

achievement was the result of a speech he made at the Union on American prohibition. The achievement assumes considerable magnitude when one realizes that the typical Oxford attitude toward prohibition is amazed disbelief that it can exist anywhere.

When Mr. Carson, as chairman, proposes the motion, the first speaker affirms it, followed by a speech of negation, two more speeches (one of affirmation and one of denial), and one speech from each side to sum up. So far the procedure is not unlike that used in America, but from now on it is radically different. In an American college music or some other form of entertainment is introduced at this point to lull the minds of the audience until the judges have made their decision. In England the fun is just beginning. When the chosen debaters of the evening complete their arguments, the question is open for discussion by the house. In all three of the contests of the American team this year this was the longest and most interesting part of the meeting. One speech from the floor was twenty minutes in length and surpassed the efforts of the debaters themselves for scope of understanding and trenchancy of expression. At Edinburgh adherents of the Labor, Socialist, Conservative, and Liberal point of view fought keenly for supremacy. When the chairman deems the forum closed, the vote is taken. There are two doors, one for the ayes and another for the noes, and all the members of the house choose their exits with care, depositing their votes in the two boxes—aye and no—provided for the purpose. At Oxford these receptacles are heavy carved oak, darkened by age; and Tradition—that ubiquitous fellow—has decreed that the aye box is a square foot greater in capacity than the no, for no other reason than tradition and that the boxes, of course, were made that size.

The general effect of this forum method of procedure and the popular

vote is to keep interest in debating quick and fresh. The audience is more responsive than an American debate audience, and it is larger. One isn't admitted except by ticket! Many an alumnus of an American college will remember being begged to attend a debate "to support the team."

The reason for an English university man going to a debate is that he is interested in the question at issue and more than likely plans to say something for his opinion. This difference in attitude and motive reveals an interesting contrast between what the student across the Atlantic thinks about and talks about and the mind of his American cousin. What surprised the American debaters this year more than anything else was the table talk and other conversation of the British collegian. He is a keen student of politics and social questions, and isn't ashamed to make them subjects of every-day discussion along with cricket and rowing. His conversation is witty, bright, clever, full of chaffing and joshing, but much more solidly based than American college talk. The Oxonian, the Edinburgh undergrad, and the Sheffield man showed themselves possessed of information and able to give it out easily and interestingly and to receive in kind. This ability is reflected in the debates, which are conducted in the conversational style. Formal argument in a solid, businesslike, "cold facts" manner, which is the substance of the American college forensic style, is rarely used. Debate in Britain is made to serve a desire to acquire a clear, cogent, and interesting manner of speech. Expressing his views as brilliantly as possible is the sole justification for debating, in the opinion of the British collegian, and so rooted is this point of view in the university consciousness that the American debaters were courteously advised not to regard the recent *rencontres* as academic contests, but merely as "a friendly interchange of views."

The amount of wit, humor, and whimsicality in the British speeches amazed their American antagonists, who had been trained to use humor carefully and in the form of a story with a point. Spontaneous wit was sprinkled through all of the other discourse, from both the debaters and the speakers from the floor. Occasionally it seemed irrelevant, as when one of the young Oxonians began his pleading somewhat as follows:

Dear Mr. Chairman (*pause*)

I am going to be confidential (*long pause*)

I have a brother (*whispered*)

He occasionally (*pause*) speaks to me (*pause*)

Recently he finished his studies here and decided to sip from the spring of knowledge in an American university.

He matriculated (*prolonged pause*)

Soon afterward he became ill.

And more in the same vein. There were also some facts in his discourse, but he had somehow acquired the gift of using them for penetrability rather than for weight. What such a speaker lacks in capacity to impress he gains in the ability to amuse and entertain, which is often a better method of cultivating receptivity in an audience than gravity and a businesslike array of facts.

All of the English college debaters cultivate the light, deft touch. Those who admire Chesterton and Shaw attempt the paradox and the aphorism, and do them rather well. They even garnish their table talk with this sort of thing.

