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GERMAN RESOURCES

Hilaire Belloc, who is the incorrigible optimist against Germany, is sustained by what is to him a mathematically demonstrable fact, that the Germans have reached the maximum of their military strength. Given population so much, an ascertainable ratio of military effectives to population, a weekly waste of so much, and it becomes possible to determine with exactness when the supply of reserves ceases to be sufficient to fill in the holes in the lines.

When the reserves are no longer available in sufficient numbers the lines must contract. Units cannot be kept up to their fighting strength. The loss becomes irreparable and with each month becomes more appreciable.

Belloc's idea is that time is the fifth power in the European entente. Russia has sufficient men if they can be given sufficient training and equipment. Great Britain has enough men if the government can lay its hands on them. France, if she attempted Germany's tactics, would expose herself to the same peril Germany is in, having even less reserve force, but France has husbanded her strength for the part she has to do.

Aleister Crowley, an Irishman who will not be accused of sympathy for England, recently sent to the New York German publication, the Fatherland, a communication containing observations on the state of things in France and Great Britain. He said that from what he was able to see behind the lines in France he would conclude that great masses of half trained British troops were being shipped across the channel, put in charge of the old French sergeants, taught a little French, made familiar with the conditions in which later they would have to fight and then returned to England for further organization, equipment, and training.

It was his idea that if the British were looking forward to two more years of fighting in northern France they were preparing themselves for it in a fashion that did not suggest muddling.

In a war of attrition haste in putting men in the field is not needed. With Russia a great depot of human supplies, and with

the British painstakingly raising a great army, the anti-Germans would be insured against failure for loss of men and the numerical preponderance necessary for success would be established.

Belloc's estimates are happy children of optimism which, once adopted, grow rapidly into the results desired. We do not discard them. They may be sound pieces of military calculation, however plainly disregardful of all factors except the one of killing or permanently disabling soldiers.

The series of articles by Gustave Roeder begun in THE TRIBUNE will give another picture of German resources, and although we do not believe it possible for any man who would be trusted by the Germans in such an investigation to be dispassionate or impartial, it is quite possible for the articles to give a conscientious interpretation of Germany's condition.

It is good policy for Germany to exploit her present condition. It betrays no indication of structural weakness. It may, as the anti-Germans say, have apparent prospects of weakness, but they are not revealed, and if the war is to continue until there is a contracting German line, due to the fact that there are no available military effectives for the gaps, it may be a bit of super-Teutonic efficiency on the part of the British to give their soldiers the kind of training they are reported to be getting in France.