

THE AUDACIOUS WAR

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The Audacious War by Clarence W. Barron

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CLARENCE W. BARRON

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BY CLARENCE W. BARRON



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IF!

SUPPOSE 't were done!
The lanyard pulled on every shotted gun;
Into the wheeling death-clutch sent
Each millioned armament,
To grapple there
On land, on sea and under, and in air!
Suppose at last 't were come —
Now, while each bourse and shop and mill is dumb
And arsenals and dockyards hum, —
Now all complete, supreme,
That vast, Satanic dream! —

Each field were trampled, soaked,
Each stream dyed, choked,
Each leaguered city and blockaded port
Made famine's sport;
The empty wave
Made reeling dreadnought's grave;
Cathedral, castle, gallery, smoking fell
'Neath bomb and shell;
In deathlike trance
Lay industry, finance;
Two thousand years'
Bequest, achievement, saving, disappears
In blood and tears,
In widowed woe
That slum and palace equal know,
In civilization's suicide, —
What served thereby, what satisfied?
For justice, freedom, right, what wrought?
Naught! —

Save, after the great cataclysm, perhaps
On the world's shaken map
New lines, more near or far,
Binding to king or czar
In festering hate
Some newly vassaled state;
And passion, lust and pride made satiate;
And just a trace
Of lingering smile on Satan's face!

— *Boston News Bureau Poet.*

This poem has been called the great poem of the war. It was written just preceding the war, and published August 1 by the "Boston News Bureau." Of it, and its author, Bartholomew F. Griffin, the following was written by Rev. Francis G. Peabody: "The English poets, Bridges, Kipling, Austin, and Noyes, have all tried to meet the need and all have lamentably failed. I am proud not only that an American, but that a Harvard man, should have risen to the occasion."

PREFACE

THE Scotch have this proverb: "War brings poverty. Poverty brings peace. Peace brings prosperity. Prosperity brings pride. And pride brings war again." Shall the world settle down to the faith that there is no redemption from an everlasting round of pride, war, poverty, peace, prosperity, pride, and war again?

But it was not primarily to settle, or even study this problem that I crossed the ocean and the English Channel in winter. As a journalist publishing the *Wall Street Journal*, the *Boston News Bureau*, and the *Philadelphia News Bureau*, and directing news-gathering for the banking and financial communities, I deemed it my duty to ascertain at close hand the financial factors in this war, and the financial results therefrom.

I found myself on the other side, not only in the domain of the finance encircling this war, but unexpectedly in close touch with diplomatic and government circles. The whole of the war, its commercial causes, its financial and military forces, its tremendous human sacrifices, the

conflicting principles of government, and the world-wide issues involved, all lay out in clear facts and figures after I had gathered by day and night from what appeared at first to be a tangled web.

I learned who made this war, and why at this time and for what purposes, present and prospective; and from facts that could not be set down categorically in papers of state. No papers, "white," "gray," or "yellow," could present a picture of the war in its inception and the reasons therefor.

There is no powerful organization over nations to keep the peace of Europe or of the world, as nations are in organization over states, and states over cities, to insure peace and justice, without strife or human sacrifice.

The immediate causes of this war, and I believe they have not before been presented on this side of the ocean, are connected with commercial treaties, protective tariffs, and financial progress.

It may be wondered that in our country, which is the home of the protective tariff system and boasts its great prosperity therefrom, there has been as yet no presentation of the business causes beneath this war. Our great journalists are trained to find interesting, picturesque, and

saleable news features from big events. Details of war's atrocities and destructions are to most people of the greatest human interest, and rightly so. As a country we have no international policy, and European politics and policies have never interested us.

Germany is buttressed by tariffs and commercial treaties on every side. Years ago I was told in Europe that the commercial treaties wrested from France in 1871 were of more value to Germany than the billion dollars of indemnity she took as her price to quit Paris. But I did not realize until I was abroad this winter how European countries had warred by tariffs, and that Germany and Russia were preparing for a great clash at arms over the renewal of commercial and tariff treaties which expire within two years, and which had been forced by Germany upon Russia during the Japanese War.

German "Kultur" means German progress, commercially and financially. German progress is by tariffs and commercial treaties. Her armies, her arms, and her armaments, are to support this "Kultur" and this progress.

I believe I have told the story as it has never been told before. But the facts cannot be drawn forth and properly set in review without some