WRITERS DISCUSS WAR FROM ALL POINTS OF VIEW

PEACE OBSTACLES GROWING AS WORLD TIRES OF FIGHTING

Samuel S. McClure Appears to Believe Only a Truce Is Possible--Frank Dilnot Tells of Life and Deeds of Lloyd George and How He Reached Premier's Chair After Years of Hard Work.

OBSTACLES TO PEACE. (Houghton Mifflin Company.) By Samuel S. McClure. ($2.)

The reader puts down this book with a sense of discouragement. How can lasting peace ever come against the odds here set forth? What power can prevail against the spiritual obstacles entrenched in men's souls?

The obstacles to peace, the author says, are of two kinds: the questions involved in the war, which are territory, access to the sea and national security; and, second—and it seems the more portentous—the states of mind of the people at war. The matters in the first group are critical enough and would be difficult enough of solution if the nations interested were on ordinary terms of friendliness and mutual trust, but with the enormous hates, contempts and horrors that divide the warring nations to-day they seem almost insuperable.

Mr. McClure believes that the real problem of this war is Asiatic Turkey. He traces briefly, in proof of the contention, the history of the Bagdad Railway and of Turkey and Anglo-German relations from the Boer war to the beginning of the present war.

He reviews, almost wholly through the medium of quotations from documents, the crucial days from July 23 to August 4, 1914, and answers also by means of documents, gleaned alike from German, Austrian and English sources, the questions, Why did England enter the war? and Why did Germany invade Belgium?

The harrowing story of the spoliation of Belgium is told almost wholly by German documents. The facts and figures stand by themselves.

In his attempts to understand German submarine rules and practice and the military purpose of the Zeppelin raids on England the author had a considerable correspondence with German authorities. This is reproduced in parts and serves to emphasize the extraordinary process of thought and reasoning by which the German people came to justify and to glorify the most savage achievements of these two arms of its service. Mr. McClure was in England on the occasion of several raids and made a personal and careful examination of the results. In comparison with his observations he quotes the German official and newspaper reports of the same raids. The comparison is discouraging in that these reports are accepted without question by the German people—and the truth is not in them.

Much space is given to the record of atrocities, both by and against the Germans, the Belgians, the French and the Russians. These records are of the utmost importance, since the implicit belief in them by all the belligerent peoples and the profound hatred nourished by this belief constitute, in the author's opinion, the greatest single obstacle to an early peace.

These documents have not been chosen with a fixed purpose of inflaming the imagination. They are set down with the object of throwing every possible light on a vexed question. They are drawn more from German than from other sources. Those of German origin end almost invariably with the justification, "The responsibility for lawless or unjust procedure falls upon the Belgian"—or the French or the English—"Government, who by arbitrarily infringing the law of nations, induced the people to act criminally," &c., &c.

The story told by these documents stretches its grim and horrible trail over Belgium and northern France, over Armenia and Serbia. It constitutes the most terrible indictment ever drawn against a nation. It convicts Germany out of her own mouth. It emphasizes the hopelessness of attempting to treat on a high moral plane with a Government that knows no moral code recognized by civilization.

This is not an ordinary war book. It is calm, restrained and impersonal, with the truth flashing from it like a flame. With the detached mental attitude of a scientist the author states facts gleaned from first hand observation, quotes the direct statements of high officials and makes lavish use of official documents. By a strange literary and emotional chemistry this unpromising material is transmuted into a book more absorbing, more thrilling and more convincing than the skilled artisan in best selling fiction can ever hope to achieve.

LLOYD GEORGE: THE MAN AND HIS STORY. (Harper & Brothers.) By Frank Dilnot. ($1.)

Formalists who seek to implant in the young the principles of continuousness of purpose, regularity and kindred qualities will find apparently little encouragement in the career of Lloyd George. He was from the first unbusinesslike in most things, and while he was the supreme business organizer of the war his office day arrangements would shock the ordinary merchant or banker. He made contingent appointments and forgot them, he neglected important men and executive chiefs for an hour's discussion with some person on a minor topic which appealed to him. The crowning inconsistency of his career was that he should oust Mr. Asquith and take his place as Prime Minister. George had all the sensitiveness and affection of the Celt nature, and he must have had a feeling of great gratitude to a man to whom he owed so much of his success. Yet it came about that he decided that it was his duty "to pull this man from the throne and take his place there."

