

MISCELLANEOUS.

TWO LETTERS FROM DR. BEADNELL.¹

(H. M. S. Shannon, Second Cruiser Squadron. c/o G. P. O.)

October 22, 1915. (At sea).

DR. PAUL CARUS, La Salle, Illinois.

Dear Sir: I wrote you a brief note of acknowledgment of your kind letter to me of September 18, but I feel I should be lacking in ordinary courtesy did I not respond at greater length and touch on some of the questions which your letter raises. I am pleased to hear you intend to publish my article, "The 'Open Mind' in 'The Open Court,'" because it is my frank opinion—and I think you can but agree with me—that *The Open Court* magazine has hitherto been devoted *almost* exclusively to furthering the cause of the Austro-Germans. I think it was a pity that a magazine of this nature and repute was ever put to propaganda work, but, once having been so put, it should not have been so overwhelmingly pro-German, nor should its editor, whatever his private views, have taken up any position other than that of judge and arbitrator of the conflicting views of his contributors. It would have been well, considering that a large proportion of your readers are English and almost the whole English-speaking, and considering that—I quote here from one of America's professors, C. Franklin Thwing, president of the Western Reserve University, in an article of his on "The Effect of the European War on Higher Learning in America"—"the sympathy of at least nineteen-twentieths of all academic people is with the Allies," had you adopted as your guiding motto *In medio tutissimus ibis*. However, you have sown and you must reap, but whether it will be aught but the whirlwind that will figure in your harvest, time alone will show.

Let me take this opportunity of saying that, seeing the article I sent you constitutes a direct attack on yourself and on your magazine, you will, in publishing views and opinions which are so antithetical to those you yourself so warmly hold, be displaying a generosity of spirit we should all do well to emulate.

One or two points in your letter to me call for comment. You say: "I have published Professor Conybeare's letter because I was glad to have a prominent Englishman of international reputation take the same view as I. Professor Conybeare has not revoked his views, he has only regretted having expressed himself in plain English instead of having used stilted expressions

¹ Dr. Beadnell is a fleet surgeon in the British navy. His article, "The 'Open Mind' in 'The Open Court,'" to which he refers, appeared in the October *Open Court*.

and carefully guarded foreign epithets, but there is no retraction in his letter to me published in the August number." Now *if* this is so—and I accentuate the "if"—so much the worse for Dr. Conybeare, for he will meet with the reward usually accorded those gay Lotharios who love, or profess to love, two women at one and the same time. But first let us see if what you say is strictly correct. When you describe him as not having retracted his views I should like to feel positive, before going any further, that we agree as to what it is he has or has not retracted. I mean—and I presume, and will therefore assume, you likewise mean—Dr. Conybeare's attacks on the principal British Ministers of State (notably Sir E. Grey), and his exculpations of Germany. Bearing in mind what Dr. Conybeare had previously said, let us closely examine his letter to you. In it we find the following admissions:

1. Sir Edward Grey is a pacifist.
2. I fancy that Grey's idea was to be able in any crisis to restrain France and Russia, and so keep the peace of Europe.
3. . . . In this case it was certainly Germany that on July 31 was the first to relinquish the attitude of defense for that of offense.
4. Even if Russia threatened her [Germany] by mobilizing, she [Germany] should not have gone beyond counter-mobilization.
5. She [Germany] invaded Belgium, knowing full well that that would inflame us to declare war on her.

Now to my mind the above are "retractions." I grant you their extraction from Dr. Conybeare has been difficult and not unattended by pain, in fact the whole process has smacked of tooth-drawing and Dr. Conybeare has parted with his apologies and admissions as grudgingly as a patient parts with his teeth, moreover, he has the unhappy knack of taking back with one hand what he gives with the other. Thus in his letter to you he "regrets" having used words such as "lies" and "hypocrisies" in connection with English statesmen, but then adds, "I should have used the word 'rhodomontade.'" A little further on he says naively, "I am not sure also that I was not too severe upon Sir Edward Grey," and then he follows this up with "I fear he is a weak man and given to vacillation." Vacillation! Dr. Conybeare!! . . . The irony of it! Almost is one persuaded to emulate the poet and take

"Another and another Cup to drown

The Memory of this Impertinence!"

