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OUT OF FRANCE BY CHRISTMAS

Some of the military critics are soberly discussing the possibility of expelling the Germans from France before the end of the year. Two months ago such a notion would have been regarded as absolutely crazy. One month ago it would have seemed no more than an alluring but visionary hope. Today it is received by men of calm judgment as a possibility, and even a probability. One American war writer with a large following insists that it is inevitable—that the Germans cannot stop now short of the Belgian and German frontier.

That is hard for most of us to believe. We have expected something of the sort to occur next year, but the most optimistic of us never, until very lately, dared hope for it before the coming winter. We hardly dare hope for it now. The war has lasted so long—there has been so much apparently futile struggling back and forth—previous gains have been so small, comparatively, and so lacking in fulfillment of their promise!

Can it be now that this is the real thing for which the world has been waiting? That the Huns are really being rolled back out of desecrated France and Belgium, on their way to the Rhine and beyond? That the allies are on the last lap of the long, hard race? That by bending every effort to the task we ourselves may win without the grueling effort that has exhausted our allies? That we can certainly finish the big job next year, and then come home and settle down to the pursuits of peace?

"It is dangerous to indulge in the illusions of hope," but it is no less dangerous and foolish to yield to the illusions of pessimism. Let us expect the best. That attitude in itself will help to realize the best, provided we abate nothing of our effort, but "carry on" to the height of our powers.

We shall not "get the boys out of the trenches by Christmas," but we may get the Germans out of France by Christmas. If we do, what a Christmas celebration there will be!

SLACKER VOTERS

That the citizen who does not do his full duty in the matter of elections is unworthy of citizenship is acknowledged tacitly by all Americans. But the number of those who apply this principle is few.

"If our state is to be governed in accordance with our best ideals," said Prof. George H. Johnson of Case School of Applied Science in a recent address, "we must see to it that the right men are nominated and elected."

Unworthy self-seekers cannot be beaten if we feel too little interest to go to the primaries, or if we have so little understanding of what is at stake that we must ask some party boss how to vote.

"No man is good or wise enough for us to become his puppets. Good government must be based on a democracy independent enough to resist dictation. Freemen who neglect the duty of citizenship are slackers indeed."

This holds a solemn truth, peculiarly important just now. This is no time for the induction of idlers and self-seekers into public office. Those who serve us must have the highest ideals of the country, state, city or village needs. They must have, moreover, the highest capabilities of putting their ideals into reality.

The people in whose hands lies the government of this country are the voters. It is up to each voter to study the political situation earnestly and to vote honestly and intelligently. Otherwise he is a slacker of the most despicable kind.

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