It is the many sidedness of the man, his charm of personality, ability, industry and shrewdness that is interestingly told by Mr. Dilnot, who knew Lloyd George personally and at close quarters for years. He traces his life from boyhood in a little Welsh town, through his years as a Member of Parliament, Cabinet officer, Chancellor of the Exchequer, and he finally details his activities in the war and their reaction upon the man himself. He assures us too that Lloyd George's career is not yet ended; that from now until the treaty of peace is signed he will be found the personal director of democratic Britain; that at the meeting of the plenipotentiaries he will be "putting in some commas and taking out the clauses he does not like," and that he will be a mighty force in the rebuilding of the nation when the war is over.

ITALY AND THE WAR. (George H. Doran Company.) By Jacques Bainville. ($1.)

In "Italy and the War" (George H. Doran Company), translated by Bernard Miall, Jacques Bainville, a French journalist, interprets the spirit of the new Italy at war. Too much space seems to be given to laying a historical basis for the entrance of Italy into the war, but the author proceeds on the assumption that the ideals of this comparatively new nation are not widely known and its designs are often misunderstood. "Italy, which remained neutral in 1870," says the author, "intervened in 1915, and in both cases she was to give the lie to numerous auguries. But her intervention was not mechanically determined. Nothing rendered it absolutely necessary, neither did it come about by itself. Men's wills were needed to produce it."

One of these men was Baron Sonnino, described by Prince von Buelow as "the man who does not speak." He it was who "led Italian politics into a new path by demanding of Austria that she should respect Article VII. of the treaty of the Triple Alliance, an article which foresaw the possibility that Austria-Hungary might disturb the equilibrium of the Balkans, and which justified Italy in demanding compensation for herself." Thus were Italy's feet set in the path of war. Prince von Buelow, half Italian by marriage, failed, we are told, to avert intervention because he had "the very German defect of nourishing himself to excess on historic memories." The new forces in Italy he could not measure with a statesman's eye.

The author believes that a community of arms will bring Italy and France together in a friendly alliance after the war. But France must understand that Italy has interests in the Near East as well as herself; also that Italy has an ambition to become a great industrial country. Tariffs and treaties will have to be carefully drawn to insure a permanent understanding.

S. S. McClure, author of "Obstacles to Peace" (Houghton Mifflin).

Arthur Bullard, author of "Mobilizing America" (Macmillan).

Edwin Lefevre, author of "To the Last Penny" (Harper).

"MOBILIZING AMERICA."

By ERNEST POOLE.

I wish every thinking American could read this book by Arthur Bullard, "Mobilizing America." (The Macmillan Company). It should give us the stimulus we need. It is a little volume and much has been left out of it that would have gone in had the author had time. But such a book was needed at once. America was going to war not only with little or no preparation but with the consciousness of its people still to a large degree confused as to its aims and purposes, the extent to which we should go in and the methods to be employed. The great speech of President Wilson had not been delivered. To make war by ourselves or to join the Allies? Send an army abroad or fight only on sea? How raise that army? How mobilize all the vast but unorganized resources of this great democracy? Such questions arose in millions of minds. Such questions have been answered here—and answered in a spirit which is not only militant but liberal and democratic, and above all practical. For since the war began abroad Arthur Bullard has been a close and intelligent student of its course not only on the battle fronts but in the industrial centres and in the parliaments as well.

I remember in January, 1915, returning from the German front I came through London and met him there. I had but one night before sailing for home. We spent nearly the whole night talking, comparing our impressions. I was struck then by his penetration into the deeper forces at work. And meeting him from time to time in the intervening years I have grown to feel that his interpretation of this war is on the whole the most broadly comprehensive of any I have come in contact with. He has been for nearly all that time in France and England watching the war, and into the present little volume he has packed the gist of his conclusions.

We have no time to lose, he writes. We must profit by the experience of France and England—both liberal countries like our own, with much the same handicaps that every democracy has when at war. We must learn by their successes and also by their blunders.

