

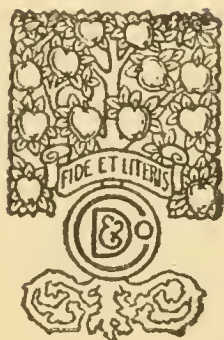






THE NOTE BOOK OF A NEUTRAL

BY
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THE NOTE BOOK OF A NEUTRAL

I

S. S. CYMRIC, Sept. 17, 1915.

“Our country! In her intercourse with foreign nations may she always be in the right; but our country, right or wrong.”

—STEPHEN DECATUR.

I propose to write five or six articles setting forth my reflections on the great war. These articles cannot be classed as war correspondence, for they will contain little, if anything, that

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is new or unknown to the readers of newspapers. They are rather the reactions of an American born and brought up in the Mississippi valley, whose parents and grandparents lived in the same region, and whose ancestors in some branches for several generations back were native to this continent.

Since the war began I have been in Belgium on three separate occasions. First, from the east with the Germans as far as Liege; next, from the north in Antwerp with the Belgians; and recently from the west with French staff-officers in the strip of Belgian territory near the sea, which the Germans have not been able to occupy. In addition

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to this I have talked with certain dignitaries, as well as many more both civil and military who were not dignitaries, in London, Berlin, and Paris.

I have read many books, newspapers, and other periodicals bearing on the war, though this reading has been confined to English, French, and translations from the German, for I cannot read or talk German.

Decatur's toast which heads this column is frequently criticized as immoral. It is compared to "My mother, may she always be sober; but my mother, drunk or sober."

It is the use of the word "immoral" when applied to inter-

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national politics that often leads us astray.

England proclaims every power moral that is allied with England and every power immoral that is opposed to England. A hundred years ago the English described Germans, Austrians, and Russians as "our gallant allies," among whom, ironically enough, "the brave Prussians, under the dogged leadership of old Blucher," were singled out for the most lavish praise. At the same time the British government officially described the French Emperor as the "enemy of mankind" (i. e., England), and pronounced him an outcast "outside the pale of social and civil relations," and having dethroned him, forced

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upon the throne of France in his place the hopeless and detested Bourbons.

Sixty years ago in Crimea, England promoted France, Turkey, and Sardinia to the rank of "noble allies," which invaded Russia with the laudable purpose of "carrying the torch of civilization into the empire of ice, night, and the knout."

Incidentally, fifty years ago Prussia whipped its present noble ally, Austria, because that country was a "treaty breaker" and "faithless to its plighted word."

Thirty-eight years ago England prevented Russia from getting Constantinople and kept Turkey in Europe because the Czar

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“aimed at the dominion of the world.”

Thirty years ago Russia threatened India and became “the bear that walks like a man.”

Now the wheel has gone full circle. The former allies, Germany and Austria, are Huns, and in particular “the brave Prussians under the dogged leadership, etc.” are “baby-killing junkers,” while the same Hohenzollern family with which the English royal family has been proudly exchanging daughters for the last century, since it fights against England and France instead of with England against France, has become the spume of hell.

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Through all the permutations and combinations of international politics the wonderful governing class of England has kept one beacon light for guidance, and only one—the interest of the British empire. Whatever nation could temporarily subserve that interest became temporarily a moral nation, and whatever nation opposed that interest became, during the continuance of its opposition, the vilest of the vile.

Has this policy on the whole proved successful? If you are in doubt about it look at the map of the world, where you will find one-fifth of the land and all the oceans painted British red.

While the people are split into

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nations, there is only one national morality which we Americans have a right to consider—the interest of America.

Our President, ex-Presidents, Congressmen, diplomats, publishers (so far as they are accorded public suffrage) should, if any of them do not, consider themselves as attorneys representing America and America only in the tribunal of nations. The duties of the attorney are to his client only. Let the attorneys for other nations represent them.

No American has a right to consider any interest save the interest of America. Any American in a position of power or influence who allows any con-

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sideration but the selfish interests of America to guide him is a traitor—unconsciously perhaps, and without a sense of guilt, but still a traitor so far as results go.

Any American who suggests or even hopes that America should go into the war on the side of the allies because he loves France, or because he sorrows for Belgium, or because of the Lusitania, or because he thinks it would be unfortunate for humanity in general to have Germany triumph, is a traitor to America.

Conversely, the American who agitates for the stoppage of ammunition exports, or who would have us complicate in any sense

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whatever our relations with Great Britain *for the sake of Germany*, is a traitor to America. He may be filial toward Germany. He is a traitor to America.

Our duty as Americans is not to the extent of one per cent of one per cent to France, Belgium, Germany, or foreign humanity. It is to America, it is only to America, all to America, and to America always.

Therefore, the American who would have us intervene in the war on the side of the allies because he thinks that if we don't do so Germany will win, and if Germany wins will attack us next, and that it is better for us to fight Germany now with allies

than later alone—such a man, I say, may or may not be mistaken, but he is thinking patriotically. Whether he is thinking wisely or not, no one in the world knows yet.

One may be for our country, “right or wrong,” without admiring its faults. Our country is inferior to other countries in many, if not most, of the higher arts of civilization.

