

RUDYARD KIPLING TELLS WHAT A PRUSSIAN VICTORY WOULD MEAN TO BRITONS

Mr. Rudyard Kipling made a speech at the great recruiting meeting held at Southport, Lancashire, on June 23rd, which is worth quoting in full: Mr. Kipling said:—I am here to speak on behalf of a system in which I do not believe, and in which, I dare say, a good many of you do not believe—the system of voluntary service. It seems to me unfair and unbusinesslike that after ten months of war we should still be raising men by the same methods as we raise money at a charity bazaar but clumsy and unfair as that system is it is the only one we have and we must work it. We committed ourselves to it in time of peace when we decided that we would not endure national service on any terms whatever. We chose it because it made us more comfortable and released us from obligations which might have cut into our time, our pleasure, and our money. We believed that in the hour of danger there would always be enough men ready of their own free will to defend their country. Our belief was justified in the past. The mistake we made—and it was not for want of being warned—was that we did not conceive a war on such a scale as that which we face to-day. The system by which we are meeting that war has shown itself to be grossly unfair, but since we chose it of deliberate intent in the face of grave warnings we cannot, now that it is being put to the test, shelter ourselves behind its defects. (Hear, hear.) How do matters stand in regard to recruiting to-day? There is, of course, a small, pernicious minority who do not intend to inconvenience themselves for any consideration, but I am convinced that the overwhelming bulk of the men who have not yet come forward to enlist argue: "Why should I go when my neighbor stays behind? Make it equal all around and I'll go gladly." That is a detail that should have been settled in time of peace. It is illogical to complain of it now. If it is changed soon so much the better, but meantime we must reap that we have sown.

How Germany Prepared.
The German has spent quite as much energy in the last forty-five years preparing for war as we have in convincing ourselves that wars should not be prepared for. He has started this war with a magnificent equipment which took him time and heavy taxation to get together. That equipment we have had to face for the last ten months. We have had to face more. The Germans went into this war with a mind which had been carefully trained out of the idea of every moral sense or obligation—private, public or international. He does not recognize the existence of any law, least of all those he has subscribed to himself, in making war against combatants or non-combatants, men, women and children. He has done from his own point of view very well indeed. All mankind bears witness today that there is no crime, no cruelty, no abomination that the mind of man can conceive, which the German has not perpetrated, is not perpetrating, and will not perpetrate if he is allowed to go on. These horrors and perversions were not invented by him on the spur of the moment. They were arranged beforehand—their outlines are laid down in the German War-Book. They are part of the system in which Germany has been scientifically trained. It is the essence of that system to make such a hell of the countries where her armies set foot that any terms she may offer will seem like Heaven to the people whose bodies she has defiled and whose minds she has broken of set purpose and intention. (Hear, hear.) In the face of these facts it is folly for any fit man to waste one minute in talking about what he would do if our system of recruiting were changed, or to wait on, as some men are waiting, in the hope of compulsion being introduced. (Cheers.) We shall not be saved by argument. We shall more certainly not be saved by hanging on to our private jobs and businesses. Our own strength and our own will alone save us. If these fail the alternative for us is robbery, rape of the women, starvation, as a prelude to slavery. Nor need we expect any miracle to save us. So long as an unbroken Germany exists, so long will life on this planet be intolerable not only for us and for our Allies, but for all humanity. And humanity knows it. At present six and European nations are bearing the burden of the war. There is a fringe of shivering neutrals almost under the German guns who look out of their front doors and see, as they were meant to see, what has been done to Belgium. The German guarantee is neutral.

Our Fate If We Lose.
Turn your mind for a moment to the idea of a conquering Germany. You need not go far to see what it would mean to us. In Belgium at this hour several million Belgians are making war material or fortifications for their conquerors. They are given enough food to support life as the German thinks it should be supported. By the way, I believe the United States of America supplied a large part of that food. In return, they are compelled to work at the point of the bayonet. If they object, they are shot. Their factories, their houses, and their public buildings have long ago been gutted, and everything in them that was valuable or useful has been packed up and sent into Germany. They have no more property and no more rights than cattle; and they cannot lift a hand to protect the honor of their women. And less than a year ago they were one of the most civilized and prosperous of the nations of the earth. There has been nothing like the horror of their fate in all history, and this system is in full working order within fifty miles of the British coast. Where I live I can hear the guns that are trying to extend it. The same system exists in such parts of France and Poland as are in German hands. But whatever has been dealt out to Belgium, France and Poland will be Britain's fate ten-fold if we fail to subdue the Germans. (Hear, hear.) That we shall be broken, plundered, robbed and enslaved like Belgium will be but the first part of the matter. There are special reasons in the German mind why we should be morally and mentally shamed and dishonored beyond any other people—why we should be degraded till those who survive may scarcely dare to look each other in the face. Be perfectly sure, therefore, that if Germany is victorious every refinement of outrage which is within the compass of the German imagination will be inflicted on us in every aspect of our lives. Over and above this no pledge we can offer, no guarantee we can give, will be accepted by Germany as binding. She has broken her own most solemn oaths, pledges and obligations, and by the very fact of her existence she is bound to trust nothing and to recognize nothing except immediate superior force, backed by illimitable cruelty. (Hear, hear.) So, you see, there are no terms possible. Realize, too, if the Allies are beaten, there will be no spot on the globe where a soul can escape from the domination of this enemy of mankind. There has been childish talk that the Western Hemisphere would offer a refuge from oppression. Put that thought from your mind. If the Allies were defeated, Germany would issue an order and it would be obeyed. Civilization would be bankrupt and the western world would be taken over with the rest of the wreckage by Germany, the receiver. So, you see, there is no retreat possible. There are no terms and no retreat in this war. It must go forward, and with those men of Britain who are eligible for service, but who have not yet offered themselves, the decision of the war rests. (Cheers.)

