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ON THE GREAT WAR

By RUPERT BEAUMONT, Montgomery, Ala.

(Continued.)

To think, for an instant, that Britain's entrance into the war was caused by the violation of Belgian neutrality, is to exhibit crass ignorance of European politics. There would have been no Slavic attack on Austria but for the machinations of the British cabinet. A powerful engine may be stationary. It has great potential energy. A touch may set it in motion. The Slav and the Teuton faced each other in the Balkans. They would still be facing each other, expectant, alert, ready, but that some one set them in motion. Who? Asquith and cabinet. What for? English navalism and the "balance of power." The *fear* of Germany approaching the channel, and establishing a naval base at Antwerp, led to the English treaty with Belgium, by which Belgium was to be considered a dependency of England in case of a war with Germany, and of which the German government must have been aware. The bare fact of the existence of the treaty made Belgium a belligerent. The invasion of Belgium by Germany was fine incendiary material in the hands of such consummate politicians as Asquith and Lloyd-George to get the people in a fighting frame of mind, and to beguile the Americans. "But Germany struck first." Did the Czar stop mobilizing when the Kaiser begged him again and again to reconsider his decisions? MOBILIZATION IS WAR. If you see a man putting dynamite under your house do you wait until the explosion before taking action? Germany was to delude herself into ancied security until the Russian hordes should trample her civilization under foot. Let America follow that policy if it pleases. Germania armed and trained was ready. Knowing the awful sacrifice about to be demanded of her she was calm. Invoking the aid of God in a righteous cause she drew the sword without malice and without fear. There was no escape. Treaties with France and Russia had long before pledged England without being supported by a plebiscite. It is well known in America that England and Russia have divided Asia between them. The division of Persia at the time Shuster was expelled from that country taught Americans that, simply because Shuster happened to be an American citizen. And did you notice how quickly talk about the Russian occupation of Tabriz subsided? Of course England would support Russia, otherwise Russia would heed Germany speak. The arrangement with the French, by which France would concentrate its fleet in the Mediterranean and the English watch the North sea, was also made without the consent of the English people. These treaties meant that Britain must go to war should Russia ever force the Balkan question, and they were entered into because of English jealousy of German progress in obtaining a proper share, under conditions of peace and in fair competition, of the shipping and trade of the world. A seat in the light: a place in the sun.

When that moment arrives where American trade has expanded to successfully compete with British trade, we may expect England to sic the war-dogs on *us*. There are several reasons why England should seek to involve America in her hatreds and quarrels. She is naturally anxious to drag as many nations in her wake as possible. Every little helps. American money tied up in London means American support. If America could be brought to break with Germany, all those German ships could be seized, to the crippling of German commerce; and English-made articles would come into vogue instead of things "made in Germany." It would take years for the German merchants to get back to the point where they stand at present as regards the American market. England of course would expect to take Germany's place in the market, just as she took America's place when she destroyed the merchant marine of the United States. The kind of government a country is supposed to have is not always an index to the real character of that government. No one would say Mexico has a republican form of government. Augustus preserved republican institutions, yet was a dictator. Germany has an emperor, but brutal economic slavery does not exist there as it does in some republics. The president of the United States has more power than many a king. England is called a commonwealth, has a king, and is ruled by oligarchs. I should say parliamentary government is at an end when a nation may be led to the shambles of war by an oligarchic cabinet, when members of that cabinet can make "undebated statements to a bewildered and entirely ignorant House," when in neither "the decisions nor in the policy which led to the decisions was there the smallest exercise of any control by the people of their representatives."—Arthur Ponsonby, M. P.) Poor old England.