We are inferior to the Russians, Germans, Austrians, Italians, French in music; to the same five and to England in literature, and the theater, and probably also painting; to Germany and Austria in medicine; to Germany and France in phi-

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losophy (certainly since the death of William James); to Germany and France in science; to Germany, France, Austria, and England in municipal government; to all of them, except possibly France, in judicial practice and procedure; to Germany and England in navy; to all powers except China in army; to England and France as colony managers; to Japan, Germany, France, and the rest of the list in patriotism; to Germany and France in agriculture (each raises about twice as much oats, wheat, barley, and considerably more hay and potatoes per acre than we do); to Germany particularly in wise social legislation for the benefit of the working classes, which, of

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course, is to the strengthening of the state. There aren't as many slum dwellings in all Germany as in Chicago alone.

However, a nation that in about a century has invented the steamship, the telegraph, the ironclad, the revolver, repeating rifle, machine gun, reaper, telephone, incandescent light, arc light, Pullman car, stock yards, Bessemer steel, typewriter, skyscraper, submarine, aeroplane, trolley car, and moving picture, may not be dismissed with contempt. Such a nation is worth saving.

But because we have been so clever and had virgin fields to settle, money came easy to us,

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and we grew rich and soft. After the war we are certain to be the envy and desire of nations that are hard and poor.

Our position is perilous. Let us quit sentimentalizing about others who have no use for us, and think about ourselves and the state of our own nation.

II

S. S. CYMRIC, Sept. 18, 1915.

“Our country! In her intercourse with foreign nations may she always be in the right; but our country, right or wrong.”

—STEPHEN DECATUR.

The amiable Gen. Bernhardt said that war was a biological necessity, and made for progress. I think he was right, by and large, and that is why I do not believe that the German idea can be beaten in this war. Suppose that one people in Europe develops a higher form of civilization than its neighbors. It may be the castle and the

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knight emerging from the dark ages, or the monarch raising himself and making one centralized nation by overthrowing feudalism, or the middle trading-class reaching for its power, or liberty, fraternity, equality, individualism against social and legal caste. It may be the state socialism of modern Germany born from individualism by pressure of population. Whatever the latest form of social development in the most advanced country, war short circuits its spread to its neighbors.

That is why Germany is so difficult to beat. She had a more efficient civilization than any of her foes at the beginning of the war. To whip the Ger-

man armies, though it will prove very difficult, is not impossible. It may be done in time by numbers and resources. But it can't be done, in my humble judgment, unless Germany's enemies imitate Germany's methods of organization. And that is precisely what they are doing today.

England is Germanizing its social structure as fast as possible, because so, and so only, can she gain sufficient strength to whip Germany.

So, though Germany be beaten, the German idea will win. Thus in one sense Bernhardi was right about this war meaning world power or downfall for

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his country. The German idea will have world power after the war, because it has proved its fundamental strength in conflict with a hostile world, and the other nations are being forced to come to it or forego hope of victory.

The competitive system makes a weak nation; the highly organized nation is a strong one. Woe to us if we don't understand that after the war. But I don't think we will consent to understand it until we have been beaten in war, probably by either Germany or Japan. I think it will take a war to force our political and social systems into twentieth-century lines.

Words don't count in such

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cases. You can tell our plutocrats that much of the wealth that goes to make them strong individually should go to make the nation strong as a whole, and you could prove biologically and every other way that women workers shouldn't stand on their feet too long every day and that children shouldn't work at all and that no child should be allowed to have adenoids or bad teeth, no matter how abominably ignorant or miserably poor his parents might be, and you could prove to politicians that as a method for city, state, county, park government, pure democracy has proved an impure failure, and you could prove to young workmen and farmers

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(and all other young men) that they ought to be made to go into the army for at least a year or the Japanese would gobble us.

Would it make any difference what one said, though one spoke with the tongues of men and of angels? I don't think it would make any difference what any one said, and so I think we are in for a beating before long unless the balance of power remains so absolutely even among the other powers that no one of either side will dare attack us, not from fear of us (why should any one fear us?) but for fear that the other side would attack them.

We are rich, fat, soft, and easy

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picking for any gunmen among the other nations. And the world is full of gunmen just now.

This explains why particularly at this time we must think of America first—America *uber alles*. We are truly in a precarious position. We have wounded Germany beyond her power or willingness to forgive. She believes that without our munitions she could win surely. Whether that is true or otherwise, it is what she believes. She sees us as one of the allies, supplying the fighting forces with food and ammunition. She sees us as one of the allies too cowardly to fight, but skulking in the background, coining the

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blood of German soldiers into American gold.

Well, to all intents and purposes we are one of the allies. But as a nation we get few fruits of the alliance. That goes to the private manufacturers of ammunition.

Now is the time to put the allies under obligation, to make them realize that if Germany is going to hate us after the war, they (which, of course, means England with her navy) must have the gratitude to protect us after the war from Germany's vengeance or Japan's ambition. Indeed, the gratitude of the strong to the weak after the event is not the liveliest thing on earth, but it is a considerable improve-

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ment on the contempt and annoyance of the strong for the weak at having been held up or "blackmailed," as the English put it in private conversation, for double price in time of need.

This is the feeling we are now carefully preparing for ourselves. The feeling of gratitude of the strong for the strong would be the most fortunate of all for us. But there's no question of that. We sha'n't be strong as a nation until we're first beaten, and maybe not then. China isn't strong and it certainly has been beaten a lot.

Now is the opportunity to drive a bargain with England for protection in the future against Germany and Japan. If Eng-

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land refuses the bargain we can and should stop the export of all ammunition to the allies *now*. We shall never be in a more advantageous position to make such a bargain than precisely now.

Will our government drive or attempt to drive such a bargain?

It will not. We shall proceed as heretofore, embittering the mighty German nation to irreconcilability and meanwhile placing the allies under no obligation to us whatsoever for protection after the war.