Because their debating reflects the student psychology it may prove a salutary influence on American student thought and opinion to hear the Oxonians next year, although they will miss the setting of the Union, saturated with memories of Rossetti, William Morris, and others of England's great, and filled with hundreds of young men eager to hear and to be heard.

## VERDUN AND COBLENZ

### SPECIAL CORRESPONDENCE

BY FRANCIS ROGERS

TO the returning wanderer who has been absent for any space of time France must always appear to merit her title of "La Belle," but this summer, which everywhere in northern Europe has been cool and wet, her beauty is more obvious than ever. Her fertile fields, luxuriant trees, and overflowing streams give evidence this year of the kindness of nature, and even the grimness of her battlefields and stricken towns is mitigated by an abundant growth of weeds and wild flowers, as well as by the devotion and industry of reconstructive hands. Tales of a cruel

drought come from southern France, but this has not spread so far north as the tourists' customary summer routes. The value of the dollar, which everywhere on the Continent is, after the weather, the prime topic of conversation of all American travelers, has not decreased in the past twelve months. The French franc is still worth only about eight cents (pre-war value nineteen), the Belgian franc even less. Prices for those who think in dollars are still appreciably less than American prices. One can board and lodge in a convenient quarter of Paris for five dollars a day, and away

from the metropolis, if one avoids the haunts of pretense and fashion, for less. Commodious motors may be hired at the rate of about thirty cents a mile. For the American, then, life in France is, as it always has been, easy and, compared with conditions at home, inexpensive.

Four years of peace have not robbed Verdun of its aspect and general atmosphere of romance and heroic conflict. There remain still in the city many evidences of destruction, but these are gradually disappearing, and on every hand one sees activity in reconstruction.

As at Rheims and Soissons, the Cathedral at Verdun is the chief monument to the years of bombardment, and even now a corner of it no larger than a village church is all that has been restored to the devotions of the faithful. As one leaves the city and passes through the outlying villages on the way to the forts one cannot but be moved to admiration at the zeal and speed with which the ruin of all buildings, four years ago usually complete, is being replaced by permanent new construction. Many a little community which the war left houseless has resumed its normal life in solid and commodious farmhouses and buildings. There is work for every pair of able hands—one sees no idlers—and if one did not know that the expense of all this reconstruction is being borne by the French themselves and not by the Germans, who should bear it, the situation would be altogether cheering.

We visited Vaux and Douaumont and the Trench of the Bayonets in a torrent of rain and bowed our heads in reverence before these shrines of French heroism and self-sacrifice, where so many, many times the defenders must have felt that nature, as well as the invaders, knew no mercy. On the way to Montfaucon one passes fields short years ago the scene of incessant struggle and slaughter, where miles of barbed-wire entanglements still overtop the new growth of weeds and bushes, and enters the territory where our own boys fought and fell so gallantly in the summer and fall of 1918. At Romagne 14,000 crosses mark the graves of those who died in the Argonne and whose people were content to let them lie in the land they had died to save. There could be no lovelier or more dignified final resting-place for them, and in the untold years to come the spot that is America in France will remain as a noble monument to our participation in the war.

As one leaves Verdun and journeys eastward into Lorraine along the route followed by the Germans westward in their attack on France, the signs of devastation are soon replaced by the evidences of long and undisturbed prosperity that characterized Germany before the war and still differentiate it from the austerity that belongs to the aspect of France even undevastated. Traveling northward through Treves, one sees on every hand fruitful farms and busy industrial towns. If there is a sweeter or more ingratiating landscape than that which is to be seen from the car windows as the train follows the course of the Moselle, I do not know where to look for it. All the hilly slopes east of the river are covered with vineyards under the highest cultivation, and every few miles is a pretty river town, the distributing center for the wine from the surrounding hills. An hour or two more, and one reaches, at the confluence of the Moselle and the Rhine, Coblenz.

