

VON BERNHARDI BY KAISER'S PERMISSION REVIEWS THE WAR

Continued from First Page.

so far as lay in her power in order to be able to ward off her antagonists on all sides if circumstances made this necessary.

That such a preparation did not follow any aggressive aims should have been proved sufficiently by the fact that, for forty-four years, in spite of all antagonisms and often by making sacrifices, she maintained peace, and that she allowed to glide by all opportunities when she could have attacked her enemies under advantageous conditions. Germany, however, does not owe her growing power to a policy of expansion, grasping what is to be grasped, but to a peaceful, untiring mental and economical effort and to the establishment of general obligatory military service which, during a century of custom, has educated the nation to a realization of duty and development of strength.

Her power of defence is the real source of her prosperous development, and at the same time the only protection of her liberty and her borders, open on all sides.

"Power or Decline."

More quickly than could have been anticipated the question sprang up before us whether we should submit to the commandments given upon the strength of our enemies, and therewith surrender the claim to be recognized as an authoritative Great Power, or whether we should offer defiance to the unjustifiable threats and risk a war against this ring of enemies numerically superior.

"Power or decline" was the serious question which came up to us during the last days of July, 1914. The German Emperor did not hesitate to draw the sword for Germany's freedom to work out her destiny and to pick up the gauntlet of strife insolently thrown before her.

Russia mobilized for the protection of the Servian assassins when Austria demanded due reprisal. France as Russia's ally also called her armies to the colors. Thus Germany, in order not to be compelled to step before her enemies unprepared, saw herself forced to adopt counter measures; but in doing this the *casus belli* was given. In spite of all the peaceful efforts of the German Emperor in the contest of the opposing elements, the solution of the existing tremendous problem no longer could be warded off. England joined the two united continental States under the pretext that Germany had violated Belgian neutrality, and now declares before all the world that she took up arms for the protection of the weak, "for a German victory would mean the subjugation of the world."

But what does this claim really amount to? England still owes proof that Germany has ever even threatened with her might a weaker State. Nothing of the sort has ever happened or even been planned since the German Empire has existed. True, we have carried war into Belgium; but Belgium had given up her own neutrality long before the German invasion began.

Belgium Member of Conspiracy.

To-day there remains no longer any doubt, and it has been proved by unimpeachable documents which have been published in the *North German Gazette* (*Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*), that Belgium, long before the beginning of the war, had made agreements with England in case Britain should become involved in a war with Germany. England had declared that under such circumstances it would positively land troops in Belgium, and Belgium has not made the least objection to this violation. England, therefore, simply considered Belgium as a vassal State which would have to serve her as a bulwark for her position on the Channel, and the nominally neutral Belgium absolutely submitted to this assumption.

The well thought out and grandly drawn plan of Gen. Joffre, which would deserve all recognition from a military standpoint, appears—so far as one is able to judge from the events—to have been the following: the great mass of the French army was to have been collected in northern France in order to advance against the right wing of the German army. Then, if the Germans—as apparently was assumed on the part of France—would be the case—should on their part march into Belgium, in order to gain room for the disposition of their troops and to oppose the French offensive, then the Belgian army, together with 150,000 English landed in the meanwhile, were to advance against the right flank of the Germans to crush their right wing, and, in conjunction with the French main army, to roll up from the north the entire German army standing on the French border. Northward of Cologne, where only the weak fortress of Wesel had to be conquered, the Rhine was to be crossed, and the army of the Allies was to enter into the heart of Germany in this manner, avoiding the strong fortifications on the Rhine proper.

England Responsible for War.

This plan of the Allies demonstrates that Belgium in reality was not a neutral State; that Germany was justified—yes, even was obliged to invade Belgium—and that Germany did not violate weak Belgium, but that, on the contrary, Belgium had united herself with our worst enemies, with intentions which are still hidden in the dark of the cabinets, but undoubtedly under the pressure and at the instigation of England, which in every way is responsible for the world war. This British claim is no less ridiculous than the claim of England that Germany's victory would mean the subjugation of the world. This is an assertion absolutely without foundation, which could not be substantiated; for German policy everywhere has protected in the most painstaking manner the rights of third parties, and also in her colonial aspirations has proceeded with the most far reaching regard of the interests of other States.

What position, however, is England able to assume in this respect?

We all very well remember the heroic struggle of the weak Boer States and their subjugation by the English world empire which led hordes of oppressors from all parts of the world, in order to force the free farmers of the Transvaal and the Orange Free State beneath her yoke, and to utilize for her own benefit the treasures of their soil. It does not change the facts in the least that the English in their procedure against the South African republics brought forth an apparently legal justification, for no human being of judgment will permit himself to be misled by such justification as to the true conditions of things.

