

TRAIL OF THE BARBARIANS

By Pierre Loti.
Translated by Ford Madox Hueffer.

(The following story has been received by a La Grande family from one of our boys who is now at the front. The story was purchased in Paris, and in order to give a thorough understanding of the terrible atrocities of the Germans, the Observer will give it in chapters. The things which are told in this book are absolutely true and not overdrawn for they are described by a Frenchman who has seen his beloved France ruined by the hand of the Hun.)

Translator's Note.
It has been my ambition for more years than I can remember, to devote the closing stage of my life to rendering into English some masterpiece of a French stylist. Well, here is the rendering of the masterpiece of a French stylist; and Fate wills it that it has been performed between parades, orderly rooms, strafes and the rest of the pre-occupations that refit us for France. . . so it is not a good rendering. You need from 11.45 pip emma of 8.8-17, to 11.57 pip emma of 9-8-17 for the rendering of almost any French sentence.

But, in spite of lack of leisure, I will quarrel with the Master as to his employment of one word; the word "irreparable." I have seen ruined France—such of it as is ruined—and have seen on the Somme the mole-work that is demanded of the foot-slogger, and probably because the mole can see what is going on below ground better than he who passes beneath the real and grey skies of the France spring, I am more sure than Mr. Loti that the grass is already moving that will cover the graveyards and rusty heaps of recovered provinces.

It is not only the horizon-blue soldiers—and the mud-colored ones—are billied amidst the ruins; it is that the inhabitants—all those upholders of the matchless "little industries of France"—are astonishingly still among the gaping ravines and brick heaps, and the husbandmen are astonishingly and tenaciously hidden in the fields. Agriculture expels furca: tamen usque . . . I have bought a melon in the town of Mametz. . . .

And last year, when we were eating bully beef and biscuits in a field that we had recovered only three days before from the Germans, a dove, tall and slender, carrying a brass-bound whip, approached us and peremptorily desired to know who was going to pay him for the damage that we were doing to his cornfield! The 42's were ploughing it for him at that moment. . . .

Well, today the tall wheat rises over that field behind Beaucourt Wood; for in France nothing is irreparable, since France possesses the secret of eternal life.

FORD MADOX HUEFFER,
Lieut. 3rd Batt., 9th Battalion,
The Welch Regiment,
Dedication.

To French School-Children at their Prize Distributions.

I have been asked to speak to the little ones of France; to speak to them of their country. And, all of a sudden, I find myself grown timid at the idea of so noble a responsibility. For, in the days past, I was a wanderer, whose chief preoccupation was to vibrate passionately under the lights and charms of the skies of the world over. . . . And then, in the evening of my life, I have come to see that no land is so adorable as our French country, and that we must sacrifice to the uttermost—our goods, our lives, and those of our sons and those of our brothers—so that we may defend her; and this not only because of ourselves, who would die did she die, but because she is a light, whose obscuration would darken the world. . . .

Let me begin by taking up the challenge of a mournful phrase which you may have heard already; for it appears that this point of view has, in certain souls, the gift of propagation. Alas, I have heard people say: "We are waging this war for the rich!" . . . These poor blinded people do not speak from the trenches, but from the rear, where sinister and evil spirits have leisure to work upon the hearts of men. What can be the origin of this small cluster of snakes, whose legs are absurd and smell of the Hun? And what a shameful blasphemy it is! Does not all the evidence go to show that, all alike, we are fighting against the more abominable aggression of modern times—an aggression whose horror surpasses any that has been ventured on by barbaric tyrants of past days? The "rich" as they are called, are serving in the ranks along with the poorest of men; the "rich," on the other hand, are just those who would have had the least to suffer from the rapacity and tyranny of the Ogre of Berlin; the poor would have been utterly sucked dry by the terrible German horse leeches. . . .

Dear little children of France, take time to read this little book, although it may prove infinitely less attractive than the exciting volumes that will be distributed to you on your prize-days. Read it, for it is inspired not by hatred, but by truth and justice. May those amongst you who have had

the good fortune to be born outside our invaded provinces, may those amongst you, who have been preserved from witnessing those horrible devastations, find here the exact account of them just as I wrote it on the spot, along the Army, making a great effort to be exact. . . .

