

TALK OF EUROPE

ANOTHER GERMAN VIEW OF AMERICAN TROOPS

A COBLENZ journal has printed the following essay on our troops:

A person who was in Coblenz two weeks ago and witnessed the passage of our troops through the city knows how warmly and cordially they were entertained. To-day our field gray uniforms have disappeared from the streets and the latter are thronged with khaki colored 'conquerors.' We have become so used to sudden changes of late years that our temperamental Rhinelanders have accommodated themselves to the new situation with rare adaptability and contentedness.

It is fortunate that we do so and have avoided any unpleasant incidents. Our new masters do not make the path difficult for us — certainly not in Coblenz.

The thing that speaks most in favor of the occupying forces is that the children have speedily made friends with them. The sentry posts are usually surrounded by a crowd of children and I recently came across an American guard who was playing horse with two little shavers. To be sure, the good relations have been clouded somewhat since the children are no longer permitted on the street after dark. This measure, the order forbidding public meetings, and the introduction of west European time, are up to the present the only changes that the new authorities have inaugurated.

One thing more! These gentlemen from abroad appear to have resolved upon restoring some of the courtesies that have fallen into disuse during the course of the war. They stand up in the crowded electric cars and offer their seats to any women, even though they be peasant girls. This is a custom that surprises us, habituated as we are to the rough ways of war time, like a memory from the ancient past. They make way for ladies on the sidewalks and step aside to let them enter the shops first.

Indeed, the ladies in Coblenz have been much astonished at the excessive gallantry of the Yankees. But the astonishment is mutual. The characteristic attitude of both the strangers and the natives is mutual curiosity. Recently, a number of French uniforms have appeared. They call up a different sentiment, but it is wise to conceal that.

Yes, mutual curiosity. Several regiments with flying banners and martial music entered the city. The children in the streets stared but remained impassive. One said, 'Is that supposed to be music? A man cannot march to that.' He was quite right. No effort was made to keep in step. Each instrument and each pair of feet kept its own time. The musical people of Coblenz shook their heads.

We observe with a sort of satisfaction that the strangers buy samples of all the substitutes they see in the shop windows as mementos. The only thing that surprises them is that the Germans will not sell their iron crosses. They consider them such interesting trophies that they offer considerable sums for them. Up to the present, however, so far as I know, they have not secured a single specimen. Coblenz is certainly the most fortunate of all the occupied cities. Let us hope it remains so. Both parties smilingly accommodate themselves to what is unavoidable. But we note one saddening fact. There are many Americans whose parents and whose wives were born in Germany, who do not know a single word of our language.

THE FUTURE OF YPRES

THE Belgian Government has decided that Ypres shall be left as it is, and a new city erected near the old. The old ruins, the skeletons of once lovely buildings rising from a heap of rubble, will thus remain for future generations as a warning and a memorial, a warning against the consequences of war, a memorial to a generation sacrificed in the attempt to end war. The

possession of the city was more hotly contested than that of any other part of the line. The Kaiser wished to celebrate there his complete conquest of Belgium. A British Commander-in-Chief took its name as his title, because he staked everything to retain it, and won. It would have been impossible to patch it up, a new city would in any case have had to be built, but the new city could never have been the old. Ypres will be a shrine sacred in the traditions of two peoples, Belgian and British, and an everlasting reminder of the furnace in which their friendship was cemented.

MR. WILSON'S VISIT TO THE VATICAN

THE last week [writes our Rome correspondent] has been an eventful one at the Vatican. Besides the New Year's audience of the members of the Roman nobility and patriciate and the reading of the final decree for the Canonization of Blessed Gabriel, the young Passionist saint, there has been an unusually important event in the audience of President Wilson.

Mr. Wilson arrived in Rome on the 3d for two days as the guest of the King of Italy, and was entertained (with Mrs. and Miss Wilson) at the Quirinal Palace. On that same day he paid a visit to the Queen Mother, and a reception was given in his honor in the afternoon at the Houses of Parliament and in the evening at the Capitol. On the following day he lunched at the American Embassy, and from there proceeded to the Vatican. As on all the occasions of his progress through the town, the streets were lined with soldiers near his points of departure and of arrival. Near St. Peter's especially there was a great crowd assembled on his passage, and all the houses in the Borgo were decorated with flags and the traditional Roman hangings of tapestry and crimson draperies from the windows. Mr. Wilson reached the Cortile of San Damaso at 3.20. He was met there by a detachment of each of the several Papal Guards, Palatine Guard, Gendarmes and others, the band of the Gendarmes playing the American National anthem. At the door of the Papal staircase he was met by the members of the Papal Court on duty for the ceremony of his visit, headed by Mgr. Tacci, Arch-

bishop of Nicea, His Holiness Maggior-domo, as well as his Private Almoner and Head Sacristan and the Secretary of the Sacred Congregation of Ceremonial, and the principal lay dignitaries of his court. They proceeded upstairs, escorted by the Swiss Guard, and were met on the Papal floor by the Maestro di Camera, Mgr. Sanz y Samper, surrounded by the Chamberlains on duty. On his passage through the antechambers detachments of the guard presented arms.