Shall we join the Allies? He feels that we should, and not only with our navy but with all the forces, military, industrial and financial, that we can employ—and as fast as we can employ them. To make war by ourselves in a half hearted way would lay ourselves open, he believes, to serious danger of German attack in case she succeeds in breaking up the newly formed Russian republic and through the work of her submarines bringing upon England a pressure that cannot be borne. He does not believe this probable, but it is a possibility not to be cast lightly aside. He does not expect the war to end this summer or next autumn. It may go on for another two years. And the wise way, the economical way, is to throw in our lot with the Allies in a prompt, whole hearted manner which will, he believes, go far toward shortening the war and so saving millions of lives; and will also give us a position of tremendous influence, perhaps even a decisive voice, in the great world conference at the end, where he hopes will be laid at last the foundations of an enduring peace, in a world of liberal peoples from which the schemes of autocracies and tories everywhere will have been done away with to a very large degree.

But to play such a part will require prompt energy over here. He shows what appalling losses have been caused among the Allies by the "short war fallacy." Nobody thought the war would last, and so by not going in hard at once to the limit of its resources England lost invaluable time which has cost lives innumerable. So here now in America he believes we should make without delay preparations for a two years war. He believes we should use our navy at once in cooperation with England's fleet; that our first task is to help clear the seas and build ships and so organize at home our mighty industrial forces that we can send food and munitions in abundance to France and England and to the struggling Russian republic. In this task we must wipe out graft and inefficiency of all kinds. We must get together, every man and woman, too, behind our Government, and forgetting private profits as well as private quarrels, fight this battle to the end.

How can we rouse such a spirit here? By taking swift advantage of the successes and failures both of France and England in that fascinating problem of mobilizing the public will. The questions of publicity and censorship are treated here. He believes in little repression but in much education. We must find through experiment the call which will appeal to this nation the most. That summons, he feels, will be the slogan: "Democracy Must Win the World"—and forever put an end to war. A dream? Perhaps. But to make men fight nothing has ever been invented that is better than a dream.

Next he takes up the subject of mobilizing industries. And again in the light of the experience of our great friends over the sea he treats of labor and capital and the Government's attitude toward them both—how to get the greatest possible output in the least possible time and at the lowest possible cost—with as little change as need be in our democratic institutions. To every sweeping radical change half the opposition here, as in England and France, may be removed if the Government makes it plain at the start that each change is only temporary, a mere emergency measure in no sense committing the nation to permanent policies later on.

He believes that without delay we should start to raise an army here—first 500,000 volunteers (perhaps through the present militia and the regular army), and then by conscription as many more millions as will bring the war to an end. He stands firmly for the principle of universal service in the very broadest sense. He writes that to bring a great people to give their full support to a cause they must all be given something to do. And again, in the light of what has been done in France and England, he suggests possibilities varied and endless of what every man and woman can do to help in a nation which is at war.

The whole book is full of suggestions, concrete, illuminating, and bits of the most searching and sincere analysis. As one faces the troubled times ahead and all the doubt and darkness, one sees the need of "getting clear." This book will help one to do that. The style is simple and easy, the spirit liberal and free. It can be read in an evening. And there is a big vision in this book to which this country should not be blind.

PATRIOTIC AUTHORS AND ARTISTS AT WORK

Many of the editors have recently been wondering why they have found difficulty in getting the right kind of material. It is hard enough to get good fiction at all times, but during the last few months there has been a particular dearth of it.

Now the secret is out. Practically every author in the country has been busily engaged on propaganda, particularly for the Vigilantes, an organization formed only a short time ago by four writers, Julian Street, Porter Emerson Browne, Hermann Hagedorn and Charles Hanson Towne. The purpose of the Vigilantes has been to arouse the country to a realization of the importance of the problems confronting the American people; to awaken and cultivate in the youth of the country a sense of public service and an intelligent interest in citizenship and national problems; to work vigorously for preparedness, mental, moral and physical; to work with especial vigor for universal military training and service under exclusive Federal control, as a basic principle of American democracy. To attain these objects the best writers and artists of the country were called upon to contribute, free of charge, the livest sort of articles, poems or cartoons on whatever phase of America's present situation seems to the individual contributor most vital. These are being syndicated to a news service which includes practically every newspaper of any importance in the country. They are brief and to the point, and they have been accepted and published everywhere.

