

must deliberately leave an unprotected district to the north or to the south of the retirement. In the first case there will be numerous small gaps, in the second case one large one, and the pursuit if properly handled will at once take advantage of the one or the other. Before a diminished enemy unable to hold the shorter line could establish himself strongly beyond the river, some portion of the river line would already be within striking distance and within bridging distance of the Allies. If, as is expected, the Allies can add to this advantage in such a final phase of the war a definite superiority in heavy artillery, the crossing of the obstacle after no great space of time should follow as a matter of course.

A FIGHT ON BEHALF OF DEMOCRACY

LORD HALDANE AND THE GERMAN CHANCELLOR.

Lord Haldane has made a striking contribution to the literature of the war in an interview with Mr. G. P. Bell, the London correspondent of the *Chicago Daily News*, which is published in the *Daily Chronicle*.

'When did you first become fearful that Germany intended to break the peace of Europe?' the interviewer asked the Lord Chancellor.

'Well, you know,' answered the Lord Chancellor, 'the whole of the past decade in Europe has been rather critical. There were moments when peace trembled in the balance. The Agadir incident, particularly, compelled us to face the possibility of war. However, subsequently things improved. Anglo-German relations appeared to be getting started on the right road. It was with the object of maintaining and accelerating the improvement that I went to Berlin on behalf of the Government in February, 1912.

'With Bethmann-Hollweg I had close and interesting conferences. The Kaiser, already well known to me, I saw again, and it was my privilege to talk with many important men. Gratifying as were these interchanges, I came away feeling uneasy. Germany was piling up armaments. She showed no disposition to restrict her naval development.'

What He Said.

'Was there real fear in Germany that England and her Allies were planning an attack upon the Fatherland?'

'I am unable to see how there should have been any such fear. Certainly we had done everything in our power to obviate it. When I was in Berlin in 1912 I left no doubt in the minds of the foremost men as to our sentiments with reference to Germany. We were prepared, and we definitely told them we were prepared, to enter into the most binding agreement that in no circumstances would we be a party to any sort of aggression against Germany.

'Moreover, I did my utmost to make the Berlin statesmen understand England's position. I disabused their minds, if unmistakable language could do it, of all doubt as to what would be England's attitude to a violation of Belgian neutrality. If the Government ever misunderstood me on this point they have only themselves to thank. From what I said to Bethmann-Hollweg in so many words there ought to have been no doubt in his mind that we should regard an invasion of Belgium as something over which he could not reckon on our neutrality.

'I also told him that as long as Germany chose to continue her policy of formidable naval development we should lay down two keels to her one. There was absolutely no ambiguity in my conversation with the German Chancellor, and he understood that all I said on these matters represented the view of the British Government. It was of the very essence of my friendly purpose in going to Berlin to be perfectly candid and explicit. This was so because I felt that in no other way could Anglo-German relations be got upon the right footing.'

Reform Must Come From Within.

'Assuming that the Allies win, will they attempt to democratise German politics?'

'It does not seem to me the Allies will find it easy to do this unless the German people respond. You know, it really is impossible to impose government from without. Government must come from within. If the army and the navy and the men who made the war lose their prestige, Germany will probably recover herself. How can she better do it than by effectualising her democracy? In other words, I feel that the real Germany, which has made so profound an impression upon the world by reason of great qualities, will take over the government of Germany when the present regime has been discredited and destroyed.

'I cannot help thinking that the present war should bring to a permanent end the system whereby political personages use peoples as pawns on a chess-board. I think secret diplomacy will disappear. Certainly, in the light of Austrian methods leading up to this war—methods that went right back to the days of Metternich—political manipulation beyond the reach of the influence of the people it affects ought to disappear.'

Democracy's Fight.

'Then you are looking for a great democratic advance as a result of the war?'

'For a great democratic advance, and for a great moral advance. Might has sought to establish itself as the supreme law. Right is on the defensive. It is giving us some very fine examples of the best there is in human nature.

'The object lessons should be beneficial. Nobility should be quickened. Our standards should be lifted up. We all were too luxurious. You in Chicago and New York were too luxurious. We in London were too luxurious. Berlin was too luxurious. In Paris also people had become luxurious. We shall all be made simpler by this war. We shall be made more frugal, more serious, less cynical, greater. Long years will pass before any one of us ceases to feel the effects of the struggle.

'As for democracy, it is democracy's fight—nothing else. The militarist has hurled his system against Europe. It must be broken. When it is broken a settlement should be possible conserving the political welfare of all the peoples concerned. Freedom for all nationalities is the ideal, and I see no reason why it should not be substantially realised.'

'How do you think the war is going to affect the question of armaments?'

'If the Allies win—if Germany, who has carried her military preparations to a pitch heretofore unknown, finds herself beaten—I do not imagine any nation in the future will be likely to pin its faith to armaments. If Germany, armed as she was armed, could not win, how could any nation hope to win by means of arms? I am hopeful that the world as a result of this war will get rid of at least a part of the burden of armaments. I am hopeful that civilisation is going to do something to defend itself against war.

Armaments After the War.

'We now know that the effects of war cannot be localised. We know that two considerable powers cannot fight without inflicting disturbance and loss on the whole world. Definite knowledge is necessary to definite action. I believe that the world is going so to organise itself that no nation, out of ambition or fear, or because of any other influence or motive, will be permitted to go to war. This means that differences somehow must be settled by arbitration. If the world had been so organised last July, Germany could not have refused to accept our proposal for a peaceful settlement of the issues at stake.'

'What do you think of the German argument that America should not export munitions to the Allies?'

'It seems to me unfair. For years Germany was heaping up armaments. She made the most formidable army that ever has existed and a navy by no means negligible. Her arsenals were filled with munitions.