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LONDON, FRIDAY, MAY 7.

WAR CLOUDS OVER CHINA.

WITH THE sending of an ultimatum to China by Japan, the Far East crisis suddenly becomes very serious. War is in the air of Peking and Tokyo, and a few days may witness the launching of a conflict. Probably if China continues to refuse the demands of Japan, the latter will at first exert some pressure on President Yuan. If later stronger measures are required, an invasion by Japanese troops on a large scale will be made, and as the Chinese military organization is weak and obsolete, the invaders would score an easy triumph. There is a strong element at Tokyo, however, that is averse to extreme measures, and this, in conjunction with British influence, may be able to patch up the difference without actual strife.

The situation in China is confusing. It has not been altogether clear just why Japan is coming on China's trail, but among the main reasons given are the refusal of China to grant certain trade and land concessions and failure to meet financial obligations. Also Japan may be hoping by a sort of intervention to clear up the chaotic conditions which prevail throughout the Celestial Kingdom. Millions of Chinese have lined up with Dr. Sun Yat Sen, who has opposed the government of Yuan, and are clamoring for a revolution. These conditions have not only played ducks and drakes with China's domestic affairs, but have seriously injured Japan's commercial relations with China and some parts of inland Asia.

There has been no announcement as to Great Britain's interest and influence in the matter, but assuredly Japan will not take any radical step if it is opposed by her big ally. Just now, were China and Japan to be plunged into war, it would hamper to some extent the campaign of the Allies in Europe, as until the Dardanelles are forced Russia must continue to receive large supplies over the Trans-Siberian Railway from Japan. It is decidedly to Great Britain's advantage that peace be kept in the Far East at present, and the Mikado's Government will take this into consideration.

NATION VS. HUMANITY.

THE phenomenon of German nationalism is an interesting and sinister resurgence of old-world, pre-Christian conditions. With the same insolence the ancient Greeks held themselves not only as a superior race, but as different in kind from others, being descended from the gods or sprung from the soil of Greece itself. The Hebrews also considered themselves a peculiarly privileged people, with a God all to themselves, who was greater than other gods, and would always help them to victory.

The modern Germans are really reviving in more forcible guise than ever a similar characteristic of their own savage forefathers. The ancient Germans called themselves "Teut," or something like that, which the Romans Latinized into "Teutones." This word meant "The People." Its modern form is the word "Deutsch," by which the Germans designate themselves. The difference now is that where "Teut" was used in primitive times without self-conceit or even racial self-consciousness, "Deutsch" has become a peculiarly arrogant synonym with our enemy for the people, paramount and distinguished from all others, and privileged to treat them as lower animals, poisoning their wells or maiming and killing off their children.

We British have been arrogant in our time. But we have never made war in the German fashion, even upon savages. We have prided ourselves on our record as a colonizing, parliamentary and governing race, on our poets and humanitarians, inventors, manufacturers, athletes and sailors, but we have never claimed a monopoly or inherent and absolute superiority in all the virtues and powers of mankind. We have freely recognized the supremacy of France in manners, and the fine arts, of Germany in philosophy, music and scholarship. Great Britain and France have looked upon Germany as their peer and worthy rival in the race of civilization. But the new Germany has been taught to treat other nations as inferior all round.

That the Germans are fairly united in this insolence is nothing to their credit, except that it shows how thoroughly their schools have taught them. (And yet it is commonly put forward as a quasi argument for Germany's cause, that her people are absolutely united! To take national unity as a proof of the state's right is to fall into the fundamental error of German political philosophy, that the nation is the All-Highest, and cannot err or be gainsaid. The German nation has made a god of its state. But history offers proof enough of the errors of unified and organized nations, as well as of individuals. The Huns were here again the prototype of our enemy. We

shall yet have some whippersnapper of a German Dernburg arguing that the Huns under Attila had a righteous cause because they were united and sold as the onward blast of a hurricane; and because some foolish people dared to resist them, any methods of warfare the Huns chose, to employ were right and good. At the same time Dernburg & Co. would be slower to admit that the plundering onrush of a united France under Napoleon after Jena was a justifiable proceeding. Apostles of violence, the Prussians do not, however, approve the application of their philosophy made by Napoleon to their grandfathers.

