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The Troubled Situation

MANY people are trying to estimate when the great war will close. It is vain speculation beyond the one fact that it cannot much longer hold its present pace.

There is a limit to human endurance, there are limitations upon human power to provide the material to feed armies and supply them with war material.

While the armies are held up to the firing line by their excitement and military pride and discipline, the indescribable sorrows of the people are fast nearing the point when either there must be a surcease or anarchy will come.

So far Germany has prevented any material encroachment on her soil, but on the other hand, all her original plans of conquest have so far failed and she is fighting a defensive battle on every side except on the eastern and northeastern front and success there can avail her little, for a hundred years ago Napoleon learned the fact that even to penetrate Russia and capture her capitol, instead of being a victory was in truth a defeat. All Germany can hope for in that direction is a temporary knockout of Russia, while she engages other foes.

To the untrained eye it looks as though Germany must break through the western and northwestern armies—the British and the French front—in the immediate future, or be willing to agree upon terms of peace, for her people at home cannot bear the strain of another winter like last winter.

This leads to another thought which is that the British and French commanders must see that they will need all the forces they can get into line to meet the shock of the armies that will be hurled upon them within the next thirty days.

The drive to the northeast we look upon as a diversion merely, an attempt to attract attention away from the real point and perhaps to enable the withdrawal of half a million men needed when the great northwestern drive shall be undertaken.

Doubtless all the commanders are working with the thought that something definite must be accomplished before another winter closes down.

In the meantime we hope our government is watching for another opportunity to tender its good officers to help bring about peace. We should be glad if the president would call to Washington two or three dozen senators and representatives of both parties—those whom he relies upon for advice when congress is in session, to counsel with him now, for as the war grows worse neither of the belligerents would

hesitate to involve our country in trouble if they could see any advantage in doing so.

That note from Austria the other day was a sample.

What she demanded was, in truth, for the United States to take her opinion of the right though what she objected to was really what she and the other nations had caused to be written into the Hague International statutes. In the same way Great Britain cannot give up her old habit of trying to bully the world on the sea.

Let us hope that this very dark hour immediately precedes a real dawn.

Our Opportunity

WE are told, and can easily understand that it is true, that the president has some most perplexing questions confronting him. One with Germany, one with Austria, one with Great Britain and the everlasting Mexican muddle.

There is still another more important than all the rest. That is how to so adjust national affairs as to permit the swiftest, safest and most effective advancement of our own country. It is the central government's business to remove all possible obstacles from the enterprise of the people; to put no obstacles in their path.

Peace will come in Europe after a while and with a weight of debt which will be a mortgage on the toil of the people for quite two generations to come.

Perhaps one or the other side will emerge triumphant and aggressive, but the prospect is that it will eventuate in a drawn battle and a long contention over the settlement.

In the meantime eastern and southern South America is expanding very rapidly and to secure the exchange of trade with those states should be the real struggle on the part of our country. We ought not only to obtain that trade, but to obtain it in a way that would amount to a much closer walk between those people and our own. Within the coming ten years a full million of our young men should find homes there and profitable occupation, and could this be brought about they would not fail to obtain a directing influence in affairs there.

Men learn mostly by example and experience what to do.

Germany has not naturally a rich soil and but limited resources. At the close of the Franco-Prussian war she was poor in money, and had neither a navy nor merchant marine. Thousands of her people were emigrating to foreign countries annually.

But her schools were fine and many of them most practical and some of her factories were turning out most finished products.

Her statesmen used the great indemnity obtained from France to establish a merchant marine and to build more factories. She promised her merchants that if they would establish trading posts in foreign lands, German ships would visit them regularly and that they need have no fear that this promise would be broken. Her trade was at first mostly barter, but she managed with the barter to secure likewise the surplus

money of the countries she traded with. In the meantime she trained all her young men to be soldiers, which was at the same time the best possible training of them for all the duties of citizenship. She laid a tariff on what her people raised, reasoning that if because of the tariff some articles were made to cost a little more than they otherwise would, the money would all be spent at home and remain at home, and more of her people would have work.

Then more factories and ships were needed and though her population was rapidly increasing, fewer and fewer of them were seeking foreign lands for homes.

She founded valuable colonies and built a navy and in the meantime acquired such wealth that last year she looked upon the conquest of Europe with confidence. All that she accomplished in forty years, on a territory a little larger than California, a little smaller than Texas.

It seems to us that if anything can be learned from experience and example, Germany's work during the past forty years ought to point the way for our president and congress to follow.

Sanguine Champ Clark

IN a moment of exultation Hon. Champ Clark, in a speech in California the other day predicted that an era of marvelous prosperity for our country was due to begin in about sixty days from the present time and to continue for years.

He seems to be obsessed with an old-time prospector's hope, a prospector whose eyes had finally become fixed on a golden mountain which was to be his when one more low divide should be crossed.

On what does Mr. Clark predicate his prophecy? A great harvest and the demand for what we have to sell abroad? We have no ships and freights on foreign ships have doubled. Many of our manufacturers are running full to prepare war material, but what of the rest? Is our trade with Spanish America or the Orient increasing? Our country has during the past year been filled with idle men. Have any new industries been opened to give them places to work?

Every day the war continues some thousands of strong men are being killed and the burden upon the living is being made heavier.

What are we doing in either a commercial or financial way to open new fields for trade or to provide work for men who need work at home?

We would not be a pessimist, but cannot help but ask in what way Mr. Clark sees any certain signs of approaching great prosperity?

Muir's Work

IT is said that an investigation of the late John Muir's effects brings to light that he left material enough to make several volumes. If this is true and the right man can be obtained to put them in proper form, they will be a real contribution to the world's literature. The danger is that the thought behind the compilation will be to prepare something out of which a syndicate