Inheriting the ideal of personal liberty from their German ancestors, the nobles fight the king and each other, parliament is formed and the king and the parliament fight each other, civil war brings the Puritans to the front, the king loses his functions which are assumed by a cabinet, the nobles lose all their prerogatives, wealth alone is powerful through the operation of rotten politics. How farcical it seems that the aristocracy whose ambitions have desolated France again and again should now be without political power except through hoodwinking the common people, and also allied with French republicanism which it fought Napoleon twenty years to crush. The pendulum swings back and forth, now to despotism, now to anarchy. The British have never learned that *Liberty* means the right of the masses to live like human beings in the enjoyment of equal opportunity, that the government which does not look after the welfare of the lower orders is no government at all, that *political* liberty is utterly and absolutely worthless unless accompanied by *economic* liberty. The Germans have arrived farther in a few decades than the British have in centuries. Why? Because work not scientifically directed wastes time, energy, and material. And if, in maintaining the lines of golden commerce to all parts of the earth for the major benefit of the great merchants, the oligarchs do not hesitate to enslave their own people, may we expect them to respect the rights of other nations weaker than their own? In all their history have they ever? This war was decided upon by the British cabinet months before it broke out. The influential newspapers talked war from 1906, when the military and naval conversations led to the mutual placing of the French and British fleets. The Admiralty, under Churchill, was governed by war conditions three years before August of 1914. When war came, every reason, *except the right ones*, were published, to show THE PEOPLE how they had gotten into it. Authors who enjoyed no circulation of repute in their own country, were dragged out and their books sold by the million in England, while said books were recommended to the Americans as good reading. The salient and actual causes of the war are today hidden from the British people, and will not be revealed to them until England gets rid of Asquith, Grey, Churchill, and Lloyd-George. And if the English masses don't know the causes of the war, why should their aristocracy attempt to teach *us?* It's the English governmental machinery that has flooded America with lies about the war and its causes.

To shape American opinion they have given us a part of the news, yellow headlines flare the iniquities of Germany and the endearing kindness of England, the Associated Press seems to act as an organ of the British censor. Alarmist stories tell what the British would like to see happen. Syria is ready to revolt against the cruel Turk, the Turks want a separate peace, Spain is straining at the leash to join the Allies, Bohemians sympathizing with the Russians have been shot in Prague, socialists have been executed in Berlin, the Hungarian Diet is about to sever relations with Vienna, the United States is solidly lined up against Germany, the "Poles" petition the Washington government to prevent the use of asphyxiating gases by the Germans, and so on, *ad nauseam*. Then we read the "Atrocious Atrocity Stories." These are best disposed of by quoting an editorial from the London "Herald," a labor paper:

"They were at one and the same time a stimulus to recruiting and the gratification of that particular species of lustful insanity which in times of peace takes its pleasures in other and equally infamous forms. But when it was discovered that these stories were not only incapable of proof, but that the vast majority of them were capable of disproof; when there was a provoking absence of handless children, searched the mongers ever so hard, there was a reaction to decent silence, but not for long. This time the stories concern themselves with a wholesale outraging of nuns and school-girls," as the English used to do in France during their former wars, or in India where it was convenient. "Make but your lie infamous and vile enough, and it will be believed. So much was proved up to the hilt in the earlier series of stories; so much is being proved in the latter. As *before* every town and village sheltered handless children, *so now* every convent is supposed to harbor outraged and pregnant nuns. Yet not one solitary case of either infamy has been produced that could survive the easiest scrutiny, and not one will be produced."

It is not the brave men at the front who invent these stories of malicious vilification. Soldiers always respect the enemy in uniform. It is the poltroons at home whose purses are being depleted by the war, who, had they received military training would have learned to be accurate in thought and to tell the truth. There is not one single order issued by the German military in Belgium but what can find its *raison d'etre* in the principles laid down in General Orders No. 100, Adjutant General's Office, Washington, D. C., 1863, and which instructions were issued, without modification, for the government of the armies of the United States during the war with Spain in 1898. The vile calumniations and misrepresentations emanating from London sources are not worthy of a noble people; they disclose the depths of moral perversity to which commercialism is capable of descending when it is the chief worship, aim, and authority in a state. The epithets employed in the English press today give a distinct shock to an unprejudiced person taught to believe in English justice and love of fair play. Let one recollect that such utterances are not the expression of the nation. They are rather the ravings of the plutocrats who have that nation in its grip, and will soon be compelled to conscript the workman to his bench as well as the soldier to his gun.

