

# FIGHTING BEHIND FORTS WHICH CAESAR BUILT

On the great plains of Belgium, almost since the beginning of recorded time the jousting place of warring tribes and nations, the greatest and most appalling battle of all is being fought today, according to despatches, between the German army of invasion and the allied forces of Great Britain and France.

The line of battle extends for a length of twenty miles, the reports say, from Namur to Charleroi, along the Sambre River. Here since the days when the Roman legions swept over the world mighty struggles have been waged. Today the opposing forces are probably using as temporary breastworks and redoubts the crumbling citadels and strongholds, which the ancient Romans threw up two thousand years ago. Behind the allies lies the most ancient country in all of Europe, with its caves and grottoes, from which come prehistoric relics of man and his works. Over the fields of Waterloo, Genappe and Oudenarde, heavy with their burden of memories of other slaughters men are again dying in mortal combat.

## CAESAR BUILT CITADEL

At Namur, city of incongruities, the allies have their base, and today from the citadel, which Caesar built, and from where his legions threw boiling oil and catapulted hot stones onto the attacking hordes, there are shrilling the burst of the shrapnel, the cry of rapid fire guns and the staccato of musketry.

Belgians who know the country where the great fight is waging yesterday called attention to the fact that the allies, with the high country of Belgium behind them and the natural facilities for defence and offence which the strongholds of Namur and the natural topography of the battlefield offer, were excellently situated.

It was asserted that the German forces in great numbers were undoubtedly sweeping southward from Brussels, thirty miles away, and from Ghent and Bruges. Other divisions it was believed, were forcing their way along the coast from Ostend, which lies in the centre of the Belgian sea front, which is 247 miles long.

The German army front extends over the battle field of Waterloo, along the Brussels Canal, which runs almost due south from Brussels to Charleroi. Whether the army has crossed this canal toward the French frontier is not known, but Belgians

said yesterday that the line of battle, when the main engagement is in full swing, probably would extend from Namur to Mons, across Belgium, and north and south from Mons to Ostend. This would make not only the lowlands of Belgium a battlefield but would once more make Flanders with its dead cities and glorious memories of war and siege, once more the scene of conflict. Only this time, instead of knights led by nobles, there will be drilled armies acting as human buttresses for the great mechanical engines of death.

## GERMANS FLANK FORTRESS

Namur, where the line of battle in the Valley of the Meuse begins, is sixteen miles from Liege, and its fortifications are supposed to be the last protection of the valley against invasion. As a protection they have been rendered almost useless by the advance of the Germans through the north of Belgium to Brussels and then southward. Namur lies at the junction of the Meuse and Sambre rivers. The fork which turns the Meuse south is a great rocky promontory, on which Caesar built his citadel. Here, it is said, was the Aduaticum, the fortified camp of the Julius Caesar, after the defeat of Nervii. Excavations made at this citadel have brought to light valuable antiquities of the Roman-æolic period.

The new fortifications of steel, cupola type, are similar to those at Liege, only they are placed on elevated positions about the city, on the right and left sides of the Meuse River. They are equipped with rapid fire guns and are bomb proof. The citadel itself, now a great open amphitheatre, offers the allies, who have been entrenched there waiting the German advance, great opportunities for natural defence, the Belgians say.

## NATURAL BREASTWORKS

They assert that the cliffs and hills which rises about the juncture point of the Sambre River and continue at intervals until Charleroi is reached, offer natural breastworks, hard to be excelled for a force striving to repulse an invader. The allies, they say, at all points will be offered the protection of natural hills, small forests, and best of all, a background of hilly country. The German army swarming onto the plain which rolls into France must fight their way through the allied forces breaking the resisting army in two, or driving it back over the French border by sheer weight of numbers.

Charleroi is the centre of the iron industry of Belgium. It has a population of 26,528 and is entirely unfortified. It is twenty miles from Namur by direct route, but about forty if one follows the winding Sambre river. It has water communication not only with Brussels, but also with France. Hills and cliffs make it a good base for a defensive army, Belgians said yesterday, and the old fortifications dismantled in 1859 could be used as a basis of a new series of temporary breastworks.

# DR. CONAN DOYLE SAYS WAR WILL BE OVER IN A YEAR

## Declares That Great Britain is Stirred With Righteous Anger Over the Long Drawn Out Plot Against Her--Germany Meant War From the Outset--Would Challenge Britain's Supremacy of the Seas

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle has written for the New York World and the Boston Globe the following article on the German war policy, under a title selected by himself.

It is instructive and interesting now, before fresh great events and a new situation obliterate the old impressions: to put on record how things seemed to some of us before the blow fell.

A mental position often seems incredible when looked back to from some new standpoint. I am one of those who were obstinate in refusing to recognize Germany's intentions. I argued, I wrote, I joined an Anglo-German Friendship Society. I did everything I could for the faith that was in me. But early last year my views underwent a complete change, and I realized that I had been wrong and that the thing which seemed too crazy, too wicked to be true, actually was true.

