SUNDAY MORNING

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The World Window

Records of German Crime

If the various reports issued by the Belgian Commission, appointed to investigate the charges of barbarity and brutality laid against the German invaders prepared the public mind to believe almost any story of cruelty and outrage that published recently by the corresponding French Commission contains an even more ghastly and shameful record. German newspapers resent the title of "Modern Huns" bestowed on the German armies and never grow tired of praising German "Kultur" and announcing that world dominion is theirs by right of superior intellectual, moral and social development. They laud, too, the German type of Christianity as presenting within itself the living embodiment of the precepts and teaching of its divine founder. In this German writers are only following in the footsteps of the Kaiser who also never grows weary of proclaiming his close alliance with the deity, his dependence on divine protection and his consciousness of a divine mission. Yet the neutral world has been confronted with the spectacle of the armies of this nation and of this man violating every possible principle of Christianity and of law divine and human. For the most hideous of the horrors described by the commissions are not the work of individual degenerates, but were perpetrated in pursuance of a deliberate policy of "frightfulness."

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Kaiser's Policy of Terrorism

That is the supreme tragedy of these plain, unvarnished and restrained chronicles of murder, arson, pillage and crimes too terrible to be detailed. The narrative compiled by the French Commission is a simple and circumstantial statement of facts as given on oath by the witnesses examined and includes the sworn testimony. It carries conviction of the truth of the occurrences described by the witnesses, but no effort is made to inflame public sentiment by appeals to human emotion. In brief, the report is an arraignment of the German armies for behaving to the civilian population of the conquered districts with a studied savagery amenable to no restraint if only a reign of absolute terrorism could be imposed. What good the Kaiser and his satellites hope to gain from a policy of this kind is difficult to understand. It is certainly the worst of all foundations on which to build a new German province filled with Belgians and Frenchmen who are to be given the superior blessing of German Government and inculcated in the benefits of German "Kultur." It is only the policy of a people mad with the lust of dominion and infatuated with the notion of their super-humanity to a degree that makes them a law unto themselves and judges in their own cause. Such a people in the twentieth century are an anachronism, a menace to civilization for whom anything but crushing defeat is impossible if humanity is to survive.

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Terrorism a Studied Policy

Not only have men of military age been murdered without trial of any kind but the same fate has been extended to men, women and children. It has been done, too, not merely with cold-blooded indifference, but in many instances in a manner indicating what can only be called a devilish delight in the job. So general, so numerous and so similar in character have been the lawless excesses of the German troops even when under the immediate command of their officers, even their higher officers, that it is quite impossible to accept the theory of their unpremeditated occurrence. What renders it more certain that they were acts of deliberate policy is the fact that they happened in their most frightful form in the first stage of the war. When the German burglars broke into the Belgian homeland and stumbled over the door mat, the Kaiser and his war staff were determined to achieve a swift and decisive victory over the French army then only in process of mobilization. For that purpose, it was essential to preserve their lines of communication intact and they conceived that inviolability could most easily and readily be obtained by breaking the spirit of the civilian population. To that resolution was later added the fury coming from bitter disappointment. The heroism of the Belgians saved France, but it roused the ire of the Huns and made their vicarious sacrifice still harder to be borne.

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Dr. Parker's Striking Sentences

Not for the first time has the Kaiser preached this doctrine of terrorism. He did it at the time of the joint expedition to China in 1900 when the old dowager empress organized a campaign of extermination against missionaries and foreign residents. At that time he stirred up the redoubtable Dr. Joseph Parker of the City Temple, London, who on Sunday, July 29, of that year, made the following striking statements supplied to The Canadian American of Chicago, by a ministerial correspondent: "I read in the newspapers yesterday something which I cannot believe. I refer to the speech reported to have been delivered by the German Emperor. He invoked the name of God and spoke, as it were in the name of Christ and His religion and yet, in the midst of his speech, he said, speaking of the Chinese—'Give no quarter, take no prisoners, so use your weapons that no Chinaman for a thousand years will dare to beard a German.' * * * I do not halt in my ministry to make any remarks upon the merely military part of the program, but when that program is associated with the name of God and with the name of Jesus Christ, I do long to send word to the Chinese that the spirit of the Gospel is: 'Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, pray for them that despitefully use you and persecute you.' I cannot allow the Lord's great, sweet name to be profaned without making at least a feeble personal protest."

