

MISCELLANEOUS.

GERMANY'S DESTRUCTION AS FORETOLD BY A FRENCHMAN.

In Major de Civrieux's book, *La fin de l'empire allemande.—La bataille du Champ des Bouleaux 1911.* (Paris and Limoges, Henri Charles-Lavanzelle, 1912), we gain an interesting insight into the Belgian neutrality question as seen through French spectacles, and we get the impression that the invasion of Belgium by Germany was not only expected by France but ardently hoped for in order to make an end of Germany.

The book gives an imaginary picture of the end of Germany in the near future. This takes place in the following way: After the German fleet has been annihilated through a sudden attack by the English fleet, following, as the book says, the example of Japan in the Russo-Japanese war, without any further declaration of war, the invading German armies are defeated by the French at Apremont, southwest of Metz, then at Neufchateau, south of Toul, and on the Ourthe in Belgium; in the latter battle in conjunction with the English and Belgians. After these defeats the victors, strengthened further by the Dutch, press forward from different directions through the Rhine province and Westphalia, and finally make an end of Germany in "the battle of the Birch field" near Hamm. William II is also killed in this battle, as the last German emperor, his headquarters being smashed into a thousand fragments by bombs thrown from French flying machines.

In the book the following sentences are significant. First, that one in the preface, written by Major Driant, representative from Nancy, to the author of the book, and those by the author himself. Major Driant says: "The proposed violation of Belgian neutrality has long ceased to be a secret. True, every one resists this idea, we know that; but in spite of this, and in consequence of the intimate relations between France and England, this violation is unavoidable. It is of the most pressing interest to Germany to march through Belgium as quickly as possible, first, in order to hinder the junction of the British forces and the northern French armies, second, in order to gain the shortest and most weakly defended route to Paris."

The author, Civrieux, says in his imaginary description of the future war: "As long as the Belgian border was barred to the French movements every French attack, which found itself confined within the narrow space between Basel and Mezières, had to go to pieces against the powerful girdle of German fortifications in Alsace-Lorraine, and, behind them, against the fortified line of the Rhine. On this narrow space a campaign having a prospect of victory was impossible. Never could it have carried our troops along with enthusiasm. It would have come to a bitter and terrible struggle, and one of extreme sacrifice, without a spark of hope for victory in the hearts of the fighters. On the contrary, the superior mass of the Germans would have crushed the French through its weight alone, for the mobility of the French would have been restricted by the narrowness of the war area, yes would have been made entirely ineffective. But now, all at once, the plains of Belgium were open to the French armies, where, besides, there were 100,000 Belgians ready to defend the violation of their neutrality. Now the prospect was altogether different. After a victorious fight on Belgian soil there would be an invasion into the enemy's country, toward the Lower Rhine, which was without fortifications, hand in hand with the English ally who ruled the sea and would now set foot on the continent."

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