What brought about my change of view was reading Bernhardt's book on Germany and the next war. Up to then I had imagined all this sabre rattling to be a sort of boyish exuberance on the part of a robust young Nation which had a fancy to clank about the world in jackboots. Some of it also came, as it seemed to me, from a perfectly natural jealousy, and some as the result of the preachings of these extraordinary professors whose idiotic diatribes have done so much to poison the minds of young Germans.

## GERMANY MEANT WAR

This was clear enough, but I could not believe there was a conspiracy hatching for a world war in which the command of the sea would be challenged as well as that of the land. No motive seemed to me to exist for so monstrous an upheaval and no prize to await Germany if she won which could at all balance her enormous risks if she lost.

Besides, one imagined that civilization and Christianity did stand for something, and it was inconceivable that a Nation with pretensions to either one or the other could at this date in the world's history lend itself to a cold-blooded barbarous conspiracy by which to build up its strength for a number of years with the intention of falling at the fitting moment upon its neighbors without any cause of quarrel save a general desire for aggrandizement.

All this I could not bring myself to believe. But I read Bernhardt's book, then I could not help believing, I wrote an article in the hope that others who had been as blind as myself might also come to see the truth.

For who was Bernhardt? He was not an irresponsible journalist nor a hot-headed Pan-German monomaniac. He was a high officer in the German army. He had written several of the standard works upon tactics. He moved in high circles and might be expected to know exactly what their sentiments were. And here was a book addressed to his own countrymen in which those sentiments were set forth.

## SIMPLICITY OF MIND

You could not set such a document aside and treat it as one of no account. As I said at the time we should be mad if we did not take very serious notice of the warning. But the strange thing is that there should have been a warning.

There is a quaint simplicity in the German mind which has shown itself again and again in recent events. But this was surely the supreme example of it. One would imagine that the fact the book could be translated and read by his intended victims had never occurred to the author!

As a famous soldier it is impossible to believe that he was not in touch with his General Staff, and he outlined a policy which has some reason therefore to be looked upon as an official one. It was as bright a performance as though some one on Lord Roberts' staff had written a description of the Feederberg Flank March and sent it to Gen. Cronje some weeks before it was carried out.

And yet this was not an isolated case, for Von Edelsheim, who actually belongs to this amazing General Staff, published a shorter sketch setting forth how his country would deal with the United States—an essay which is an extraordinary example of bombastic ignorance. Such indiscretions can only be explained

as manifestations of an inflated National arrogance which has blown itself up into the conviction that Germany was so sure of winning it mattered little whether her opponents were upon their guard or not.

## BERNHARDT'S PROGRAM

But Bernhardt's program, as outlined in his book, is actually being carried out. The whole weight of attack was to be thrown upon France, Russia was to be held back during her slow mobilization and then victorious legions from Paris were to thunder across in their countless troop trains from the western to the eastern firing line.

Great Britain was to be cajoled into keeping aloof until her fate was ripe. Then her fleet was to be whittled down by submarines, mines and torpedo boats until the number was more equal, when the main German fleet, coming from under the forts of Wilhelmshaven, should strike for the conquest of the sea.

Such were the plans, and dire was to be the fate of the conquered. They were in accordance with a German semi-official paper which cried on the day before the declaration of war, "We shall win, and when we do—Vae Victis!" With France it was to be a final account, and our own fate was to be little better.

It needs a righteous anger to wage war to the full, and we can feel it when we think of the long-drawn plot against us and of the fate which defeat would bring.

## LENGTH OF WAR

We can hardly hope to escape some bad hours during this war. The Germans are a great and brave people, with a fine record in warlike history. They will not go down without leaving their marks deep upon the Allies.

But it will not be long. It seems to me absolutely impossible that it should be long. The temper of the times will not brook slow measures nor will the enormous financial strain upon Germany be tolerated indefinitely.

How dangerous is prophecy! And these very words may come back to mock me. But I cannot make myself see how it can be over in less than six months or how it could extend for more than twelve.

If it should happen that the military affairs of Germany are so rotten as her diplomacy, then it certainly should not last long. That, no doubt, is too much to expect, but there are many degrees of incapacity which are short of that extreme limit.

## GERMAN DIPLOMACY FAILURES

What has come from all this crazy science of "Real Politik" and "Welt Politik" and the rest of it? Simply that wherever it was possible to lose the trick Germany and her partner have done so.

An alliance with Italy so loose that it was useless. A Mediterranean understanding with Austria so vague that it only operated after it became of no service to the German rulers. The drawing of Serbia, Montenegro and finally Belgium into the field against them. The dealing with England in a fashion which must unite our ranks and cut the ground from under the feet of any party which might cause dissension—these are the results of Wilhelmstrasse combinations with Potsdam embellishments.

Was there ever so colossal a muddle?

(Continued on Page Five)



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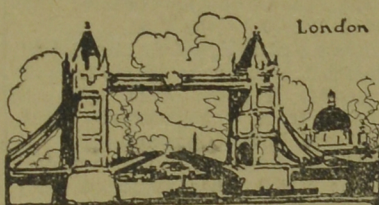
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