

FRANCE EXPECTED TO COME BACK QUICKLY

Activity in Various Lines Gives Much Promise.

FRENCH COURAGE HOLDS

Country Will Benefit, Observer Believes, From Contact With Americans During War.

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(Oregon Newspaper Man and Preacher.)

PARIS, Sept. 11.—From what I can see of the French, and from my conversations with them, I am convinced that this great nation will "come back" in as quick order as can be expected after so great a war as we great a cost in treasure and life. I was informed the other day by an American officer that Germany would recover much faster and already was getting under the burdens laid upon her in fine spirit; but as I see things here, in business, social and amusement lines, I feel that France is doing well under the circumstances.

I have recently talked with a married French business woman who well represents the class popularly called "the common people." She was a milliner before the war and has lived in Paris all her life. I found her through an effort to locate a Parisian who had thought and studied, had formed opinions and could give reasons for the same. This woman was pointed out to me as such, and with a stenographer I interviewed her.

She held that there will be very little in the way of reconstruction done here, and the rebuilding of France until the treaty of peace is ratified and France knows her future with certainty.

As soon as this is done France will readily get under way the developing process by which she will soon recover her old position in the world, her forces marshaled by such statesmen as Clemenceau, whom the people believe in.

American Contact Helps.

One help to this recovery, I gather, is the recent and present contact of the French with the spirit of America through the instrumentality of the forces which came to fight for civilization on the field and forum. France is not discouraged, although about prostrate, but is encouraged by the great victory over her old foe, and will, with the aid expected from her friends, soon be on her feet again.

While former methods of doing things were somewhat on the slow order, it is sometimes admitted, compared with American ways, the new way will be adopted. For instance, in the building of houses, instead of stone, wood will be used in construction and thus the laborious method will give way to one more speedy. France expects all lines of business to be much better at present and things are more settled, and hopes for better days than even before the war. At present business is very careful about the future before peace, and the conditions desired for progress, are absolutely assured.

Cafe life on the boulevards is pronounced and sidewalks are lined back after block with the open-air cafe-takers enjoying their wine and beer by the hour and the beautiful evenings. The streets are thronged with people and the theaters are well patronized.

To me, as naturally a superficial observer, Paris appears like a great big, wide-awake city with health, at least, showing on the surface. To be assured, the restlessness resulting from the war is apparent in labor circles and others, as in other parts of the world, but to me it seems the unsettled condition of mind resulting from the adoption of new thought, seeing things from new points of view; in fact, a house-clearing, as it were, which always means better conditions, though they come through a period of disarrangement.

Given the opportunity, France will come into her own and in thus doing will reveal the fine spirit she manifested through the years of blood and smoke. France is looking to the future with hope.

Birth Rate Decreases.

The birth rate is decreasing faster now than before because of the fact that so many women had to give up home life and thoughts of the same to enter the fields of business to take the places of the men engaged in battle. But this will be remedied, it is hoped, by the new conditions and legislation which it is expected will safeguard the new and better state longed for.

The Americans are liked by the French, although there is some criticism of the claim made by certain Americans that "we won the war." France would prefer the Americans to say, "We won the war along with the French and the other allies."

The French like President Wilson, but some fear he is too idealistic and take the position that he stopped the war too soon.

Various were the opinions given on many different topics as I have conversed with intelligent natives of Paris, of late, from the question of the part the "Y" played and is playing in the building of the nation, and the prospect of another war with Germany.

Religion is stronger in the popular mind on account of the sacrifices and fighting valor of the priests as seen on battlefield and in camp, it is stated, and while many soldiers have become more religious because of these things, there are many who have been more inclined to religion if they have not become directly affiliated with the church.

"Why could not the French people make a better impression upon the American soldiers, if the former are a hospitable people?" I asked. The answer given me was: "The real good French home is not opened easily. There are not too many American men who know any real French families. The French are very hospitable, but have done in the case of foreign armies camped in their land, though friendly, just what American families would have done were French armies camped in the United States. In France there is the old-fashioned education, which perhaps is as good



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as it is old, which precludes the French maiden from receiving men in her home.

Another Was Expected.

"Will there be another war with Germany?" "Oh surely, France expects to have another war with Germany, but not very soon. It took Germany 41 years following a great victory to prepare for war, it will following her defeat this time, take her longer to prepare for the next. But France expects to have war with Germany in the future, of course."

Another viewpoint of one of the questions discussed above was derived from Lieutenant C. O. Bunnell of Portland, who before he left for Serbia with the Red Cross the other day gave me his views on the question. "Why is it that some of our boys are taking home a bad impression of France?"

Herewith I quote the response of this army man from our own section of America. While I may not agree with all he says, his statements are interesting and aid in putting the light on some problems of soldier life in France, and might be true regarding some Americans. Let the reader judge.

Said Lieutenant Bunnell: "Upon landing at the station they are taken in charge by the Y. M. C. A. and given lodging and a place to eat where they will not have to pay excessive prices, but the 'Y.' cannot keep an eye on them all the time and can only offer its services. He goes to see the life of the city and here is what he sees: the Place and Avenue de l'Opera, the boulevards Des Italiens and St. Denis, possibly the Place de la Republique and certainly the Champs Elysees. All these he visits in the evening when they are aswarm with butterfly life. They don't get in till morning and Sammy is too tired to take any sight-seeing trip before noon.

"In the afternoon he takes the trip about town with the 'Y' and gets a tallish idea of the general character of the city. The party stops at the different points of interest and he loads up on postcards and views of the things that are hidden therein but which, owing to the war, he cannot see. This evening is much the same as the one before with the exception that he probably goes to the Casino and winds up the night at Montmartre in one of the all-night shows, staged especially for Americans and other foreigners with money to spend.

"This second morning he is again too tired to take any morning trip

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