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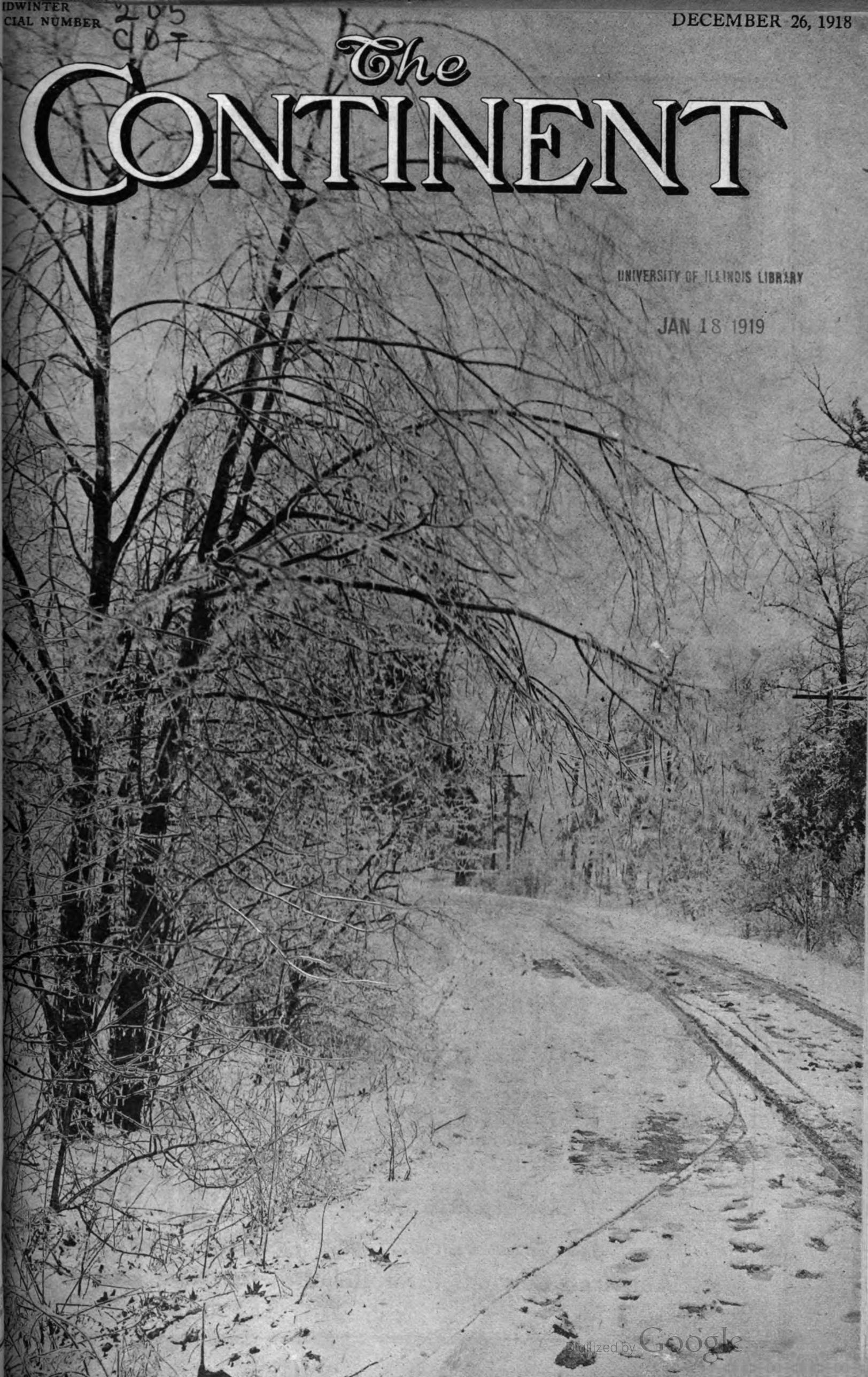
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The CONTINENT

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The Good Things of the War

V. THE GLORY OF COURAGE

THE COURAGE which war has revealed in the soul of American youth is an incalculable asset in America's moral resources.