Gertrude Atherton recently said when an editor asked her for a story that she had written no fiction in a year; that she would rather write something that touched upon America's extreme case and give it away than to turn out another successful novel. This is the spirit which is permeating American literature. H. G. Wells seems to be the only English author, if we except Robert Hichens, who has been able to continue regular literary work during the war. Now that the country is actually involved in the conflict, perhaps we shall begin to see fewer books published, that is, fewer books of fiction. Authors are thinkers or they are not authors at all. History is being made so rapidly that it is an adventure to be alive. Perhaps all our novelists are storing up tremendous material for future books, but certainly at this moment their minds do not run to romance. It is an age of stern facts, and these interest the thinking author.

The organization is non-partisan. Among its active members are Augustus Thomas, Meredith Nicholson, Cleveland Moffett, Democrats, and Ernest Poole, a strong Socialist.

The Vigilantes has gone about its patriotic mission in a thoroughly organized fashion, and has already received important contributions from such writers and artists as Theodore Roosevelt, Cleveland Moffatt, Samuel Hopkins Adams, Hildegarde Hawthorne, George Ade, Rex Beach, Oliver Herford, Hy Mayer, Gertrude Atherton, Irvin S. Cobb, Charles Dana Gibson, Edith M. Thomas, Mary Austin, Percy MacKaye, James Montgomery Flagg, Jesse Lynch Williams, Irving Bacheller, Ernest Poole, Booth Tarkington, Theodosia Garrison, Wallace Morgan, Mary Roberts Rinehart, Arthur Bullard, Mark Sullivan, Edgar Saltus, Don Marquis, Augustus Thomas, William Allen White, Clinton Scollard, Hamlin Garland, Elizabeth Dejeans, Ellis Parker Butler, Robert W. Chambers, Maria Thompson Davies, Howard Chandler Christy. A tremendous campaign of publicity is on, and the pen may prove mightier than the sword.

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THE PASSING OF GERMAN INFLUENCE IN RUSSIA

With the recent revolution in Russia, the death knell to German sympathies has been sounded in the land of the deposed Czar, according to Stanley Washburn, who has been correspondent for the London Times with the Russian armies since the beginning of the war. Mr. Washburn is an American and has recently returned to the United States for a brief rest from his activities at the front. He is well known as an author, his latest endeavors finding shape in "Victory in Defeat," and "The Russian Advance" wherein he chronicles Russia's part in the world war. Says Mr. Washburn:

"There has never been any question as to what Russia would do in this war, once she was equipped and provided with the necessities of continuing military operations in the field. The only vital danger she has had to face was the possibility of being sold out to the Germans.

"There have been two grave crises for Russia during the war looking toward an independent peace. The first was after the fall of Warsaw when the Bureaucracy would have been glad to have entered into negotiations at that time, but with Sazonov in the Foreign Office and dominant in influence with the Czar such a move was impossible. Still the German party felt no acute anxiety as to the outcome, for they felt in general that Germany was going to win anyway and that they could afford to bide their time. By June of this year when Brussilov was advancing in the southwest and signs of a big offensive were beginning to show in the west, the pro-German party began taking the necessary steps to make it possible for the negotiation of a separate peace if the moment became ripe. The removal of Sazonov and all of the pro-Ally faction in the Foreign Office gave the Government the mechanism for negotiating a treaty if the opportunity developed. But all through the summer things were going very badly for the Central Powers, and by August, when Rumania came in, the pro-German bureaucratic alliance in Petrograd was not far from a panic as to the ultimate outcome of the war, for Germany up to September first was clearly beaten on the map.

"I was certain from my long experience in the army that the men at the front would never stand for the dissolution of the Duma and I was moderately convinced that the people around the Czar represented nothing but the intent to consummate a peace which would be for their own and German interests.

THE LAST BATTLE OF SERGEANT-PILOT M'CONNELL

In a letter from Edmond Genet, one of the Americans flying for France, he describes the death of Sergt. James R. McConnell, American aviator and author of that remarkable little volume "Flying for France."

Genet writes:

"When McConnell and I went out together last Monday morning to patrol along the new French line Mac was in the lead. We hung around the machines we were protecting until about 10 o'clock. We had left at 9. Then for some reason that I do not know Mac turned and headed north over and into the German line toward St. Quentin. Probably he wished to make observations for himself in that direction.

