

the Germans are not likely to retire without an enormous effort to keep their footing. It is probably true that they have now more men on the western front than at any previous stage of the war. But their quality has obviously deteriorated. They seem no longer to have the consciousness of strength that they had. Nothing is so demoralizing as repeated failures. But it is now nearly certain that the Hindenberg line can not be held. If the Germans could not retain Vimy and Caronne they can not resist the crowbars that are being applied in the north and the south. This is one of the time when a gain of a mile or two, perhaps one might say of a few hundred yards, may mean the decision of a campaign. There is a critical moment in every tension when a fracture becomes imminent, when it must inevitably follow even the least increase of strain. At the same time it is well to be cautious in prediction. The unexpected sometimes happens. The German resistance may so far stiffen that further advance becomes impossible. But it is highly unlikely. The French and British are now so well co-ordinated, their actions are so measured and deliberate, their advances are so cautiously subordinated to the movements of the cumbersome artillery, that their success is nearly certain. We may believe with some reasonable confidence that we are about to witness the evacuation of France and a retirement upon so large a scale as to throw all previous retirements into the shade.

There is now something that the German commanders fear much more than military

They don't call Sir Douglas Haig a war lord, but he was a veteran of two big wars when the Junkers were making war on paper.



defeat. They dread the wrath of their own deceived people much more than that of their enemies. Otherwise they would have fallen back to the Belgian frontier long ago. We have only to read the German bulletins with their careful suppressions of the truth and suggestions of the false to understand something of the military mesmerism that they have exercised upon their readers. In no other way can we account for the stupefying fact that Germans of intelligence are still discussing the extent of French soil that is to be permanently occupied, and the amount of the indemnities that they will demand. It is alike bewildering and pathetic. One would suppose that maps are unknown in Germany, and that no realization ever comes to the readers of these bulletins that the daily reports of "successes" show a steady movement eastward, or that the Wotan line, for example, is to the east of the Hindenberg line, or that the "impregnable" Vimy now lies well to the west of the fighting. But then the Germans have not been told of the loss of Vimy. Realization must, of course, come, and the moment of its coming is the perpetual nightmare confronting the German command.

Editor's Note:—Owing to the best of a week's journey before this war article reaches the editor's desk, readers will find it necessary to trace back somewhat the events of a week previous. The writer has not found it necessary to revise his original estimate of the belligerents made when the United States was a neutral.

## DID PRESIDENT WILSON PROPHECY?

SIR THOMAS BARCLAY, writing in the New York Times, says that President Wilson, in 1903, foretold that the United States would be on the side of the Entente whenever a great war should break out. Sir Thomas, who has been called Father of the Entente, because he worked so hard in King Edward's time to bring it about, bases his conclusion on a talk he had with Woodrow Wilson before he became Governor of New Jersey.

Let me explain, he says, how this conversation came about.

It was in New York, on the occasion of the festival of St. Andrew, the patron saint of Scotland, which Scotchmen all over the world celebrate on the 30th of November by a banquet. Now, in the United States, all those who have one Scotch ancestor consider themselves Scotch. It is the royal blood of the United States!

On my left I had as a neighbour a man whose fine Scotch head, firm and determined mouth and intellectual brow I had already noticed. I looked at his place card—"President of the University of Princeton," it read.

"That will mean nothing to you," he observed, "I will give you my private card." I, being a foreigner, was supposed to be ignorant even of the best-known things of the country.

"But it does mean something," I said. I was well acquainted by hearsay with him who by his strength of character, genius for organization and indifference toward superannuated university pontiffs, had not only saved Princeton, but raised it to the first rank among trans-atlantic universities. I knew only too well of these things, for I had come to the United States as a member of an English committee whose special mission was to study American methods of public instruction. Moreover, everybody knew the historical works of the President of Princeton.

After terminating my work on public instruction, I had remained in America to renew the agitation in favour of an arbitration treaty between England and the United States. The Anglo-French Entente, to which I had consecrated my life up to that time, had just been consummated by the arbitration treaty of

Oct. 14, 1903. The second part of my mission was to bring the United States within the charmed circle of ententes.

Wilson assured me of his support, and, in fact, when later on the movement was definitely launched, he did not fail to give us the backing of his well-reasoned, moderate, and convincing words.

To pass from talk about agitation for arbitration treaties against war to the causes of war, and thence

to the elimination of these causes, is an easy and natural transition and Wilson spoke to me of these things with all the freedom of a man who most assuredly did not in the least foresee at that time that ten years later he would be elected to the highest and most responsible position attainable by a man in this world.

I do not claim to give his exact words, and I merely guarantee as authentic the general sense of our conversation as I remember it after thirteen years. This conversation has enabled me to foresee certain attitudes taken by Wilson which some of his best informed countrymen refused to credit. The reason is that Wilson has the Scotch character, and that only one possessing a Scotch soul can understand him fully. We agreed with one another so remarkably well, in fact, that I must confess that I hardly can tell now from which of us the statements here set down emanated:

"Your idea," he told me, "of looking upon arbitration treaties merely as a means of coming together and not as an efficacious means of settling disputes seems excellent to me. A good commercial treaty can have the same effect, like the treaty of 1860 between France and England. It is the 'entente' that counts; the means do not matter. A treaty serves as a guidepost for pointing out the road. Here in America you must have found the ground well prepared for the implantation of such an idea.

"The American does not like red tape. You will even find big commercial firms in New York whose partners have never drawn up a partnership agreement. They have merely agreed upon some little matter as a starting point and, from that, conditions have shaped themselves according to circumstances. These untrammelled associations are the most durable because they operate without constraint and, since they may be dissolved at will, continue as long as they are useful.

"In the United States you will always find sympathetic support for ententes of this kind and you may rest assured that this country will respond sooner or later to your efforts by attaching itself to the entente between England and France."



RUSSIA WEDS DEMOCRACY.

Nervous Bridegroom: "Where the deuce is that ring?"

—New York Times.