A hundred years ago Napoleon made himself at home in Coblenz, but since then there has been nothing to disturb

its growth as a beautifully situated, prosperous commercial city. Its fine streets, handsome buildings, and well-planned parks all betray its comfortable history. In these particulars it does not differ substantially from fifty other German cities of moderate size. It is unique to-day among all the cities in Europe, because it is living under the Stars and Stripes, which float serenely from the highest tower of its famous old citadel, Ehrenbreitstein. From two buildings on the river-front beneath Ehrenbreitstein French flags are flying, but they are subordinate to one flag, which by its pre-eminence on the citadel signifies that the bridgehead of the Rhine at Coblenz is in the keeping of the American Army.

At the present time twelve hundred American soldiers, under the command of Major-General Allen, are in absolute control. Some six or seven thousand French soldiers are in and about Coblenz, but General Allen is also their commander-in-chief, and as long as our flag floats above Ehrenbreitstein the city will remain under American rule. The beginning of last June our army had packed all its belongings in readiness to depart. Then came orders from Washington to remain, and there our army still is. Early in 1919 Coblenz was the center for 300,000 Americans, but little by little this great host has shrunk, till now it is only the skeleton of its former self. It is small in numbers; in efficiency and training it is said to be the equal of the best. General Allen has spared no pains to keep its morale and discipline at the highest point. Its chief duty is to administer justly the territory intrusted to its care and to minimize in all possible ways the friction that in any occupied country is inevitable between the natives and the alien troops. Our army seems to be performing its task admirably and to be the least unwelcome of all the occupying armies. The unofficial contact of our soldiers with the native population is constant and agreeable, as is attested by the many marriages that have taken place between our men and German girls.

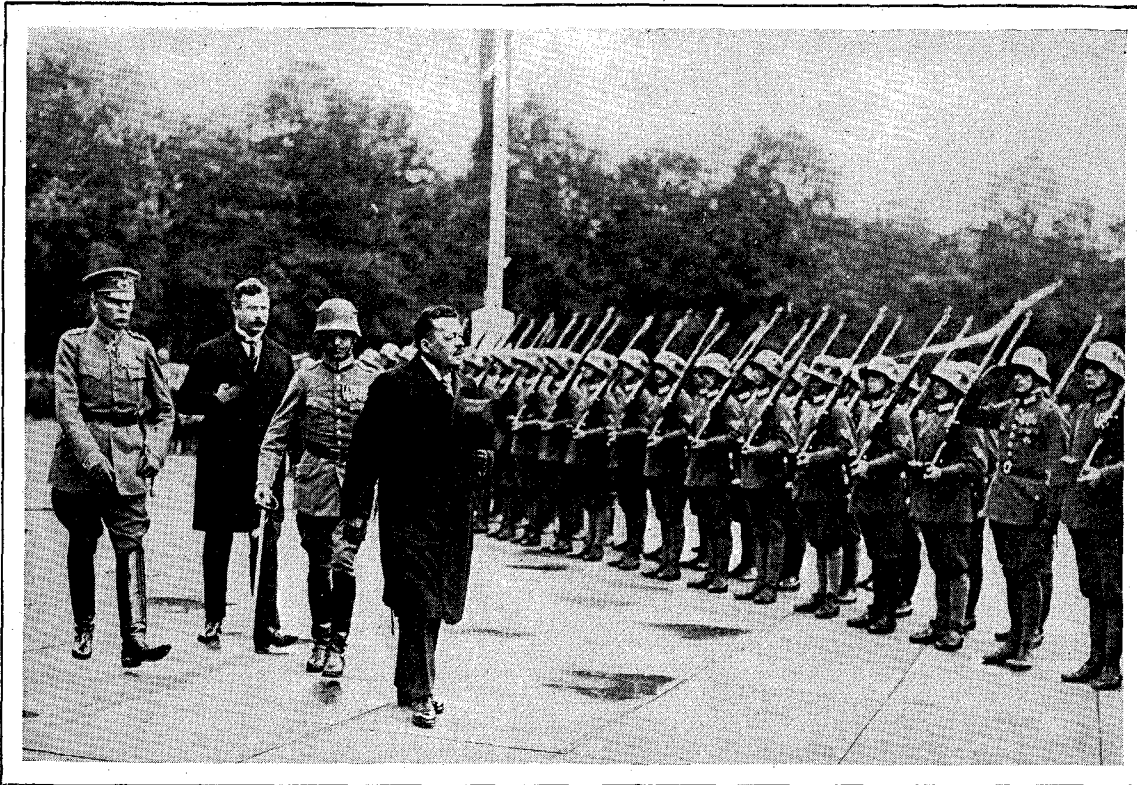
There is little homesickness among our men. Indeed, it would be surprising if there were, for I doubt if any army ever served under more comfortable conditions. The army, which is composed entirely of professional soldiers who enlisted, presumably, because of a taste for military life, is well housed and well fed; its military duties, while sufficiently exacting to keep it in fighting trim, are not severe. The men are paid in American dollars, the purchasing powers of which in Germany are now so great as to place within the means of our men innumerable luxuries. In addition, the ever-faithful and well equipped Y. M. C. A. and a unit of the Salvation Army minister generously to all prayers for healthy recreation—fields for all outdoor games, golf, tennis, swimming, libraries, billiards, panteens,

