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**THE YOUNG MAN ABSALOM**

**IS THE YOUNG MAN SAFE?**

A half million more of our sons will soon be called into camp life by the second draft. The half million young men of the first draft went out of our homes into a strange, new life with almost no direct preparation for it. And the chances the churches missed at that time suggest the things we ought now to be doing to safeguard the souls and bodies of our sons in the second draft.

Otherwise fathers and mothers in a million American homes will be wringing their hands with the agony of David, and asking, Is the young man Absalom safe? and saying, perchance, Would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son! The diseases of vice are a far deadlier menace to the bodies and souls of our boys than Boche bullets are to their lives.

**Proposed Church Program**

The Methodist Recorder of Pittsburg proposes that the church and Sunday school authorities everywhere organize in their behalf a joint campaign of preparation. The details of the plan are suggested as follows:

"Conferences in various sections of the community for six or eight weeks, to which all the drafted men in the vicinity are personally invited. At these conferences a regular course of subjects might be presented, such as, for example Why America is at War, Significance of the Selective Draft? The Marks of a Good Soldier, How to Get Ready for the Training Camp, What is a Camp Like? What to Avoid When One Gets to Camp, The Compensations of Military Training, Religion and the War, The Soldier's Place in the New-World Order after the War. These conference sessions ought to have careful leadership. While each should be opened by competent speakers, military, educational, or professional, there should be a leadership which will conduct a discussion and draw from the young men their problems and needs in the way of information. They should be more than a series of lectures or talks. Special addresses might be given at regular church services, mid-week meetings, men's clubs, and Bible classes.

"An organized effort might be made along the lines of the 'Cleveland Plain,' now in preparation, to interview every one of the drafted men, using for this purpose wise, reliable, representative laymen. These young men could be met in small groups, at convenient times and places. An evening given to a group of six to ten would have tremendous meaning to the young men, and prepare for the more extensive work of the conference and classes.

"Special pamphlets on personal hygiene, athletics, Bible study, military history, military organizations, etc., might be circulated freely."

**The Need of It**

"Young men need a bigger motive for getting and keeping fit than ambition or fear of physical dangers along the pathway of indulgence in drink and vice. Experience is convincing that young men will respond to the higher motives, such as loyalty to one's country, one's friends and family, and a sense of obligation to God, when properly presented. Such motives hold young men steady when fear of consequences utterly fail. If they can have such motives put before them and accepted before they leave home the fight for character and military efficiency is largely won before they reach the training camp.

"The examples of capable young men who have been put out of business as soldiers and sailors and are out of the war—broken in health and spirit, a disappointment to themselves and their friends—because of inadequate information, should make all Americans, especially religious and educational, patriotic, and benevolent organizations keen to do the preliminary educational work which will largely prevent such tragedies.

"The young men can be aroused to an appreciation of the honor and privileges which belong to such heroic service for humanity. It is possible to make them enthusiastic and eager to become fit to

fight. Fully 50 per cent of the morale can be put into them before they leave home. What this may mean every military expert can testify."—The Literary Digest.

**THE BLACK PLAGUE**

There are 6.8 times as much venereal disease in the national army and 4.7 as much in the three American armies combined as all other communicable diseases, measles excepted, according to reports made to Surgeon-General Gorgas for the twelve week period from September 21 to December 7, 1917.

From these reports figures have been compiled to show the comparison of venereal with other communicable diseases in the three armies as follows: Regular army, venereal diseases 88.0 per 1,000 men, other communicable diseases 13.4; national guard, venereal diseases 115.2, other communicable diseases 38.8; national army, venereal diseases, 152.4, other communicable diseases, 23.8.

**Community Unconcern**

This condition, declares Surgeon-General Rupert Blue, demands the immediate attention of civil authorities in every state. It is evident, he says, that the prevention of venereal infection in the military population is largely dependent on the degree with which these infections are prevented in the civil community. This imposes upon the civil health authorities the duty of forcefully attacking the venereal problem upon the basis of the control of other communicable diseases.

That civil communities have a responsibility in controlling venereal diseases in the army is also shown in reports made to the surgeon-general. During September and October when drafted men were mobilized, a large number of cases of venereal diseases, as high as 388 cases per thousand men for the week ending September 28, were contracted in civil life, mostly in the cities and towns from which the men came and through which they passed on their way to camp.—State Health Board.

**OUR GOVERNOR SAYS**

Today, as never before, the world needs clean men, for without purity there can be no power. Dr. Elliott says that in the French army more men have been put out of commission by vice than by bullets. Surgeon-General Gorgas says that any general on the western front, if given the option, would prefer to take the casualties created by bullets rather than casualties created by vice.

And this is due, not to military but to civil life. I have recently visited three camps, and my judgment is that the men in these camps are living cleaner and more wholesome lives than 95 per cent of men of the same age at home. The army authorities have carefully safeguarded the men, and have compiled the records, and these show that in the year 1917 in the regular United States army thirty-eight out of one thousand were sick as a result of immorality, while in September of the same year in the National Army, made up of men fresh from civil life, 388 out of every thousand were afflicted with diseases due to vice.

