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NATIVE AFRICAN LABOR IN WAR

Nearly Every Southern Tribe Represented—Valuable As Dock Workers, Lumbermen, and Quarrymen.

London, England.—Only by degrees is the curtain being raised on the scene of the vast operations, involving sheer manual labor, behind the western line of battle. A notable article has now been contributed to the Journal of the African Society, giving some account of the part played by the South African Native Labor Contingent in France.

Its author, Sir Herbert Stoley, K. C. M. G., was at one time the Resident Commissioner in Basutoland; and as a member of the South African Native Affairs commission, in the early years of this century, had, in addition, exceptional opportunities for studying the social life of most of the Bantu tribes within the Union. Thus, when lately visiting the camps of the labor contingent in France, he was especially well equipped for appreciating the suitability of conditions under which these non-combatant forces were working.

Sir Herbert finds that the native companies are representative of almost every aboriginal tribe in South Africa. In the ranks of Zulus, Fingoes, Gikas, Tembus, Bastos, Matabele, Pondos and Bechuana, as well as natives from Portuguese Africa. The officers were almost entirely composed of members of the South African Native Department, or of retired officials possessing a lifelong experience among South African natives.

As workers the natives appear to have been highly thought of by the departmental officers under whom they were employed. It was the general estimate of officers of the royal engineers, army service corps, commissariat, transport, and ordnance departments, that the African native, man for man, was equal to any other class of workman employed behind the British lines. Those remarks the writer of the article, who know the South African unskilled laborer in his own country will not be surprised to hear this.

The work that was put before them in France was that for which their South African experience had particularly fitted them. They were to be seen felling trees, and handling timber in the forests of the Seine, very much as they chop and lop and strip the wattle plantations of Natal. They shifted cargoes in French ports and railway stations, in the style they had learned in Cape Town or Durban, and their familiarity with railway construction and the blasting processes of the Johannesburg and Kimberley mines made them valuable as quarrymen and railway workers.

Physically the native is well equipped for work in which strength and endurance are required. The South African Bantu races do not appear to produce many exceptionally big men, nor, on the other hand, are there many of them of dwarfish stature. The tribal discipline teaches and fosters hardihood and stoical disregard of pain, hunger, fatigue, and other discomforts. The open-air life and occupations of boys and young men in pastoral and agricultural communities tend to promote growth and health, and the young native, as a rule, reaches manhood with his bodily powers in a vigorous state of development.

See these fellows, after finishing their day's work in a French camp or a South African compound, taking the baths which every wise administrator knows to be as necessary for the workers' wellbeing as food and shelter. They seem like groups of bronze statues, glistening under the splashing shower-baths of cold or tepid

water, and a sculptor would be able to select many a model of classical proportions and beauty. These men had plenty of energy left in them after their day's work, and expended it in games of football and cricket, or during bad weather and in the hours of darkness, by attendance at the night school, or in the recreation tents, playing draughts and other games, or writing letters to their homes.

When not actually working under the supervision of the European officers, the natives have been practically confined to barracks, with the excellent result that they have been, on the whole, preserved from the temptations of drink and other vices; thus the majority of them will reach their native land with their wages in their pockets and with health unimpaired. No doubt they would have preferred a life of greater freedom, and some of them may return to their homes with a discontented grumble that they were in gaol while on service. But it was best for them that it should be so, best also for the army and for the French population with whom they would have been in contact, and for the tribes to which they belong and which they will rejoin.

As to the effect upon these tribes of the return to them of such a considerable number of their young men with stories of their experiences while engaged in this great war, it is very difficult to speak with any degree of certainty. It has often been noticed that it is impossible to predict precisely what particular impression will be made on a native's mind by any unusual and remarkable spectacle or experience. The impression made is often something very different from that which is desired or expected. To illustrate this, Sir Herbert Stoley said that he once accompanied a party of natives, all men of unusual intelligence, on a visit to one of the principal Lancashire cotton mills. After the visit, and when discussing the day's doings, it might have been expected that these visitors would have made some remarks about the vastness of the industry, or the ingenuity of the mechanical processes, or something of that sort. But it appeared that what most struck them was the fact that the workers in the cotton mills were almost all women, who, of course, do the machine tending.