etc. No wonder that the American soldier in Coblenz is contented and that, having nothing to be disagreeable about and his pocket full of easy money, he makes no enemies. So much for the surface of things.

The closer one gets to the situation at Coblenz, the clearer becomes the value of our being there. One coming direct from Verdun to the Rhineland must realize why France feels that she has been unfairly treated both by her allies and by Germany and that if she were now to weaken in her attitude Germany would never make the reparations that are so justly due from her to France. Germany, sulky and disingenuous, will pay nothing that she is not forced to pay; that is certain. No matter how loud she cries poverty, the fact is indisputable that for every selfish enterprise she has money in plenty; for reparations only does she lack funds. England, with Germany's colonies and navy in her hands, but with grievous unemployment at home—the figures show a million and a half of idle men—sees as her most pressing need the restoration of her former trade with Germany. It is small wonder that between two countries having such different points of view there should be constant friction when their representatives come in contact with each other.

America is not in the League of Nations; her attitude towards European questions is almost as detached as was that of Woodrow Wilson in 1916. Congress is now striving to erect a tariff wall about our commerce that would render foreign trade more difficult than ever before. In such a situation let us be truly grateful that General Allen and his little army still represent us officially in the European tangle. The rift is widening between the two great European democracies that held the Germans back while we were making up our minds to participate in a struggle that really involved our own safety as a nation. We, with France and England, finally brought Germany to defeat. It is a sad time now, when the fruits of victory are still to be gathered, to withhold our hand from the harvest. It should be our earnest aim to try to reconcile the differences between our two allies to whom we are bound by a thousand ties of blood and tradition and to whom we owe the major part of what is best in our civilization. We did our share in 1918; it will be to our everlasting shame if we do not do it in 1922. Let us in our gratitude to England and France for the many precious things that we owe to them, in our sympathy with them in their many tribulations and sorrows, and in our understanding of their urgent needs, cease to think of America as a land unconcerned with the problems of Europe and determine, as we did in 1917, to play a worthy part in the world's great drama. General Allen and his little army are playing one in Coblenz; let us all, as a nation, play ours with equal zeal and vision.

# GERMAN AND ITALIAN REVIEWS



Wide World Photos

## CELEBRATING THE THIRD BIRTHDAY OF THE GERMAN REPUBLIC

President Ebert, Chancellor Wirth, and General von Seeckt inspecting the honor company of the German national army during the celebration of Constitution Day, the third anniversary since the birth of the German Republic in 1919



International

## FASCISTI MARCHING THROUGH THE STREETS OF MILAN, ITALY

The Fascisti are a society of Italian patriots organized to combat the propaganda of Italian Communists. They are reported to have recently broken a general strike in the city of Milan and taken over the government, which was in danger of collapse as a result of Communist agitation