

IF BRITONS SPOKE IN KAISER'S EMPIRE AS HUNS IN CANADA WOULD MEAN DEATH

Would Likely Encounter Firing Squad, Says Pembroke Observer, Commenting on Journal's Interview With Mayor.

ADMITS SOME GERMANS HAVE SPOKEN DISLOYALLY

Local Paper Fears, However, That
Aspersions Will be Cast on Many
Loyal Citizens of Teutonic Ex-
traction.

Special to The Journal.

Pembroke, Dec. 4.—The Pembroke Observer in a lengthy front-page editorial this week comments on Mayor Morris' interview with the Ottawa Evening Journal, in which the chief magistrate of this town alleged that Pembroke was the centre of an organized German spy system. In part the Observer comments:

It is a fact known to all that some residents of German extraction have at times since the outbreak of the war, given expression to sentiments and opinions of a nature calculated to arouse the antipathy of loyal citizens whose patriotism is stirred now as it has never been stirred before and which, if made in Germany under similar circumstances by any one of British extraction, would most probably merit for the person guilty a volley from a military firing squad.

Indignation Aroused.

"There has at times been much indignation caused by such indiscretions on the part of people who are generally believed to be sympathetic with the Teutonic cause, and no action has been taken to intern or in any way punish those who are believed to be openly unfriendly to the Empire, and this fact is as gall and wormwood not only to the Mayor, but to many others whose anxiety for the Empire's cause is deep and sincere.

"That there is being operated from Pembroke a spy system which embraces the whole country seems rather a far-fetched statement and one which it is difficult to believe. We understand that complaints made at different times to the authorities at Ottawa have been investigated and that nothing has been discovered which would lead to such a conclusion, and so far as this section is concerned there is little that could be secured which would be of any military value to the German authorities. The only information which could be sent from Petawawa camp is that the prisoners interned there are being decently treated and are enjoying life, and that the Russian authorities are using a portion of the camp for the purpose of testing shells.

Their Sheer Folly.

"The interview makes the mayor say that he does not wish to create the impression that all our German residents are bad citizens, and this is well, for no sane man would desire to cast aspersions on all of them, and particularly those of Canadian birth, all of whom we believe are loyal and true to the cause of the Empire. They know and appreciate the value of British liberty and British institutions, and it would be sheer folly for them to wish to exchange the heritage they enjoy here for the oppressions and disabilities in the land of their forefathers. One of the clergymen referred to in the interview has a son fighting in the trenches in France, and on him in all events the suspicion of disloyalty can hardly be justly placed.

"Residents of German birth or extraction should be very guarded in their acts and utterances lest they do or say anything which might place them in a wrong light or bring those of their fellows who are conscientiously endeavoring to maintain a proper attitude under a cloud of suspicion. Canada is at war—just as much at war as any of the nations involved—and in war times the sensibilities of any section of the people are not likely to receive very much consideration if anything occurs to arouse suspicion against them. We are not going to indulge in any washy sentimentality regarding our German fellow citizens. We fancy they are intelligent enough to understand that no one would wish to do any injustice to people who have for so long a time had a large and important part in the business and social life of Pembroke and district, but if any among them assume an attitude hostile to the country at this time they should be dealt with as alien enemies and the authorities should have no hesitation in invoking the law, quite irrespective of any political or other considerations.

Giving Them Justice.

"Last night's Journal followed up the matter and made suggestions for the clearing up of local rumors and suspicions, in justice to the large number of German residents who have remained true to the land of their adoption.

"While The Journal's articles have many things which have been common talk in Pembroke for months past, there are features which are somewhat unfortunate and which must tend to cast discredit upon well-meaning, loyal Germans, and this is regrettable. Pembroke people have hitherto done no worrying about our German citizens as a whole. Their loyalty has not been questioned. A few have been unwise and indiscreet, but we must not condemn all for the few, and it is extremely doubtful, if publicity of this kind will do much good. Action by the proper authorities on any occasion when action is called for would be much more effective, and would not tend to set one element of the people against the other, as articles such as those published by The Journal are very likely to do."