The great pity is that this national infatuation of Germany has stopped for a time the tide that had been setting slowly for centuries toward a recapture in an enlarged form of the ideal of united humanity which the Stoic philosophy, the Roman Empire and the Christian religion, in part, realized once upon a time for a season. It is perhaps a last great reaction against world unification and brotherhood. Only a complete overthrow of this German separatism will satisfy our humanitarian idealism.

ANOTHER CANADIAN VICTORY.

THE MAIL AND EMPIRE, the leading organ of the Conservative party in Ontario, says in a large type headline: "NO ELECTION THIS SUMMER." In other words, the Rogers wing of the Government has been crumpled up, not by the other division of the Conservative forces at Ottawa, but by a strong advance of the army of public opinion. Liberals and Conservatives of the rank and file were allied to prevent an attack upon the internal peace of the country. Rogers' militarism was downed, and the Liberal party, which stood at least as good a chance as it will have in another year of being returned to power, deserves much credit for having stood out against an election.

One thing that has been emphasized is that the public does not want any political bickering. It would welcome a return to the early days of the war, when each political leader paid tribute to the other, and Gen. the Hon. Sam Hughes saw fit to consult the former Minister of Militia. It would be gratified to see all the talent for statesmanship possessed by this country utilized to the full advantage. It wants an end to war grafting, and has confidence in the men appointed to the purchasing commission.

The heart of the country is beating without disturbance. While there must come a day when wrong-doing will be exposed, and when the lid that has been lifted slightly will be thrown back on its hinges and all that has been dishonest shown, it is well to recognize that there has been a great warning to the man who would strike a treasonable blow through enriching himself from war contracts, and that public opinion has pronounced a heavy penalty for future offenders. There is no reason why the two parties should not work together. Sir Robert Borden should make co-operation mean something, the same as it means in Britain, where the Unionists have filled important offices and been trusted with extraordinary prerogatives.

There is an opportunity for a fine, broad unity between parties, and the announcement that an election is at least delayed is the best news that has been received. It tells of another kind of victory.

POISON IN AIR.

THE USE of asphyxiating and poisonous gases by the Germans has led to a declaration by the British Government that the adoption of similar weapons is under consideration by the Allies. This method of warfare is prohibited by one of the resolutions of the Hague Convention. That Germany agreed to the prohibition, and now violates it, is only in accord with their common practice. But in this case they would doubtless make the excuse that neither Great Britain nor the United States accepted it, and therefore cannot object. The exact reason for Great Britain's action in this matter at the convention does not appear; but, at all events, it leaves us way perfectly clear for the British war office to adopt any measures of this kind that it sees fit.

To an outsider, it may be confessed, there does not seem much difference between firing explosive shells and dropping bombs which crash into massed troops, killing or giving ghastly wounds in every direction, and sending a poisonous gas over them, and putting them out of action. Either practice is horrible to contemplate; either one is destructive. On the whole the gas clouds would seem to be the least dangerous, as by the use of respirators, or even putting cotton in the nostrils, the evil effects of this weapon may be minimized.

At all events, if the Germans are going to use poisonous gases to fight the Allies, the latter will be justified in giving the Kaiser's men some of their own medicine. War is a horribly cruel and unnatural thing under any circumstances; and it is not easy to differentiate between weapons that are permissible and those that are not. The very best are inhumane. The worst differ only in degree. And we fear that the average man would be very apt to show some prejudice in giving an opinion. No matter how severely he might feel disposed to condemn certain weapons used by the enemy, he would find some excuse for the use of the same method of warfare by his own country.

MR. ROGERS AND THE CLERGY.