The natives said, "The white people will no more be able to tell us who we make our women do more than their share of the work." And, therefore, while one would suppose that these young men would take back to their friends stories of the great military power of the white people, of the extent of the war area and the enormous armaments and other accounts of our prowess and resources, which might have a useful and salutary effect, it is by no means certain that it will be so. It has to be remembered that few of the contingent were ever in or near the front line, and the majority saw and heard little of the fighting beyond the rather distant sound of guns.

They can have had but a vague impression as to the actual nature of the struggle or as to the immensity of the forces engaged. However, there is no reason to doubt that they will return with an increased idea of respect for the governing races. They seem to have been filled with admiration for the industry of the French agricultural population, and it is tolerably certain, observes the writer of the article, with sly humor, that they will have only terms of faint praise to bestow upon the European climate.

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WHY 'HUN' TEXTBOOKS?

In a new ruling, which makes it unnecessary that students taking entrance examinations for the Massachusetts Institute of Technology shall be examined in German, the president of the school, Dr. Richard C. Maclaurin, after saying that this change "has very little if anything to do with war conditions," and that it does not affect studies after the student enters the institute, remarks those taking certain technical subjects, such as chemistry, will be obliged to study German after entering, as much valuable material is to be obtained only through a knowledge of this language. Dr. Maclaurin is not the first college president or professor who has said substantially this during the last forty or fifty years. In view of the present awakening of the world to the shallowness of German claims to super-learning and super-efficiency there is justification for the hope that he may be one of the last.

The inference to be drawn from the statement is that, somehow or other, the Germans have succeeded in locking up certain technical knowledge in their language, and that if you do not learn that language you will be shut out from important results of research, discovery, and invention. The fact is that less than any other of the great nations of the earth today can Germany lay claim to extraordinary advancement in theoretical or applied natural science. In technical matters she is a borrower rather than a creator. She does not compare with Italy, with France, with Great Britain, or with the United States in discovery or invention. She has imitated and sometimes improved in fields abandoned to her by countries lacking her patient application and low-priced labor, but even in this respect she has not kept pace with Japan.

The steam engine is not hers, nor the locomotive, nor the steamship. She did not invent the telegraph or the telephone. She did not give to the world the sewing machine, the harvester, the cotton gin. She had nothing to do with the spinning jenny. She has never been a leader in the development of electricity. Wireless telegraphy is not hers, nor is wireless telephony, the X-ray, the type-writer, the mimeograph, or the fountain pen. She has excelled in certain technical branches, especially in chemistry, only because France, the United Kingdom, and the United States practically conceded certain fields to her, being preoccupied in other fields themselves. What she has accomplished in the perfection of dyes, during half a century, England and the United States have, in the main accomplished in less than four years. She made headway in commerce, between 1870 and 1914, by underselling rather than by excelling her competitors. Even in the one line which she has regarded as wholly her own, that of producing implements of destruction, she is a borrower and imitator. She has nothing to do, nearly or remotely, with the invention of the submarine, the aeroplane, or the "tank." After four decades of drilling and reviewing for the present war, she did not, in 1914, have a gun equal to the French "Seventy-five." She has not put out an explosive or a gas that the Allies have not rendered immediately ineffective. She still moves her troops in mass after the medieval fashion. Only brute force seems to appeal to her.

Germany can teach the English-speaking people little or nothing that is worth knowing, notwithstanding that she has long enjoyed another reputation largely as the fruit of sheer pretense. Her claim to superior knowledge has been a brazen sham; her assertion that the information she has accumulated can be communicated only through her language is a shameless fiction.

The French Ecole Polytechnique is older than any technical school in Germany. It is asserted by scholars that the United States is indebted to Russia more than to any other nation for some of the most important and valuable features of its school technology. Technical schools gave England prestige in manufacture long before Prussia had a trade reaching beyond her own borders, and made British wares famous throughout the

earth. England has capitalized her great technical schools and colleges during these latter years as has Germany, but German technical education of achievement has never been able seriously to impair English commerce.

There is nothing in the German technical textbooks that may not be found essentially in English or American textbooks. Germany has no special means of access to technical knowledge, any more than she has to music or theology. It is time the technical industries of the United States abandoned the illusion, begotten of German psychology, that the youth of the country can be taught things worth knowing better in German than in English, and time also that educators were throwing the German textbooks out of the window. The superstition of German superiority in education has gone far enough, and done harm enough.—Exchange.