Now if this State, which everywhere suppresses the liberty of the weak herself, this State which for centuries has kept Ireland in bondage, which supported France in the enslaving of free Morocco, which enslaved India and Egypt and which in conjunction with Russia seeks to subjugate weak

Persia, the State which for her selfish interests has driven neutral Belgium into the war; which throughout the world, because she believes herself to be the stronger, calls the nations to arms to throw down Germany; if this State claims that a victory of Germany would mean the subjugation of the world, then every discerning person and every unprejudiced being must recognize the hypocritical mask behind which hides the unscrupulous policy of power and selfish interest.

Attacks English Navalism.

In reality exactly the opposite of the British claim is the case. In the war raging at present a victory for Germany would mean a liberation of the world from the English yoke. The chief commercial rights of the world are being controlled at certain strategic points of blockade by British cannon; the exits of the North Sea to the Atlantic Ocean, the Strait of Gibraltar, the Suez Canal, the Strait of Bab el Mandeb, the Malacca Strait, are in British possession, and wherever England is not able to exert absolute control directly, as, for instance, in Eastern Asia, she has succeeded in enforcing other States into her service by a clever policy of finance and coalition. An eloquent example of this is England's agreement with Japan.

Like the sword of Damocles, English navalism hangs suspended above all peoples possessed of the coast or transoceanic colonies open to attack. They all in a certain sense are dependent on England, which at any moment, owing to her superior maritime strength, is able to make impossible their over-sea trade and to cut off the communication with their colonies. Even now during the war itself it is easy to recognize how heavy is the pressure exerted by England in the ruthless manner, disregarding all international law, in which she treats the neutrals, and in the manner in which she violates public opinion through the spreading of false and mendacious information by the aid of her cable monopoly. Even America is not free from this outrage, for even there reports in keeping with the truth are hardly given to publicity in an impartial manner. The entire telegraphic communication with Europe is subject to the British censor! All the despatches of the Reuter service are "faked" or at least colored to a greater or lesser extent in keeping with British policy.

Fighting to Break English Yoke.

Therefore the struggle in which Germany is compelled to fight to a finish to-day is not only for her own freedom and independence, for her own right of self-direction and for the position of power due her as one of the greatest civilized nations of the world, but at the same time a struggle for the liberty of the States of the Old World from the English yoke and for the free development of all peoples which have within themselves the strength and ability for independent action.

If the Triple Entente under British guidance should be victorious then England's chains will fetter all free movement of the European States to an even greater extent than heretofore; then England's rulership of the seas will be even more oppressive, England's world monopoly of trade will be utilized to even a greater and sharper extent than before the war to concentrate control of all the treasure of the world in the British money market; then France and Russia will notice that they have fought in the first place the battles of England and not their own, and that they will have to carry the main costs of the war, while England—free from attack behind her protecting wall of waves—will take as her prerogative the chief fruits of the victory.

On the other hand, no weaker neutral State need fear any violation in the case of a victory on the part of Germany. Such a violation would not be in keeping with our policy, such as has been demonstrated for a century past, nor with the spirit which to-day permeates the entire nation.

Pictures Germany of To-day.

Of course the German nation to-day is absolutely determined, cost what it may, to carry through to a victorious conclusion the struggle which has been forced, in a most despicable manner upon us; to rebuild what the war has destroyed; to win back again what our enemies have torn away from us; to fight for and secure for ourselves and others the possibility of free development and absolute independence of the assumed British world dominion; the freedom of national and state existence. In this spirit we all are one; all strife, all partisanship, has disappeared before the common danger; in this all Germans are of one will; in all hearts the soldierly spirit of our fathers has been awakened; the young and the old crowd each other to get to the colors; members of every profession and trade grasp arms; battalions and squadrons spring from the earth.

Recently when I inspected some troops the oldest volunteer standing in the front was 62 years old, the youngest 14½; and the battalion was led by a professor of prehistoric research, while the battery was being commanded by a minister of the Gospel. Both of them to-day are already adorned by the iron cross. That is a picture of the Germany of to-day. Whoever is not able to go to war seeks to make himself useful in some other way to serve the great cause, through contribu-



General Friedrich von Bernhardi.

tion of money and in the organization of all the powers of resistance. The women also are hotly competing in devotion and willingness to sacrifice in a splendid demonstration of their capabilities of nursing the sick and wounded. All the lower instincts seem to have disappeared; all the good and noble comes to the fore; it is elevating to-day to look into the eye of the German nation; 70,000,000 of people governed by the one spirit in absolute union, devoting themselves to one ideal purpose; a vision such as the world has never seen before.

This spirit, however, which exalts all hearts and brings every muscle into play, is not the spirit of conquest and of violation, of a measureless ambition for rulership and self-assertion; it has been called into play for self-defence, and if to-day we are aiming to throw down our opponents by every means, this is not in order to rule them in future and to enslave them politically and economically, but in order to attain for ourselves in future the guarantee of peace.