No Frenchman or Englishman with whom I talked — and I talked with many — no English or French paper which I have read, seems to think we have

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acted in anything but an unhandsome and rather cowardly way to the allies.

If you mention ammunition, they say: "Good heavens, we pay you money for that, through the nose, a double price. Do you expect gratitude as well?" The money that they pay they do not pay to the nation, but the nation may yet pay for it.

And so, ladies and gentlemen, it appears to this writer that we are drifting on to our national Niagara, squabbling about the rights and wrongs of Belgium, thinking nothing of the greater Belgium that we may ourselves become.

III

S. S. CYMRIC, Sept. 19, 1915.

“Our country! In her intercourse with foreign nations may she always be in the right; but our country, right or wrong.”

—STEPHEN DECATUR.

Theodore Roosevelt, in my opinion, has more vision than any American statesman since Lincoln. He saw the need of conservation, of recognizing and regulating the trusts (not “busting” them, the futile policy of his two successors), of social legislation, which, though behind that even of such an in-

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dividualistic and conservative country as England, was ahead of anything we had had. He saw the need of national defense and that it does not take two to make an international quarrel. He saw the need of the Panama strip and took it, the meaning of the Santo Domingo custom-houses and seized them; he occupied Cuba a second time, thereby emasculating the foolish Platt amendment. No one doubts what he would have done in Mexico before that unhappy land had reverted into chaos.

Therefore, when Theodore Roosevelt, with full vigor, delivers invective against the Germans and prays for their defeat it should give every thoughtful

and patriotic American pause no matter what his blood. Roosevelt has been right so much oftener than he has been wrong in his visions that the balance of probability would seem to be that he is right again in a case of this sort.

But I believe that Col. Roosevelt's visions spring rather from his subconscious than from his conscious mind; that his conclusions come first, the fruit of his intuitions and emotions; and that the process of apparent reasoning and the arguments are fitted to them afterwards like the woodwork and ornamentation in a building.

The reasons which Col. Roose-

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velt alleges as the causes of his anger and distrust toward Germany seem to be chiefly two: the violation of Belgian neutrality and the Lusitania. I confess both those reasons leave me cold. Indeed, in the present perilous condition of our country, any reason for international action leaves me cold which does not have some direct or indirect bearing on our own welfare. I wish other Americans would will themselves into the same frame of mind.

President Roosevelt himself violated the neutrality of Colombia and seized the most valuable portion of that country—the Panama Canal strip. I thought he was acting as a patriotic

American then and applauded him for it. Time has only confirmed me in the opinion that the seizing of the canal strip was the deed of a far-seeing and patriotic American statesman.

England has recently violated the neutrality of Greece by seizing the island of Mitylene. Why? Because it was desirable as a naval base in the operations against the Dardanelles. The English seem to approve the decision without one single dissenting voice. And I for one think that they would have been fools if they had acted otherwise.

“But the Germans committed atrocities and the Americans and English didn’t.”

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I believe that both Americans and English were armed to commit the atrocity of death on whomsoever resisted them. And I believe it indubitable that the atrocities committed by the Germans in Belgium were in no wise more terrible than the atrocities committed by the Russians in East Prussia in August, 1914. The rough work of the Russians in East Prussia contributed enormously to the victory of the Marne by compelling the Germans to withdraw six army corps from their western forces just before that historic conflict in order to protect East Prussia, the cradle of the German empire. One has heard no complaints of Russian atrocities in Germany

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by pro-ally partisans and no complaints of German atrocities in Belgium by pro-Germans.

In the words of the old political story, "Tell me first which d—n rascals did it; their d—n rascals or ours."

We Americans need not sentimentalize about that famous "scrap of paper." It is none of our business. Let us consider instead what has a very fair chance of happening to us, our coasts, our fortunes, and our families within a decade.

If any pro-ally partisans here insist, and many will, that such an attitude is base and cowardly cynicism, that treaties are and of right ought to be perpetual,

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inviolable, and unalterable, that we should certainly protest and possibly fight whenever foreign nations break treaties between themselves, then what do these same pro-ally partisans think of Italy's action? Italy, that made one of the brightest bonfires on record out of one of the biggest scraps of paper in history—the triple alliance.

The fact is that that is none of our business either. We have neither the intelligence nor the strength to be custodian of the morals of all other nations. But the Italian scrap of paper and the joy with which Italy's violation of her treaty was received by the allies and pro-allies serve to indicate what a lot of cant and hy-

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pocrisy has been ladled out on this "scrap of paper" topic.

If treaties were never broken there would never have been a war. If treaties were never broken Europe would still be divided into duchies, margravates, bishoprics, counties. The scraps of paper ordaining the relations of those defunct divisions would have the value of immutable law now and for all future time.

Whether Germany remains a military imperium or becomes a socialistic democracy, as long as German loins remain fruitful German weight will press increasingly upon Belgium and Holland. For the German Rhine crosses Holland to come to the sea and a heavy percentage of

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Rhenish Prussian products must reach salt-water by canals to Antwerp and the Scheldt.

If the mouth of the Mississippi were held by another power we should press upon that power no matter what our form of government.

There may be valid reasons why we Americans should wish to see the Germans beaten, even to the extent of joining in the war against them. Don't let us, therefore, urge invalid reasons.