So much for his letter to you in the August number, but I have not quite finished with your "Darling of the (pagan) Gods." I note you say in your May number (page 309), when quoting passages from Dr. Conybeare's article published in the *New York Nation* of March 25, that "he does not venture to offer his opinion to an English periodical." Just so, thereby advertising both his astuteness and his cowardice. Nevertheless, a little later on, to wit, on July 2, he does make the venture, or rather, public opinion and the anxiety to "save face" force him into the venture, and as you seem to be so swayed by, and to have such faith in, this prominent Oxford scholar, you will perhaps permit me to call attention to a few of the things he did say on this side of the pond, and they will be worth contrasting with what he said on your side. I quote from the *Globe*:

1. My new study [of the published records of the diplomatic transactions] has forced upon me the conviction that, apart from the deplorable tone

- of my allusions to Sir E. Grey and Mr. Asquith, I was quite wrong in imputing the motives which I did.
2. It does appear to me that Sir Edward had in view the peace of Europe.
 3. I ought to have set down to the awful contingencies with which he [Grey] was faced many passages which I was guilty of grossly misinterpreting.
 4. I was too ready to forget that in the years of the Balkan wars it was after all he alone who, by his patience and conciliatory treatment of the situation, held in check the antagonistic forces which last July he was unable to control.
 5. I deeply regret I mistook his aims.
 6. In my endeavor to be fair to the enemy, [I] was grossly unjust to him [Grey].
 7. I am . . . anxious to undo, if it be still possible, some of the harm which my hasty judgment and intemperate language has caused.
 8. If I had only kept my American letter till the morning, for revision, I should first have struck out all the vituperation and all the imputation of motives, and have ended by never sending it at all.

If this is not as complete a right-about-turn-quick-march as it is possible to meet with, then I should like to know what is! It may be said I am, after all, but trying to kill a dead fish and, in a sense, I admit this is so, but my real object is only to impress on you that *some* of your readers, at any rate, see the wires by means of which you galvanize the corpse into a semblance of vitality.

You say you limit your admiration for the English people to the commoners of the Saxon element, and exclude from it Norman aristocracy who have had (so you allege) all the benefit of England's dominion of the seas and the enormous wealth that has been derived from it. You say the war will make Ireland free, will make England a really free country and give better chances to her colonies. This would make quite amusing reading were it not pathetically tragic. Where in the wide universe, I would ask you, is there an "aristocracy" in such sympathetic touch, both in peace and war, with "commoners"? Is it in Germany? Has German aristocracy paid, relatively to total numbers, in this or in any war, anything approaching the high death toll paid by the British aristocracy? Have the German counterparts of English lords been serving in the ranks by deliberate choice? You say the war will make Ireland free. Yes, it will—if we win. Our government was in the throes of grappling with that complex question when Germany made her great mistake of thinking she had caught us "with our trousers off," and that *der Tag* had at last come. Your remark concerning our colonies was, to put it mildly, unfortunate, and one which probably your German friends would ask you not to repeat, for if ever Germany had a thorn in her side it was exemplified in the two words, "German colonies." I suppose I have traveled about the world as much as the average English naval officer, and I have had opportunities of visiting not only the central heart of the German empire but her very finger tips in China and Africa. And what was my impression of those far distant bits of Germany? Dismal failures—and heavily subsidized ones at that. Why, I asked myself, has England so signally succeeded in this direction where Germany has so signally been found wanting? No doubt there are many factors contributing to this result, but the one which impressed me as being the most important was naturally the one which I was able to see and examine

for myself. Let me tell you of that factor because you can draw a parallel from it in connection with the present war. England's success in far distant lands as contrasted with Germany's want of success is due to the fact that she is more tolerant of the natives' ways, customs and religions; because she treats them as human beings rather than as lower animals; because she uses as her weapons making for evolutionary advance, persuasion, appeal to reason and education, rather than force and the suppression of opinion and knowledge; because she has none of that overbearing swashbuckling arrogance that seems to be so inseparable from the German official, be he at Zabern or at Kiau-Chau; because, finally even the naked savage has an aphorism to the effect that he can always rely on an Englishman's word of honor but not on a German's.

