

IF AMERICA BORDERED GERMANY

A POINT OF VIEW

BY NICHOLAS ROOSEVELT

IN these days when the voice of the pacifist is again heard in the land and the Germans here and abroad are endeavoring to prove that their poor innocent Fatherland should be paid an indemnity for having been so wantonly attacked by ruthless Belgium; when the Bolsheviks are bringing liberty through a military autocracy; and when war dodgers and spies are being honorably discharged from their prisons, it is refreshing to see that there are still some who have not lost their clearness of vision.

From a lawyer in Tennessee, a captain in the American Army during the war, comes the following plaint:

"I am so often depressed now at these days of sordid selfishness that have followed the war. It seems that all our affairs are petty and unnecessary. It is a most refreshing thing to go back in memory to those soul-stirring days when self-seeking was a crime and when the public service was worth more than the greatest private gain. We were on the mountain-tops then. The decline has been so swift that I haven't quite recovered."

And from an officer in the French army, writing from the banks of the Rhine, comes a sentiment somewhat akin:

"I hope that your good wishes for France will come true, not so much on my own account as on account of my country, the ruins of which seem to have been forgotten by so many people, even including those who ought to be our friends.

"I have often regretted since the armistice the hours of military danger which France passed through, for at that time I was sure that we should be victorious.

Those were the days of soldiers. Those were the days of men whose vision was clear. Since then has come the day of the merchant and usurer, and many of those upon whom we had counted seem to fear, above all, seeing France regain in times of peace that position which none sought to deny her when it was a case of fighting.

"It would be well if many persons could come here in order to be able to tell your fellow-countrymen what remains of the ruins of France (despite her magnificent efforts towards rehabilitation, considering the present penury of her resources) and also to tell the truth about Germany. Under a camouflage of apparent bankruptcy Germany is actually accumulating wealth. Under a camouflage of democracy (incidentally daily more transparent) she is preparing the return of the Hohenzollerns. More unrepentant than ever, more impudently insulting than ever, she is abusing the extraordinary credulity of her public to utter loud protests which no nation with any critical sense can read without laughter, but which stimulate hatred of the 'hereditary enemy' among Germans abroad and at home. According to a German newspaper, they are teaching school-children five years of age the following song:

"When I am grown up
I shall be a soldier,
I shall have a horse,
And shall fight the French.

"Because Germany thought she could attack France alone—France which believed in peace—she brought about a war that cost the life of one Frenchman between the ages of twenty and forty-five (of whom two-thirds were

twenty to twenty-five) for every twenty-five inhabitants of France.

"Just because we have been abandoned in peace (a peace, by the way, of which many clauses disadvantageous to ourselves represent concessions to our friends) shall our enemy of yesterday be allowed to prepare a new war with impunity to-day—this time an economic war, but to be followed by a military war in a few years, a war the preparation for which we by ourselves cannot prevent? Will it be necessary, when the time comes, that our former friends, their eyes opened too late, return once more to fight a new 'last war' on the graves of the last Frenchmen?"

Our absorption in home problems makes us prone to lose sight of the French point of view. We forget that twice within the memory of living men France has been attacked by Germany. We forget that in 1871 Germany was moved by no pity for the enemy she had crushed and nearly broken. And yet that same Germany to-day, unbroken and untouched by the ravages of war, whines and by every dishonorable means in her power (means, by the way, in which she is well experienced) is endeavoring to shift the moral and physical cost of the war upon her victims.

If America bordered Germany, our sentiments would be those of France. Just because an ocean lies between us, the Germans are seeking to malign our allies and are hoping to have us help the Fatherland back so that at the earliest possible moment she may resume the war which she regrets for the sole reason that it was not successful.

Perhaps another time Germany will win.

