

## ***Censorship of Opinion***

A correspondent of The Star raises the question of German professors in the University of Toronto. Broadly speaking, the question is of the employment of Germans in any public capacity in Canada. The guiding principle in all such cases should be prudence, not passion or prejudice. What we ought to do is to make it certain that no German shall be in a position in which he can jeopardize the cause of Great Britain and her allies.

The guiding principle must be, not prejudice, but prudence and patriotism. To put it in another way, the guiding principle should be generalship. Our aim is to make Canada an effective agent in strengthening the cause of our friends. Everything else we can afford to ignore.

For instance, it is not of the least consequence to us or our cause that some American papers containing opinions with which we do not agree should stray into Canada. We are not children. We are capable of distinguishing between good and bad arguments. We of the Canadian newspapers are every day combatting German views as to the causes of the war. We could not combat them unless we read them. And what editors are allowed to read others may read. The editorial calling is not an hierarchy, whose members are privileged to hear things that are withheld from the populace.

Here, again, discrimination must be used. War necessitates war measures. Prudence, not prejudice, must be our guide. If literature were circulated in Canada with the express purpose of misleading and inflaming German residents of Canada, it would be quite right for the Government to remove that danger and temptation. But it would be both silly and tyrannical to prevent Canadians by law from reading standard and old-established American publications which present both sides of the case.

We expect our American contemporaries to be fair, and as a rule they are fair. But we cannot expect the United States, as a neutral nation, to take precisely the same view as Canada, which is a combatant. We must expect to find in American papers reproductions of German as well as of British articles. And surely Can-

adlans are not such intellectual weaklings that they cannot be trusted to read a translation of an article in a Berlin newspaper, side by side with an article in the London Times.

We have little sympathy with complaints against military censorship over the press. It is much better that our readers should miss a bit of news than that the Germans by reading that news should gain some advantage over our forces in the field. But censorship over thought and opinion is a very different matter.

We must not forget that American papers are published mainly for Americans; and that if some of them do mislead their readers, the effect in the United States is far more serious than the effect in Canada. Germans in Canada do understand British institutions and value them. Many Germans in the United States, and many other citizens of the United States, do not understand British institutions, and especially do not understand Canada and other self-governing British commonwealths. If we could reach those people and explain our ideas to them, we could accomplish far more good than by excluding from Canada some opinion which Canadians at once condemn as unjust and absurd.