The miracle of that courage has never before been quite equaled in the world's story. It made ridiculous the romantic notion that in "brave days of old" men of a more heroic breed dared death more recklessly than moderns had grit to venture.

Military opinion everywhere assumed that in face of the terrors of twentieth century war it was idle to expect human flesh to stand unafraid unless long continued drill and discipline had made obedience to orders an automatic habit. Only the soldier trained to act before he thought could be depended on in battle conditions.

Indeed, there were military leaders (not of the American army) who deliberately said it was impossible to get soldiers "over the top" into the seething hell of "no man's land" while they were in sober possession of all their senses. The claim of many commanders was that before a charge was ordered rum or something worse had to be given the rank and file to drug their brains.

But the American army in France achieved a record of bravery unsurpassed in history—and broke both tradition and superstition.



For one thing, it will always be the thankful pride of Americans that victory was won by their soldiers in France without reproach to the simple, sane manhood of them. They fought sober. Never a man of them went into battle drunk.

Besides this, Americans overseas demonstrated that the doing of duty in deadly peril is not the trademark of a mechanical automaton. Courage, they proved, is not blind heedlessness. And the patriot's fighting is not a trained-in brutality.

For practically all the hundreds of thousands of American lads who fought in France, only a few months at the most—and with many but a few weeks—divided home scenes and home routine, all unexciting and perfectly secure, from the most appalling pictures of horror and blood that the eyes of men ever looked on.

Training, as military science has defined and demanded it, was impossible in the brief interval. America's army was still composed of independent-thinking and self-controlled individualists.

Yet untrained as they were, these youth from the peaceful cities, villages and farms of the United States marched, "breast forward" and unflinching, into the furnace of the hottest trial by fire and death that modern scientific frightfulness could devise.

And they complained at no hardship, hesitated at no task, blanched at no peril, bewailed no wounds.

Soldiers for the passing day alone—yet no hardened, lifelong devotee of the soldier's grim trade has ever outdone their valor. Indeed, they met the best disciplined troops of any time and worsted them in direct combat.

What is the explaining secret of that unmatched record?



Not a simple secret entirely—several elements mix in it.

The comradeship, the unselfishness, the fidelity to duty and the contempt for adversity, to which this series of studies have already alluded, all enter into the account.

The initial determination of these young patriots to go through to the end with the bad business imposed on them by Germany, not only supplied cheerfulness in the early discomforts of camp and transport but sustained courage in the final clash of battle.

The sense of a man's duty in a hard time—realization of the baseness in leaving others to carry the load of righting wrong in the world—likewise held soldiers sternly true.

And then the fidelity that a sound-thinking man must bear toward his comrades, interlaced with the thrill which their courage imparted to him, made a bulwark that defended even a natural coward from the infiltrating of cowardice.

All of these things are minor, however, in comparison with the great inherent military fact that the soldier had forgotten himself. When he enlisted he abandoned care to save his own life or protect his own good fortune.

And of course any man can be brave if he has forgotten himself. All timidity is selfishness—a shivering wonder how one is himself going to come off if he accepts a great hazard. But the heroes are those—and those alone—who have put themselves out of consideration and are consumed with the passion of doing the one deed challenged from them by the current instant.

The American army had courage because it had no self-concern.



Yet there was still something else that came in to crown the stalwart moral grandeur of this heroism and that was the immediate instinctive reaction of manhood refusing to cower before threats.

Few things finer are inwrought in human nature than its practically infallible response of scorn and defiance to imperious force demanding its homage.

This is the true guarantee of mankind's liberty in all ages—this intolerance of tyranny which is native to the human soul. And it was from that primitive impulse, reappearing with full force in our own time, that the troops of the United States opposed to the Teuton armies indomitable resistance and irrepressible daring.