This was in September, during the period of mobilization, and by December these 388 per thousand had been reduced to 80 per thousand. These facts will be startling to every one who has not investigated the subject; they were fearfully startling to me.

**Give the People the Facts**

In my opinion one of the best ways to fight the spread of vice diseases is to give the people the ugly facts. These facts show that practically every immoral person is a diseased person, and if people knew that any breach of the moral law would almost certainly incur these frightful penalties this knowledge would operate as a powerful restraint.

A campaign of information in the press from the pulpit and chiefly in the home would produce gratifying results. I think the government would do well to throw these figures and charts on the screen in every moving picture show in the land. False modesty should no longer be allowed to camouflage the fearful ravages of social vice.

**GERMANY CANNOT WIN**

The Germans can never win this war! Even if the kaiser defeats Italy; even if he defeats France; even if he makes peace with Russia and Roumania; even if he continues to have his way in the Balkans and Poland—even then the kaiser will not be in as strong a position as Napoleon once was.

And Napoleon, his armies bled white with victories, was finally defeated, and spent his last days in exile at St. Helena.

Even though the kaiser should be victorious on land, the victory would be short-lived, and the spoils would have to be returned and full reparation made. Why? Simply because the United States, Great Britain, and Japan can still shut the Germans from the seas. With free access to the raw-material resources of practically the whole world the allies can maintain an economic blockade of Germany until the German people establish a people's government with which a lasting peace can be made.

The United States and Great Britain will never surrender. If worse comes to worst, they will continue the war against Kaiserism on the sea and in the air until the Germans will gladly make a lasting peace.

But the kaiser hasn't defeated Italy. He hasn't defeated France. The allies are getting stronger every day as the United States throws her gigantic weight in man power and resources against the kaiser, while the Germans were at their zenith in the opening days of the war three and one-half years ago and are getting just that much weaker every day.

The same thing that defeated Napoleon will defeat the kaiser. What? Sea power. No, the Germans can never win this war!—Farm and Fire-side.

**THANK GOD FOR BRAVE WOMEN**

It was a woman that presented to the Social Service Conference in Raleigh the other day the subject of the Black Plague and its ravages in the sacred circle of the home, the penalties paid by innocent mothers and defenseless children for the sins of the fathers, the right of children to be well born, and the need for a wise overhauling of our marriage laws.

It was Mrs. Clarence A. Johnson of Raleigh, the president of the State Federation of Women's Clubs. It was bravely done and no more important word was spoken by anybody during that entire session.

The dire menace to Christendom of social vices has been camouflaged long enough. The subject has too long been under taboo. The light of full intelligence must be turned on it before we are likely to get busy with it; and a splendid woman leads the way in North Carolina.

Dr. Prince A. Morrow's volume on Marriage and the Social Evil ought to be in every intelligent home; also the Social Hygiene quarterly. Single Men in Barracks in the March World's Work will help sensible people to get their heads out of the sandbanks of prudery and to right-about-face in the defense of society against an ancient, hoary evil.

The danger bulks up far bigger than most people think, and for any man or woman to be stupidly ignorant about it is now inexcusable. The Buffalo survey showed, for instance that, for every victim of tuberculosis the great White Plague, there were eight victims of venereal disease the great Black Plague that curses the race.

**A Social Service Program**

And it was three noble women that stood as sponsors for the constructive program adopted by the conference—Mrs. W. F. Woodward, Miss Amy Sheldon, and Miss Daisy Denson.

An important detail of that program sends up a danger signal that challenges

attention and calls for action. It reads as follows:

"The testing time of war has brought a national awakening to the perils involved in the diseases of immorality and their disastrous effects upon our national strength and well-being. This menace to the strength and purity of our national life can no longer be ignored.

"We appeal for action not only by our national government and by State Boards of Health, but also for drastic action by city and county officials in our own State.

"We repeat our former declaration for State-wide adoption of the Guilford county public morals law for making property owners responsible who rent houses for immoral purposes, and we urge our churches and health authorities to give the crusade against immorality the same determined support they have given the campaign against alcohol."

**OUR NEW WAR-LEAFLET**

The University of North Carolina has now published 13 separate leaflets on topics pertaining to Democracy and the War. These special studies and outlines by members of the University faculty have been much in demand for study clubs, reading courses, schools, and other organizations, as well as for individuals. They are published by the Bureau of Extension.

Number 14 in the series will be published this week. This will be a book of about 100 pages, written by members of the University Department of English, under the direction of Dr. Edwin Greenlaw. It is entitled: National Ideals in British and American Literature. The booklet is in the form of a syllabus, with comprehensive reading lists in the various fields of study. The chapters treat the following topics: 1. From the beginnings to Shakespeare; 2. The English Renaissance; 3. The Rise of Modern Democracy; 4. Democracy under Queen Victoria; 5. American Ideals; 6. The Rise of Imperialism; 7. The War and Democracy: Materials in State papers and public discussions; 8. The War and Democracy: Materials in Personal Narrative and in Literature of the Imagination. The appendix contains short reading lists.

