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EDITORIALS BY JUDGE C. C. GOODWIN

Will the Lesson Be Heeded?

THE world is shocked at the sinking of a great ship carrying more than 2,000 men, women and little children, by a hostile force, not giving the people even a chance to take to the boats. When the commander of the great ship was finally rescued and asked for a statement, he replied "It is the fortune of war." That covered the whole case. War is savagery. That kind of savagery which holds it legitimate to destroy an enemy by any means obtainable though the law of nations for centuries has commanded that passengers on unarmed ships must be removed before the ships are sunk.

The savagery of sinking the Lusitania is no greater than the sweeping of Belgium by fire and sword, laying great cities filled with men, women and little children, in waste; leaving 10,000,000 of all classes of people so destitute that they have only been able to live, for months past, through the charity that the outside world has bestowed.

When such forces are awakened there is but one of two things to do. Either submit and beg for mercy or meet force by force until by the awful attrition one side is ground into submission.

Maybe this last appalling catastrophe was needed to properly arouse the Anglo-Saxon race. Great Britain has suffered far less than France or Russia in the present war. While the British government has been straining every nerve to meet and turn back the storm, a great many thousands of her people have failed to comprehend the mighty menace which the war presents to England. Her labor unions have tried to cripple the authorities in their efforts to do their part. Maybe the catastrophe will cause those men to see that there is a danger that threatens them and requires them to do what the men of the northern states of this Republic did when the news reached them that something had transpired that called for no less than the direct sacrifice of their fortunes, their honor and their lives.

Maybe the cataclysm was needed to awaken our president and congress to the fact that they have all been criminally careless in not providing the needed transportation to carry our commerce and our people on the sea, and in doing comparatively nothing to prepare our people for possible war.

The war has been raging in Europe now for nine months, ample time in which to have built half a dozen beautiful fleets.

The president wanted to purchase some interned ships in our harbors, but Great Britain served a notice of protest against their purchase, and again the president and his friends in congress refused to agree to run those ships for two years, if they were purchased, but rather laid tolls upon such American coast shipping as de-

sired to pass through the Panama canal, because that would be an indirect subsidy. It was indeed a notice that there was no desire to restore an American merchant marine.

The result has been that no ship has either been bought or built, and our citizens are obliged to go in foreign ships if they go abroad.

We have never had a war that at the beginning has not been marked by tremendous sacrifices of splendid lives, because there have not been men capable of training our troops in the simplest rudiments of military maneuvers, on in making sanitary camps, while the cost of the first six months of war had been greater than twenty years of training would have been.

Japan knows this and because of it, is starting on her conquest of China because she is sure we will take no chance of having our west coast ravished by interfering, and we stand disgraced before the world.

The Original Blame

THE barbarity of turning those assassins of the sea, the submarines, upon a passenger ship loaded with more than two thousand non-combatants, of whom perhaps one-third were women and little children, need not be discussed. The horror of it will make a stain on that page of the world's history which will be a "damned spot" that never will "out."

But the primary crime of it does not lie against the direct murderers, but against the government of the United States.

It has been as clear as the sunlight for half a century that American merchant steamers can not run against the cheaper wages and the subsidies paid by foreign governments to their ships, without government help.

It has been clear, too, that all the time our country through its trade has been making for foreign ship owners and indirectly paying the subsidies they have received.

The shame and loss suffered by our country through the banishing of its flag from the ocean, and through depending upon foreigners to carry our commerce has been likewise just as apparent. But the silly jabber that "we will not pay subsidies to already rich shipping firms" has been enough to keep our country running on three wheels; as merchants we have hired other merchants' delivery wagons to deliver our goods, until our flag is no longer known to half the inhabitants of the world.

So sensitive is the British government on this subject that it loaned the Cunard company \$6,000,000 to build the Lusitania and has paid the ship \$200,000 per annum subsidy annually ever since it began its voyages.

When the war broke out in Europe last August, it was clear what would follow to ocean commerce. It was just as clear that our country would be hopelessly crippled in its trade for want of ships. Had the government moved at once and ordered the building of a dozen great steamers, they would have been completed now; they would have been safe on any sea and Americans would not be obliged to embark on foreign ships

to go abroad. But congress wrangled and wrangled over the question and finally without doing anything, adjourned. No, we are mistaken; it did remain in session long enough to pass an immense river and harbor bill, though every member knew in advance that quite half the sum appropriated in that bill would be directly stolen or wasted.

Now those same members will read the barbarism of the assassination of the great Lusitania, and denounce the fearful tragedy; though if they had half common sense they would realize that they themselves were primarily to blame for the heartbreaking pitiable story.

It is just as wicked, too, to neglect preparing the American people to meet a sudden war on land.

An alert and powerful enemy could land great armies on both our coasts and inflict incalculable losses before any check could be interposed and in the meantime tens of thousands of untrained Americans would give up their lives to pay for the imbecility of the men who make and execute our laws. It is cowardly and base to neglect needed precautions against danger, and then to sit down and cry or swear when the calamity comes.

Time To Keep Cool

THE great Hamburg company's (German) steamer, Kronprinz is interned in an American harbor. Suppose she had sailed, carrying large quantities of arms and ammunition for Germany, and many Americans, though warned of the danger had taken passage upon her. Suppose an English submarine had cited her in the straits of Dover, what would it have done?

Suppose the submarine had sunk the steamer would we be talking about war with Great Britain on that account.

We are not in the least seeking to condone the crime of sinking merchant ships and their passengers without so much as giving passengers a chance to take to the boats, but are merely trying to make clear what war is in lands governed by the old imperial methods of kings and chiefs.

Germany has dictated new rules for the government of neutrals in time of war, Great Britain has demanded from us what she scoffed at doing when the life of our nation hung upon a thread in our great Civil war.

As Viscount Bryce says: "International law has been within the last ten months more completely disregarded, cast down and trampled under foot than I think it ever was within the last four or five hundred years."

It is horrifying to think of American women and children dying because of the fury of some war minion. Still American women in Mexico have been subjected to a far worse fate than drowning, but the knowledge of that has not moved our government to action.

Our belief is that the American people are more humane than any other. Think of peaceable men and women being mobbed and robbed in Australia, in Canada and in London, itself,