A MAN OF THE WORLD'S DICTIONARY

BY BEVERLEY NICHOLS

IN that sad year 1822, when England, still staggering under the burden of the lately ended Napoleonic wars, was in the thick of social, political, and economic troubles, fully as grave as those with which she is confronted to-day, there was published in London a little volume called "A Man of the World's Dictionary." It was brought out anonymously, in a discreet brown cover, and it appears to have been well received, for it went through three impressions in a year. And for the wit and wisdom which it contains it might well have gone through thirty. Perhaps this book was unknown to Meredith, perhaps the bulky figure of Oscar Wilde never bent over its pages, and quite possibly Mr. Bernard Shaw has never even

heard of it. But it would certainly have paid all these gentlemen to have assimilated some of the "Man of the World's" *bon mots*.

He was not a patriot, this anonymous one. Under ENGLAND, you will find: "The land of philanthropy, most of whose inhabitants would lay the world in blood to sell a yard of linen. A country in which there is nothing polished but marble, nor any ripe fruit except roasted apples." That, *mutatis mutandis*, is the true Wilde touch. Nor does he appear to have been a profiteer, for he has none of the profiteer's reverence for wealth. Good to him is "A yellow metal, that causes men to be massacred, towns to be burned, citizens to be oppressed, and women to be overcome."

But he is, first and last, a thorough-going cynic. The first word in the book is Abbé. This is how he deals with it: "A B B É. No word has been wrested further from its original meaning than this. Abbé signifies *father*; yet those who bear this name are condemned to celibacy. It is true that, in those times when morals were purer and religion was honoured, these gentlemen occasionally recollected the etymology of their name. But never more shall we see those happy days when gallant abbés, and even waggish abbés, were so much loved. Alas! how everything has degenerated!"

The last word in the book (and it is the last quality in the book too) is YOUTH: "The age of a man till he is

twenty and of a woman till she is fifty." That definition reminds one of Wilde's lady whose hair, when her first husband died, went quite gold from grief.

It is a fat little book, this, and whenever one opens it one gets a verbal slap in the face. On the same page as GOLD there are three other pieces of wisdom. GARRET, we are told, is "the palace of artists, the haunt of rats, and the sanctuary of genius." GAY WOMAN is "A rose, from which every lover plucks a leaf, so that the thorn is all that is left for the husband." And, lastly, a definition of the much-discussed word GENTLEMAN: "One who has duties to fulfill and models to follow, but who generally neglects to do either one or the other." On the next page we find two very good and bitter remarks:

GRATIS: "A word so foreign to our manners that it has been borrowed from a dead language."

GROW RICH: "Signifies to be a miser or a cheat, and usually to be both at once."

The "Man of the World" seems to be particularly active among the G's. Perhaps he dropped his G's and had lost his temper in endeavoring to pick them up. Let us see how he fares among the H's. Hardly better, it is to be feared.

The first word is HANGING. "The English," he says, "have fits of hanging as other people have of fever. It is but just that a nation who neither think nor live like the rest of mankind should die in a way peculiar to themselves."

That is cutting enough, but what about these?

HIGHNESS: "A great name given to a little man."

HISTORY: "A word which has been so much abused that it has become synonymous with tale."

HONEST FELLOWS: "Those who hold precisely the same political opinions as ourselves." He goes on to say:

"You may be a bad son, a bad husband, a bad father—you may have injured, calumniated, and persecuted your benefactors, yet you will not figure the less in the list of honest fellows with such or such a one, in place, or out of place, while you share his political feelings and antipathies."

HONOUR: "A term whose meaning is singularly comprehensive, including both virtue and infamy. It signifies everything and it signifies nothing. We solicit the *honour* of dying for our country. We have had the *honour* of killing our best friend in a duel. We have the *honour* of reckoning among our ances-

tors a confessor of Louis XI, a mistress of Francis I, or a favourite of Henry III. We have the *honour* of saluting a scoundrel, of making an observation to a fool, or of writing to an idiot."