In this spirit of union and unshakable determination of victory, which at the same time will not despair in adversity, but will never abuse the power of the victor over the weaker in order to bend right by might, there lies the absolute guarantee of final victory. To-day no German exists who does not carry in his heart this conviction, and the course of the war hitherto appears to justify our confidence.

Gen. von Bernhardi Discusses War News and Analyzes the Campaigns to Date.

SECTION II.

ENGLAND, aided by France and Russia, has been successful in spreading everywhere false information concerning the origin of the war and the aims of the German Government, and the military events upon the field of battle have been reported throughout the world in the same distorted and lying manner by the English telegraph bureaus. Therefore it ought to be of interest to the American public to be informed in a concise manner as to the truth of the events of the war in so far as it can be discerned at such an early date, and in so far as the interests of further campaigning permit.

Reviews Military Operations.

In the west a campaign was opened by the attack upon Liege. In spite of the fact that the Belgian frontier was held by much stronger forces than we could have anticipated the extremely difficult undertaking succeeded in a brilliant manner. A strong modern fortress fell a victim to a daring assault, and the Belgians, completely surprised, did not even dare attempt to recapture the position lost. How daringly this incomparable undertaking was executed is shown by the circumstance that one of the forts was surprised and captured by a lieutenant with only twenty men, who captured the garrison of 200 men, who were taken absolutely unawares. From Liege the German attack turned against Namur, which also was overwhelmed in the briefest time, and while a part of the German army victoriously threw back the Belgians toward Antwerp another penetrated across the French frontier, defeated the English-French forces it met, and after a brief siege took Maubeuge and then entered more deeply into France. The Germans forced their way into the immediate vicinity of Paris, everywhere defeated the enemies opposing them, Frenchmen as well as Englishmen, and captured many cannon, machine guns and prisoners.

In the meantime the French had carried out an energetic attack against the line at Metz-Saarburg. They had also entered Alsace and had occupied Muelhausen. Both offensive operations, however, ended disastrously for them. The army which had entered Lorraine was thrown back behind the line of border fortifications and suffered heavy losses in killed, wounded and guns taken. The strong fort Maunoyville was taken by the Germans, and in Alsace the French troops that had entered suffered a defeat near Muelhausen. They were obliged to retire to Belfort, while in the Vosges fighting was going on with changing success, until here too the Germans succeeded in throwing back the enemy almost wholly over the frontier.

These two enterprises against Lorraine and Alsace appeared to have been undertaken by the French only for the purpose of distracting the attention of the Germans from the northern field of action. This purpose, however, was not attained.

It is true that the advance guards of the German columns which had forced their way through Belgium and into France on the Marne met hostile forces far superior. These were the main forces of the French

army, hitherto held in leash. There was no reason to enter into an unequal struggle with them. The right wing of the German army was withdrawn and succeeded in breaking away from the enemy without losses worth mentioning, while the centre of the German forces maintained its position before the strong fortresses of Verdun and Toul.

The Capture of Antwerp.

The plan of the French to turn the right wing of the German army miscarried absolutely. In advancing they did lengthen their left wing until finally it reached the sea, but at all times it was possible to put into position against them the German troops necessary, and the success sought became absolutely illusory when the bulk of the troops, until then employed in Belgium, became available and when reinforcements from the interior of Germany could be brought to the front.

Gen. von Beseler with comparatively small forces had attacked the fortress of Antwerp, defended by a largely superior force, but he had overwhelming artillery on his side. Everything depended upon the taking of Antwerp quickly, in order to protect both flank and rear of the army that had entered France against undertakings of the Belgian army supported by English troops. This object was attained in most brilliant manner.

Antwerp generally was assumed to be the strongest fortress in the world, and it deserved its name. By the English the city was considered the secure position from which they expected to hold their sway over Belgium. The fall of Antwerp was almost equal to a defeat of England. The reinforcements sent there by England therefore had a motive largely political; but they were unable to prevent the loss of the city. With an élan without comparison, the Germans attacked and threw upon the forts an absolutely annihilating fire from their heavy guns. The garrison finally left the city in flight. Within twelve days of the opening of the bombardment Antwerp was taken—another accomplishment without equal in the history of wars.

Fighting Around Ypres.

Simultaneously the Germans took up the pursuit of the fleeing enemies and threw them back along the coast of the sea, until the fight assumed the stationary character along the line of Nieuport, Ypres, Lille. In the meanwhile the Allies had succeeded in bringing to the front considerable reinforcements. New troops had arrived from England, Indian troops had been brought to the scene of action from Asia, Turcos and Senegal negroes from Africa. Canada had sent troops to support them.