As the President approached the private rooms His Holiness was warned of his arrival, and came out into the private antechamber to meet him, and took him into his study, where they conversed for a little over twenty minutes. As President Wilson does not speak French, Mgr. O'Hearn, Rector of the American College, and Mr. Fraser, of the American Embassy in Paris, who accompanied Mr. Wilson to Rome, acted as interpreters. When the Holy Father's bell gave the signal that the conversation had been concluded Mr. Wilson presented the members of his suite. Mr. Wilson then paid a visit to the Cardinal Secretary of State, who would have returned the visit officially at the American Embassy if the President had had more time to dispose of in Rome. As it was His Holiness sent at once to the Embassy his present to Mr. Wilson, a copy in mosaic of Guido Reni's St Peter, carried out in the Vatican Mosaic Factory. His Eminence Cardinal Gasparri sent two richly bound copies of the new Code of Canon Law, in the revision of which he had so large a part.

The conversation which took place between the Holy Father and President Wilson is naturally entirely private, and equally naturally there are many conjectures afloat concerning it. As the interview only lasted twenty minutes; and all that was said on both sides had to be interpreted, which made the time considerably shorter in value, it is impossible that many subjects can have been treated, and one can eliminate at once the fantastic theory that the question of the reunion of churches, which it is true His Holiness has greatly at heart, was seriously discussed, and that Mr. Wilson expressed

the willingness of the American Episcopal Churches to be joined to Rome! It is also unlikely that, as the other extremists maintain, the conversation had no political importance at all. The only statements that have any real bearing on the case are those contained in an interview with Mgr. Cerretti in France. Mgr. Cerretti is reported to have said that in his interview with Mr. Wilson he was entrusted with a message from the Holy Father regarding certain questions of religious and diplomatic importance, and among them those concerning the means of assuring the future peace of the world and the right re-constitution of Europe, and the question of indemnities and reparation of injustice. On these matters the Holy Father and President Wilson have many views in common, as the expression of these views in the past has proved, and a personal interview was desired to satisfactorily dispose of one or two of these points.

THE LAST OF THE ROSSETTIS

WILLIAM MICHAEL ROSSETTI, who died recently, was one of the last of Ruskin's intimate friends. He was in his ninetieth year, and published his last book, I think, when he was eighty. I never saw him, and he was not the kind of man about whom anecdotes clustered. His literary work, principally concerned with the Pre-Raphaelite Movement, was competent, but no more. He wrote a dull, very loyal, biography of his brother Gabriel, and it was to his credit that he (with Swinburne) forced the public to study Blake when Blake was neglected. He was friendly with almost all the Victorian great, a safe friend who had no illusions about his own powers. As a man of letters he lived, to a large extent, upon his golden prime when he was one of the seven members of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood and edited the *Germ*, most famous of ephemeridæ and now worth its weight in gold. But he was also one of the band of scholars who worked devotedly and patiently during the nineteenth century at restoring the text, and increasing the reputation, of Shelley, urged on to this by his associates who were too busily engaged in original work to do more than encourage him. He was not perhaps the best of those

who worked this field. He can hardly be ranked above Mr. Harry Buxton Forman. But this is a branch of literary work which can best be carried out by what may be called independent collaborators; and W. M. Rossetti's edition has its place in the development of Shelley's text. A legend was set about some time ago that he was really the poet of the family, and that he sacrificed his gift to the no doubt arduous duty of looking after his unbusinesslike brother and sister. This has an air of romantic tragedy about it which makes one want to believe it. But I am afraid it has no foundation in fact. His poems have been published (two small volumes of sonnets on democracy only twelve or thirteen years ago) and they offer no support for the theory.

THE CHINESE DEFENDERS OF THE BOLSHEVIK RÉGIME

THE illustrated supplement to *Voörujenny Narod* gives an account of the Petrograd Chinese International Force.

It is housed in Kirochnaya Street, in the barracks, where the Gendarme Division used to be quartered.

The premises are large and light. The yellow international warriors are excellently cared for; each has his own bedstead, bed linen, etc. The food is the ordinary Red Army ration. No especial Chinese dishes are provided, but, nevertheless, the soldiers' physical condition is splendid.

The most superficial acquaintance with the internal life of the force will convince anyone that its discipline is very strict.

The command of the force does not itself impose any disciplinary punishments, and certainly not corporal punishment. It merely informs Shan-Tan-Ho, the organizer of Chinese Forces, of the fault that has been noted, and he gives the needful order, as from himself, in consonance with the psychology and customs of his compatriots.