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Terrorism Only a Fizzle

The Kaiser did make that speech and he has whetted its edge by the conduct of his troops in the occupied districts of Belgium and France. There, too, the command was given to his soldiers: "So use your weapons that no Belgian or Frenchman for a thousand years will dare to beard a German." His order was only too faithfully obeyed, but the spirit of the Belgian, the spirit of the Frenchman remains unbroken. They have dared to beard the German soldier and the day will surely come when he will be driven from the fair lands he has devastated and laid waste. Retribution will follow for these most cruel wrongs, but it will not be the retribution of the Hun. It must however, be so drastic and severe that no German, Kaiser, King or soldier, will ever again dare to wage war with the unbridled ferocity of a savage. The Kaiser is yet down on these once fair regions, "having great wrath because he knoweth he hath but a short time." He is still trying his rule of terrorism on the sea, and wild was the joy of his people when the high admiral issued his edict of destruction without warning and without mercy to the crews of peaceful merchantmen. In that the Kaiser will fail; has already failed, just as he has failed to make the Belgian and the Frenchmen crouch beneath his scourge. Nor will the Briton, at home or oversea.

THE BLOOD OF THE MAPLE

Will the U.S. Government Buy the Western Pacific?

Another United States railroad has gone into the hands of a receiver. This latest system to suffer from the operations of a so-called master of finance is the Western Pacific, an enterprise that owed its origination to the late George Gould, whose dream of establishing another transcontinental line had never chance to be realized. Looking back over the history of the later United States railroads, it records many instances of schemes entered upon without regard to either existing conditions or future prospects. Yet their initiators posed and were generally accepted at the time as typical examples of the American spirit and as the owners of shrewd and practical business minds. Now they, or rather their relics, remain as monuments of egotism and folly.

In the leading editorial of a recent issue, The Financial World of New York and Chicago remarks that with Gould, the predominating thought appears to have been first to raise the money, without consideration for any of the accepted tenets of conservatism and let the future take care of itself. The Western Pacific has ended in the same fiasco which has attended all the properties with which Gould was associated simply because they were based on unsound systems of finance. This particular undertaking started with a first mortgage debt of $50,000,000 to which succeeded $25,000,000 of second mortgage bonds. These sums represented over $80,000 per mile of debt upon a road running thru a territory that could not carry it and the earnings show that it will require years before its resources and products suffice to support the mountain of debt under which the road labors.

This did not represent the whole of Gould's financing. He controlled the Denver and Rio Grande railroad and yoked it up with the Western Pacific to the extent of guaranteeing the interest and principal of the first mortgage bonds. The Denver also holds the second mortgage issue, none of which, fortunately for the investing public, has been placed on the market. As the Western Pacific has never been in a position to pay the interest on the first mortgage bonds, the Denver and Rio Grande has had to make up the deficiency and it is semi-officially announced that Gould's ill-starred venture has cost the guaranteeing company more than $40,000,000 in cold cash for which it has not received a penny of what can be considered profit or any advantage. The result is that the value of the Denver's guarantee to the holders of the first mortgage Western Pacific bonds is worth practically nothing at all.

These being the circumstances, The New York American comes out with the suggestion that the United States Government should become the purchaser of the Western Pacific road. It thinks the government could get the property for about one-third of its indebtedness and one-third of its actual cost. The American contends that the way to get government ownership of railroads is for the government to own a railroad. Able to borrow money at a low rate of interest, the government could speedily build the feeders that are needed to bring prosperity to the Western Pacific and the road in the hands of the States would be a safeguard to the Pacific Coast, that has so long stumbled under the burden of railroad monopoly. Will President Wilson take advantage of this opportunity? He has been urging the public ownership of steamers—why not of railroads?

World Concern of the Mediterranean

Not even the first great drive of the German armies thru Belgium and Northern France, the capture of Brussels and the fall of Antwerp have so held the attention of the world as the operations now in progress in the Dardanelles. The significance of the place held by Constantinople was not at first fully recognized. Only when the forts began to yield to the powerful guns brought to bear by the allied fleet and the mine sweepers came into play did the full import of the expedition dawn upon the nations. That the Dardanelles could not be forced had long been the supposition and the Russian armies were still too distant to compel consideration of the consequences attending the occupation of Constantinople. When it suddenly became an early possibility it set the world guessing.

No sea on earth equals the Mediterranean in historic importance. Its shores are dotted with the relics of bygone civilizations whose impress remains with the most advanced nations of today. Egypt, hoary with the story of six thousand years; Palestine, the cradle of the Christian religion; Greece, mother of arts and eloquence—Rome, the Empire that carried its law and its engineering skill into every quarter of the known world. All these and the later empires, kingdoms, and republics that crowd the story of the Mediterranean are of the deepest interest to the human race. Even the British Isles are intimately concerned with the great inland sea and today they are the arbiters of its destiny.