More Men and More Arms.
Let us look at a few figures. Like yourselves, I have no definite information, but as far as one can estimate rather more than two million men have joined the army up to date. This is an impressive record till one remembers that the population of these islands is rather more than forty-five million, so that the present proportion works out as about five per cent, for the total population and ten per cent for the total male population. We do not know how many soldiers we shall need to end the war, but we do know that we do not need ninety per cent of the male population to make ammunition and carry on the necessary work of the coun-

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try during the war. People who won't look facts in the face ask sometimes "What's the use of piling in men before one has the arms and equipment for them?" The answer is quite simple. You can use equipment the minute you get it, but you can't use a man until he has been trained. (Hear, hear.) That is why the supply of men must always be months ahead of other supplies. And we need a steady unbroken flow of men—young and without domestic ties for choice—always coming on into training. Once again I admit as freely as any of you of the immense unfairness of our system which has been well called conscription by cajolery, but it is the system we have chosen, and till we have another we must work it. Those who believe in national service can take comfort from the thought, that if the Government has not yet brought it in, they must be quicker than the Government (this isn't difficult), and bring it themselves in. Those who believe in the principle of voluntary service must realize that now is the time for them to show what an excellent system it is voluntarily shouldering their responsibilities. (Cheers.) In the meantime public opinion is hardening every day against the eligible men who have excuses which are not reasons for not enlisting. Public opinion is hardening against those parents, wives and relatives and employers who directly or indirectly are keeping these men back. You can't expect people who have given or lost their own flesh and blood in this war to be patient or sympathetic with people whose families are still untouched and unseparated. That feeling may be reasonable or unreasonable, but it is one result of our system, and as more men join it will increase. What's the good of waiting till it breaks bounds.

A Peace More Terrible Than War.
This is for us, in truth, war to the death against the power of darkness, with whom any peace except on our own terms would be more terrible than any war. Words cannot begin to do justice to the devotion and bravery of our men who have already gone up against that power. They have dealt, almost as a matter of routine, in battles any one of which in the old days would have made the marvel and the glory of the generation. They have endured as never British troops have been called upon to endure, the most amazing devices of warfare and the unclean malice of the enemy. They have proved themselves through all these things heroes without stain. The counties know, the great cities know, and the little villages where they mark the names on the church door know, what their neighbors and kin have done.

There is no part of the land to-day which has not a new reverence and pride in our armies' achievements, and no part has better right to this pride than Lancashire. But the need—the Empire's great need—is far more men of this mould. In the days that seem so little and so far off now—the 'days when we dealt in words—there used to be a saying which ran, "What Lancashire thinks to-day, England will think to-morrow." Let us change that saying for three years, or the duration of the war, to "What Lancashire does to-day, England will do to-morrow."

Unnatural
Christian Register
"Mark Twain was visiting H. H. Rogers," said a New York editor. "Mr. Rogers led the humorist into his library. 'There,' he said, as he pointed to a bust of white marble. 'What do you think of that?' It was a bust of a young woman coiling her hair—a graceful example of Italian sculpture. Mr. Clemens looked, and then he said: 'It isn't true to nature.' 'Why not?' Mr. Rogers asked. 'She ought to have her mouth full of hairpins,' said the humorist."

Good Targets for Missing
Calgary Herald
The formation of bantam regiments in Canada has been suggested and some of the authorities regard the idea with favor. So they should. Because a man happens to lack something in inches it does not follow that his strength is inferior or his powers of endurance below average. And why should the "shorties" be barred from fighting the King's battles if they wish to?
* * *
The millindun, like most good things, is in no hurry about showing up.

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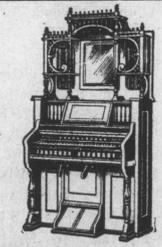
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