The Lusitania. Permit me to say that I made it a particular point to return on this slow White Star British ship, the Cymric, one of the largest of the ammunition-carriers, sister ship

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to the Arabic, in order to see if my opinion concerning the Lusitania was in any way modified by the fear for a period of twenty-four hours that a German submarine might kill me without further warning than I already had had. My opinion has not changed. The war is between England and Germany. Each is trying by intimidation and destruction on the sea to starve the other and so preserve itself. The grain of wheat that inserts itself between the millstones may expect to be crushed; the American passenger who chooses an English ship now takes the risk of the venture. Before sailing on this ship I left behind me a note, which would have been pro-

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duced had occasion arisen, to state that I wanted to be the subject of no representations or inquiries whatever, as I had gone into the thing with my eyes open.

The cause of the Arabic was similar to, though less spectacular than, the case of the Lusitania, for the latter carried and lost more and more prominent passengers, and was a most famous flier of the seas. Both had received the same degree of warning, if warning it may be called, namely, a general warning from the German government, not a specific warning from the German submarine commander. Indeed, the case of the Arabic was more flagrant because she was not carrying ammunition to

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England, but gold to America, presumably to pay for ammunition or other war material.

By the way, it has never been printed or otherwise publicly acknowledged in England to this day that the Lusitania's cargo consisted, in part, of ammunition.

Germany may possibly gain on land for two or three years to come and yet in the end, if history be prophetic, and it usually is, Germany must succumb if England can keep its own merchant fleet copious on the seas and keep Germany's merchantmen in ports.

England finally strangled her other great challengers, Spain,

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Louis XIV., Napoleon, with salt-water.

There is no chance now visible for Germany to get her ships out on the oceans to replenish her with gold loaned by us, with shells made by us, with copper dug from us, with bread raised by us and Argentina.

But this possibility remains for Germany, though an improbable possibility it seems to be: If Germany could make its submarine tactics five times as effective, if instead of sinking ten British merchant ships a week, it could sink fifty, then the price of food might rise to such a pitch in the British islands that England would consent to make a compromise settlement with

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Germany. Prices of food have about doubled in the British islands since war began. Germany and Austria together are, or rather claim to be, just about self-sustaining, under pressure, in reference to food.

Great Britain has been (I haven't the statistics, but this is my recollection) considerably less than half self-sustaining.

England's Achilles heel is this (if she has one): She must get her food by sea and she can't defend herself against submarines by building twice or ten times as many submarines, for submarines do not encounter each other. It is not generally appreciated that the British subma-

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rines have been handled as gallantly, as audaciously, as successfully as the German ones, but they have an infinitely smaller target to shoot at, because there are few Teutonic or Turkish ships left on the seas. But submarines can't defend against submarines.

Being of Irish descent in all directions (a mixture of Scotch-Irish and Irish-Irish), I have never had loving feelings toward the British. Nevertheless, as an American, it seems to me clearly for our welfare for England to remain mistress of the seas.

Why? Because in the past century England has had the oceans in her power and she has not misused that power. In

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times of peace at least, she has been a fair and equitable and just suzerain of the salt-waters. She has allowed all to trade with her colonies and enter her ports and pass by her strong places on equal terms with herself.

If Germany wrested command of the sea from England, would Germany be as easy a boss as England? That no man knoweth, but I doubt it, for one.

I think that in such a case German ships would get the best of it all down the line, as compared with the ships of other nations.

I think our own interests as a trading nation are safer with Neptune in statu quo than they would be with Neptune in statu Teutonico.

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However, don't let us forget that this is the time to make our bargain with the mistress of the seas. When the war is over we mustn't be left out on the end of a branch to the tender mercies of an infuriated Germany blaming us (with partial justice) for its defeat. We certainly can't strangle Germany by salt-water, whether England can or not. So let us choose England on our side and in the holy name of the Monroe doctrine sit tight in our hemisphere and make more money.

It is upon considerations akin to these I imagine that the singularly active subconscious mind of Col. Roosevelt has convinced

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him that Germany should not win. One may share in his conclusions without subscribing to all his spoken reasons therefor.

IV

S. S. CYMRIC, Sept. 20, 1915.

“Our country! In her intercourse with foreign nations may she always be in the right; but our country, right or wrong.”

—STEPHEN DECATUR.

There are two quotations concerning France that seem timely. The first was by a Russian woman writer a few years ago:

Spain has the night, Italy the evening, France the afternoon, England the noon, Germany the morning, but tomorrow belongs to Russia.

The other one, which I have damaged considerably in trans-

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lation, has recently been going the rounds of French papers:

FRANCE

BY ARMENTER HANIAN

I was an exile from my own country and wandered over the breast of the world seeking another country.

And I came into a land where there was only a long spring and a long autumn, where they did not know the deadly heats of our summers or the mortal colds of our mountains. Among the vines and sunny fields I saw the people of this land at work, ever young of soul, smiling, loving, and kindly.

I asked, "What is the name of this happy place?"

And the answer was, "*France the voluptuous.*"

I came to towns of splendid monuments, of harmonious buildings, of

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proud triumphal arches of the past, and above always I saw the spires of great cathedrals stretching toward the sky, as if to seize upon the feet of God.

I asked, "What is the name of this marvelous land?"

And the answer was, "*France the glorious.*"

I advanced again, when I was struck by the red color of a large river. . . . It was a river of warm blood that rolled down from afar in thick and heavy waves. I advanced again. Before me dark clouds of smoke hid the endless sky above huge fields of warriors in battle; when these died smiling at death others took their places singing.

I asked, "What is the name of this chivalrous land?"