Some of the alarmist stories should deal with British affairs. Why not intimate that England does not dare to use the European troops she has in India for fear of a revolt in the land of the durbar, that English workmen are so thoroughly discontented with the controlling caste they would rise against it if they could, that Welch coal miners are almost in a state of insurrection? The unrest in the Sudan, the hatred of all the small neutral nations for the mistress of the seas, the historic enmity of Ireland, the endless bickerings between the British commanding generals the dissatisfaction the French feel with the military policy of the British, the Russian complaint that his screams for help were only answered by the Germans, the cause of the rise of food prices in Great Britain, the silent recruiting going on in the United States, might be made the subjects of interesting monographs, none of them reflecting credit on the British cabinet.

England has for years boasted of having her navy as a means of controlling Europe. Now her people ask, *"Why the army?"* They can't grasp the idea of an armada hidden away for safety. That army will never be recruited to the size the cabinet wants it until conscription is resorted to, for the war is not popular enough with the middle class to obtain the requisite number of volunteers. Primarily her policy is to fight to the last Frenchman. What childlike faith in the ability of the Slav hordes to overrun Germany. Her traditional policy, copied from Carthage, of paying gold for men to shed their blood that her commerce and trade may prosper is not to be abandoned. Unless the virus of teutonphobia leaves the veins of England's allies, the British paymaster will stay on the job until all the nations are totally exhausted. England will get what men she can out of her colonies, and use her native Indian troops, but she is not going to drain England for the actual fighting. She will let the other nations exhaust themselves, withhold her forces both by land and sea, and when the war is ended stand in a position to dictate terms to wasted Europe as the dominant power,—if she can. She has enjoyed the plunder of a score of nations by paying her gold to mercenaries to do the bloody work, on the commercial principle that every man has his price. Following closely in the footsteps of Carthage, whole nations are thrown a sacrifice to her gods of gold. Witness the Boer republics. As Carthage was conquered for the good of civilization, so England will be. The strangest thing of the whole war is that Frenchmen can be so blind to British purposes. Perhaps the French generals as well as the Russian autocrats are on the London pension list. Fifty years from now American school children will be punished for not knowing the date on which the English army saved France. Why all these notes from the American government to Germany, and none to England? Why our delicacy in dealing with the English and our harshness to Germany? Are the Washington authorities under the control of Great Britain? On the rights of neutrals much might be said. Does England respect the rights of Chile, Argentina, the Netherlands, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, or the United States? She is holding up millions of dollars worth of goods belonging to each of these countries, and covers the case with the doctrine of *occasional* contraband. Nothing is safe from her because she owns the seas which American and other vessels may only travers through her courtesy. A few notes to England, worded in the same severe phraseology as the notes to Germany, would bring Britannia to her senses regarding Southern cotton and Chicago beef. They would incidentally help other neutrals to obtain the freedom of the seas.

