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KIEL: THEN AND NOW

BY W. SCHULZE

KIEL, early in January.

At last we have the winter solstice behind us, and may look forward to the cheerful prospect of growing warmth. Such a prospect is something precious to a soul cast down by the coal famine. What soul in Kiel is not thus depressed? In our whole house at home we have only one diminutive iron stove, which constantly looks ill-humored and frosty because it is so poorly fed with coal substitutes. As to real coal, we wonder if it still exists. There are rumors of some in Kiel, but it is so well concealed that it might almost be non-existent. It lies at the bottom of the harbor. Optimists — for we have such people, fortunately, even in this era of tears — say, with all seriousness, that Kiel has really a little submarine colliery district at its doors. This lies around the old coal hulks of the former Imperial Navy. In transshipping coal there year in and year out for so long a period, many a sack of the now costly black jewels found their way accidentally to the bottom of the harbor, and in spite of the general war scarcity the fish have not eaten it up. So coal is down there. And people are trying to get it — inventive persons eagerly trying various devices. Kiel, therefore, has a new profession, that of coal fishing. It is a trade that supports men; for a trifle of a hundredweight of coal will sell for from twenty-four to twenty-six marks if you get it. It is generally reported that the prospective product has been bought up for a long period to come. At least we have this latest gift of the sea — or, if you prefer that way of looking at it, the last present which

the old navy is making to its home town.

That is about the only thing left to Kiel from the navy: as a naval base the city is a back number. Nowhere else does the ruin of the Old Order impress itself with such painful clearness on the vision. Naval officers and sailors who once thronged our streets have almost completely disappeared. Business houses which formerly were, nearly without exception, suppliers in one way or another to the navy — where did you find a sign at that time that did not have the words, 'Purveyor to His Majesty's Ships'? — have acquired another and, I might say, a civilian aspect. And then the harbor! The picture stabs one's heart. All the steel-clad leviathans, Germany's proud sea defenders, have disappeared. The busy going and coming of boats and launches has ceased. Even the buoys are deserted. The gulls keep flitting here and there, feeling keenly the change in their fortunes, for the vessels which used to feed them so abundantly have gone, and no substitute has come. The surface of the harbor is like a desert, frightfully empty. Only the 'graveyard,' a district set apart before the war for old ships taken out of service, is still well occupied. There lie the ancient, brave veterans long past their fighting age, which have been left us. They look shabby and rough. We can put them back into service if we have money; and may make pleasure trips in them, if that gives us pleasure. The winter sun glistens on the cold blue waters of the Fiord. The icy sea stretches far beyond, the gloomy coast frames the picture. It is a picture of the grave of Germany's sea glory, and we avert our gaze from it whenever possible.

A few weeks ago there was a temporary revival of activity, and the harbor took on new signs of life.

When the Baltic blockade was suddenly proclaimed, merchant vessels from all parts of its western waters scurried to the protection of Kiel harbor. Little vessels flocked around the buoys like sheep fleeing in panic from a wolf. The navy thus gave shelter, with its harbor at least, to the sister merchant marine. That was all it could do: our armed might had crumbled to the dust. Will it ever revive to protect our ocean commerce?

Over there on the eastern shores of the harbor lie the mighty works of the former Imperial Navy Yard and the Germania Shipbuilding Company. They used to be of interest as a picture of highly organized industry. Never stopping, radiating activity day and night, with the clang and clatter of hammers and thunder of machinery, they were the birthplace of many of our great war vessels and our submarines. But now? Silence — almost the silence of the grave! Wearily, drop by drop, little streams of labor for a brief period each day trickle about the vast premises. An observer hardly notes them; and what he sees does not bring comfort to his heart. A few men are employed breaking up our submarines. The same hammers that forged them now crush them to fragments. A slight beginning, however, has been made toward new construction. A few days ago the Germania Yards launched the ore carrier "Saya," the first of four sister vessels built on contract for the Krupp firm. This steamer is one of the first, possibly the very first, merchant vessel whose keel was laid and whose construction was finished after the end of the war. We hope that other Kiel yards will soon be busy. The city must transfer its interest as speedily as possible from the navy to the merchant marine. Its future depends upon the success with which it accomplishes this, else its

ruin impends with the abolition of our navy. For what small remnants of our so-called new naval establishment still exist will have their principal base at Wilhelmshaven. Naturally this question of the future employment of the harbor is occupying the attention of the municipal authorities. Their purpose is to make Kiel a great transshipping port for Baltic trade. In this connection they advocate making their city a free port.

The authorities are also seeking other compensation for what Kiel has lost. There is the 'Kiel Week,' that annual sporting event of international interest to which the Imperial Court formerly added exceptional brilliance. Unforgettable and vivid as a picture the memory of the last Kiel Week, in June, 1914, rises before my eyes — our mighty gray war vessels in the harbor, and just beyond them the black colossi of the English squadron which was on a 'friendly and neighborly' visit to the 'cousin-nation.' The German battle-ships needed to fear no comparison with these of Britain. With proud satisfaction even an expert eye could compare our gray giants with the British black leviathans. How everything shone with neatness! How radiant the festive garb of the vessels and their crews! And above them all the black, white, and red flag. 'We'll defend it with our lives,' was the saying then. Farther on down the Fiord were the white sails of the speeding yachts which had come from far and wide for the competition. Through the streets, and in the gardens, and on the steamers were joyous, happy men. There were strangers with alert, interested, admiring eyes. That was Kiel. That was what the people of the city with proud glances called 'our Kiel' and 'our Fiord.' It is now a dream, nothing but a dream, and to awaken from it is torment.

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TARANTELLA

BY HILAIRE BELLOC

Do you remember an Inn,
Miranda?
Do you remember an Inn?
And the tedding and the spreading
Of the straw for a bedding,
And the fleas that tease in the High Pyrenees,
And the wine that tasted of the tar?
And the cheers and the jeers of the young muleteers
(Under the dark of the vine veranda)?
Do you remember an Inn, Miranda,
Do you remember an Inn?
And the cheers and the jeers of the young muleteers
Who had n't got a penny,
And who were n't paying any,
And the hammer at the doors and the Din?
And the Hip! Hop! Hap!
Of the clap
Of the hands to the twirl and the swirl
Of the girl gone chancing,
Glancing,
Dancing,
Backing and advancing,
Snapping of the clapper to the spin
Out and in —
And the Ting, Tong, Tang of the Guitar!
Do you remember an Inn,
Miranda?
Do you remember an Inn?

Never more;
Miranda,
Never more.
Only the high peaks hoar:
And Aragon a torrent at the door.
No sound
In the walls of the Halls wheré falls
The tread
Of the feet of the dead to the ground.
No sound:
Only the boom
Of the far Waterfall like Doom.