

WILL THE WAR END THIS YEAR?

British Civilians Think It Will. The War Board Is Confident, in Spite of Submarines

By GILBERT VIVIAN SELDES Special Correspondence Evening Ledger LONDON, Feb. 19.

FOR the first time since the battles of the Marne England is confident. In the first seven weeks of the war she expected an immediate victory in the field. In the middle of 1915 she awaited the push of Kitchener's army and the collapse of Germany owing to lack of food and men. But in 1915, when the battle of the Somme began, she was not confident at all. Pride had been knocked out of her; she was determined enough, but without faith that she would be enough to bring down Germany. That was the midsummer anticipation. There is still no consensus of opinion concerning the result, partly because no statistics of casualties are available. But success or failure as the Somme may be, the coming year—the coming six months—are marked for the end of the war. The optimism is fairly crushing. It starts in the field, with enormous stocks of superior equipment and munitionment and morale; it spreads to the training camps, and so into the towns and cities. It is a mounting, steady, growing confidence. The States broke with Germany, but that act was a final fling. "Germany's number's up," I heard again and again in a phrase which corresponds to "your number's number." The war has gone along only moderately well, partly because the small investor is so sure that the "show" is all over and that it can't cost much to lower the curtain.

Civilian Optimism Two and a half years after the war began the Government is compelled to ask for 30,000 more women to fill shells, because the military authorities are convinced that more munitions are wanted. But the civilian knows better. He has the feeling that there are enough shells at the front today to run the whole spring-summer-fall offensive. At the same time the food dictator pleads for economy in meals, sets the exact amount of meat and bread and sugar per person per week. But that aspect of the war hasn't touched home yet.

The basis of this optimism is in the certainty of a triple offensive. The British, it is noted, have not passed below the old Somme front, although the French were talking of an extension as far as Soissons. So the Somme will continue to be the same time there is a concentration in the region of Belfort, and either a German attack or a French in the clouds. At some point in the southern front the Germans may attack in the hope of cutting off Verdun from behind. Finally, in the north, near Ypres or further, a joint offensive by the British and Belgians may be made. The months the Allies have been feeling out the ground and have been spreading the most vivid reports of an attack through Switzerland. The German staffs know where the British concentrations are, and the British are obviously studying their ground.

German Intrigues in Russia Two great factors in this talk of offensives are not nearly so much in the public eye. First, there is always the assumption of a corresponding Russian effort and there is the shadow of a possibility that the will be made. The Brusiloff plan of putting out of action a huge number of Austrians at a frightful cost to himself cannot be a mere bluff. The Russian staffs know just how far the Government is going to assist or to hamper the army. It can checkmate the army completely by refusing to alter the conditions of its distribution in the cities. And if the "dark forces" remain in power nothing will induce them to make the army fit to overthrow Germany. The Russian staffs know where the German defeat on all the other fronts will overcome the intrigues of the pro-German party in Russia. The extent of the power wielded by a small party in Germany is not to be despised. It is known everywhere that a prominent member of the Government has at Stockholm several influential German agents who are working for the overthrow of the present Government. It is known everywhere that the present break would have come over the Sussex had Germany had enough submarines to check all American exports to Great Britain. The news is enough now. Germany is in a position to lay down a new "ton-for-ton" policy. The old one was to demand a ton for every ton Germany sank—but that left it until after the war. The new policy is to lay down a ton for every ton sunk. It is barely possible that between two and three million tons of shipping can be built in Great Britain in a year. But the positive action plan, it is the next three months which count.

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Sorrow's Crown of Sorrow Rests on the Ancient Land By ISRAEL ZANGWILL I SAW all our women and my mother torn to pieces by the monsters who disparted for possession of them," says the old Princess in Claudine, "and I was left for dead amid a heap of corpses. For three hundred leagues around similar scenes were going on without any omission in the prayers a day prescribed by Mahomet." It is impossible in reading the evidence as to the treatment of the Armenians in the Ottoman Empire not to be reminded of this and other episodes by which Voltaire strove to discredit the optimism of his Panglossian Epistles, which, however seemed to transcend the license of even satirical invention and to have no warrant in the actual facts of medieval history. And we now know that Voltaire's imagination fell below, did not exceed, the diabolism of human nature at these moments when, maddened by war just aggravated, let us charitably admit, by war panic, it returns to that prehistoric animal nature through which the soul has slowly struggled from more than one area of the war zone, from Belgium, from Galicia, from Turkish Armenia, the same story reaches us; the same dread saga of the wanderings of whole populations under the spur of the purple flag of fire by night, the fall like flies by the wayside and new children are born on the march. Mothers go mad. Girls throw themselves into the rivers. Men are killed and buried like dogs. But Belgium has almost all the world for her friends and the faith in restoration goes before her exiles like a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night. Even the Jews of the Pale, torn and tossed between the alternate virtues, begin to find organized help and behold some faint gleam of light upon the political horizon. On Ararat about an ark is seen. For Armenia alone there is the cry without answer, "Watchman, what of the night?" Only for a minority can there be political redemption. Let us at least bring physical salvation to their agonizing remnant. Sister nations I have been accustomed to think the Armenians and the Jews. Both hail from sister lands of the cradle of civilization. Both come trailing clouds of glory from the purple days of Persia and Babylon. Both have borne the shock of the ancient and medieval empires and the militant migrations of their races, and both hold to their original faith—for, if the one was the first preacher of Jehovah, the other was the first nation to profess Jesus. And sisters, too, in sorrow, although exiled, scattered, persecuted, massacred. Sisters, forsooth, yet not equal in suffering. Hitherto through the centuries the crown of martyrdom has been pre-eminently Israel's. And, as day by day during this war of wars there came to me, by dark letter or whisper, the tale of her woes in the central war zone, I said to myself, Surely the cup is full; surely no people on earth has had such a measure of gall and vinegar to drink. But I was mistaken. One people has suffered more. That people, whose realm held the legendary Eden, has now for abiding place the pit of hell. I bow before this higher majesty of sorrow. I take the crown of thorns from Israel's head and I place it upon Armenia.