The Carthagenians in Italy so equipped themselves with captured Roman arms that they looked like Roman troops. The Romans were not pleased. They had not been overjoyed when Pyrrhus brought his war-elephants into line at Heraclea. The Chevalier Bayard declared that any soldier caught with a musket ought to be put to death. Hand grenades were at first looked upon as highly barbarous, yet whole regiments were afterward proud to be known as grenadiers. As science invents superior weapons not only must formations change, but opinions and laws with reference to the use of the new weapons must change. The sub-marine is one of the latest of the new weapons. There is, in international law as made the controlling influence of the dominant sea power, specific rules for the search and seizure of contraband cargoes and belligerent vessels. Life is to be safe-guarded. When the German government gave notice of the submarine blockade, a jeer of derision went up from England. How can a submarine halt an ocean-liner and search her, when destroyers and cruisers friendly to the liner are swarming about in every direction? Impossible. It takes a submarine about 2 minutes to submerge, in which time a destroyer can go over 1760 yards, depending upon the types of vessels under consideration. The envelope of a submarine is easily penetrable by the projectile from a three-inch gun, which fires twenty-four shots a minute and carries five miles. So the British looked upon the submarine blockade as a farce. But they forgot that the cause of this blockade was English violation of international law. The British blockade of Germany is not a true blockade, but rather an embargo directed against the United States. The British could look with complacency on their own attempt to starve the civil population of Germany, breaking all laws of civilized war and reverting to the barbarous practices of the middle ages, but could not understand the just retaliation of Germany in avoiding the usual procedure of the right of search. England has only to thank herself for making the German submarines effective, for retaliation will always follow barbarism in war. That a neutral power like the United States should seek to shield British vessels from attack, by permitting American citizens to sail under the British flag, is shocking. It is true American citizens have the *actual* right under international law to take passage on a belligerent ship; but they have *not* the *moral* right to exercise their *actual* rights under the strained relations and disordered conditions of war, when such action might drag this country into difficulties easily avoidable. The American government ought, in defense before the world of its high *moral* ideals, to prohibit any American citizen from embarking on board any ship not flying a neutral flag, *if* said vessel is bound for the zone of war. If our people must go abroad, let them travel under the stars and stripes, on steamers not carrying contraband. Americans have no more safety making a voyage under the British flag, than they would have journeying from Calais to Belfort in the Allied trenches. The false practices of the English in using neutral flags, in arming merchant vessels, in contemptuous and insolent overlordship of the seas, has put the submarine blockade on to stay during the continuance of the war, or until England shall herself rescind her infamous Orders in Council. *The submarine will finally bring Britannia to her knees and end the war.*

If we wish to "lead submarine warfare into more humane channels," let us take the matter up with England. Certainly the presence of Americans on board will not act as insurance for the freightage of munitions for the Allies, when the presence of Americans does not insure delivery of wheat to the women and children of Germany. Perhaps the British Admiralty will revoke its order for merchant ships to attack and ram submarines on sight. Perhaps the United States will arrange to have German commissioners work in conjunction with American customs officials to examine ships sailing for Europe, to the end that vessels not carrying munitions, armaments, or troops, may be exempt from attack by German submarines. The British government maintains like commissioners in various neutral countries to pass upon cargoes bound for neutral ports.

The submarine warfare was looked upon in England as a joke until the "Lusitania" went down, then the howl that arose had in it a note of terror and dread as well as of rage. The "Lusitania" was constructed under supervision of officers of the Royal Navy, was on the list of the British Admiralty as an auxiliary cruiser, subsidized by the British government. Whether it had its guns or not is immaterial, the German government not being supposed to know if British war-ships carry their cannon with them all the time. There might have been in the hold enough guns to equip a dozen auxiliary cruisers. As well claim a soldier to be non-combatant because he happens to have his pistol inside his shirt. As a matter of fact only one torpedo hit the "Lusitania," and the rapid sinking of the ship was due to the explosion of the enormous quantity of munitions of war the vessel carried. If the presence of one "neutral" American who fancies to voyage on such a ship could operate to render said ship immune from attack, then any British ship loaded with enough munitions to destroy the entire German army could insure its safety by the simple expedient of carrying an American, because he, forsooth, has a right under international law to take passage.

There is no difference between the Washington and Berlin governments that cannot be amicably adjusted. America has told Germany she would, in the diplomatic way, try to prevent England from a further abuse of naval warfare. If America's note to England is not satisfactory, it may be repeated. On England's attitude alone depends the German modification of submarine warfare.

Under the rules of international law the United States has the right to manufacture and sell munitions to whichever of the belligerents she pleases. She breaks no law *except in permitting English and allied experts, having official status with their governments, to superintend in this country the output.* The question is one of morals, only. Conditions are such, that to sell munitions to the Allies, is equivalent to taking a very important part in the war for the Allies and against Germany, while apparently being neutral. Without doubt the influx of gold, even in the form of American securities, is very gratifying to American manufacturers, but why not make money honestly by developing South American trade? The talk of the moralization of the American people has led us to believe our people to be actuated by the highest ethical laws, which belief the present situation does not warrant. The gold received is stained with blood. All our governmental war proclamations for decades have abounded in phrases about "morality" and "humanity." Have the munition makers and dealers a graft in Washington?

