

Review.

The War.

The present war, so vast in its proportions, far reaching in its effects and uncertain as to its termination, deeply engages the thoughts of men the world over. In vain do we conjure the past to find anything worthy of comparison. As we read history and saw Napoleon with an army of half a million men undertaking an expedition to Russia, or Cyrus in his Anabasis, the leader of more than a million of soldiers, we were amazed at the magnitude of these warlike undertakings, but they are small, indeed, compared with any of the great battle fronts of the present tremendous war.

In this struggle all the accumulated knowledge of science has been brought into requisition, and the inventive genius of man, stirred anew by the troublous times, is daily making discoveries and applying them in the prosecution of this strife, and dreadful beyond comparison would be the results, if the discoveries of science were not as strenuously applied in the methods of preservation. Although many are thus saved from injuries and others only temporarily disabled, yet the loss of life in all the armies engaged is appalling. However for some time the number of recruits will exceed the wastage of men and the armies will continue to grow, but a time must come when the wastage of men will be in excess of recruitment. This period will arrive much earlier for the armies of those countries which have been subject to the laws of conscription. and its advent will be preceded by the extending of the age limit in both extremes and by the mitigating of many of the tests heretofore placed to ensure none but valiant manhood in the ranks. Although some thus admitted will display great bravery and prowess, yet in the main they will not measure up to the standard, even if strengthened by the return of others, who had tasted war before, and now convalescent, are again eager for the battle. The expenditures will be increasing

all the while, and although at the beginning the increase of expenditure gave increased results still a period will come which will be marked by diminishing results, notwithstanding the continued increase of expenditure.

The armies of the British Empire and of Russia will maintain their relative strength the longest, as according to their systems they were slowest in getting their men into the field. The outlay on the part of the British Empire will be enormous as she has not only to maintain her great navy, and her armies, but also to give financial aid to many of her Allies.

The struggle is too intense to last many years. The wastage of men, the enormous expenditure of money and the strain upon the nerves and muscles of the individuals engaged, all point to the impossibility of the struggle being of long duration. Every new battle front opened will hasten its conclusion. The Central Powers may be successful in the Balkans, they may plant their standards in Constantinople and even reach Egypt, but the armies by which the struggle will be decided will be found in Courland, Poland, and Galicia, or in Flanders, France and in the Alps. The main armies of the different nations must remain to protect the frontiers and those sent from the home battlefields will have the nature of expeditionary forces. An expedition may prove unsuccessful, yet while the main army is intact and the resources sufficient, the failure of an expedition will prove but a small factor in the final decision. However, the confidence expressed by people in an executive is often gauged by the success of the armies in the field, and the failure of even an expeditionary force could occasion the overthrow of a government and imperil final results. The maintenance of such armies will be accomplished only by the united action of strong executives in the Allied Nations and by unity of direction in the prosecution of the war. This lesson is being painfully learned by sad experience on the part of the Allies, while the Central Powers have been profiting largely by its practice.

The important place held by the head of an executive can be judged from the manner in which the world

waited for the pronouncement of Premier Asquith in the British House of Commons, after his recent illness. His declaration, so eagerly expected, was one of confidence and resolve. As head of the Government he assumed full responsibility for all that had been undertaken, and whilst he held that position, he declared it was his intention not to falter till the war was carried to a successful termination. It was the same statesman-like declaration, the same shouldering of responsibilities and the same determination to carry the business in hand to a finish, as distinguished his pronouncement two years ago, when the internal affairs of the kingdom seemed to threaten its disruption. It demonstrated the part the British Empire is taking in the struggle, and the influence her policy, as enunciated by her chief executive, has on the prosecution of the war. Her position is after this manner: Her armies show the greatest increase, relatively, in strength, and can continue to do so; her navy commands the seas and makes the resources of all Neutrals accessible; her possessions are free from hostile invasion and finally her resources in money are the greatest. Whilst the struggle waged by her armies on land is small compared with that of either France or Russia, yet on account of her ability to continue indefinitely the increase of her forces, her domination of the seas laying open to her the resources of all neutral nations; and her own great resources of wealth, make her the dominant power of the Allies, which will become more in evidence as the war progresses.

The changes that the war brought about in the various Governments of the Allies, were in many cases the weeding out of incompetency. When nations are in a tranquil state, men of mediocrity and even of incompetency may be found in important positions, but when trouble arises with its accompanying agitation, discernment, open criticism and feverish expectancy of results, only men of judgement, decision and action will survive.

As the Allied Nations are fully aware of the seriousness of the struggle in which they are engaged, and the many dangers which accompany it, they will not

become fearful of any partial success on the part of their enemies, but will take a comprehensive view of the entire struggle and confidently pursue their task to a finish. A careful study of the different aspects of the war since its beginning, should inspire them with reasonable hope of accomplishing this end. It is only at this stage that the armies of the Allies are equally equipped with those of the Central powers, and if the latter by reason of their preparedness for war were able to over-run the frontiers, nevertheless no final results have thus far been accomplished. The maintenance of these forward positions will in the end prove an exhausting drain upon the resources of the Central Powers; deprived of their commerce they will be entirely thrown back upon their own resources, and although these by thorough and systematic arrangements will be very fruitful, yet considering that their country is in a continual state of seige, they must fail in the end.

There is yet another factor, the all determining one, and but little reckoned in human calculations but clearly outlined to us by the Prophet Amos under somewhat similiar conditions ; "Seek him that maketh Arc-turus, and Orion and that turneth darkness into morning, and that changeth day into night ; that calleth the waters of the sea, and poureth them out upon the face of the earth ; The Lord is his name." We must, therefore, never forget nor in all human calculations lose sight of the fact that,—

"There's a Divinity that shapes our ends
Rough-hew them how we will."

Believe not each accusing tongue,
As most weak persons do ;
But still believe that story wrong
Which ought not to be true.

Better a friendly refusal than an unwilling consent.