**Texas Follows**

The state authorities of Texas have just wired in a request to be allowed to issue a two thousand edition of our War Leaflet No. 11—"Selections for Speaking in the Public Schools, (1) Washington, Lee, and Lincoln, and (2) The Present Crisis."

**BUSY FOLKS WARNED**

We have received the Year-Book of the North Carolina Club at the University of North Carolina. Ordinarily a Year-Book is very dry reading, and it is used more to give an air of interest and respectability to a home than for any practical use.

Unless a man has time to spare, we advise him to avoid even a glance at this book, because if he once begins to read, he will go through it from eggs to apples.

It gives in a most interesting manner the resources of the State, and its revelations are surprising. There is scarcely a subject that is not touched upon, farm and forest wealth, that from fisheries and mines, the banks and the per capita deposits, and the government of the State. It reflects great credit upon the University and is full of promise for the future.—Presbyterian Standard.

**PELF FOR SELF**

We have just received a copy of the North Carolina Club Year-Book for 1916-1917 and we desire to thank you for it. It is certainly very interesting reading, and we wish every state in the union had such clubs for the promotion of the possibilities of our nation.

Unfortunately our people are given too much to the idea of accumulating wealth. We doubt whether one-tenth of one per cent of the people of this country think about the good of the community in which they live. Their main thought is the accumulation of pelf for self. We judge from the Year-Book that the idea of this society is the promotion of the common weal of the people of North Carolina.

We think it is about time for the people of the whole United States to begin thinking in terms of the common good, and we sincerely hope that other societies of similar character will be formed in all parts of our country.—Powell, Gerard and Co., Chicago.

**CANADA AND THE WAR**

It has been many times said that the world will never again be as it was before the war. The saying applies with especial force to the Dominion of Canada. The loose ties that bound her to the British Empire before the war can never again be so loose. The practical demonstration of loyalty by the Dominion, Australia, and New Zealand in the early autumn months of 1914 definitely settled the relationship of Greater Britain to Great Britain for all the years to come.

To be sure, the time had long gone by when Canada could be spoken of, with any degree of accuracy, as "belonging" to the British Empire. Canada had long been conscious that she was a part of the Empire as certainly as England herself. Her answer to the threat of disruption of that Empire was a spontaneous one, evidencing the spirit of idealism and loyalty that have long been hers.

**Whole-Hearted Canada**

On August 4, Great Britain declared war against Germany. On September 24—seven weeks and two days later—33,000 trained and fully equipped soldiers were ready for embarkation at Quebec on the Megantic, the Lapland and a half dozen smaller transatlantic liners—30 ships in all. By the spring of 1915 the force had increased to 60,000, a number equal to the British army landed in France in the first month of the war. In a year's time it had grown to 90,000, more than England's total forces engaged in the Crimean war. By the end of 1915, Canada's forces were 120,000, twice the American army in the Spanish war. By the end of April 1916, the enlistment was over 310,000, and a few months later it was announced that 210,000 had been trained, equipped and sent over-seas.

Now Canada's program calls for a permanent force of 400,000, attended by an expenditure of one and a quarter million dollars a day. These figures assume their true meaning only when it is remembered that Canada's population is less than 8,000,000 souls.

**Her Gift of Men**

The thirty-three thousand soldiers that the fleet carried into Plymouth sound October 14, 1914, was the largest freight of soldiery that had ever been borne across the Atlantic. The significance of Canada's contribution to the war does not lie, however, in the size of her forces, nor in the speed with which she trained and equipped those forces, remarkable as that is, but in the part that the Canadian troops have played on the battle front. A few months later this force of 33,000 saved Calais. When on the battle field of Langemarck the French broke under the clouds of asphyxiating gas let loose by the Germans and left the northern end of the Canadian line in the air, the Canadian troops stood fast. How they fought through the day and night and through another day and night, is the story of the battle of Ypres. By May 1915 the Canadian loss at Ypres was 6,000; by June it was 8,000; and by August 10,000.

**Her Gift of Treasure**

While the Canadian government has increased the national debt from \$300,000,000 to a billion dollars, Canadians have been giving, as free contributions, other millions to the Canadian Patriotic Fund. This fund is used for assistance in cases of need to the wives, the children, and the dependent relatives of the men who have gone to serve in the army and navy. This is in addition to the government's provision for those left behind. By the end of 1914 these outright contributions to the Canadian Patriotic Fund amounted to \$2,000,000. In 1916 twelve million dollars was contributed. The year 1917 furnished \$35,000,000.

"Fight or Pay" has become the watchword. Canada's giving for war purposes has become well nigh universal. The contribution of a day's pay per month or per quarter is general throughout the Dominion. The Patriotic Fund represents the free will offering of a generous people and is in no way connected with the Federal government.

It seems hardly possible that Canada's idealism of Empire will not yield returns in the development of a new meaning of what the British Empire is. Ypres, Hill 60, Vimy Ridge, mean the re-making of the loose constitution of the British Empire in its relation to its component parts.

Verdun bespeaks the re-birth of Old France; Ypres the awakening of Young Canada.—G. K. G. Henry, N. C. University Faculty.