Dear little children of France, when the fortunes of war shall have changed, I do not ask that you shall avenge yourselves on the lands that lie beyond the Rhine; or that, there, you shall reproduce what I have shown that they have done here. No; leave such things to the officers and soldiers of the German Emperor; and, besides, you are not capable of barbarities.

Eut, never forget! These men of Germany, I give you my word are not such as you should fraternize with. Later they will seek to return and to insinuate themselves deviously beside our hearths; then, shut your doors close; keep them out, as you would keep out wolves and vampires. Let it be your aim that our beloved country, learning wisdom at last from the greatness of its misfortune, may remain French alone, and more than ever French.

CHAPTER I. THEIR SUPERIORITY.

"We have nothing for which to make excuses, we are morally and intellectually superior to all the world, we are without equals. This time we will clean the slate."—Lasson, German Professor—May, 1917.

Throughout whole leagues, during whole hours, to pass through landscapes of desolation, the mere conception of which before those days would have been impossible to the imagination of a Frenchman to tell oneself that that is all that remains to us of fair provinces, upon which THEIR master had let them loose! . . .

How they must have worked, the gorillas! They must have worked with an indefatigable fury and a stupefying genius of evil-doing before they could have brought about such appalling devastations, which, the further one goes, stretch before one always, further and further. It is a whole great district of our country which has ceased to exist. It is like trying to escape from a nightmare; every minute, at every turning in the road, you say to yourself or you hope: "This must come to an end." But, no, it never ceases; ruins succeed to ruins; towns, bridges, crossing rivers, villages, humble and solitary farms—everything is sacked, smashed, crumbled into dust. The gorillas found time to spare nothing. . . .

If we had wished to anticipate a little of all this, it would have been enough to sound the Germanic soul, or only to glance at the history of Germany, before this war, which has revealed her so irrefutably. Many simple souls amongst us understood from the words, "German industry," the thousands of factories, the flood of pinchebeck and imitations that for some decades past had poured itself out across the world.

But there was an industry still more German, still more fundamentally national—that of espionage, rapine, violation and murder. If we read the works of their thinkers and of their great men, upon every page we find the apologia of that particular industry. It we delve into their annals we find that by this particular industry, above all, they have lived.

Some months before the present invasion, which was so patiently and diabolically prepared, a certain von Bernhardt set himself the task, on the instigation of the German Emperor of preparing extenuating circumstances for the crimes that were premeditated by his master. "It is actually more humane," he dared to write, "to make war (trifling, so that it may be sooner finished)." And to think that men have been found amongst us who could take that seriously, and could do this pantalone the honor of discussion!

A little later the Ogre of Berlin believing that the time had come, threw open at last the cage doors of his wild beasts, and upon noble Belgium, as upon our dear France there poured forth this line and

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F. L. MEYERS,
County Chairman,
8-19-18.

CAPT. B. B. LIPSNER



Captain Lipsner resigned his commission in the army to become superintendent of the aerial mail service.

very of beasts of prey. Nevertheless—oh, wonder!—the Neutral States made no moan, and—wonder greater still—some were even to be found who, for the expenditure of a little money, or a few lines became the best friend of Germany.

But it is only today, in the course of what they style their brilliant retreat, that horror enchains to its height; it is only today that we see the true unveiled to the world its ghoul's face. For, since the days of Attila, Europe has lost the idea of such ferocities—of civil populations led away to slavery, of destruction, of rapine, of butchery—even of the violation of the tombs of our soldiers, which was officially and meticulously organized by their leaders.

That they can never deny, since they have narrated it all in their own papers; since they have complacently glorified all the troubles that it must have cost their troops acting upon orders, whenever they evacuated our already martyred towns, so that they should not leave behind for us anything more than a desert. And they had added naively that certain of their soldiers, who must have been simple souls, and somewhat accessible to pity, recoiled from that ignoble duty, so that the "noble" exhortations of their superiors had to be brought to compel them to execute their tasks.

(To be continued.)
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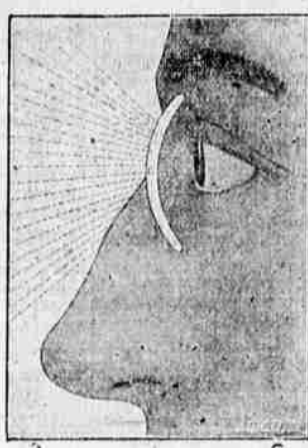
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