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German Priest's Tribute To British Rifle Brigade

"Mercenaries Could Not Behave Like This. They Were Heroes All." Hun Allusions Shattered. British Kindness to Prisoners Admitted.

General Headquarters of (London Daily Mail Correspondence.) The British Expeditionary Force.—The iron ring which war sets about the belligerent countries is most often pierced where the rings touch, namely, on the firing line. The statements of prisoners and letters and orders found on the dead or in captured trenches frequently throw light on the real condition of affairs in Germany and the state of mind of the German people and its leaders, of which you may gather no indication in the carefully controlled German press.

In German letters thus brought in from the front I have read woeful complaints penned in humble homes in Germany of the dearth of food, of the unceasing toll which the war is taking of the family circle. A woman writes that —, though old and ailing, has been called up for the army. Many ask: "When will this dreadful war end?" One still finds the British referred to as murdering rascals and the like, but the tone struck with regard to our soldiers is becoming gradually rather one of fear than of contempt. Thus in one letter I saw the writer commiserated with the recipient on being sent against the British, and expressed the fervent hope that the addressee might escape from our clutches.

There is no doubt, however, that the eyes of the Germans, at least as far as the army is concerned (for people at home would seem to be still firmly held in blinkers), are being opened to the real nature of the enemy as of the task before them on this front.

Recent German army orders show that the Germans on the west are clearly on the defensive; moreover, that the leaders no longer try to conceal this fact from their men, but urge upon them the necessity of continually strengthening their defences.

Illusion Disappearing

The illusion, spread and fostered by the German government, and by none more consistently than by the emperor himself, formerly British field marshal and honorary colonel of the Royals (1st Royal Dragoons) that the British army consists of a horde of highly paid mercenaries who would run on the appearance of the Germans, is disappearing. I have before me some extracts from a letter written by a German Catholic priest serving as a volunteer in the ranks (since killed in action), who pays a very fine tribute to the heroism of the Rifle Brigade during the attack on the Fomelles ridge in May. He describes a successful German counter attack, and says:

British 'Heroes All.'

"After two hours' fighting the enemy was beaten back. You can scarcely have an idea of the work this represented. How these Englishmen had in twelve hours dug themselves in! The hundred fellows who were in our trenches had brought with them an enormous quantity of ammunition, a machine gun, and one they had captured from us. With the aid of the material lying about they had got everything ship-shape and ready for defence. Almost every single man of them had to be put out of action with hand grenades.

"They were heroes all, brave and true to the end—until death. We captured about fifty of them, well-set-up, extremely muscular soldiers. In the course of the day we picked up about thirty more of them wounded. They were all men of the (sic) 'active English Rifles-Brigade.' Their pride or their mistrust of us was such that officers, seeing that the situation was hopeless, tried to commit suicide. Men who were only mercenaries could not behave like this."

"More Food Than We Want."

Striking tributes to the humane fashion in which we treat our prisoners are contained in letters written by some Saxon soldiers captured outside our trenches a few nights ago and now waiting transport to England. Naturally prisoners are inclined to carry favor with their captors by extravagant praise of the treatment they receive, but there is a note of sincerity in these letters which cannot be gainsaid.

One writes: "We are being very well treated and there is more to eat and smoke than in Germany. To-day we played football. We have a great deal to learn about this game. I hope the English prisoners in Germany are treated as well as I am."

"German Papers Lie."

A letter written by another man—

by the writing, a man of some education—says: "We are suffering no hardships and it is a big lie when the German newspapers say that the English treat their prisoners badly. One must always give truth its due. As for food, we have always two loaves of bread, two tins of jam and cheese—more than we want. I am well aware that you in Germany have not long had such good food for dinner as we have here. If we want anything we only have to ask the sentry, and in five minutes we get it. We also receive twelve cigarettes every day. So it is the full truth that I write, and not, as people are saying in Germany, that prisoners are compelled to write that they have enough to eat."

"Don't worry about me," another prisoner writes. "We have so much to eat that we can't eat it all. To-day we played football and had a very good time. The English are very friendly towards us, and it is not true, as our newspaper writes, that the English treat the German prisoners badly. On the contrary, they are very well off."

I might add that all through this war the Saxons have fought cleanly in a manner that is in glaring contrast to the brutality and disloyalty of the Prussians, and the Bavarians and that, generally speaking, our men's feelings towards them is one of comparative friendliness.

No Chickens.

(British Farm and Home.) "Stole any chickens this week, Brudder Jones?" asked the searching class leader of a weak-kneed brother. "No, sah, Cank de Lord," was the reply.