QUESTIONS FOR DOCTOR BRADY

To the Editor of the Evening Ledger: Sir—The Rev. Cyrus Townsend Brady exhorted his hearers at the Yonkers Y. M. C. A., saying among other things: "Move the ships. Shall the St. Louis, St. Paul, Philadelphia and New York be tied up, their cargoes discharged, their crews let go and their mail placed on foreign ships because we are afraid to move the ships? Move the ships, if it takes the whole power of the Government to do it. I don't want war, but I have an idea that this would not produce war. If anything will produce war it is to show that we are afraid. We don't want the world to think that this Government is afraid of any nation." To this I reply, I, an American citizen, would like to reply. First of all, Mr. Brady, what is your idea in "moving the ships"? Do you know what those ships carry? Are you in favor of the arrival of their deadly cargo in the hands of the British that they may sooner murder their brothers across the trenches? And is this the gospel that you preach? And do you think that your Master approves of your idea? Has any body branded the American nation as a nation of cowards because we do not move these ships? I am thankful to God that the power of moving those ships and conveying them by the entire United States navy has not been vested in you. Further on in your speech you said "that God was no pacifist, as He had given His only Son to fight and die." Will you please tell us where in the Bible you read of Christ as a fighter? Such an entirely new view of our Saviour at this time, if it proved true, deserving of a column in the history of the world. The fighting Christ would be among other conceptions the needed straw to break the back of the camel of a dying faith. And finally you said that you doubted if the Sea would have been a pacifist if he had stood on the fields of Belgium. When a speaker resorts to such extremes to put the required punch in his speech his end is defeated. When he casts his eyes about for a new missile to cast and find, he is not taking the purest character in Christendom to fling it at his hearers as he would a stone, one of two things is certain; either his God has bereft him of reason or he is insincere. Come to the fore and tell us by way of apology that the enlightened presence of this nation of ours ought not to fall upon its knees a prey to the barbaric past. By your faith we have been murdered before and we do not intend to be murdered again. A CITIZEN OF UNITED STATES, Philadelphia, February 26.

TOO GOOD TO BE TRUE

There is a rumor—it is scarcely more than that—to the effect that President Wilson will create a coalition Cabinet to meet the present great national emergency. It is reported that if this is done several members of the present Cabinet will be dismissed so that places may be provided for other men of wider experience and great capacity for usefulness. Perhaps it is the fact that this is exactly what the President should do that has started the rumor. The wish among a great many patriotic Americans is a father to the thought—Kansas City Journal.

TO ONE WHO IS BLIND

I said I had forgotten her. That I had put away Our memories of Paradise Until the Judgment day; That never more the laughing earth Should see us hand in hand, That I long since had shut the door Of the old Parterryland. Then on a sudden came strange news Upon the gossip wind. My love of those sweet years ago Said Good-bye love was blind; I said the news must be a lie. Cruel as are the years, They could not be so merciless To such great eyes as hers. O little girl of long ago, God grant the news untrue! Except for one thing, thought— That I may come to you. And sit beside you in the dark, And as in Paradise I gave you all my breaking heart, New birds to yonder eyes.

THE FOOD CRISIS

To the Editor of the Evening Ledger: Sir—I want to commend you on the article which appeared in yesterday's Evening Ledger headed "Food Crisis." It is refreshing to read such a sensible article after reading so many other statements and reasons why, especially, food products are costing so much more than twenty-five years ago. It is all nonsense about middlemen and speculator rolling in wealth made out of the exorbitant profits. You have it positively correct. Give us more goods and prices will automatically come lower. Make the thousands of acres wild in fifty miles of Philadelphia become producers instead of lying idle and you would save a great deal. We don't want to see...

Tom Daly's Column

THE PLAYMATE I barked beneath his window, "Come and play!" I scratched so lightly at his nursery door. I whimpered softly in the passage-way— He never failed to answer me before. I've saved the willow whip his fingers peeled; The stick he used to throw is by the pool; The butterflies are waiting in the field Beside the grassy path that led to school. It is so long since last we romped and ran, How proud I was to guard his door of late! I've called to him in every way I can, There's nothing left to do but wait—and wait. BURGES JOHNSON.

THAT'S ONLY one of the many lovely things to be found in B. Johnson's book, "Rhythms of Little Folks," published by the Putnam.

YOUNG JOHN LOUGHNEY, of Lansdowne, was fifteen years old day before yesterday. On that same day of the month, but many, many years before, Longfellow uttered his first musical cry. The centenary of that occurred in 1907. Young John was in the kindergarten then, being only five years old, and all of his little classmates had been invited to attend a party in the afternoon at John's house. So when Dear Teacher asked, "Now, children, whose birthday is this?" of course, the class arose as one child and shouted, "Johnny Loughney's!"

ALL THIS HAPPENED IN ONE HOME Sir—A young lady called at our house the other evening and insisted upon telling us about a play she had seen. It was "The Hour." She wanted to arouse our interest in a movement to appeal to the P. O. S. of A. because of the horses in the chariot race! By the way, please:

ADD FAMOUS TRIPLETS Europe, Asia and Africa, Rags, bones and old iron, F. H. B. (when company's at table) The wash lady complained the other morning of the intense cold, and we remarked that if she thought it was cold here she