

THE SUBMARINE

The submarine is the newest and most terrible weapon of naval warfare, and in its short career it has outraged humanity and made war more inhumane than any other engine of destruction.

Its first exploit, in sinking the three British cruisers at the beginning of the war, necessitated the order to all the ship commanders, never to stop to save life, but, when a ship is struck, to scatter and leave the crew of the torpedoed ship to its fate: practically certain death. From then on, the loss of life in naval battle has tremendously increased.

The defenselessness of the submarine, when seen, means, that it must strike like the rattle-snake, before it is discovered, and the laws of civilized warfare, as they were developed when the nations fought on the water, and not under the water and in the air above the water, are being thrown aside, made scraps of paper, like many other things in the present war.

Justly humanity is outraged and frantically tries to stop national lawlessness. But still all warring nations without exception overthrow and disregard whatever "international law" - if such a thing really exists - operates against their interest.

And still all neutral nations build submarines, and how they will use them in an emergency when their national existence is at stake, we fear to think.

The laws of civilized warfare are being changed with the changing conditions of the engines of war, and so far the change has not been towards the better, the more human, and naturally and justly we protest against such a change.

But when doing so, let us look beyond the present horrors, weigh carefully what we approve, and what we disapprove, lest by present sentiment we may be carried away to approve things which may in the future endanger our national safety, oppose things, on which some time we might have to rely for our preservation, for after all, war and humanity have never gone together and never will, but as Sherman said "War is Hell".

The grave question now is before us, whether submarines can be permitted to destroy merchant ships carrying ammunition and other supplies of the enemy, when such destruction necessarily involves the destruction of innocent passengers, of neutral nations.

Humanity without hesitation says no

But let us stop and think, what we as a nation would do.

Suppose at some future time a German army of invasion lands and occupies New York, or Boston, or Washington, after the German navy has defeated the American Navy, destroyed its

ships or driven them back into inland harbors, and only American submarines can still go out on the ocean. (Those of the readers, who sympathize with Germany, may substitute "England" for "Germany", or "Japan", at their pleasure.)

Our army would probably be just as unprepared as it always was, and it would take us many months before we could make a stand against the invaders, possibly years before we could drive them out of the country. In the meantime, the Hamburg American Liners, the North-German Lloyd will ply the ocean between New York and Europe (or the Cunard or White-Star Line, for the German Sympathizers). These ships would carry passengers of all nations, and would carry cargoes: food and other supplies, ammunition for the invading army. Because they are merchant steamers, and innocent neutral passengers may be on them, will we as Americans stand idly by, hold back our submarines and leave these merchant steamers ^{to} bring in unlimited supply of food and ammunition for our enemies, until we are ready to attack and defeat them at the cost of hundred thousands of American lives? When we know, that by cutting off their supplies we could defeat them in a few months, without serious loss of American life? Hardly! As I know the temperament of our citizens, I do not doubt, that we would promptly send every submarine to destroy the passenger ships, the merchant steamers, which are the enemy's ammunition carriers, the ships which bring their supply of food

and other necessities, even if thereby we should sacrifice the lives of passengers, even of neutrals.

Thus, let us look beyond the present sentiment, aroused by the atrocities of the present warfare, and think what the future may have in store for our nation, and ask ^{ourselves} ~~us~~, whether in the relentless use of the submarine we have not the most effective weapon of defense against any attack, and realize that America would in its national defense be able to gain more than any other nation by the relentless use of the submarine in war, which is hell. For America never will have the standing army of millions of men, never desires a navy superior to the combined navies of the present allies for instance, and therefore its great coast cities will always be open to hostile attack and temporary occupation, and even when in the enemy's hands, there will be extensive neutral commerce between these great cities and Europe, with no chance for us to cut off the invading enemy from its supply, except by submarine blockade, with all the horrors which this implies in the destruction of merchantmen. Indeed, war is hell, and is becoming more so with the development of engines of destruction; it can not be made gentle; thus do not let us make the vain attempt, but rather let us study, how the social, industrial and political conditions of the world could be changed so as to make war unnecessary, and thereby eliminate it altogether.

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