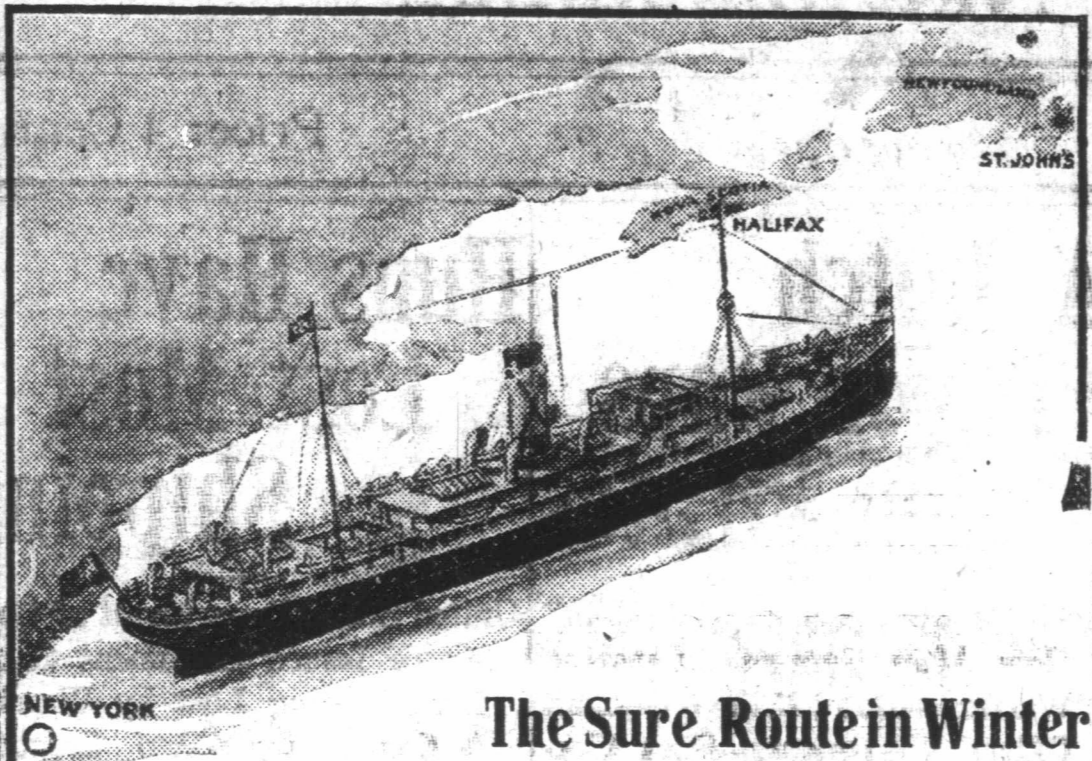


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Strike Only When Right

President Wilson Sounds the Keynote of His Foreign Policy in Ringing Speech Before Gridiron Club at Washington.

WASHINGTON, Feb. 28.—President Wilson told members and guests at a Gridiron Club dinner Saturday that America ought to keep out of the European war "at the sacrifice of everything except this single thing upon which her character and her history are founded, her sense of humanity and justice."

The address was confidential since the speeches at the dinners of the Gridiron Club, composed of newspaper correspondents, are not reported. It was made public last night, however, with the consent of the President and the club, because many of those who heard it urged that it should go to the country.

The President spoke of the Nation's affairs with unusual gravity. His hearers, including several hundred members of Congress, business men and correspondents, were brought to their feet cheering when he concluded with these words:

"I would be just as much ashamed to be rash as I would to be a coward. Valor is self-respecting. Valor is circumspect. Valor strikes only when it is right to strike. Valor withholds itself from all small implications and entanglements and waits for the great opportunity when the sword will flash as if it carried the light of Heaven upon its blade."

PRESIDENT WILSON'S SPEECH TO THE GRIDIRON CLUB

I have very little to say to-night except to express my warm appreciation of the invariable courtesy of this club and of the reception you have so generously accorded me. I find that I am seldom tempted to say anything nowadays, unless somebody starts something, and to-night nobody has started anything.

Your talk, Mr. Toastmaster, has been a great deal about candidacy for the Presidency. It is not a new feeling on my part, but one which I entertain with a greater intensity than formerly; that a man who seeks the Presidency of the United States for anything that it will bring to him is an audacious fool. The responsibilities of the office ought to sober a man even before he approaches it.

One of the difficulties of the office seldom appreciated, I dare say, is that it is very difficult to think while so many people are talking, and particularly while so many people are talking in a way that obscures counsel and is entirely off the point.

