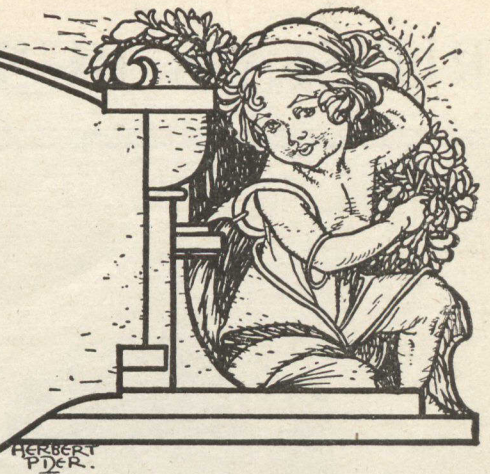




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HOW GERMANY STANDS TO-DAY

At Least One-Third of Her Fighting Force Obliterated

By RT. HON. C. F. G. MASTERMAN

PROLONGED wars have always brought periods when all seemed lost and the faint-hearted inclined to raise the cry "We are betrayed." It was so in the long struggle against Napoleon, when Pitt saw three of his Coalitions smashed one after the other, and at one time this country was fighting the whole of Europe alone. It was so in the four years' struggle in America, when it was only "Father Abraham," who never despaired of the Republic. There is some such faint-heartedness about to-day. Yet the war is pursuing its course far more successfully than anyone could have predicted two years ago; and it is obviously evident that in one year's time, or two, or perhaps a little later, the defeat and utter ruin of Germany is assured.

First, let it be granted, that in modern warfare no objective rarely matters, or really, that there is strictly speaking no objective but slaughter of the male population of the nations. Instead of small standing armies wandering about Europe to capture capitals or to be destroyed, we have nations rising up against nations intent only on the massacre of each other. We have not—yet—to attain the Rhine, or capture Frankfurt or Berlin or occupy Germany. We have just to destroy by killing, maiming, capturing, or otherwise rendering inefficient, the adult, efficient male population of Germany. When more than a certain percentage of these have thus been annihilated for military purposes the game is over. And the point at which further resistance becomes impossible is dependent upon the clearness with which the German people will face realities, and the moment when they recognize that they are faced, not only with defeat in battle, but with the destruction of the race.

HERE we are faced with conjectures and various interpretations, often seemingly backed with logic yet often leading to results with divergence of millions. We have the estimates of the British War Office, and of the French War Office before us. We have the actual list by name of killed, slightly or severely wounded—not sick—in the published German casualty lists, which I believe to be accurate, although generally dilatory a record, and although they are now forbidden to give the totals of each class, I have no private information; but from these and other evidence, and giving (as is right) the full benefit of the doubt in any case to Germany, I believe that I am, if anything, understating losses if I estimate as follows:

The total number of German potential combatants between 18 and 45 at the commencement of the war was a little over 13½ millions.

From these deducting 25 per cent. for inefficient

Hon. C. F. Masterman, late Financial Secretary to the Treasury, writes very little for newspapers. When he does, he writes with a strong grip of what he is talking about. As he says himself, he is no optimist; but in taking the most conservative view of the war as it stands to-day he is forced to the conclusion that Germany, no matter what frantic efforts she makes on any of the three fronts, is a great brute slowly bleeding to death.

(a low estimate), we have something like 10 millions of potentially efficient combatants.

It is doubtful if Germany has ever armed more than 7½ millions of these: leaving 2½ millions (a meagre estimate) to work the railways, the coal-fields, the great iron and steel works and all the machinery of supplies.

And of these 7½ millions, I think one is quite safe

tween the Marne and the Vistula and beyond. Soon their very graves will be forgotten, and the world will be as though they had not been.

Some three-quarters of a million are either maimed, prisoners, or so injured that they can never return to the scene of war. The bulk of them will remain as evidences, hobbling through city and villages to the children of the coming generation, a burden on their profit and production; evidence of the infinite folly of those who delighted in war, and staked in one mad adventure all that Germany which had been built up for nearly 50 years—staked and tremendously lost.

And another million at least form a "constant" of those severely or slightly wounded, and all the sick. Some of these will die, some live on a crippled life, the bulk return to duty. But for each one returning from the giant hospital one new sufferer will be substituted; so that though the individuals change, the loss remains the same, and will remain the same until peace comes.

I have not counted Austria in these figures. First because, although we have no reliable figures for Austria, it seems certain that her actual loss has exceeded that of the Germans; second (and principally) because the resistance is a German resistance; and if the Germans contemplate the real possibility of the bulk not only of their armies, but of their male efficient population being destroyed, they will sue for peace regardless of Austrian or Turkish opinion.

AND GERMANY CALLS THIS WAR



This is one of the many recent pictures of Zeppelin destruction in London. The bomb fell between two houses. On the left is a bed where mother and daughter were thrown into the street; on the right a boy was pinned down by the roof. Absurd stories have been circulated, not only in Germany, about the havoc wrought to London by these attacks. A well-informed London newspaper man in Canada last week estimated that a Zeppelin raid goes about as far towards making any real change to the great city as a contractor in peace times tearing down a single building—and London contains a million buildings.

in asserting that 2½ millions have been destroyed in this first year of war.

Of these some three-quarters of a million—the flower of the manhood of Germany—lie dead on alien soil. No trump of King or Kaiser, blown as in the old legend when the Fatherland is in danger, can rouse them from their eternal sleep. They rest forever in massed heaps of dead or solitary graves, be-

On the contrary, I have refused to accept optimist estimates of many of my "expert" friends; though I profoundly hope they are true. My desire is to see things as they are, and their consequences as they will be, so not being deceived. But the observer who wishes the truth should keep his attention rather on casualties than on territories. Germany can be destroyed equally in the heart of Russia, beyond

ONE-THIRD of their fighting population, one-quarter of their whole efficient male population, destroyed in one year of war—no nation has ever yet suffered such punishment; and there is to-day in Germany grief and misery and the counting of the cost of it discernable beneath the heavy hand of the military machine. I think by this time next year, if the war continues, that number should be more than doubled. More than half the manhood of Germany will be destroyed. And before the three years' limit which Lord Kitchener has given (according to Lord Esher's statement) be attained there should not be much left that could offer serious resistance between the Vistula and the Rhine.

I am not an optimist (optimism to-day being alone in this country a quality held in derision).