For a generation past certain individuals of poor insight and narrow understanding have been applauding themselves as benefactors of the world because they were making war impossible, as they said, by making it too terrible to be contemplated. The inventors of airships, airplanes, machine guns, submarines and high explosives all were clamorously taking to themselves this credit.

But now the world knows they were mistaken, and it is every human being's right to be proud of the demonstration thereof.

War will be abolished from the world—let no despairing cynic doubt that—but let every lover of humankind rejoice that it will not be abolished because man has learned to cower before terror.

Out of and above all the dismay and suffering and death and grief of a time of war, rises unconquered still and undaunted the human soul.

And man is yet the unabashed master of life because he is the untamed challenger of danger and death.



Who then beholds in America any entrenched evil which he is willing to call impregnable, when this heroic host of the nation's strongest young men, purged from fear and vibrant with the very custom of courage, are so soon returning to home portals?

It is needful only to make them see, when they have come again, the actuality and enormity of social and civic abuses.

They will not fear to assail nor fail to crush any injustice which has the remotest affinity to the colossal injustice which they smote in Europe.

The War Code of the Old Testament

NOT LONG since I read in the "Catholic Encyclopedia" that while Bible study was "the most important study in which a Christian could engage," it was "also the most dangerous"—unless that reading was supervised by the church. In a late issue of *Christian Work* I read the same rather singular statement, only in this case the supervising censor is the critic and not the church.

Frankly, I do not see how the most useful book can be at the same time the most perilous, but let that pass. It occurs to me after sixty years' familiarity with the Bible that the Bible is as useful as it ever was to any man who will study it thoroughly and not superficially.

For example, we have in the Old Testament a history of war and a code of war. The true Bible student reads both and interprets the one by the other. They are not contradictory: they are complementary.

We have an account of the exterminating war carried on by the Israelites in the conquest of Palestine. Such a war when inspired by greed for territory or by military ambition is wholly indefensible. Carried on as a punitive measure to save the world from unspeakable moral degradation, it has been defended by a soldier like the Duke of Wellington and by a theologian no more anxious to preserve traditional theories than Frederick Dennison Maurice. Wherever it is spoken of in the Scriptures it is so called. It was not because Moses wished "a place in the sun" but because the Canaanites' iniquity was a full cup and their vices of such a nature that those vices are still called by the names of the cities blotted out. It was one of those "major operations" in world surgery by which the world was saved from rottenness of such a character that we cannot speak of it without a shudder. And the Israelites were warned that if they fell into the vices of the Canaanites they would share their doom.

Laws of War Antedate Hague Convention

But if we turn now from the history, familiar to the most cursory reader of the Old Testament, to the code, familiar only to the students of the Old Testament, we find a law of war which antedated the rules and regulations laid down by The Hague conference and anticipated them in all their most important principles.

In the first place Israel was by that code enjoined most effectually from any and every offensive war. The injunction against multiplying horses (Deut. 17:16) struck at the root of aggressive war because without horses Israel could have neither cavalry nor chariots, and without such troops it must perforce limit itself to wars of defense. It meant then just what a peace conference means today when it seeks to limit the building of dreadnaughts. When Germany declined to limit the multiplying of battleships England knew that Germany intended aggression just so soon as she had ships enough to command the seas. The horse was not in the east then, is not now, a necessity of domestic labor but was used solely for royal show and offensive campaigns. Solomon was the first king of Israel to break through this restriction, and his ambition for empire caused the ruin of Israel as a nation.

Another important article of Israel's war code was that requiring universal military service when military service was at all necessary. When attacked, Israel did not call for volunteers. She called out "every one able to bear arms" (Num. 1:1-3). In an emergency, a forlorn hope like that confronting Gideon (Judges 7:4), only volunteers could succeed, but for ordinary wars it was expected that all who shared the protection of the state would protect the state.