You say future events will prove that my view of Germans is absolutely mistaken. I sincerely wish I could think with you, for if one must fight one would like to fight with the knowledge that one was dealing with an honorable and chivalrous foe that knew how to "play the game," but unfortunately *present* events alone have proved that your desired proof is impossible of realization. The dead do not lie, and the damning evidence of German misdeeds found on them in the shape of written letters is too ghastly overwhelming even had a Bryce commission never sat. You ask, Have not these accusations against the Germans "been invented for the purpose of creating a prejudice in the whole English-speaking world, and especially in England itself? No Sir, I can assure you they have not. Well do I remember how, when these atrocities first got whispered about, then appeared in print, my brother officers heatedly refused to believe a word of them. But the rumors grew and grew, like a rolling snowball; heated denial gave place to silent and grave suspicions, and then, as the awful evidence of castrated and crucified men, of outraged women and murdered children accumulated, the last lingering scepticisms were swept away as by an avalanche and we were left with a bitter, sorrowful conviction of the truth.

Only last night, after "turning in"—the only time I allow myself for the perusal of light literature—I was shocked to read in the daily papers of the execution, by the German military, of a lady—Miss Edith Cavell, the superintendent of a Brussels training school for nurses; "the charge against her was of aiding Belgian men to escape to England. It is stated that she hid them in her house, and provided them with money and with addresses in England, and helped to smuggle them across the frontier. The German military court found her guilty, and sentenced her to death by shooting. A firing party of six men and an officer were drawn up in the garden and awaited their victim. She was led in by soldiers from a house near by, blindfolded with a black scarf. Up to this minute the lady, though deadly white, had stepped out bravely to meet her fate. But in the presence of the rifle party her strength at last gave out and she tottered and fell to the ground some thirty yards from the spot against the wall where she was to have been shot. The officer in charge of the execution walked to her. She lay prone on the ground, motionless. The officer then drew his service revolver from its belt, and, taking steady aim from his knee, shot her through the head as she lay on the ground. The firing party looked on. The officer quietly returned his revolver to its case and then ordered his men to carry the corpse into the house. The execution of Miss Cavell has shocked the whole community, who

speak of it as the bloodiest act of the whole war." In the next day's paper I read that four other ladies are under sentence of execution and that both the Pope and King Alfonso have personally interceded on their behalf direct with the German Emperor. You no doubt will again say, "Have these executions (for there are others) not been invented for the purpose of creating a prejudice against Germany throughout the English-speaking world?" Before these words of mine come under your eyes not only yourself, but the whole civilized world, will know the truth, for the government of the United States has instructed its ambassador at Berlin to make inquiries regarding the circumstances of the execution of Miss Edith Cavell. Doubtless the lady had by her conduct rendered herself liable to punishment, possibly to severe punishment, but, as the Marquis of Lansdowne said in the House of Lords, "she might at any rate have expected that measure of mercy which in no civilized country would have been refused to one who was not only a woman, but a brave and devoted woman, and one who had given all her efforts and energies to the mitigation of the sufferings of others."

You say "the English army and navy would scarcely fight if they saw the truth plainly before their eyes." On the contrary it is the horrible and brutal truth that is being unveiled that is causing thousands and thousands of our civil population to give up their peaceful occupations, part from wife and family and take up arms, not for England, not for the British Empire nor for the Allies, but for humanity as a whole. There is no false patriotism in this country, there is none of that my-country-right-or-wrong spirit to be seen; men from all grades of society are flocking to the colors because they realize that a detestable canker has sprung up in the midst of the civilized world, they realize that if this cancerous growth gets mastery of the world body-politic, then it were better for humanity had man never evolved on this planet, it were better indeed had the whole sidereal cosmos been expunged.