Unity of the British Empire

Now that Canadians are in the trenches on the western front of the European war and their names appear in the casualty lists that are awaited with so much anxiety, the people of the Dominion will more immediately realize their place and responsibilities in and towards the British Empire. Not the United Kingdom alone, but every British Dominion and dependency is closely involved in the issue of the war. Success for the allied arms means the continued free development of an aggregation of nations and peoples, loosely and for convenience sake, called an Empire, but which is in reality an association standing together, not thru the compulsion of force, but because of a conviction and an instinct that within its confines peace and freedom can be found.

British peoples have nothing to regret in that they have become participators in this greatest and most momentous of world wars. Men of the Empire have rushed to the colors from the seven seas. The unity, the enthusiasm, the self-sacrificing that have sprung into being provide a living inspiration to the world.

CRUSTS AND CRUMBS

By Albert Ernest Stafford

THERE is only one passage in the Bible, I think, which directly and unequivocally warrants anyone in the internal use of alcoholic liquors, but I never hear it quoted by those who subject themselves to the influences of the poison. The passage I have in mind is in the Gospel of St. Mark, xvi., 17, 18: "These signs shall follow them that believe; In My name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover." The authenticity of the passage has been disputed by the textual critics, but Mr. Ivan Panin, with his septenary numerical test, which shows the Greek text to be constructed on an intricate and incontestable system, whereby the very letters, and all the words form part of an elaborate whole so that not even a letter can be detached from the rest without breaking the symmetry of the arithmetical relationship among them, asserts its genuineness. Those who have Greek texts—Mr. Panin uses Westcott and Hort, I believe—may sit down and count for themselves. I have not had time to do much in corroboration of Mr. Panin, but I counted the words and letters in the Lord's Prayer, and they certainly respond to the system, the Greek version containing 63 words, 9 by 7, and 315 letters, or 7 by 9 by 5. If the system works in the 16th chapter of Mark the higher critics have a new problem on their hands. It must at once be admitted that only supernatural literary ability could construct a series of books, such as those of which the New Testament consists, in which all the words and all the letters, and not only these, but the important substantives, and the vowels and consonants, all bear a septenary relation to each other. Let anyone who thinks the task simple sit down and write a passage in English which shall contain 63 words and 315 letters and he will have some conception of the difficulty, even tho he may not attain any very exalted literary excellence in sense or style. Our English version is inaccurate and ambiguous in many ways. Take, for example, the passage I have quoted. "They shall lay hands on the sick and they shall recover." Is this a guarantee of immunity from contagious disease, or is it a promise of the power to heal? Who shall recover, the person laying on hands or the person on whom hands are laid? Many dogmatic contentions rest on as ambiguous and trivial readings of the English version. The Greek, with its inflexions, makes it clear that the believer shall have power to heal. The believer also shall have power to drink poison and receive no harm, and to take up serpents without fear of their fangs. Alcohol is a poison, a deadly thing to drink. Either the people who drink it are not true believers, or the promise is vain. They do not drink the deadly thing without harm, and after they have drunk a certain amount they show no disposition to handle serpents with equanimity.

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I AM quite prepared to believe, and I do believe that when people have attained a certain stage of development, they attain such a measure of control over the physical body that they can directly influence the organs and the blood to reject without injury any toxic element introduced into the system. I believe, however, that this involves a mental antagonism towards the element so introduced, so that the neutralizing forces of the body would be set in operation. Hence the poison would not be introduced voluntarily. A toxic substance is a poisonous substance. An intoxicant is therefore a poison, but people do not understand the English language definitely, and few realize that when they drink an intoxicant they are drinking a poison, and that there should be a red label on the bottle, and it should have a three-cornered shape with a rough and lumpy surface so that it could be recognized in the dark and not taken by mistake. I am sure there are many worthy people who manufacture and sell intoxicants who do not realize that intoxicant is a Latinized term to describe a poison, and that they are engaged in a wholesale poisoning of the community. The Latin word for poison comes from a similar Greek one, toxos, which meant a poisoned arrow, a deadly thing indeed, as poison is to drink. But suppose we do understand that intoxicating drinks are poisonous drinks, has one not a right to take poisonous drinks if he wishes, and has he not a right to offer them to his friends if he wants to do so? The big question of free will is raised in this consideration. Have I not a right to poison myself if I desire? Have I not a right to poison my friends if I desire and they do not object? Britons never will be slaves, and quite a lot of people see their freedom in danger if this immemorial right to poison one's friends or oneself is in any way curtailed. Our brewers and distillers and hotel keepers are often denounced by temperance cranks, but when this national view of the liberty of the subject is taken it is clear that these men are standing as the bulwarks of freedom. It is they who have preserved our right to poison ourselves and our friends without question. It is at some expense to themselves that they have been able to maintain this privilege for us, so that if I wish to show my friendship for those I meet I can take them into a convenient place and offer them poisonous drink without stop, let, or hindrance. They are forced to spend large sums to maintain our rights in this respect, and the exercise of our free will, without which we are not men. It has been at great cost they have been able to repel the attacks of the local option people. Local option is only another name for a sly movement by which the temperance cranks expect to get the rule of the majority to prevail. They actually assert that there is nothing in this contrary to the principles of British freedom. It is clear that some people will go to any lengths to carry their point, and when they declare we should not be allowed to take a poisonous drink or give one to our friends they have reached the limit. If these things are permitted what is to become of our boasted British liberty, and what is to become of the exercise of our free will?