In spite of the strictness of the discipline, and although all the soldiers are volunteers, desertion is pretty frequent. A Chinaman who has got into difficulties enters the force, is fed, warmed, clothed, and — deserts. But men like these, who are so fond of living at the country's expense, are usually very soon caught. They

are brought back to barracks, stripped of government kit, and expelled with disgrace.

The chief of the force considers his soldiers excellent fighting material, requiring, however, a tremendous expenditure of labor and energy. The Chinese give marked attention to their training. They regard their arms almost with affection and are not willingly parted from them. No sooner does a volunteer enter the force than he is provided with arms at his own expense. A great liking is observed, too, for all sorts of distinctions and ornaments, and especially for spurs.

At present the Petersburg Chinese International Force is in the stage of being formed. Its training is not yet finished. Its strength is about that of a battalion in peace time. Its nucleus, when it was being organized, was a commando of Chinese coolies, formed from Chinese soldiers of the International Battalion, that was afterwards merged into the First Soviet Infantry Regiment.

This fundamental nucleus was, and is, increased by volunteers, among whom the prevailing element consists of men who formerly worked on the construction of the Murman railway.

The force's organizer is Shan-Tan-Ho, who has directed the organization of all the Chinese Volunteer Forces that exist on Soviet territory. The idea of creating such forces belongs to him, and he himself commanded one of them that fought in the winter of 1917 on the Kaledin-Kornilov front.

The chief of the Petrograd Force is Comrade Puchko, a former lieutenant, who was at the front during the whole of the 1914-17 campaign, in the ranks for a year and for the rest of the time as an officer. After the demobilization of the old troops he entered the ranks of the Red Army as a volunteer, and at one time was in charge of a commando of Chinese coolies.

The language of the force is Chinese, and the word of command is given in the Chinese form.

ERMETE NOVELLI

THE death is reported of Ermete Novelli, the last descendant of that great line of

Italian actors which included Ristori, Rossi, and Salvini (Duse, although still alive, has not acted for a long time now). But Novelli had a specialty in that he was as great a comic actor as he was a tragedian. I do not know whether Rossi ever acted comedy, but anyone who saw him will agree that it is not easy to imagine him in a comic part. All he did and said had some of the dignity of tragedy. Novelli, on the other hand, seemed to have no difficulty whatever in passing from one genre to another. In the same week he would play Shylock, Hamlet, a couple of wretched French farces, Ferrari's play on Goldoni, an Italian classic (Alfieri or Cossa), and perhaps a *pochade* for a Sunday matinée. There is only one great actor left in Italy now — Ermete Zaccani, who introduced Ibsen into Italy.

THE TROUBLES OF THE TAGEBLATT

ACCORDING to the following paragraph, clipped from the *Tageblatt*, the business of getting out a newspaper in Berlin is evidently no task for the timid.

We must ask our readers not to underestimate the difficulties under which the paper is still being produced. In the neighborhood of our offices, which are shrouded in complete darkness in the evening, shots are frequently fired from the roof or other posts of vantage, or concealed Spartacists throw hand grenades about. On Sunday evening, the technical staff and their workers had to interrupt their work for a whole half hour because there was tremendous noise, and our guard had to start firing with its machine gun. On Monday afternoon a great portion of our evening edition could not be sent out at the right time because the men at work loading the van were heavily fired upon by concealed posts. During the whole of last night, there was firing in the darkness. This condition of things makes heavy demands on the editors, the workers, and the clerks, and in case of delay we ask our readers to take account of the conditions. The houses surrounding our office will shortly be raided, and we hope that normal times will soon follow this period of difficulty.

A STORY OF CLEMENCEAU

THE fact that the League of Nations has not yet got beyond the stage of faith is illustrated by a delightful story of M. Clemenceau told in the *Daily News* by Sir

Frederick Maurice. M. Clemenceau declared that every evening at his bedside he says to himself: '*Georges Clemenceau, tu crois en la Ligue des Nations.*' And every morning 'I raise my hands and recite my new creed.'

THE EDITOR'S NOTE-BOOK

Henri Croisier was editor-in chief of the Petrograd journal *L'Entente*.

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Readers will find an interesting sketch of the late **Rosa Luxemburg** in the 'Talk of Europe' department of *THE LIVING AGE* for March 1st. She was a Russian Pole by birth, and married a German in order to work for the social revolution in Germany.

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George Santayana, late Professor of Philosophy at Harvard University, and author of many distinguished books, is now living in Europe.

John Masson, M.A., LL.D., is a critic and philologist of high distinction. He occupies the post of Classical Lecturer at Edinburgh.

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J. A. T. Lloyd, author and journalist, was for many years the assistant editor of *T. P.'s Weekly*.

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Alfons Paquet, of the staff of the *Frankfurter Zeitung*, is considered to be better informed on Russian affairs than any other German journalist.