Free country? You taunt us about our freedom, knowing what you must know of Germany. I won't ask you why so many Germans leave Germany in the piping times of peace and settle down in America and England (neither of which are German colonies) because I know that you know that I know the answer, but I will ask you another question in lieu. Every single man of our forces, temporary and permanent, ashore and afloat, whether raised in Great Britain, Ireland or the colonies, has enlisted of his own sweet will. Can you say this of Germany? No, you can not. That, in a nutshell, is the explanation of the *bon camaraderie* between our men and their officers, it is also the explanation of the manacling of German gunners to their own guns. Now I come to think of it, there *is* one circumstance that would stop our navy and army from fighting, and, though it is as inconceivable as the Infinite, yet, as I am writing to one who is openly in sympathy with the Germans, I will mention it. This circumstance is based on the supposition that our officers and men were ordered by those in power to commit deeds akin to those which the Germans have indulged in. An English officer, if ordered to commit a hundredth part of the infamies perpetrated by his German counterpart, would tear his commission into a thousand fragments. An English soldier, before he would allow himself so to degenerate as to shoot in cold blood a defenceless lady lying, fainted, on the ground, a lady who had nursed not alone her own countrymen's wounded but also those of her countrymen's enemy, a lady concerning whom Mr. Whitlock, the American Minister at Brussels, wrote to

the German authorities: "She has spent her life in alleviating the sufferings of others. . . . Have pity on her." I repeat, before an English officer would do this he would turn his revolver on himself and blow his brains out. Should you, Dr. Carus, make further attempts to exculpate Germany for the crimes she is piling one on the other to the horror and disgust of the civilized world, especially for this last act which really has "staggered humanity," let me implore you to do so on some other lines than pleading that Germany has every right to her misdeeds because England committed misdeeds in the past, for such excuse comes especially graceless from an exponent of logic and philosophy. For the sake of argument I am quite prepared to admit that England may have committed misdeeds long ago, but these can only fairly be judged by drawing a parallel with German misdeeds at a contemporary period, and inference will acquaint you that this would be an unwise thing to do. As a consistent evolutionist let me admit to you here and now that it is more than probable that my ancestors pillaged, murdered, sacrificed, raped and even ate one another. But then I am not talking of the Eocene and Miocene, I am not talking of the Stone Age, nor of the Mutiny, nor even of the Boer war, I happen to be talking of the present 1914-1915 war. Like all other nations England has, no doubt, had the sins of her youth, but she has evolved during the years and, at the outbreak of this war she had evolved up to a certain level of civilization and humanity. She gave Germany the credit of having made a corresponding evolution and of having raised herself to a corresponding height above the level of the brute and the beast from which we all originally sprang. But alas—and here lies Germany's shame and England's disillusionment—under a thin veneer of showy civilization Germany still retains the slime of the Saurian. Evolved, Germany has. Yes . . . but it is the retrogressive evolution of the hag-fish and the tapeworm. England now realizes she is grappling with an atavist.

It is impossible to believe you really condone Germany's manner of conducting war; on the other hand, seeing your ideal situation for taking up a calm, philosophic attitude, and your great facilities by means of your magazine, for weighing the pros and cons of, and meting out praise and blame to, either side indiscriminately, it is difficult to understand your wanton and gratuitous attack on England. Your magazine is written in English and read by English-speaking peoples; why, having committed the original mistake of diverting it from its primary object did you go on to make the unpardonable mistake of using it as a propaganda almost exclusively for one side? Why did you not, as editor, ensure that equalization of opinions expressed in it that one has a right to expect in a magazine of this type? I ask you, Dr. Carus, what will history say of your magazine in ten years time, nay, what will you yourself say when you take up a back number, shall we say that for August, page 500, and read the following lines?—

"In the present crisis there are more pigmies than men. Obscene dwarfs like George V, pot-bellied *bourgeois* like Poincaré, could only become heroic by virtue of some Rabelais magic-wand. Joffre and Kitchener are quiet business-like subordinates with no qualities that can seize the reins of the horses of Apollo. The Czar is a nobody."