And the answer was, "*France the courageous.*"

At last I came to an immense city,

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of which I saw neither the beginning nor the end, a city full of sumptuous palaces, of parks, and fountains. The sun glistened on the marble of the streets and kissed the serene, resigned faces of women clothed in black. The chimes of churches filled the air with solemn sounds, and words, until then unknown to me, "Te Deum," came from the throats of thousands of thousands.

With respect I asked, "What is the name of this land that mourns?"

And the answer was, "*France the victorious.*"

I kissed the earth of this land and said, "I have found my country, who was an exile."

The two statements are anti-pathetic. One suggests a decadent France, the other a shining land of strength and triumph. One was written before the war,

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the other after a year of war. Each may have been truth at the time of writing.

From a crushed, abased, and beaten people France climbed in a year to the heights under the banner of Joan of Arc. Perhaps France may be again a first power in Europe and the world.

But before this can happen France must cease to sin against herself. She must allow her population to increase.

In 1870 the French and Germans had about equal numbers, 39,000,000 each, to draw upon for their armies. In 1914 the French had 39,000,000; the Germans 68,000,000. In 1870 the French fought the Germans nation to

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nation. In 1914 France could not hope to face Germany without allies.

If in the course of this dreadful war the Germans kill 1,500,000 French males, the more terrible truth remains that France has prepared for this war since 1871, by denying life to 15,000,000 French males and 15,000,000 French females.

Indeed, the number is far larger than that. For the German people are not entirely without the means and the will to prevent birth. Yet in comparison with the Germans, and assuming their increase to be the maximum possible, the French have lost 30,000,000 people in the interval between the two wars.

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Unless the war and the inspiration of a splendid triumph shall restore the French as a nation to the will to live, the willingness of her soldiers to die can avail little in the long run; treaties, allies, diplomacies can avail nothing. If, after the war, French families have two or three children and German families four or five, then no matter how the war turns out, no matter whether the Kaiser ends his days in St. Helena with only his sons for body servants, no matter if the German empire is broken up into its pre-Bismarckian fragments, no matter about anything else but the filling of the cradle, the civilized nation which does that has the morning, and the nation

which refuses has the afternoon.

There seems to be a group of underlying reasons for birth decline: 1. The complexity of civilization. 2. Density of population. 3. Religious or other idealistic feelings.

The first cause is by far the most important. The more civilized a people, the greater its wealth, the higher its knowledge of sanitation, of art, and of culture, the smaller the birth-rate.

In this respect the general biological law of plant and animal life seems to operate. The most primitive animals have the most offspring, the most highly developed animals have the fewest offspring. Nature can spend

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its vitality upon one species in producing many individuals of low development, or it can (apparently) exhaust its vitality upon another species by creating comparatively few individuals of high organization. The codfish lays several million eggs a year, the hen several dozen; there are several kittens, and usually only one baby.

Among nations whose records are kept we know that our southern negroes, the south Italians, and the Russian peasantry have the highest birth-rates, while the most literate and highly educated peoples have the lowest.

Nature (apparently) can spend itself either in producing one

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highly developed white American, Frenchman, or German, or equally in producing two or three negroes, Russian peasants, or Sicilians.

But this law (if it be one) is not invariable in application. For instance, the degree of civilization in France and Germany is about the same. They have pretty nearly the same form of government in those respects which intimately affect the lives of the people, namely, each is governed by a permanent appointive bureaucracy and (fortunate improvement on our unhappy system) the bureaucrat seldom serves in his own home district. It is as if a mayor who succeeded in Peoria might next

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be promoted to the mayoralty of Chicago, and a chief of police who made good in Chicago might expect a call to New York.

In spread of education, the Germans are slightly ahead of the French, one-half of 1 per cent of recruits entering the German army being unable to read while in France the figure is $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent.

The areas of the two countries are almost the same: Germany, 208,780 square miles (91 per cent productive); France, 207,054 ($92\frac{1}{2}$ per cent productive). On territories so nearly equivalent the Germans house 30,000,000 more people than the French. The density of population is 310.4 per square mile in Germany

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and 189.15 per square mile in France.

In spite of this greater density Germany continued (until the outbreak of the war) to increase her population 800,000 a year or more, while the French population increased 30,000 a year. Japan with a population of 50,000,000 on an area of 148,000 square miles, of which "a high percentage"—exact figures not given in Statesman's Year Book—is rocky and non-productive, increases her population at the rate of 700,000 a year.

The explanation may have to do with the spiritual condition of the two countries. Before the war France as a nation was

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in a pretty cynical frame of mind. Two-thirds of it was practically free-thinking, materialistic, socialistic. It didn't believe in much you couldn't touch.

If our material ideal is "get the money," France's was "keep the money," and that is even lower than ours, because less adventurous, less daring.

The French family with a tiny security bringing in an income of \$50 a year would pass that \$50 a year down unchanged for two or three generations. The Frenchman who held a government job (there are about 1,000,000 government jobs in a population of 39,000,000) wouldn't move half an inch out of the groove the of-

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france had been in since Napoleon stereotyped it a century ago.

Both in public and in private business France was swathed in red tape and the long way 'round. After the war, when she starts rebuilding, she particularly needs to introduce time clocks, typewriters, rubber stamps, and cash registers, and other reasonably modern methods of doing business. At present she is wasting a lot of human effort doing the work of machines. It is the trade-unionists' idea of limitation of output applied to government and clerical positions.

This sense of caution which permeated the nation may have been because France was growing

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old, or it may be because the beating of 1870-71 dampened its national courage. A victory of 1914-16 might restore to France its old proud dreams of glory, splendor, pride, and adventure.