What embargoes have been placed in Nicaragua and Mexico were for the benefit of the side we wanted to see win. Humanity and morality have nothing to do with our manipulation and sale of explosives. The law allows it, so take your pound of flesh,—and the blood that goes with it. Kill the Teutons in dense masses because the law allows it. However, History will record our conduct as vile chicanery, and accuse us of obliquity of vision,—moral vision. We are doing the maximum of damage to Germany and its allies, and a state of war *de facto* could not be worse for them.

The only safe plan to follow, to maintain absolute neutrality, is to place an embargo upon *all* munitions so as to utterly prevent their exportation. No patriotic American will engage in the dirty business, much less think the blessings of God fall upon him through an atmosphere highly charged with morality. And the Germans would be in the last stages of driveling idiocy if they did not try to sink every load of American-made war material, regardless of conditions due to international law. If the moral law is above international law, it should act to place an embargo on the exportation of munitions made in America; if the laws governing the struggle of a nation for existence come before international law, they should act to sustain the German submarine warfare to the last moment. Were the case reversed and America attacked by the whole world in arms, we would use every means now known to science, and new means yet to be invented, to keep our enemies from obtaining munitions, regardless of international law.

The fuss about Americans having a right to sail safely under the British flag is straining at a gnat, and the selling of munitions to the Allies is swallowing a camel.

The moral code that permits us to injure the Germans without declaring war was derived from the English, and is part of our inheritance from the Puritans. It was the greatest calamity that ever befell North America when the Puritans settled in Massachusetts. From the Puritans we have procured the great American idea of making *every* thing as disagreeable as hades for *every* body, the taking of our pleasures sadly lest joy should be indicative of sin, the mouthing of a meaningless optimism that is synonymous with hypocrisy. Puritanism leads our people to acts of moral turpitude that would make a White Mountain Apache shudder.

When Attila invaded France in 451, he obtained unobstructed passage of the Rhine through the invitation and aid of a Frankish king. Had Attila conquered at Châlons, the chief who solicited his aid against the Roman and Visigothic forces would have gone down in history as the real author of the destruction of Greco-Roman civilization,—the traitor within the gates. See how history repeats itself. For purposes of her own England brings the noble Japanese into European quarrels, and he, while Europe is engaged in weakening itself in what a cosmopolite might term this "civil" war, is steadily increasing his power and strength against the time when it may be needed in conflict with the white race. England launches a war to crush the highest civilization the world has ever known, and her honorable ally, the Japanese, seizes China for the purpose of training the Mongolian race in military art and science. English and American newspapers were filled with clamor about the invasion of Belgium, which was unavoidable, but did anyone speak twice when Japan occupied China? Is it not a fact that diplomats all the world over laugh at us? Then why can not the Japanese smile with the others? While America is straining at the gnat and swallowing the camel, Japan is busy preparing the millions of China for future military service. The day will come when the Mongolian must be fought again in defense of our civilization, but the place may be the Pacific coast of the United States instead of the Campi Catalaunici stretching about the good city of Châlons. The ignorant will deride the thought, yet when Attila and Aetius fought, the arms wielded by the combatants were practically equal; and why, then, when the yellow race again has arms and training equal to that of the white race, cannot the conflict come again? It will, and when it does let us thank England for her alliance with the Japanese as a means of bringing it on.

