



"HERE'S TO DEAR OLD TROTSKY!" —Passing Show



ONCE BIT, TWICE SHY. LLOYD GEORGE: "My dear Asquith, as Charles the Second said to his brother, James, they won't kill me to make you king; they've had some!" —The Passing Show.

### Morale Invincible

"The Fighting Spirit" is the Reason Why France, England and Italy Are Unconquerable in the Decisive Battle

(By Stephen Lausanne, Editor in Chief of Le Matin of Paris, in the N. Y. Times.)

Let us go back two years—to Verdun. On Feb. 25, 1916, after a furious though brief bombardment the Crown Prince's troops, in dense masses, hurled themselves upon Verdun. Everything bent before them. In forty-eight hours they smashed through all resistance to a depth of nearly eight miles and began to scale the cliffs, supposedly impregnable which command the Woerth plain and the banks of the Meuse.

On that 29th day of February a sensational communique announced that "in the presence of the Emperor and King the Brandenburg regiments have stormed Douaumont, the corner-stone of the principal line of Verdun's permanent fortifications." The communique added that the fort was "solidly held by the Germans." Another announced the capture of 30,000 prisoners, 200 cannon and great quantities of war material. By the Kaiser's order a holiday was granted to all German school children, flags covered Berlin, the church bells pealed forth, the public buildings of the big German cities were illuminated.

Enthusiastic eulogies resounded like flourishes of trumpets in the German press. "What we are going to obtain," wrote a certain General von Blume in the Muenchener Neueste Nachrichten, "is the final decision of the war." And Major Morsh, in a paroxysm of delirium exclaimed, in the Berliner Tageblatt: "No, we are not dying to impress the neutrals. Our aim is clear and simple; it is the destruction of the French armies; after that, Lord Northcliffe will come the destruction of the English armies. Finally, above all the voices of the valets, arose the voice of the master—the Kaiser, addressing the attacking forces, cried: "The enemy is giving way! The end is coming!"

That is what we see if we look back two years. That was the first act of the drama. We know what the others were; we know how the horses were stopped; we know how a rampart of breasts and of cannon arose in the path of the raging flood and withstood for four months its repeated assaults; we also know how all the lost ground, all the stormed forts, all the captured hills, were retaken one by one. Blood and corpses—that is all that remains of the battle fought in the presence of the emperor and king, of the battle heralded as final and decisive, of the battle begun amid the peals of church bells, on the holidays of joyous school children.

The past vouches to us for the present and the present vouches for the future. The gigantic battle of Picardy will end as did the gigantic battle of Verdun.

At this tragic hour of our life I might marshal statistics, proofs based on arithmetic. I might recall how France, which in 1916 was beginning to make only about 100,000 shells a day, now makes 300,000. I might remind people that in 1916 there was still a shortage of heavy artillery. I might compare the 30,000 prisoners taken in eight days before Verdun, on a front of attack of twenty miles with the 50,000 prisoners claimed by Germans in Picardy on a front of eighty miles—four times as long. I might harp on the fact that the Allied front has been bent, but nowhere broken; I might say that our great armies of manoeuvre have scarcely got into action; that these armies, tempered by four years of war, are the best that have ever trod a battlefield. But I will sweep all that aside because it is only secondary.

There are elements that sways arithmetical figures from afar, that controls all strategic plans, all the power of war

all, is that immaterial force, that incalculable force, that force beyond valuation, the sole arbiter of war—THE FIGHTING SPIRIT! Twice in this war have we seen France, surpassed in men and material, sweep forward to victory because she had kept her fighting spirit. And once we have seen the most formidable empire of the world, an empire of 175,000,000 inhabitants, topple to earth without an attempt at resistance because the spirit of its moral power had snapped.

They who do not take into account the moral power of combatants are fools—and they are visionaries who calmly set a date for the regeneration of this or that beaten army as a result of their sending it engineers, experts, gold, and munitions! You can give all sorts of things, export all sorts of things, but there are things that are not given and not exported—courage and faith and the will to die and triumph!

That will is preserved intact by France, England and Italy—and it will prevail!

On the issue of the battle now raging depends the fate of the world. The world will either be free or enslaved. As for France, she has made her choice; rather will she die than live in a degraded world, ruled by savage beasts who form what today is called the German empire.

To fight Germany, France will sacrifice the very last of her sons; when she has no more men the women will rise up; when there are no more women, the children will rise up; when there are no more children, the dead will rise up!

Yes, France has made her resolve to live in freedom or die! And France will live!

#### ELECTRIC TRENCH GUN FIRES AT TERRIFIC SPEED.

In the vermin-hole of the trenches a machine gun is a "coffee mill." And now there comes into the limelight a weapon, illustrated in the May Popular Mechanics Magazine, that looks like a coffee mill and operates like a cream separator. Moreover it is designed to slaughter Hunns more rapidly and economically than existing instruments. It is a centrifugal gun that hurls as many as 3,000 steel balls a minute without employing explosives of any kind.

The contrivance, in the mind of its inventor, is adapted to replace machine guns in the first-line trenches. The mechanism is preferably driven by an electric motor incorporated in the body of the device, but other means may be employed. The weapon has no barrel or sights, and in no physical respect whatever resembles a rifle. The missiles are fed from a hopper to a disk that revolves at terrific speed. It is said they are hurled with sufficient force to pierce 18-in. boiler plate at 100 yards. With the firing speed five times greater than that of the fastest machine gun, the inventor believes the weapon capable of great effectiveness.

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