In brief, it was a world in arms, against which the Germans were obliged to defend themselves. They have dug themselves into the earth at favorable points; slowly, almost as in a siege, they force their way forward against the enemy, also entrenched up to his teeth. From the sea-coast to the frontier of Switzerland the opposing armies face each other in long, entrenched lines behind barbed wire and other obstacles, often separated by only a small distance, and struggle for every inch of ground.

The artillery of each belligerent throws a death bringing hail of projectiles over the blood soaked battlefield from rearward positions. Thus far all attacks of the Allies have been shattered by the heroism of the German defenders, while we, as stated, slowly gain ground.

High in the air the aviation corps fight each other and throw death dealing bombs upon the enemy, while the English fleet seeks to enter into the battle from the sea-side, but is obliged to maintain a respectful distance, owing to the heavy German coast artillery which borders the shores.

French Offensive Power Exhausted.

At the present time it is impossible to foresee how and by what means the final decision will be brought about. Each party will seek to prepare it in one way or another, and whosoever has the steadiest nerves and knows how to strike the sharpest and most telling blow will carry away the palm of victory. Apparently, however, the offensive power of the French is nearly exhausted, for their attacks are constantly growing weaker and the French headquarters seeks to maintain the courage of its troops by artificial means. Continually it consoles them with the "brilliant successes of the Russians," which very soon will threaten the defenders of the German western frontier from behind and thereby compel their retirement. All French prisoners that fall into our hands are thoroughly convinced that the Russian armies are already occupying Berlin and that the German army of the East has been absolutely crushed. These are the tales that are dealt out to them officially in order to strengthen them in holding out in the heavy fight, to hold out in snow and rain and frost in the face of death.

This dishonesty of the French army headquarters toward its own people is significant of the conditions in France. Its effects are positively grotesque, if one views them in comparison with the actual situation.

On the Eastern Front.

The struggle on our eastern frontier thus far has developed in a manner entirely different from that which the Allies have dreamed of. That our eastern army would be crushed by the masses of the Russians and that they would be able to undertake a triumphal march to Berlin was set forth as a matter of course, that never had to be considered a second time. On the contrary they have been thrown back almost entirely into their own country; only a very narrow strip of the border of East Prussia is in their possession. On the other hand they have been able to penetrate into eastern Galicia in Austria because the strategic position made it necessary to comparatively weaken this wing of the army.

At any rate, if one desires to be able to properly judge the warlike conditions on the eastern frontier, one must realize that Germany and Austria-Hungary here from the beginning were obliged to fight against an enormous numerical superiority in view of the fact that Germany had her chief forces on her western frontier and that Austria-Hungary, the defensive forces of which in themselves were developed in the same degree as those of Germany, was obliged to utilize a great portion of its power against Serbia and Montenegro. The total Servian forces may be estimated at 300,000 men, those of Montenegro at 50,000. These are figures which in any event meant a considerable increase to the Russian army. Only if one keeps in mind these facts is one able to judge the successes and strategic measures of the German and Austro-Hungarians in their full significance.

Hindenburg's Victory.

The well known slowness of Russian mobilization and of the penetration of Russian units enabled the Germans to permit exceptional small forces to hold the east, forces which generally speaking were concentrated in East Prussia, where the first blow was expected. In conformity with this expectation a strong Russian army entered East Prussia from the Niemen and in the neighborhood of Gumbinnen met the inferior German forces. According to their custom, the Russians dug themselves into the ground for a stubborn defence and the Germans had to turn them.

During these fights the German leader received word that a Russian army was approaching from the Narva toward the border of East Prussia and was threatening the line of retreat of the troops fighting in the neighborhood of Gumbinnen. Gen. von Hindenburg, who now assumed command on the German side, decided to permit small forces to hold out against the Niemen army and to attack with the main part of his troops the Russian army of the Narva. With the aid of the railroads he drew from the interior of the empire some reinforcements of the second line and operated in such a manner that he succeeded in encircling from all sides the much superior Russian army, which one corps marched up to meet it in front. The German offensive was carried out with such quickness and daring that the Russians were unable to undertake adequate counter measures.

Some detachments of German troops marched up to sixty miles in a day and yet were able and fresh to attack. They struck the Russians with annihilating force. Only separate parts of the army were enabled to withdraw. Not one part succeeded in breaking through. Thousands fell victims to the German projectiles. Those who were forced into the lakes and morasses in that neighborhood, however, never did not perish there was captured, as were two commandants, generals, while the commander in chief remained dead on the battlefield. This was a defeat which in the history of warfare stands almost equal to the annihilation in the fullest sense of the word, for only weak remnants of the proud army were able to save themselves behind the sheltering woods.

The Germans, however, were spurred to new deeds by this victory. Turning from the battlefield, Hindenburg with all available forces turned back against the Russian army of the Niemen, which, supported by a few German cavalrymen and local troops, had not dared to