—and even as she read, a sweet-voiced singer wandering aimlessly about the empty palm-screened stage, softly sang "Love's Old Sweet Song."

Her accusing, reproachful eyes were starry as the note fluttered to her feet.

GERMANY NEARS COLLAPSE ON LAND

LAST week I suggested that the submarine war had been accorded a larger place in the public mind than its importance merited.

The emphasis given to it seemed to rest upon a fallacy, indeed upon many fallacies. In the first place it was assumed that Germany had built a large fleet of new and improved submarines and that she had been storing them in readiness for the present occasion. This particular assumption contradicted itself. Germany has been conducting a continuous submarine warfare for a year or more, and there has been hardly a day without its tale of victims. It was obvious that she was using all the submarine strength she possessed. She would naturally do so. Every underwater craft would be sent to sea as soon as it was launched. The story of a new and unused fleet was a myth. There was no such fleet. A second fallacy was the supposition that Germany had substantially restrained her underwater activities in deference to the pledge given to Washington and that this restraint was now to be repudiated. The pledge to Washington was the result of the sinking of the Sussex between Folkestone and Dieppe, and although for a time there was a lull in submarine activities the records show that 262 vessels were destroyed after the Sussex incident, and before October 1, 1916. At least fifteen of these vessels are supposed to have been sunk without warning, and even when warning was given it usually meant no more than the transfer of the crew to open boats. There seemed therefore no good reason to suppose that any distinctly new departure in submarine warfare was to be expected either in the number of U boats employed or in their selection of victims. Writing last week, I said it was unlikely to the last extent that Germany was about "to display any new and hitherto undisplayed strength except in the single respect of sinking those few ships that have until now been theoretically immune."

This forecast seems now to have been justified so far as we are able to extract the facts from the statistics published in the daily newspapers. We are told that fifty-nine vessels were sunk between February 1st and February 7th, but this considerable total appears to include several vessels that were reported as missing between those dates, and that may have met their fate from causes other than the new campaign. On February 7th we learn that fourteen vessels were sunk. On February 8th there were seven. On February 9th there were six, on February 10th there were seven, and on February 11th there were only two, one of them of small size. The average capacity of the ships sunk was about 2,000 tons, and many of them were only trawlers. The total number of British ships sunk was forty-three.

Now this is by no means an impressive showing when compared with the end that was sought. Writing with all the caution that belongs properly to

Her new Sub' Warfare is only a last desperate effort to ward off defeat

By SIDNEY CORYN

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early days, it may be said that the showing is insignificant. If the new campaign can do no better than this it must be adjudged a failure. I do not know the precise average number of ships that normally enter and leave British ports every day. Statements on this point are conflicting, but it is certainly several hundred. We must remember also that most of the ships already sunk were on the water when the campaign opened, and even if it was possible to warn them of the new danger it certainly was not possible to equip them against it. We may suppose also that it would take some little time to get the new machinery of defence into motion, and it is certain that none of these ships could have received the guns with which it is the intention to arm them. We may believe, if our sympathies lie in that direction, that Germany has suddenly launched some two hundred new submarines of unprecedented power in order to make effective her blockade of the English coast. But in that case we must face the fact that these two hundred submarines are able to sink only about half a dozen vessels a day. Either we must admit that there has been no sudden accession to Germany's submarine strength or that these new craft have failed in their mission.

STILL another fallacy is based on calculations of Great Britain's mercantile marine and the time needed for its reduction to what we may call the starvation point. Estimates of this sort emanating from Berlin give the size of the merchant fleet as eleven million tons, and an easy sum in arithmetic based on supposed successes during the first week of the campaign points to its annihilation within a measurable period. But we may notice in the first place that the size of England's mercantile fleet is given by Lloyd's as twenty million tons instead of eleven million. In the second place we may notice the rapid shrinking of the submarine successes after the first week to a point far below the German calculations. And in the third place we must make allowances for England's shipbuilding capacities, and the number of new vessels turned out by the yards to take the places of those destroyed. We do not know what the yards have actually done in the way of shipbuilding, but we are told that the production is very large as a result of standardization and simplicity of construction. So far as France is concerned we may note the statement made to the

French Senate by Rear-Admiral Lacaze, the minister of marine. Admiral Lacaze emphatically confirmed the view expressed in this column. He said that no new departure in submarine warfare need be expected, since no new departure was possible. Germany would continue to do what she had been doing all the way along, since it was not in her power to do more than this. During the last eleven months, said the admiral, fifty-one million tons of merchandise had entered French ports, and

one-half of one per cent. of these ships had been sunk. He thought it likely that the percentage of losses would presently be somewhat higher, but it would remain insignificant. The admiral's forecast seems to have been confirmed so far as we may judge from the returns of these few days.

NOR must it be forgotten that Germany's submarine losses will be in proportion to the number of craft that she sends forth. Now here we are almost wholly in the dark, since Great Britain and France never allow the publication of their successes against submarines. A British admiralty official said recently that the efficacy of the measures to be taken against submarines might be judged by the decreasing number of the ships sunk, and certainly the decrease has been steady and continuous, although the period of observation is still very brief. The best of all weapons against the submarine, he said, were the guns mounted upon merchant ships, and here we must remember that only a small number of these ships can yet have received their guns. He added that two and sometimes three submarines a day had been accounted for in this way. In addition to the armed merchantmen we know that there are thousands of swift motor boats scouring the ocean in every direction, as well as innumerable other expedients for the detection and destruction of submarines. In spite of such successes as the submarines have won it may be repeated with every assurance that the odds are very much against the underwater craft and in favour of her intended victims. The submarine never fires a torpedo unless she has a broadside target. Her torpedo tubes are fixed and rigid, and she must therefore manoeuvre into position for her shot. If she has a stern or bow target she must rise to the surface in order to use her guns, and if her intended victim is armed she will almost certainly be destroyed, since she will be clearly visible for many seconds before her own guns can be uncovered and aimed. Against the motor boat she is nearly helpless, and she will be fortunate if she can submerge and creep away without being seen. Her torpedoes are practically useless against these erratic and slippery craft, and in gunnery she would be at a fatal disadvantage. Moreover, a motor boat is hardly worth destroying except under the necessity of self-defence. So far as value is concerned, a single torpedo is much more costly than a motor boat.