It was, one is permitted to surmise, this cautious sense of "keep the money," together with the spread of free-thinking, that stopped the French birth-rate.

Belgium, adjoining France, and of a precisely similar character economically, as well as in the Walloon districts being allied racially, had before the war about 8,000,000 inhabitants, as against 39,000,000 in France. Yet Belgium's population increased

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60,000 a year to France's 30,000. Belgium is 95 per cent Catholic; two-thirds of the French population is practically free-thinking.

Germany has at present a very intense religion of its own and that religion is—Germany. Germans implicitly believe that they are the greatest people of this or any other age. And in many respects, I think they are right about it. However, that does not mean that it is at all to our American interest for the German empire to extend its suzerainty over any part of the western hemisphere, if we can prevent it.

German parents are convinced that to bring forth a German

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baby, especially a boy who can be a soldier, is a glorious thing for the boy, because he can some day serve such a Kaiser, and for the Kaiser because he can some day command such a boy. If France was cynical and world weary in 1913, Germany was the most sophomoric, youthful, "fresh," and egotistical of all the great nations.

It believed in "Gott mit uns," "Deutschland uber alles," and "Civilize 'em with a Krag." In other words, it had not lost its illusions. It never doubted the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow.

It didn't ask if life was worth living. It knew it was.

It was a glorious world (fast

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becoming German) in which to introduce a baby, particularly a boy. And if his parents, because of the number of their own brothers and sisters and children, did not have \$50 annuities to hand on to their children, they knew they had something far more glorious to give—namely, German citizenship.

It is, to us, an utterly naive point of view, but it makes for good armies. It is the same point of view the Japanese have about Japan.

In 1914 Germany was still drunk on the wine of 1870. It may sober up on the bitter waters of 1916. But Japan shows no signs of tasting bitter waters. 1895, 1900, 1905, and 1915 all were

good vintages for that remarkable little people.

The latest census figures show that among white Americans, born of native American parents, the birth-rate is dropping rapidly toward French figures. The reason for this, I think, is the same as in France. Americans of the third generation are highly individualized and materialistic. Our motto is get the money and devil takes the hindmost. We are so eminently "wise" and practical that we refuse to take out insurance against the national calamity that is probable within the decade.

V

S. S. CYMRIC, Sept. 21, 1915.

“Our country! In her intercourse with foreign nations may she always be in the right; but our country, right or wrong.”

—STEPHEN DECATUR.

From our national point of view, the most advantageous settlement after the great war appears to be along some such lines as the following:

1. (And most important.) The severing of the chains which Japan has taken advantage of the European war to fasten upon China. This point will be dis-

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cussed more fully tomorrow in the final article of the series.

2. England's continued mastery of the seas, in alliance with us.

3. The restoration of Belgium to independence under French protection.

4. The return of Alsace-Lorraine to France.

5. The autonomy of Poland, under German or Austrian protection.

6. The banishment of the Turk from Europe.

7. The division of certain bits of Austrian territory among the Balkan states on the principle of nationality.

8. The extension of our "protection" over Mexico.

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Such arrangements as the foregoing would keep the rivalries alive between the stronger European states, which is to our advantage.

If the European states could once finally agree on a fixed and permanent distribution of territory in Europe, then their intense military and diplomatic energies would necessarily seek outlet in other fields—for example, South and Central America.

The advantage to us of a naval alliance with Great Britain is clear enough. Britain has the greatest navy in the world. In conjunction with that navy we could protect our coasts and islands against any power or

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combination of powers now in sight. A clear and obvious benefit to us. But what is the quid pro quo? What is in it for England?

First, if our government has the will power and intelligence to make the bargain we could offer Great Britain more ammunition and war material than we are now supplying at very much lower prices than our thrifty manufacturers are now charging; or perhaps we could furnish the ammunition free from our government arsenals.

If Great Britain refused a naval alliance we could refuse to let her have any ammunition on any terms whatever.

Next, after the war we could

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increase our navy and make it more effective, so that Great Britain could not feel that the major burden of our defense was laid upon her.

As the British empire and the United States are the two great North American powers, they have a common selfish reason for upholding the Monroe doctrine and protecting this entire hemisphere from European or Asiatic aggression. It is not generally appreciated in the United States that the Monroe doctrine was originated by the English and merely accepted by President Monroe.

Belgium, a flat and fertile and naturally defenseless territory,

lying between the sea and the German and French races, for centuries has been the predestined battlefield of western Europe. Philip II. and his bloody Duke of Alva, and William of Orange; Marlborough and Louis XIV.; the armies of revolutionary France and the opposing kings; Wellington, Blucher, and Napoleon, met in Belgium. Belgium has changed hands oftener perhaps than any other territory in the world—from Spain to Austria, to Spain, to Austria, again to France, to Holland, to neutralization. There have been more scraps of paper torn up in Belgium than anywhere else in the world.

Belgium is, or was, not a nat-

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ural but an artificial nation. There is not a Belgian people. Before the war 2,800,000 of the people spoke only French; 3,200,000 spoke only Flemish (akin to Dutch), and they were legislating against each other at a great rate to put one another's language out of the schools and courts. The remaining million Belgians (over 2 years old) spoke both French and Flemish.

Belgium's separate existence dates from 1831, when with the covert assistance of England and France she obtained her independence from Holland, after some fighting of minor consequence. England's interest in Belgium, though now professed-

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ly sentimental, has hitherto been frankly commercial. Through the independence of Belgium the great port of Antwerp became an open door through which by virtue of the most favored nation clause English goods could reach the heart of the continent on equal terms with those of all other nations.