Perhaps, after all, our man of the world dropped his H's too. It would be interesting to know who this man, with his bitterness and his mordant wit, really was. Possibly he was a politician, but one can hardly imagine any of the statesmen then in power or in opposition writing in such a fashion. Liverpool's fifteen years' Premiership was slowly nearing its end; he was certainly not the man. Nor was Wellington or Eldon or Richmond, nor either the young Peel or the budding Palmerston. The only one who might have written it was Canning. Canning was a brilliant parodist and a writer of comic verse, and, had he wished, could have remembered plenty of material in his life to have made him bitter enough. But, whoever it was, it would be interesting to know what the man of the world would have said to-day, and whether his judgments would have been more favorable or whether they would have been even more biting than before. I am inclined to think the latter would be more probable.

ROOSEVELT'S BEST CONTRIBUTION TO DEMOCRACY

BY FREDERICK M. DAVENPORT

IT was the human touch and the inspiration to practical, effective public service which Roosevelt gave to a multitude of men and women whom nobody can number, especially young men, in all parts of the United States; this was, I think, Roosevelt's most useful contribution to democracy. He aroused the initiative of others, not only by displaying enormous energetic initiative himself, but by his wonderfully unselfish backing up of dawning initiative on the part of the men and women whom he saw enlisted in the difficult practical political struggle for the common welfare of the American people.

So many of us have had this experience of Roosevelt. My own definite fighting interest in public affairs dates from him. I will speak of that later. I am led to reflect at the moment upon this particular sort of Roosevelt influence because of the fact that we now have for the first time a genuine Roosevelt woman in Congress.

There has been one woman already in Congress, Miss Jeannette Rankin, of Montana. She was received with delightful courtesy, and her career in the House was followed with eager interest by the whole country. The outcome was not a happy one, mainly because Miss Rankin found herself unable to follow the overwhelming sentiment of Congress and of the American people on the issue of the war. She could not bring herself to cast her vote for the sending of American young men to the trenches of the

battle-fronts in France. She thus exhibited to the country the very trait which many of the opponents of woman's entrance upon the activities of government professed to fear. They professed to fear the dominance of a sort of hysterical super-idealism in the woman nature which would prove dangerous in National crises. And Miss Rankin seemed to demonstrate it. She is no longer in the House of Representatives.

But now comes along a Roosevelt woman, Miss Alice Robertson, of Oklahoma, who will furnish some argument on the other side. She is sixty-six years of age, and comes from a line of sturdy pioneer missionary stock, fearless and practical, with the right amount of control of the emotions. She appears to have helped to recruit and fit out the Rough Rider Regiment of Roosevelt in the conflict with Spain, and she seems to have been a sort of war mother to young soldiers in her section of the State during the recent world struggle. She seems to have lived, like her ancestors before her, a vigorous, fighting life of practical service.

In political heredity she is a typical Roosevelt product. Many years ago she came East to the Lake Mohonk Conference to speak about the needs of the Indians of Oklahoma. The story has recently been told of her in the accounts of her life which have followed the election:

It was a dignified, impressive gathering, and the stranger from the West was at first conscious only of a

blur of faces as she took the platform and began her address. But finally a face separated itself from the others, a face half the distance of the auditorium away, a peering, attentive face. The speaker found herself forgetting the rest of the audience and talking to that one understanding face.

Her address finished, the speaker hurried to one side and sank, rather exhausted, on a settee to rest. The man who had listened so attentively left his place and made his way to her side.

"I could not wait for a formal introduction," he said. "I just had to tell you how fine I thought your talk was. Your views on Indian education are mine also."

It was Theodore Roosevelt, then United States Civil Service Commissioner, with an eternal instinct for unselfish appreciation of expert knowledge or quality in others. Twelve years after, as President of the United States, he named Miss Robertson as Postmistress of Muskogee, a position which she held for more than eight years, until the Democratic Administration came into power after 1912. And now she is in Congress.

There be many who will recall Roosevelt's great sweep to the West in the summer of 1910, when he was seeking to stay the tide of revolt against the Republican party which was rising from the Mississippi to the Pacific in the middle of the Administration of President Taft. He sought to check the revolt by inspiring the party and the country