

LETTERS TO GUILFORDIAN.

(Publication of letters does not necessarily imply that their sentiments are endorsed by the Board.)

A PLEA FOR JUSTICE.

At the beginning of the European war the neutrality of the United States of America was proclaimed to the world. In an earnest, manly letter President Wilson appealed to his fellow-citizens to observe the spirit as well as the letter of neutrality. Are we Americans making an honest effort to heed the admonition which our President deemed necessary, in view of the grave crisis, to give us? Honestly, is not this neutrality of many of us of the same stamp as that of F. Hopkinson Smith, who said, when questioned as to which side he was on, "I am absolutely neutral; I'm willing for anybody to beat Germany, even the Japs!"

"Judge not that ye be not judged," and "with what measure ye mete shall be meted unto you," can not, must not be forgotten by a Christian people. Sympathy and aid for Belgium is right; and a certain degree of warm attachment to England because of racial ties and common language and literature is praiseworthy, but is it not a fact that many of us are so under the spell of these feelings that we have unwittingly lost for the time being our sense of justice and "fair-play?"

As American citizens we have no just ground for the hatred of Germany that many of us announce openly. We have never but once in the whole course of our history had any serious difference with Germany—a difference arising out of Germany's effort to collect the Venezuelan debt during Cleveland's administration. Germany readily assented to the representations of our government, and the matter was quickly, satisfactorily, and amicably settled.

This is not the place to allude to the differences that have arisen time and again between us and England, leading to bloody war or to tedious and costly diplomatic negotiations; or to the differences with France, as when for instance, in 1861 France endeavored to establish an empire in Mexico in direct violation of the Monroe Doctrine, in which enterprise England lent a ship of war and 700 marines to the assistance of France; or to differences with Japan, which have called forth a torrent of abuse of America and American institutions from Japanese newspapers and magazines. These facts are utterly beside the question, unless, perhaps, they may help us to form sane judgments in the present by the light of the past.

What we are bound as a Chris-

tian people, or even as an enlightened people, to do, is to make an effort to cast aside prejudice, face the questions at issue today in this gigantic strife, and endeavor to do justice to all parties, including Germany. Has England a moral right, or a right under the law of nations, to say in substance to Germany: "I will restrict the size of your navy, you dare not let the size of your fleet approach that of mine; I will regard the building of a few more battleships as a declaration of war?" Germany, small in area with a huge population, is dependent upon its factories and commerce for its existence, and all history, as well as the course of the war now raging, proves that an adequate navy is necessary for the protection of a merchant marine and a nation's commercial and industrial interests.

Much is said of "German militarism." Germany has on its east semi-barbarous Russia, ambitious for expansion and ready to grasp any opportunity; on the West France, ever openly eager to revenge 1870-71; across the channel England determined to remain mistress of the seas and commerce. Those who speak oftenest of "German militarism," say nothing of "English navalism," or refer to it lightly and in excusing terms. "German militarism," according to them, is a monster to be feared and crushed; "English navalism" is for some mysterious reason a beneficent power. Was "English navalism" beneficent when in 1809, during the Napoleonic Wars, the English fleet, without any declaration of war, sailed into the harbor of Copenhagen and destroyed the Danish navy?

We are told that Germany is utterly condemned by her violation of Belgium's neutrality. We seek to excuse and palliate England's offenses, can we justly refuse to do the same for Germany? It is yet to be disproved that Belgium had not violated her own neutrality by permitting French officers to enter her territory and make such arrangements as they deemed feasible. The fac-similes of the papers found by the Germans in Brussels certainly give ground for suspicion that Belgium had been tutored by England as to what course she could most safely take in case the threatening war cloud should break over Europe.

War is wrong, cruel, and antagonistic to the teachings of the Master whom we, as well as the people now at war, profess to believe and follow; but does it help matters to make a scape-goat of any one nation? Does any one honestly believe that war will be abolished, if Germany is utterly crushed in this struggle, while

England's fleet continues triumphantly to sail the seas?

PRESIDENT HOBBS TALKS AT THE Y. M. C. A.

There was an unusually good attendance at the Y. M. C. A. at the last meeting. The simple announcement on the bulletin board that President Hobbs would talk was enough to attract the boys. Since he is a man that can say much in a few words he appealed to them.

He began his talk by quoting a text from the writings of St. Paul. He especially emphasized, in his talk, the bad results of an evil life. He spoke in reference to this life for he said that if this life was lived rightly the life to come would take care of itself. To impress this point he related how an Irishman who was placed on a barrel and forced to preach, gave this splendid idea of life in this world and life in the next:

"Our ingress is naked and bare, Our progress is attended by toil and care, Our egress is to—we know not where, But if we live right here, we will be right there."

The speaker said that he thought the Irishman ought to have been forced to preach more.

Then, continuing, he spoke of his own observation, how he had been convinced that wrong living will ruin even the most promising future and mentioned some cases in which sin had wrecked the lives of some promising young men whom he had known. By sin he said he meant lawlessness. As a parting word he invited those who might be on the wrong road to place themselves on the right road at once.

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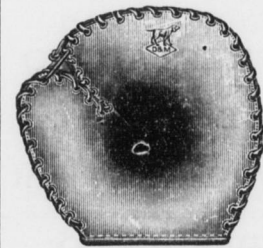
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