"Of course I followed him, somewhat above his level so as to keep him well in view, as is usual when flying in group. North of Ham, when we were at an altitude of about 3,000 feet, I suddenly saw two German machines coming toward us at considerably greater altitude. One was much nearer than the other.

"I looked down at Mac to see what he was going to do, but he was going along as if he had not seen the boches at all. Then I saw the more advanced boche was getting nearer and nearer, and getting into position to come down on us. I decided it would be best to try to get above him, so I pulled back and started up at full speed toward him. I knew Mac could look out for the second machine if he were attacked.

"The German opened fire first. His first shots did some damage to one of my main upper wings. The supports were cut in half, and also the guiding rod of the left wing was injured. The bullet was explosive and half of it glanced off and made a nasty and painful gash in my left cheek.

"The boche turned away northward and I drove to find Mac or the other boche. I could see neither, and so, fearing every minute that the wing might fall off and feeling weak from my wound, which was bleeding under my leather helmet, I turned at last and headed for camp, hoping that Mac had preceded me, as it would have been easy to miss him in such a mist.

"Some French cavalry reported on Thursday that they had seen the combats on Monday and had seen Mac attacked by two machines and fall within the German lines toward St. Quentin. The third German must have been further back in the mist than the first two, for he was hidden from me. They said Mac fell just as I finished fighting with the one which I attacked, so he could not have been one of the two which Mac encountered.

"I flew over there this morning and came down over Petit Detroit. I found the wrecked Nieuport and circled over it a few minutes. It was completely smashed. The boches had taken his papers and left him unburied beside his machine after taking away all his valuables, even his boots.

"The Captain has sent in a proposal for a citation in orders for Mac and also for me. How willingly I would give up twenty citations and endure twenty wounds to have Mac back with us!"

JOURNAL OF SMALL THINGS. (Duffield and Company.) By Helen Mackay. ($1.35.)

Etchings, as delicate as they are sympathetic, may be found in Helen Mackay's "Journal of Small Things" (Duffield and Company). These little sketches were inspired by the war. The scene often changes, but usually she writes of the people of the French villages in the track of desolation, and often of the very poor and wretched. Nothing could be simpler than the medium, and there is no "small thing" in this journal that doesn't have a significance, pitiful or tragic.

In the gardens of old chateaux, in the village square and hospitals, under the crumbling walls of blasted towns, on deserted country roads, and by the river bank, Mrs. Mackay sees something with a human note in it that fits into the sad drama of war. It is always worth while, and never does it fail to move one. This little book may be a minor record of the great conflict, but the reader cannot resist its appeal to the heart.

TO THE LAST PENNY. (Harpers.) By Edwin Lefevre. ($1.35.)

Mr. Lefevre's stories of business life, especially the life of Wall Street, are always entertaining and inspire the reader unacquainted with the Titans of finance and enterprise with a deep reverence for one who knows their ways so well. Sometimes his figures, however, rather inspire doubt as to their essential realness. It is perhaps a trifle of a strain upon the imagination of the reader to believe in the possibility of so extraordinary a parent as the elder Leigh in this volume. This more than Roman father, after putting his son through college and meeting his every financial wish, confesses on the lad's graduation that every dollar of the $17,000 thus expended he had embezzled from a bank. The stricken youth, after business adventures of a sort which Mr. Lefevre has made into a lively and entertaining romance, comes back in a few brief years with an assured business place and the money to make good the parental deficit. Thereupon the father again confesses, with tears, that he never stole a cent, is in fact an enormously rich man, and had invented the fable to prevent his son's going out into the world as a rich man's son. The most difficult part of Mr. Lefevre's task, we should say, was the pages of tender sentiment in which he showed that the youth tenderly loved his father during the years when he thought him a thief and highly respected him when he found him a liar.

Sir Gilbert Parker, whose latest novel "The World for Sale" was published shortly before he came to this country on a visit, has left California and gone to Castle Hot Springs, Ariz., for a stay of some weeks. "The World for Sale" Sir Gilbert explains in his preface, was written before the war and is "a picture of the peace life of the great Northwest."

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