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IT IS contended by these local option people that a man once had a right to burn down his house if he had a mind to, and to beat his wife to death if it pleased him. We know that there has been a slow and gradual encroachment on the liberties of the subject in these respects. People make a fuss, nowadays, if one attempts to burn down his house. They say it endangers other houses, and costs money to get out the fire-brigade, and the insurance people, who have their own selfish interests in view, also object. One is no longer allowed to beat his wife to death without a row being raised, over it by the police. No man can enjoy being drunk properly unless he can do as he likes when he is in that state, and of course as he does not know what he is doing it is not fair to punish him for what he does. This argument is being ably pressed home just now in favor of a man who, under the exhilarating influence of intoxicating or poisonous liquor, took a poker and in beating his wife, which is the right of any free man in a free country, happened to bend the poker when he struck her on some vital parts. An attempt was made to have him hanged, but justice saw that fifteen years' imprisonment was a sufficient concession to public opinion, and now that the first excitement has died down his friends think he should be liberated. He was always a friend of liberty and free will, and asserted the right of a man to drink when he pleased and to do as he liked. The question is where are we going to stop if we limit British freedom in this fashion? The temperance cranks are set on preventing people having the right to poison themselves at will. Is this right to disappear like the right to burn down one's house or to beat one's wife to death? These are grave questions.

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ANOTHER mercenary element is being introduced into the discussion by the temperance cranks. They declare that it does not pay to imbibe poisonous liquors or to encourage their use. They point out that the big business firms (really in order to get more work out of their hands), insist on temperance habits among their men. The railways won't employ an engineer who takes poisonous drinks. The banks are down on the habit. Even newspaper offices refuse to hire reporters who go in for it. The editors say they cannot depend on a man doing what he is told if he gets under the influence of a poisonous drink, and the other reporters object to having constantly to do his work for him as well as their own, which shows how selfish the temperance craze can make people become. The new generals and admirals have taken the same view, and say a soldier fights better and costs less if he is not poisoning himself. Does it not seem mean to grudge the extra cost for a man who is willing to give his life for his country? The new doctors all refuse to have a surgeon who takes intoxicating liquor, as they say he is not reliable, his hand is not steady, his nerves are not steel-true, and his eye is not so clear. It seems as if there was a general conspiracy to deprive the poor man of his beer. They even go so far as to say that if he left his beer alone he would not be poor. They declare that the whole community would be rich and prosperous and contented if so much money were not wasted and so much good grain destroyed in making these poisonous or intoxicating drinks. They say that the change in Russia since the sale of one kind of intoxicating drink alone has been stopped, has been a marvel, and all the tradesmen now get the money divided among them that used to go to the vodka shop. They say that if whisky and other spirituous poisons were prohibited the result would be the same in Canada. They say also that in the course of national evolution the race or people who will give up the use of alcoholic poisons will so outstrip others in intelligence, industry and integrity that they will lead the world. Great stress is being laid by them on national health, which means national vigor and stamina, and they give statistics to show that a man who takes poison regularly catches disease more easily and dies more quickly. They say he has no chance at all in typhoid and pneumonia, and Dr. Hastings has just issued a warning in his health bulletin about the fatal effects of intoxicants. All this tends to create the opinion that it is quite justifiable to interfere with the liberty of the subject and to stop a man drinking intoxicating liquor; and that it is the people who drink and not the people who suffer from their drinking who are selfish; and that the people who make and sell poison think more of their pockets than their patriotism; and that the nation that does not eliminate such a wasteful, expensive, diseaseful and poisonous habit must fall behind. But of course if one is able to cure disease with a touch, and handle serpents, and speak with tongues, and cast out devils, he need not hesitate about drinking alcoholic poison.