

what he is going to do; you cannot so prevent a woman, because she does not know what she is going to do herself!

It is this consideration, and only this, which prevents our ranking the actions of Edith Cavell as constitutionally one of the most loathsome and abominable crimes in the history of the planet.

"Murder most foul, as in the best it is; but this most foul, strange and unnatural."

The only parallels that occur to the mind are the crimes of Alexander VI (Italian), the Massacre of St. Bartholomew (French-Italian) and the Massacre of Glencoe (English).

I have no doubt that the shocking and unexpected nature

of the atrocity threw moral Germany for the moment off its basis.

With all due deference, be it said, the Kaiser missed a coup which would have thrown America into his arms; and it would have cost him nothing. After all, there is but poor sport in shooting vermin!

He might have written:

"Madam—You came to my country as a guest of honor; you used your position to assassinate your hosts.

"You disguised yourself as an Angel of Mercy to perform the work of a fiend. Worthy daughter of England, to England you shall go."

THE DEGRADATION OF THE CROSS

By John L. Stoddard.

MORE serious even than the loss of life and property in this world-war is the destruction of those high ideals on which our civilization was supposed to rest. The passing of these will mean perhaps a deterioration of human character for at least a generation. It is, for example, impossible to forecast what the result may be of the deliberate lies and slanders circulated everywhere by England through a purchased press. The temporary success of this campaign of falsehood may make its use so common that it will debauch the moral standards of humanity. The introduction into Europe also of heathen Asiatics and Africans to kill white Christians, and the abuse of German prisoners, civilians and missionaries at the hands of African blacks, ordered by British authorities, may likewise have a very serious influence on the spread of Christianity. This is the more unfortunate, as during the last twenty years other ideals of incalculable value had already vanished. With the increasing growth of luxury and Mammon worship, man's spiritual nature has been atrophied. Modern iconoclasts have, in particular, crucified the spirit of reverence. Nothing has been kept sacred from their sacrilege. They have made obedience and respect from children to parents, a lost art. They have parodied noble poems in a silly doggerel; scoffed at the possibility of honesty in men and virtue in women; ridiculed those who try to make the sufferings of animals a little less; frequently lowered the drama to obscene vulgarity, and changed through coarseness and publicity that type of womanhood, which we revered and loved, into the virago, who slashes precious paintings with a butcher's knife. Nevertheless, till recently, one ideal still remained intact—apparently too universal to arouse hostility, too pure to be besmirched by calumny, too far removed from political and religious feuds to call forth hatred. This was the ideal of HEROISM—the spirit of self-sacrifice, carried to the point of death; the trait of which Horace wrote two thousand years ago, "*Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori*"; the quality to which Christ referred when he said: "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." So rare and noble is this attribute in man, that every government has sought to recognize and reward it. Not by the gift of money. That would dishonor it. The gratitude of states should be ideally simple, like the wreath of laurel to the victors at Olympia. Such decorations, by whatever nation given, have hitherto been everywhere regarded with respect and admiration. Behind the Cross of the Legion of Honor, the Ordre pour le Mérite, the Iron Cross, the Victoria Cross and the Medal for Bravery, humanity has

always revered its best and highest, and paid an indiscriminate homage to the men who wore them. They spoke a universal language. One touch of nature made in this respect the whole world kin. Among many of our enemies, however, this sublime ideal no longer exists! An English paper recently published some verified abuse of Germany, whose jingling rhymes announced the fact that while formerly a thief was hanged upon a cross, men now hang crosses upon thieves!

We have heard, too, that French soldiers sometimes cut from the uniforms of wounded prisoners their badges of distinction, and then before their pain-racked eyes attach these decorations to the tails of animals, or offer them still worse indignities! So horrible does such a mockery of what is noblest in mankind appear that one endeavors to explain it by ascribing it to minds of a low order, made furious by the sight of bloodshed.

But now it seems that the same spirit shows itself four thousand miles away, in the United States, whose only part in the appalling carnage is that of prolonging it by ammunition and thereby making countless widows and orphans. Yes, there are actually men and women there who mock at and deride the decorations which the German Government gives its bravest sons in their stupendous task of beating back the Fatherland's unnumbered foes! Such people know, however, that the Iron Cross is never given except for deeds of heroism. They know that it lies often bathed in blood above the wearer's lifeless heart. They are aware that any insult offered to this token of Teutonic valor must wound unspcakably a million fellow-citizens around them, whose relatives are dying for the German cause. Yet in American cinematograph shows, upon the stage, and even in newspapers, supposed to be respectable, this sacred emblem has been ridiculed in cruel words and caricatures, because it represents German bravery.

Never once have I seen in a German or Austrian newspaper, and never have I heard from a German or Austrian citizen, one word reflecting on such decorations given to their enemies. But in America, shop windows have displayed cheap parodies of the Iron Cross, and even women have descended to the infamy of tying them to dogs!

What sort of people could have laughed at this base betrayal of the noblest of human sentiments and called it "cute"? Yet such there were who thought it fun thus to throw mud upon the stainless statue of self-sacrifice and spit upon a beautiful ideal, sacred to the brave of every land! There seems indeed no depth to which this mockery has not sunk. On one variety stage, for example, occurred a repre-