Can You Guess—

- Why is a pig's tail like the letter K?—Because it is the end of pork.
- What church official would be most useful on the battlefield?—A cannon.
- When is a person obliged to keep his word?—When no one will take it.
- What is the riddle of riddles?—Life, because we must all give it up.
- If a barrel weighs 10 pounds, what can you fill it with to make it 7 pounds?—Holes.
- Why is a crow a brave bird?—Because he never shows the white feather.
- Why is a nobleman like a book?—Because he has a title and several pages.
- Why is an orange like a church steeple?—Because we have to peel from it.
- Who may marry a wife and live single all his life?—A clergyman.
- Why is the letter Y like a young spendthrift?—Because it makes pa pay.
- Where was Adam going when he was in his 39th year?—Into his 40th.
- Why is a schoolmistress like the letter C?—Because she forms ladies in classes.
- Why is a new-born baby like a gale of wind?—Because it begins with squall.
- Why is your shadow like a false friend?—Because it only follows you in sunshine.
- When is a sermon like a round shot?—When it comes from the cannon's mouth.
- What did the spider do when he came out of the ark?—Took a fly and went home.
- Why was Ruth ruthless to Boaz?—Because she pulled his ears and trod on his corn.
- Why do carpenters believe there is no such thing as stone?—Because they never saw it.
- Why are the houses of bald people easier to break into?—Because their locks are few.
- Why should a man never tell his secrets in a cornfield?—Because so many ears are there.

Field Marshal Von Hindenburg is Dead.

Amsterdam July 13.—Field Marshal von Hindenburg is dead, according to the newspaper Les Nouvelles. His death is said to have occurred after a stormy interview with the German emperor at great German headquarters at Spa.

The emperor and the field marshal are declared to have had serious differences of opinion concerning the German offensive toward Paris. The field marshal died from congestion of the brain.

The violent interview between von Hindenburg and Emperor William occurred on May 16, the paper says. It was followed by an apoplectic stroke, which ultimately resulted in the field marshal's death.

The paper says its information was obtained from "good sources in the occupied district of Belgium."

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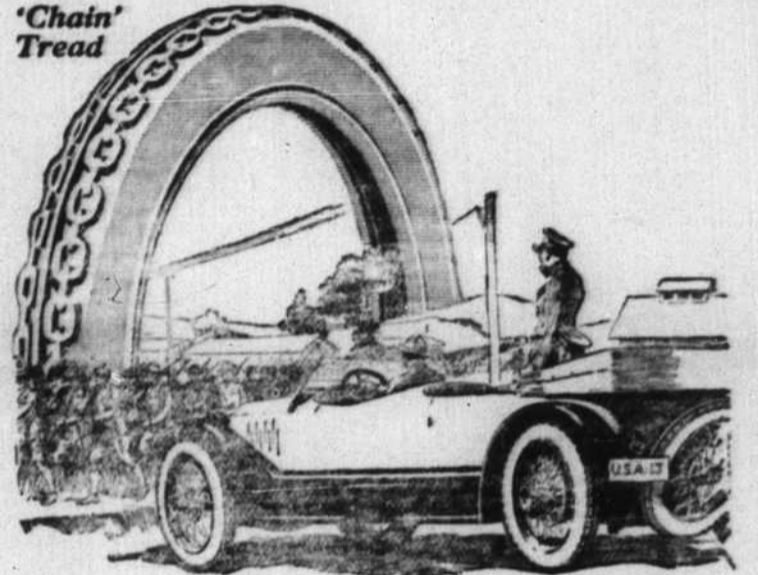
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We stand ready to undergo any sacrifice in order to cooperate with the Government.

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We know it is best for our country.

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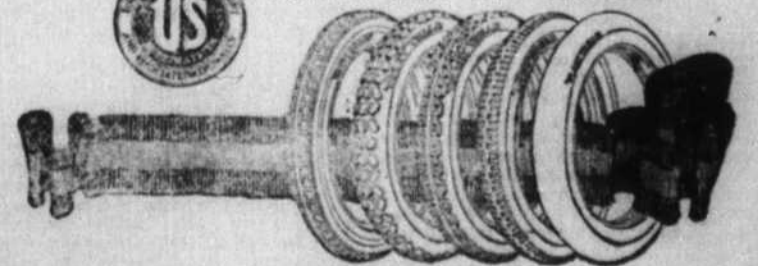
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