THERE is a quiet indignation among the homes of this country that a man of the type of Hon. Robert Rogers should have been seen in his recent skyrocket speech at Montreal to attack the clergymen of Canada, who have raised their voices in protest against the mishandling of war funds. Mr. Rogers sent up this speech as a flare is sent up on the European battlefield. He wanted to see his enemy re-

RIGHT!

[Buffalo Courier.] It would seem that Canada should have little taste for an election contest forced upon the country by self-seeking politicians while thousands of Canadians are being killed or maimed on the European battlefields.

vealed in the full light, and to take a shot at him. So that every clergyman who has protested against "graft" was a target for the following volley of abuse from the machine-master:

"The unfortunate part is that evidently some simple-minded, innocent people read these statements and believe them to be true, as evidenced by the fact that a few clergymen, but fortunately very few in number, through want of knowledge, are simple-minded enough to venture to re-echo from their pulpits some of the misrepresentations being published from day to day in the Grit press of our country. It might be well for those individuals to better study and better understand the true conditions before undertaking to enter upon a discussion of public affairs, for, if they have no better knowledge of their Bible and its teachings than they appear to have when they undertake to discuss public questions, all I can say is may God have mercy upon the souls of unfortunate people that depend upon such individuals for spiritual instruction and direction."

In London and this district very many clergymen have been "simple-minded" enough to speak their minds over the condition of affairs. We believe these clergymen were fairly well informed before they spoke, and we believe that they were carrying out the highest teachings of the Bible when they told their congregations of misdeeds and denounced them. They will be enlightened to have advice from Mr. Rogers on the subject of religious ethics and will no doubt hereafter submit their sermons to him for censoring before delivering them.

Seriously, we believe that the quiet thought of the community is that Premier Borden has not yet completed his process of housecleaning. Mr. Rogers has made such a spectacle of himself that it will be difficult for the country that respects its clergy to regard him as a fit man to have a place so near the throne.

EDITORIAL NOTES.

Nightly the boom of the forty-two centimetre carpet-beater is heard throughout the land.

The British Government has issued a white paper on the drink question. Black seems the more appropriate shade.

Although there have been countless opportunities apologies have been scarce in the war. In fact there has been but one, that of Great Britain to Chile.

At Bethlehem, Pa., the great Schwab steel works are working day and night making war material. At another Bethlehem was born the Prince of Peace.

Germany now hates the Americans almost as much as she does the British because she has been unable to make Washington depart from a strict neutrality.

Ten to one the Canadian Highlanders held their ground at Ypres far into the night. The blood of that breed has never been thinned out. It still holds good, as in a thousand fights.

Sir Edward Grey has just returned from two grand weeks amongst the salmon of Scotland and reports himself in splendid shape. Sounds like a fair warning to Germany's chancellor.

The Pittsburgh Chronicle is responsible for the following: If a man's father was English and his mother German, would he hate himself? To be strictly neutral he would have to hate both his parents.

DISTRIBUTION.

[Washington Star.] This thing called trouble is a curious bug. Each mortal thinks that he has all there is. Yet there's enough for each and some to spare.

GERMANY'S "APPOINTED" MISSION.

[London Times.] Germany boasts that it is her appointed mission to conquer a great world-empire, through which she may impose her ideals upon mankind. Our empire and our ideals are the chief obstacles in her path. That consideration is the key to all her world-policy. That is why she has grasped at the "Triple Entente," which has been intriguing for years in Egypt, India, and in South Africa. That is why she has watched our domestic controversies and the supposed symptoms of our decadence with malignant vigilance. That is why she has sought, again and again, to sow mistrust between us and our partners, and why at the last she tried to bribe us into treachery. Her object in this war is to shatter the Triple Entente, to destroy the free empire of England, and to rear upon its ruins a German world-empire of militarism and bureaucracy. She hates us, she proclaims, with a hatred more vindictive than she bears the Belgians or the French. She hates us because she envies us, and because our honor and our plain sense have broken through the flimsy toils of her diplomacy.

BETWEEN WOMEN.