Napoleon spoke of Antwerp as a pistol leveled at the heart of England. He meant in a military sense. If the Germans hold Antwerp it will be a commercial pistol in their hands at England's heart.

The following figures for 1912, the last published, explain something of the bitterness of the war and of England's passionate ex-

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clamations concerning Belgian atrocities and scraps of paper:

VESSELS AT BELGIAN PORTS

ENTERED

Nationality	No.	Tonnage
Belgian	1,962	1,856,832
British	5,152	7,079,203
German	1,768	4,269,515

CLEARED

Nationality	No.	Tonnage
Belgian	1,961	1,871,003
British	5,145	7,037,734
German	1,748	4,239,807

If the Germans should hold Antwerp after the war the British tonnage would fall at once to second place, or lower.

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France was the first of the signatories of the widely advertised neutrality treaty of 1831 to propose officially the violation of the Belgian neutrality. In 1867 the French government instructed its ambassador in Prussia, Count Benedetti, to obtain Prussia's consent to the French conquest of Belgium in compensation for French neutrality during Prussia's conquest of Austria the previous year.

A regular scale of concessions was demanded—first, the (French) frontiers of 1814 and the annexation of Belgium; or Luxemburg with Belgium; or Luxemburg with Belgium but without Antwerp, which was to be declared a free city “to ob-

viate the intervention of England.”

“The minimum we require,” wrote the French government to Count Benedetti, “is an ostensible treaty which gives us Luxemburg and a secret treaty which, stipulating for an offensive and defensive alliance, leaves us the chance of annexing Belgium at the right moment, Prussia engaging to assist us by force of arms if necessary in carrying out this purpose.”

Bismarck on this occasion outwitted Benedetti and held out hopes of Belgium for France until 1870, when Prussia was ready for war.

Between such neighbors as

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France and Germany, Belgium is not safe. At least it never has been yet. France has invaded Belgium oftener than any other country. Belgium for its own future security should be drawn into the military orbit of one of its two great neighbors. It should go to France, and its population be made subject to the plans of the French general staff, because this would strengthen France and tend to bring it toward a military parity with Germany. Commercially Antwerp and the rest of Belgium could remain a free port for England.

Alsace-Lorraine should go to France for its moral effect. Such a gage of victory would invigorate the entire French nation. Per-

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haps if *la gloire* came back to France she might again be fecund. The hope in its statement seems utterly fantastic, but perhaps it is not impossible.

Anything to strengthen the position of the French republic among the great powers is to the advantage of our republic. The question is complicated by the fact that of the inhabitants of Alsace - Lorraine 1,634,000 are German - speaking and 204,000 are French-speaking. But this fact is outweighed by the military advantages the French would gain by the recession, both from the moral effect of such a symbol of victory and from the strategic value of Metz and Strassburg.

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Italy should obtain Trent and Triest from Austria if it can take them—the right of the stronger. We are not particularly interested either way.

Poland should be made autonomous and under Prussian or Austrian rule. Poland is inhabited chiefly by Polish Catholics and Russian Jews. Under Russia's economic and religious oppression from 100,000 to 150,000 inhabitants of Russian Poland emigrate annually to the United States. This number of a rather low grade of immigrants is far more than we desire or can advantageously assimilate. The Prussian rule is not mild anywhere, but it is comparatively just. The emigration from Ger-

man Poland to the United States is from 3,500 to 5,000 a year.

Another reason why we should wish Germany to take Poland is because that would throw the apple of discord between the two great military empires of Europe. And nothing could be more disturbing to the peace of mind of western Europe and America than Germany's reversion to Bismarck's policy of "reinsurance"—a personal understanding between the Kaiser and the Czar. It is difficult to conceive of a stronger military combination than a zwei-Kaiser bund between the German Kaiser and the Russian Czar (Austria in attendance), except a drei-Kaiser bund

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between the three war lords, Kaiser, Czar, and Mikado. That combination would be irresistible on the continents of Europe, Asia, and Africa—everywhere its soldiers could walk.

It is as clearly to the advantage of the western powers (England, France, and the United States) to promote hostility between Germany and Russia as it is to the advantage of Germany to revert to its traditional policy (from the time of Frederick the Great to the dropping of Bismarck by William II.) of friendship between Russia and Germany.

If as a result of the war Russia loses both Poland and vodka, it will be the greatest victory in the history of the empire of the north,

VI

S. S. CYMRIC, Sept. 22, 1915.

“Our country! In her intercourse with foreign nations may she always be in the right; but our country, right or wrong.”

—STEPHEN DECATUR.

The psychology of nations and armies in war is not merely more intense and passionate, it is completely different from that of the same nations and armies in peace.

Foreigners, who in times of peace were thought of as waiters, hotel-keepers, musicians, fox-hunters, must be thought of in

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times of war as hordes of anti-Christ, enemies of mankind.

It is a practical matter. A barber or bellboy who might hesitate to shoot at another barber or bellboy would conscientiously spend a winter in the trenches to kill an anti-Christ.

War, other things being approximately equal, is won by the nation with the strongest will, and the way to strengthen your will to fight is to think of your enemy as base, brutal, and feeble and of your side as strong, gallant, clever.

If the Kaiser described the English as "a contemptible little army," it would be the proper war "dope" to hand out to his soldiers. It would make them

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more eager to attack the English than if they thought of them as a band of man-eating tigers apt to give a terrific mauling to all opponents.