You will not even be able to anæsthetize your conscience by pleading that *you* did not write these personalities, for you and every one else will know that an editor, though not responsible for the opinions of his contribu-

tors, is responsible for the tone of their contributions. But in this case you are in very fact actually responsible for the opinion expressed, for in the very same number you pat the author of the words on the back for his anti-English outspokenness. But let me be fair, here is what you say:

"There are a few men in England with backbone who speak out boldly and criticize their government, but they are unpopular at home, and the truth they have to tell is resented. We mention the best of them when speaking of Professor Conybeare of Oxford, the Hon. Bertrand Russell of Cambridge, J. Ramsay Macdonald; and we must not forget Mr. Aleister Crowley who has sent a circular to his friends in which he castigates English hypocrisy under the title 'An Orgy of Cant.'"

From which I gather that Mr. Aleister Crowley, the author of the before-mentioned words, is an Englishman. Really? I confess to astonishment. Present him, Dr. Carus, (with apologies) to the German nation. *Nous n'avons pas besoin de ce gentilhomme*. A man capable of comparing the German emperor to Christ, who portrays him as seemingly "omniscient, omnipotent, omnipresent, the very angel of God, terrible and beautiful, sent to save the Fatherland from savage foes," compels a certain amount of furious thinking. All would agree such a one had certainly missed his vocation, the only conceivable point of disagreement would be as to whether he should be appointed Chaplain-Royal to the "All-Highest" or clapped into a mad-house.

I fear, Dr. Carus, that like the great mass of the German people, you now see through a glass darkly. For the latter there is some excuse, for they must perforce gain their knowledge from, and base their beliefs on, what their press tells them, and that amounts to just what the German government allow or order. For you, who have access to the papers of every nationality and who could, did you not fear learning the truth of that which you do not wish to be the truth, pay a brief visit to the Continent and ascertain firsthand the truth or otherwise of these atrocities, there is no excuse. But the time is not far distant when the darkened glass will fall from the eyes of the German populace and they will see face to face—then will come the rude awakening. Then will that people realize that not England, nor Russia nor France nor Italy is their real enemy. That enemy is in their midst gnawing their very vitals and it is embodied in that hideous code of Bernhardian ethics, Macchiavellian warfare and Jesuitical religion which the clerico-military-imperialists absorb with their mother's milk and wherewith they have contaminated the whole Teutonic empire.

And now, Sir, I must close. The writing of this letter has affected me with very conflicting emotions, it has caused me sorrow, aye, and pain, pain to think that these words of mine must necessarily cause pain in one who, as the *ante-bellum* Paul Carus, I so respected and admired, for although I had never seen him in the flesh, yet had I come to regard him in the spirit through his many works, as an old and revered friend; it has caused me vexation, grief, yes, and let me say it, downright anger to think that the *durante-bello* Paul Carus should have said and done the things which he has said and done. And what shall be said of the *post-bellum* Paul Carus? I will venture no opinion. There will be plenty of time and ample opportunities for him to re-survey his general reaction to his environment and to ask himself, and answer, the question, "Is my reaction helping or retarding the attainment of what I

conscientiously believe to be the highest and best and happiest type of humanity. I will only comment *spero meliora*.

And now, Dr. Carus, I bid you, for the present, goodbye.

Once more let me thank you for your kind letter and for your generous promise to publish my original "open letter." Do what you like with this one, and please note that I may or may not communicate what I have said to the press, that will depend on circumstances. Your letter to me I shall, of course, regard as private so far as publication is concerned unless you give me express permission to regard it otherwise.

With kind regards, believe me, Yours sincerely,

C. MARSH BEADNELL.

* * *

October 24, 1915....

Dear Dr. Carus:

Since my letter to you of the day before yesterday another mail has arrived on board, and as this puts a somewhat different complexion on the circumstances attending the execution of Miss Cavell and I wish in my comments thereon to say nothing unjust to any one concerned, but only what I believe to be perfectly true, I am sending this rider to my letter of the 22d.