[Kansas City Journal.] "She's an old maid. That proves that she couldn't get a husband." "Not at all. It may indicate that she was more particular than some. I never see you exhibiting your husband around."

THE OBLIGATIONS OF SEA POWER.

[Westminster Gazette.] We, as the chief sea power, are under a special obligation to respect the rights and even the susceptibilities of our neighbors. If, for a century, we have held unchallenged a position which in theory might be oppressive or intolerable to the rest of the world, the last thing we desire is that they should interpret this as meaning that we intend in future to lay down the law for ourselves regardless of international agreement.

Ten Minutes With the Short-Story Writers

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BEHIND THE GUNS.

By Alex. Shell Briscoe.

Stephen Barrow paused in his work of mixing dough to listen to the distant pulsing of the battle. The rasping rifle volleys sounded from a point nearer at hand, and he knew there had been changes in the positions of the batteries, too.

Yes, the troops were retreating again. From the hill he could see cavalry already crossing the Marne.

Well, that had been the regular thing since the English expeditionary force had bumped into the German legions at Mons, far to the north in Belgium. Stephen could hardly recall how many days had passed since this steady retirement had begun. It seemed to him that it had been going on for months—years.

He had been disappointed in the campaign from the very outset—from the day he had accepted the King's shilling to fight for the Union Jack. Neither events nor his part in them had come up to his expectations. In the first place, he had been transferred to the commissary department to mix dough since the army had been hurled back toward Paris in the initial battle—and he had been in the commissary ever since.

Stephen's regiment was encamped on a plateau above a bend in the river. At dawn the German guns opened fire, grumbling like a tired sleeper awakened too early; then for the first time in weeks of the campaigning Stephen saw a real battle begin. The commissary was back of the ridge hardly a half-mile behind the line of rifle pits, and from the top of the hill he could see the whole battlefield in the bend of the river.

From both sides he heard the throbbing of cannon and the smashing rifle volleys—like the sound of hail on a glass skylight. For miles up and down the river the battle was in progress, and at every point the German onslaught was equally determined. The pontoon bridge was completed again, and ghost-grey thousands poured over it.

In the fields the solid masses spread toward the trenches. Now they were at the foot of the hill, and Stephen could no longer see the ones directly in front of where he stood; but on each side he had a good view of their onward rush. Little flashes of light glinting from bayonets fixed for the charge. Machine guns and rifles took heavy toll.

The ground the Germans passed over was carpeted with wounded men, motionless figures; but ever they closed their ranks and went on. The attack seemed irresistible—their numbers hardly diminished.

But even as he turned back to take up his work there came a shout. Men were running about among the wagons, some being harnessed; already some of the vehicles were moving away.

For a moment Stephen stared bewildered; then, after a glance toward the west, he broke into a run. Stephen's driver was hooking the traces when he arrived, and started the team with a shout and a swing of his whip as his comrade leaped to the seat of the big oven. The crest of a hill to the west was swarming with grey-clad figures. The English were fleeing before them. The line had been broken by a force which had charged up the steep bank along the Marne.

Whether the Germans could hold the position under the fire of the English batteries and could cut off the force entrenched on the little plateau was yet to be decided; but meantime, the vicinity was no place for a commissary train.

Every shell added to the confusion. The road quickly became a litter of smashed wagons and dead horses. Drivers were cutting loose the animals and riding away. It was obviously impossible to extricate the train, and Stephen was about to follow the example of his fleeing comrades when a turn came a back ammunition wagon, its driver lashing his horses. Plunging into the piled-up mass of wreckage it drove!

Stephen reached the scene as the driver, who had been hurled from his seat, staggered to his feet, and from his blasphemous comments he learned the reasons for the officer's haste. The infantry on the plateau was running short of ammunition.

There had been a bang somewhere, and the word had been wig-wagged that, unless ammunition arrived the troops would be helpless.