The impression seems widely spread abroad in England and America at present that the chief military operations undertaken by the Germans in Belgium were against unarmed civilians and consisted of destroying churches, burning towns, shooting priests, cutting hands from babies, and violating women. It is of distinct military value to spread this impression in France and England, for it not only lashes the soldier of those countries into fury, but it also skips some-

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what lightly over the fact that in their swift thrust through Belgium and northern France the Germans were opposed not only by civilians and churches, but by fortresses and the armies of France, England, and Belgium.

It is not true that the German thrust through Belgium was a surprise to the military authorities of France and England. The great debate in the French parliament in 1912 and 1913 on the three-year law (as to whether the compulsory military service should be raised from two to three years) was finally won by the advocates of the three-year service, largely if not chiefly on the argument that the Germans would not hesitate to come

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through Belgium if they thought they could gain a military advantage thereby. These debates were not held in executive session, but were published extensively in the newspapers. In consequence the condition of the French forts on the Belgian frontier was investigated, quite a bit of graft was discovered, and scandal resulted.

Nor is there any particular validity in the charge that for the last forty-four years Germany alone has been preparing for war, while the other nations, inferentially, never dreamed of such a thing.

Before the war France took all its healthy young men into the

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army for three years, while Germany took about 60 per cent of its healthy young men into the army for two years (cavalry three). Before the war Russia had a peace establishment of 1,300,000, Germany of 800,000. Before the war Great Britain had the greatest navy in the world.

I doubt not that Germany was the aggressor in this war. I think it indisputable that the German higher command seized what it believed to be an opportune moment to strike, and struck. But there is no sense whatever in the apparently prevalent notion that Germany has been alone in preparing for this war since the last one.

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England, France, Germany, and Russia all have been appropriating about the same amount of money for military and naval expenses each year, and if Germany is the only one that has spent its military appropriations on "preparation for war," the other countries have been stolen blind by their naval and military officers and contractors, or else those gentlemen are almighty inefficient.

Such charges are in the nature of "alibis" to explain defeats. If the other countries had smashed up Germany in a six weeks' campaign they would be bragging now of their marvelous preparedness and their politicians would

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be running for office on that issue.

The English in one breath proclaim the bloodthirsty brutality of the Germans in making their army a "huge war machine" and in the next extol their own almost celestial virtue in having their navy utterly fit on the break of hostilities.

When (or if) the Japanese attack us we shall immediately present the same alibis for our defeats, but with even less excuse. The other nations at least tried to prepare for the probable onslaught of the great military empire of Germany. We are not even trying to prepare for the probable onslaught of the great military empire of Japan.

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The other nations complained of the surprise attack of Germany. If the Japanese attack us we shall doubtless try after the event to derive some minor comfort from similar complaint. But such comfort is quite minor.

One thing is certain. If the Japanese decide to fight us they will try to surprise us and obtain for themselves that initial advantage.

What do I mean—war with Japan? Has the war in Europe addled my brain? Am I seeing things at night?

I hope that is the explanation. Nevertheless these facts are indisputable: Japan is now dominated by descendants of the old

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Samurai, a caste more martial even than the Prussian junkers, a caste that believes the only honorable occupation for a gentleman is war; a caste that despises trade and tradesmen. We are a nation of tradesmen.

Under the influence of this caste the Japanese have engaged in five wars in the past twenty-one years and all have been glorious and profitable — viz.: 1894–95 against China, which resulted in the acquisition of Formosa; 1900 Boxer expedition, when Japanese troops distinguished themselves above their white allies, resulting in Anglo-Japanese alliance; 1904 – 05 against Russia, resulting in acquisition of Corea, Port Arthur,

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lower Manchuria; 1914 against Germany, resulting in capture of Kiao-Chau, with the rich province of Shantung for a hinterland; 1915, "the peaceful war," with China, in which by the display of irresistible force the Japanese forced a treaty upon China which makes that aged country tantamount to vassal of the islanders.

Is there any reason to suppose that the Japanese have turned pacifist since their latest, easiest, and most profitable victory last March?

"But why should they want to fight us in particular?" Aside from the fact that they like fighting and dislike us, we are the

next logical victim, being a near neighbor, unmilitary and rich—a wonderful nation to loot.

Japan and its vassal, China, are settled to the suffocation point. If the Japanese could seize and hold Alaska and the Pacific states for five years, at the end of that time there would probably be not less than 5,000,000 Chinese and Japanese settled on this continent, on the other side of the Japanese outposts.

“But Japan hasn’t the money to fight us.” If Japan can confirm and regularize the vassalage of China at the peace treaties after the great war it will have all the natural wealth it needs—coal, iron, and cheap labor—to start war with us on a grand

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scale. After the war gets well under way Japan will expect us to pay for its continuance.

“But even if there could be any vestige of possibility in such a nightmare, why suggest alliance with Great Britain, already allied with Japan, instead of with Germany, already at war with Japan?”

For three reasons—1. England has large interests in central and south China, and strong naval bases in the Pacific, and will be jealous of the Japanese advance in those regions. Germany has already lost its Chinese colony and all naval bases in the Pacific.

2. The British colonies, British Columbia, New Zealand, and Australia, share the apprehen-

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sions of our Pacific states concerning the Japanese and would urge the mother country to common cause with us.

3. The British navy will probably be much stronger than the German navy after the war and it is the high moral duty of our statesmen to be with the winner if they can pick him out in advance.

However, though we live in an inflammable house and ought to take out fire insurance, we will probably prefer to chance it.

THE END



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