The clever Japanese is well pleased with the turn of affairs. He succeeds almost beyond his fondest dreams, emerging from a difficult situation with eclat. His alliance with England permits him to dominate China with impunity, and to prepare for the future irrepressible conflict with America. Through the influence of those United States capitalists who are more English than American in sentiment, who are well pleased with the profits on munitions and British war loans, England proceeds to involve us in an apparent *entente cordiale*. Apprehending an eleventh hour return to wisdom on the part of the deluded Americans, no Japanese forces are sent to Europe. Why not? The esoteric believe the Japanese army and navy are being held at home to be used against United States defenses in case of need. England will defend Canada by means of Japanese expeditions to Manila, Honolulu, Seattle, San Francisco, and Panama. The Tagalog is waiting for the signal to rise. The mine is now laid in Hawaii. The military arrangements of Panama, our key to the Pacific coast of South America, as well as plans of many of our forts and soundings of our harbors, are already known to the honorable Allies. Mexico and Columbia yield a little assistance *en passant*. With regular forces hardly numbering two army corps, and an unpaid Organized Militia subject in many states to reproachful and derisive epithets, we are given over to slaughter bound hand and foot. When you see your dead heaped in trenches, and your cities in flames, think of the English decentralization theories you have absorbed, one effect of which is to cause you to scorn your own soldiers, and thank England for letting down the drawbridge for the free admission of the Mongolian to prosperous America and exhausted Europe. *God punish England* by speedily fulfilling the destiny of the United States in regard to Canada.

NOTE: I shall be glad to receive, from friendly readers, any suggestions in relation to the foregoing remarks.

RUPERT BEAUMONT,
Montgomery, Alabama.

Sein Leben für seine Feinde.

Gedenkblatt für einen deutschen Helden.

In einem Berliner Blatt lesen wir: Obwohl die beiderseitigen Schützengräben an der Aisne an der Stelle, an welcher das 2te Rhein. Infanterieregiment lag, sehr nahe, stellenweise nur wenige Meter entfernt voneinander lagen, so bewiesen unsere Leute doch, daß der frische, fröhliche Angriffsgeist selbst im Stellungskrieg nicht eingeschlafen war. Und konnten auch größere Unternehmungen nicht vorgenommen werden, da sie nicht in den taktischen Rahmen paßten, so fanden doch häufig wagemutige Patrouillengänge statt, die gute Erkundigungen heimbrachten. Die Franzosen waren in diesem Punkte zurückhaltender und wagten sich nur selten aus ihren Gräben. Am 15. März d. J. hatte jedoch eine ihrer Patrouillen versucht, sich der deutschen Stellung zu nähern; das Feuer unserer Sappenposten hatte sie zurückgetrieben, während ein verwundeter Franzose vor dem deutschen Graben liegen geblieben war. Er vermochte nicht mehr in die eigene Linie zurückzukriechen, sondern suchte Deckung in einem Granatloch vor den Geschossen. Man hörte sein Stöhnen und Wimmern im Graben. Da es gefährlich schien, ihn bei Tage zu bergen, so war schon Befehl gegeben, ihn zur Nachtzeit hereinzuholen. Aber sein Stöhnen wollte nicht verstummen. Im Graben stand an der Brustwehr ein junger deutscher Offizier, der Leutnant Schenk. Zu Kriegsbeginn aus dem Kadettenkorps überwiesen, führte er schon monatelang mit gutem Erfolg seine Kompagnie.

Der rief nun plötzlich: „Ich kann den Jammer nicht mehr anhören, dem Manne muß geholfen werden!"

Schon war er aus dem Graben und näherte sich dem Franzosen, gefolgt vom Unteroffizier Borchert, einem bewährten Patrouillenführer. Sie erreichen den Verwundeten, heben ihn auf und tragen ihn zum Graben. Da setzt drüben starkes Feuer ein: Infanterie- und auch Maschinengewehrfeuer, und von mehreren Schüssen durch den Kopf getroffen, sinkt der junge Held zu Boden, ein Opfer seiner Nächstenliebe. Er stirbt den schönsten, schnellen Soldatentod. Tags darauf bestatten ihn die Kameraden, und mit Recht sagt der Pfarrer: „Er hat nicht nur sein Leben gelassen für seine Brüder, sondern sogar für seine Feinde!"

Das ist ein kleiner Zug aus dem Leben deutscher „Barbaren". Wenn man dagegen in eroberten Stellungen sieht, wie die Franzosen die Leichen in die Deckungen „eingebaut" haben, so fragt man sich, wer hier „Barbar" ist.

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