Liberal Exemptions from Service

Nevertheless the exemptions from such general service were as liberal as those prevailing in any free state today. Not only were the physically unfit excused but all under 20 were exempt, practically our own limits of conscription; but so was a man betrothed whose marriage was to take place in the near future, and the newly wed, wed within the year (Num. 20); to which exempt classes were added those whose families depended upon their completion of a home or the planting of the vineyard which could not be delayed until a later season. Then too, at the last moment before the battle was joined, those whose hearts failed them were sent to the rear lest they should create a panic in the ranks. The best features of our modern war codes, it will be seen are no more modern than those of old.

When the whole confederacy of tribes were jointly engaged in

BY H. D. JENKINS

This was one of the last papers written by Dr. Jenkins and reached The Continent just before his death three months ago.

any war, no single tribe, no two tribes, could form a separate peace when the results which they specially sought had been already won (Num 32: 6,7,16-19). They must stay by their allies and see it through.

Another important section in the code forbade the destruction, even under the plea of military necessity, of things necessary for the use of the inhabitants after the war should be over (Num. 20:19-20). That form of war which leaves a province devastated, orchards felled, vineyards uprooted, villages burned and cities looted, was not known in this old time code. A nation which proves its "kultur" by bombarding unfortified towns, killing little children assembled in their schools and sending thousands of men, women and children, unwarned, to their death by a torpedo, may claim to have "Gott mit uns" but it is not the God who inspired the Old Testament code—a code as reasonable and as humane as our own.

Can Wage War on Bible Lines

It is possible to wage war today along the lines thus laid down, as the writer can bear testimony from his own experience. As a federal soldier he marched something like a hundred miles down the Pennsylvania roads up which General Lee had brought 100,000 men on his way to Gettysburg. He then saw that no private citizen had been molested, not so much as a barn had been burned, no bank had been looted and no city had bought safety by paying an exacted ransom. Federals and confederates fought, they fought hard and fought to a finish, but they fought fair, fought according to the code they found in their Bibles. The professors in German universities and the preachers in the court circles of Berlin may invent defenses for Turks who massacre helpless, unarmed and inoffensive Armenians; they may condone the deportation of Belgian women and girls to work in the munition factories of their captors, they may shout hallelujahs as they did over the sinking of the Lusitania—but these inhuman and atrocious methods of warfare they have evolved out of their own inner consciousness as they have evolved their theology: but it is certain they have not found such a code in their Bibles and they cannot justify such acts and methods by anything between the first chapter of Genesis and the last chapter of the book of Revelation.

Support Beer; Defraud Workingman

The most pathetic event in this march toward prohibition of brewing has been the attitude of organized labor, says Dr. H. W. Wiley in *Good Housekeeping*. There is no part of our people that will receive greater benefit from prohibition than the laboring man. These tearful appeals against deprivation of his beer have no weight on the minds of those who are fully informed. There is no possible way in which a laboring man can spend 10 cents so foolishly as to buy beer or whisky. It is worse than throwing money away. The laboring man has exactly the same relation to drink whether he works for the Pennsylvania railroad, which forbids him to drink, or for the city of New York, which allows him to drink. The Pennsylvania Railroad Company is right; the city of New York is wrong.

The leaders of labor have never made a more egregious blunder than when they protested against the prohibition of beer and other light alcoholic beverages. They are standing in the light of the men whom they are supposed to lead. They are going contrary to every fact which the scientific investigation of the effect of alcohol on man has produced. They are running counter to the attitude of the government in drawing strict prohibition lines around all camps and war activities. It is a poor service they are rendering laboring men, when they insistently demand an opportunity for him to spend his hard earned money at the bar. I shall hail with joy the day when organized labor escapes from this incubus which has rested so heavily upon it, and realizes that the salvation of labor, its escape from the hardships which have so long burdened it, its entrance into a future of opportunity of high service, depend most of all upon the arrival of that day when the workman can no longer spend a large percentage of his wages in that which harms and never helps. The passing of beer will bring an abundance of bread.

—"They seem to have a lot of trouble with their car." "Yes. Her husband is one of those expert accountants who imagines he was a born mechanic."—Louisville Courier-Journal.