"You've done well," said the leader, and passed on. Brudder Jones turned to his classmate and whispered: "Lucky he said chickens; if he'd said ducks he'd had me shuah!"

Even a fast man may not make a rapid recovery when he's ill

Thoughtful People

Are stretching their Dollars by having us renovate the old garments, and make up remnants of cloth.

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500 Dozen **TOILET SOAP** 1 dozen in a Box, 35c dozen.

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J. J. St. John

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DECLARATION OF WAR AS SEEN BY HALL CAINE

Eleven O'clock a Year Ago the Time—Difference of Hour Between London and Berlin Forgotten

London, August 4.—Hall Caine, the noted British author, gives the following dramatic description of the historic scene preceding the declaration of war by Great Britain.

In a room in the prime minister's house in Downing street the prime minister himself and three principal members of the cabinet are waiting for a reply to the ultimatum sent to Germany at noon. The time for the reply expires at midnight. It is approaching 11 o'clock. In spite of her "infamous proposals," the ministers cannot even yet allow themselves to believe that Germany will break her pledged word. She has not yet replied, but she will do so; she must.

There is more than an hour left. Even at the last moment the telephone bell may ring and the reply of Germany handed to the British ambassador in Berlin will reach London. It is a calm autumn evening, the windows are open to St. James' Park, which lies dark and silent as far as Buckingham Palace in the distance. The streets of London round about the official residence are busy enough, quivering with excitement.

A Resolute People

We British people do not go in solid masses surging, singing down our Corso, or light candles along the line of our boulevards, but, nevertheless, all hearts are beating high in the theatres, railway stations, railway trains, shops and homes. Everybody is thinking "by 12 o'clock to-night Germany has got to say whether or not she is a perjurer and a thief!"

Meanwhile, in this salient room overlooking the park, the time passes slowly. In spite of the righteousness of our cause it is an awful thing to plunge the great empire into war. The miseries and horrors of warfare rise before the eyes of the ministers and the sense of personal responsibility becomes more unupportable. Could anything be more awful than to have to ask oneself some day in the future, awakening in the middle of the night perhaps after rivers of blood have been shed, "Did I do right?"

A Great Little Thing

After all, the reply to the ultimatum has not even yet arrived, and the absence of a reply is equivalent to a declaration of war. Suddenly one of the little company remembers something that everybody has hitherto forgotten: the difference of an hour between the time of London and Berlin. Midnight by mid-European time will be 11 o'clock in London. Germany would naturally understand this demand for a reply by midnight to mean midnight in the country of despatch, therefore at 11 o'clock London time the time for the reply will expire.

It is now approaching 11 o'clock. As the clock ticks out the remaining minutes the tension becomes terrible, talk slackens, there are long pauses. The whole burden of the frightful issues involved for Great Britain, France, Belgium, Russia, Germany, for Europe, for the world for civilization, for religion itself, seems to be gathered up in these last few moments. If war comes now it will be the most frightful tragedy the world ever has witnessed. Twenty millions dead, perhaps, civil life crippled for a hundred years. Which is it to be—peace or war? It is terrible to think of.

As they sit there the electric wires may be flashing the awful tidings like a flying angel of life or death through the dark air all over Europe.

The four men are waiting for the telephone to ring. It does not ring, and the fingers of the clock are moving. The world seems on tiptoe listening for the thunder stroke of fate. The ministers at length sit silent and rigid, almost petrified, looking fixedly at the floor or ceiling.

Then through the awful stillness of the room and the park outside comes the deep boom of Big Ben—boom—boom—boom!

No one moves until the last of the eleven strokes has gone reverberating through the night. Then comes a voice heavy with emotion, yet firm with resolve: "It's war."

When the clock struck again at midnight Great Britain had been at war for an hour without knowing it.

If I have done wrong in lifting the curtain on this private scene I ask forgiveness for the sake of the purpose I put it to; that of showing it was not in haste, not in anger, but with an awful sense of responsibility to Great Britain and humanity that our responsible ministers drew the sword of our country.

Khaki Overalls For Small and Big Boys

TO Wear at the Seashore, in the Country or in the City there is no garment that a mother can buy that will give better service for Boys than a cool, weightless, strong overall—the same color that our Volunteers are wearing—made exactly the same style as the boss mechanics use—finished with Pockets, Bibs, and Braces.

Why not give the Boys Khaki Overalls this Season? They like them, and they protect the best garments from dust and mud, and prevent many a good garment from being torn, thus saving an enormous amount of worry for any mother that likes to keep her boys neat, clean and dressy.

Being weightless, a child could easily wash them and they dry readily.

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