The first accounts that appeared in the press described the officer commanding the firing squad as deliberately shooting the lady through the head with his revolver as she lay in a faint on the ground some few yards away from the spot against the wall where she was to have been shot by a firing party. It also described the firing party as looking on. The later description of this horrible deed, and probably the more correct one, shows that all the sparks of chivalry, sentiment and mercy have not been quenched in some German breasts at any rate. It would appear that the squad *did* fire on the lady, or rather that they purposely fired in such a manner that their bullets missed the human target. One or two of the missiles, however, struck the lady in such way as to wound but not kill, on seeing which the commanding officer went up to her and fired a bullet through her head. Under these circumstances his act was, therefore, an act of kindness and mercy.

It makes one tremble with sympathy to think that any member of the male sex should have been put in such an absolutely impossible and cruel position and made to participate in a deed that will haunt him—and his men—to their dying days. I wish, therefore, to transfer what odium I placed on the shoulders of this officer and the firing squad entirely, and with compound interest, onto the shoulders of the military tribunal who so vindictively sentenced to death this English lady. Their act has done the German nation more harm than any of the many previous ones. The Germans started their campaign of hate and sang their Song of Hate at the very beginning of the war. We had not then and have not since committed a single act calling for hate. We've "played cricket" first and last, and it's been our most deadly weapon against Germany. There might have been some excuse, in view of all the atrocities, for a Song of Hate on our side, but not even now, after this last and culminating dastardly act, is there any hatred. Men shake their heads and set their teeth—that is all...One cannot hate what disgusts.

I am not going to insult you, Sir, by the very vaguest insinuations that you approve of such deeds for I *know* you detest them. I have attacked you because of your paradoxical attitude, because I believe you are your own

enemy, because I would like to see the *quondam* Dr. Carus restored to us all—rescued, as it were, from Dr. Carus.

Here is the account as it appeared in the papers received to-day:

Amsterdam, October 22.

(From the Antwerp correspondent of the *Telegraaf*.)

“Of the four women recently sentenced to death—namely, the French teacher, Louise Thullier; the Countess Jeanne de Belleville; Anna Benaizet, a tailoress, and Miss Cavell, only the last-named up to now has been executed. The heroism shown by Miss Cavell, and some weeks ago by Madame Louise Frenay, who was executed at Liège, influenced even the German firing squads, of whom the majority did not aim at the victims. The result in the case of Madame Frenay was that she was wounded in the leg, while Miss Cavell was hit by only one of twelve bullets, the commanding officer in each case being obliged to give the *coup de grâce* by shooting the wounded woman with a revolver placed at the ear.”

This makes terrible reading which will, Dr. Carus, affect you as it must affect any civilized human being. I see that, owing to pressure brought to bear on him by the King of Spain and the Pope, the German Emperor has ordered the execution of the remaining ladies to be cancelled.

Sincerely yours,

C. MARSH BEADNELL.

DR. BEADNELL'S CRITICISM.

While the current *Open Court* is being made ready Dr. Beadnell's answer reaches me, and I take this opportunity to publish it at once and make special room for it in the current number, even in preference to my own article on the same subject, written in answer to my critics. It but proves to me again that Dr. Beadnell is fully convinced of the justice of the English cause and the viciousness of Germany. I am especially impressed with the case of Miss Cavell, and wish to let my readers consider it in the light in which he so impressively represents it. But has he ever considered that the German authorities are in an extremely difficult position? Surrounded by spies and traitors who use underhand methods, the German authorities in Belgium were helpless against certain individuals who, under the protection of their position and their sex, misused the confidence placed in them and succeeded in rendering the enemy more effective service than the soldier can do in the open field. These are weapons which can become more formidable than regiments. Information sent thus secretly to the enemy is as arrows shot in the dark, and it is an established law over all the civilized world that the misuse of public confidence in such a case is punishable with death. I am sure the German judges did not pass the death sentence without great reluctance, and moreover they did so only because they deemed the execution of such a sentence absolutely necessary for the protection of their country against those persons who, for security in their wrong-doing, relied on the leniency with which they would be treated.

It is peculiar that in this case again, as in the execution of francs-tireurs earlier in the war, the world complains about German barbarism, while if the Allies do the same thing it is considered a matter of course. It does not seem to be known that the French executed two German women, at any rate