The point in National affairs, gentlemen, never lies along the lines of expediency. It always rests in the field of principle. The United States was not founded upon any principle of expediency; it was founded upon a profound principle of human liberty and of humanity, and whenever it bases its policy upon any other foundations than those, it builds on the sand and not upon solid rock.

Back to Fountains of American Action
It seems to me that the most enlightening thing a man can do is suggested by something which the Vice President said to-night. He complained that he found men who, when their attention was called to the signs of Spring, did not see the blue Heaven, did not see the movement of the free clouds, did not think of the great spaces of the quiet continent, but thought only of some immediate and pressing piece of business.

It seems to me that if you do not think of the things that lie beyond and away from and disconnected from this zone in which we attempt to think and conclude, you will inevitably be led astray.

I would a great deal rather know what they are talking about around quiet firesides all over this country, than what they are talking about in the cloak rooms of Congress. I would a great deal rather know what the men on the trains and by the wayside and in the shops and on the farms are thinking about and yearning for, than hear any of the vociferous proclamations of policy which it is so easy to hear and so easy to read by picking up any scrap of printed paper.

There is only one way to hear these things, and that is constantly to go back to the fountains of American action. Those fountains are not to be found in any recently discovered sources.

Ready to Stake All For an Idea
Senator Harding was saying just now that we ought to try when we are 100,000,000 strong to act in the same simplicity of principle that our forefathers acted in when we were 3,000,000 strong.

I heard somebody say—I do not know the exact statistics—that the present population of the United States is 103,000,000. If there are 3,000,000 thinking the same things that that original 3,000,000 thought, the 100,

sound in the authentic voice of American tradition.

Then we shall be certain what the limits of the future are, because we shall know we are steering by the lines of the past. We shall know that no temporary convenience, no temporary expedience, will lead us either to be rash or to be cowardly.

I would be just as much ashamed to be rash as I would to be a coward. Valor is self-respecting. Valor is circumspect. Valor strikes only when it is right to strike. Valor withholds itself from all small implications and entanglements and waits for the great opportunity when the sword will flash as if it carried the light of Heaven upon its blade.

**Whole Regiments
Germans Literally
Melted Away**

In Madly Driven Attack

PARIS, March 9.—The great German offensive north of Verdun was suddenly halted in its tracks Thursday night on account of two elements. One was the storm of French artillery fire that swept bare the central plateau behind the villages of Beaumont and Samogneux, whither General Joffre had lured the Germans by falling back from various salients, and where, it is estimated, the Germans made the greatest sacrifice of human life in this war. The second was a blinding snow blizzard across the Heights of the Meuse, which made fighting impossible.

Despite nature's interference, Germany's offensive has so far resulted in failure in the opinion of French military authorities. Whole regiments of Germans literally melted away in the madly driven attacks that won them the wooded slopes of the plateau on the north and east from there they had to move across a bare plain, swept on the western side by the French batteries across the Meuse at Regneville, and Forges and the guns on the Central Hill 254 and on the eastern side by the whole weight of metal of Fort Douaumont pouring down an open "corridor" from the fort itself to where the road from Beaumont Village rises toward Hill 354.

The net result of the German advance from an artillery standpoint is a virtual reversal of the French and German positions. At the beginning of the struggle the French outer lines on the northern and eastern slopes of the plateau were directly commanded by a ring of German guns on the hills outside of them. Now the French gunners on the hills nearer the fortress have an easy task to blast the German infantry the moment they débouché upon open ground.

If the Germans push farther they will probably try to drive along the ravine road from Beaumont to Vacheriauville, so as to outflank Hill 254, at the same time obtaining shelter from the terrible seventy-five.

The French reserves are ready in great numbers. The Matin states that only a seventh part of the French troops now on the spot have been engaged thus far. It is thought certain that the Teutons will be checked here by the infantry as elsewhere by cannon and that in a few days, at least, the Germans must admit defeat.

"Then," as one of the French editorial says, "what a groan of agony will rise from all Germany at the failure of what General Deemling has truly called 'their last supreme offensive.' That cry will be the precursor of a storm that will rock the Hohenzollern Throne."

Air Pressure Great.
"From behind us the French artillery fired into the German masses, the German shells flying over our heads toward the Douaumont section. Then our machine guns, placed in batteries every five yards, began to play, and we saw the dead in groups upright, where there was not room to fall. From Montcourt I followed the supply road to Fleury, where I took the light railway toward Verdun. The heavy guns near Douaumont and Dambloup were firing as fast as they could be loaded. When we passed between the two points the air pressure, produced by the continuous discharges, was so terrific that blood rushed from our ears and our lungs almost ceased working."

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