It was then that Stephen qualified as a man in an emergency. The ammunition wagon was overturned, one of its horses was down with a broken leg; but near by stood a big-wheeled trough, in which dough for the camp bakery was mixed. Its horses had not been touched by the rain of shells.

Promptly Stephen took command of the situation. No officer was near, and the men followed him as promptly as they always with a natural leader, whether he wears a natural leader's wig or not. With his shoulder-straps or not, William had ripped a passage through a hedge which surrounded an adjoining field, while others hastily transferred boxes of cartridges from the ammunition wagon to the camp bakery trough.

When the gap was open Stephen took the reins, the driver of the ammunition wagon swung up beside him, and they drove through the hedge. Shells were bursting around them. Any moment one might hit the wagon.

There was more than half a mile of open country, swept by bullets, to be crossed. It was his first experience under fire, but he did not hesitate. There was no time even to think of being scared, to analyze his emotions. The men up on the plateau must have cartridges or surrender—and the loss of that hill spelled disaster!

The pace of the heavy draft horses was slow—cruelly slow—and the need of haste was vital. They had not gone a hundred yards before bullets from the German infantry were whining past, and Stephen stood up to lash the lumbering animals.

Now they were only a quarter of a mile from the English trenches, but the bullets were flying thick, and whirring was dotting the slope with fleecy, white balls!

Now they were at the bullet-swept summit, with only a hundred yards to go! Could they pass through the storm of lead unscathed?

Stephen yelled encouragement to the laboring horses, swung his whip in an effort to urge them to greater speed. The man beside him suddenly slumped in his seat and quickly slid off to the ground.

Stephen felt a shock, and his left shoulder went numb; his cap was wrenched from his head; something warm was running down his wrists and making the reins slippery.

One of the horses lurched in its stride, but he lashed it to a quivering, last effort. Only a hundred feet to go—now, then!

One horse went down; the other was thrown to one side. The twist over-

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turned the wagon, spilling cases of cartridges on the ground.

There was a sensation of flying through space, and blackness swallowed Stephen.

He awoke to find himself lying on the trampled grass near the trenches, swathed in bandages, very stiff and helpless and weak. The sound of the guns had receded. English guns were slamming shells into the rear ranks of Von Kluck's army, which was already beginning its retreat to the north.

Someone leaned over him—a grey-haired man who wore the straps of a colonel.

"So this is the chap who drove half a mile through hell to bring the cartridges," a voice said. "Well, if he hadn't, it's hard telling what would have happened today. Holding this hill is all that saved us."

Several days later in a field hospital Stephen, with the petulance of a sorely-wounded man, interviewed the brisk, capable, young physician who was dressing his wounds.

"You think they'll take me in one of the active regiments when I get out of here?" he asked. "They put me in the commissary where a chap has no chance to get into the fighting. It's tough."

A grin overcame the doctor's face. "That's too bad," he said dryly; "and you're not likely to be able to have a chance soon. You've a hole through your right thigh, a bullet in your left shoulder, a superficial furrow of the scalp, the calf of your right leg was drilled twice, and you have three minor flesh wounds. You've been mentioned in dispatches for that ammunition stunt of yours; and the chances are you'll land a star decoration that many a staff officer would give his left leg for. Yes, it's tough you never had a chance to get into a battle."

RUSSIA'S PROBLEM.

[Springfield Republican.]

One of the chief problems of the war just now is Russia's supply of munitions. As to this, while the Germans

are no doubt perfectly informed from German-Russian sources, close secrecy has been kept, but on general principles we should expect a shortage. The Russian demand must be at least as great as that of the Allies in the west, and we know that England and France have had to make a special effort, even with free access to all the markets of the world. Russia has had no such access, and since the closing of Archangel and the capture of Przemysl being an exception due to the hunger of its garrison. If Russia's ammunition is wanting, even the opening of Archangel, which should come by May 15, will be an appreciable relief; the opening of the Black Sea apparently to be a difficult and tedious matter. Just now a broad-gauge railway to the White Sea would be worth many army corps.

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