

A GERMAN IDEA OF "HATRED."

In recent issues, "Der Courier," a German weekly, published in Regina, has borne evidence of a tardy recognition that it lives, moves and has its being on Canadian soil, and, further, that Canada happens to be a portion of the British Empire. It now assumes the tone of outraged virtue, and complains bitterly that both itself and the German element it represents have been much ill-used and much maligned.

In this lament The Free Press receives special attention as the following extract from the utterance in question will show:

"In these days we can only recognize a general hatred of the Germans, a general lack of sympathy and restricted freedom. An example of this is to be found in the continued malicious attacks of the Winnipeg Free Press upon the German-Canadian Provincial Association. When we reflect how unreservedly at the very outbreak of hostilities we declared ourselves to be first and foremost for Canada, we are amply unable to understand how such a campaign of baiting could be undertaken."

The Free Press is on record as having been one of the first Canadian newspapers to plead for tolerance and sympathy towards the German-speaking population of Canada. On August 6th—that is to say, two days after the declaration of war between Britain and Germany—The Free Press said:

"As for our fellow-Canadian citizens of German origin we can well afford to adopt a generous attitude. We have had proofs of their good citizenship and of their loyalty to Canada. They are not responsible for the present madness of the German military war lords, although it will be impossible for them not to feel in some degree their blood relationship with Britain's enemy. Their loyalty to Canada will receive neither shock nor hurt and it will be for us, in the circumstances, to play the larger-hearted part."

This, then, was the attitude which The Free Press was determined to maintain and to urge others to observe towards fellow-Canadians of German origin. It implied the supposition that the latter would at least adopt a policy of strict neutrality, even if they were unable publicly to support the cause of Britain and of that British liberty and freedom under which they had greatly prospered.

What was the truth? Even as The Free Press' appeal for sympathy and toleration was being penned, a German publication in the city of Winnipeg was taking active measures to help German and Austrian reservists to leave Canada and join the armies of Britain's enemies. It printed on its front page detailed directions how such reservists were to try and cross the ocean and reach Europe.

The "Courier," immediately prior to the war, published a bellicose dispatch, stating that the world would see such a spectacle as had never been witnessed if the German Army mobilized. After the outbreak of the war it published "An Appeal to the German Newspapers and All German Societies in Canada." This "Appeal" protested energetically against uncomplimentary references to the Kaiser and the German armies in the English-speaking press of Canada.

Proceeding to issue a veiled threat, the "Courier" said: "We are bound to show that we will not tolerate in silence any sneering at the German nation or the German civilization." And to back up this threat, it uttered the foolish falsehood that "we number nearly a million in a population of some seven millions." The "Appeal" was also responsible for the remarkable statement that, while Canadian citizens of German origin had duties to their adopted country, they had "also duties to the nation of our birth." In subsequent issues the "Courier," by means of heavy type and display headings, sought to create the impression that German arms were proving victorious all along the line, while gibes and sneers at the Allies were quite frequent in its columns.

The Free Press gave publicity to this pro-German campaign of the "Courier," and for doing so the "Courier" now accuses it of "a blind hatred of the Germans, a general lack of sympathy and restricted outlook" and also of "continued malicious attacks." At the time The Free Press put some plain questions to the "Courier," which the latter failed to answer. We asked whether the "Courier" denied the right of the Canadian English-speaking press to reproduce the speech of the Kaiser wherein he instructed German soldiers to emulate the deeds of the Huns under Attila, and whether, in its opinion, there should be no reference in Canadian newspapers to

scenes of German vandalism and barbarism. We also asked the "Courier" to state what was the "duty" of Canadian citizens of German origin towards Germany.

A recent issue of the "Courier" contains, further, the false statement that Canadian journals have denied the right of the German-Canadian Alliance of Saskatchewan to present a petition to the Canadian Parliament. No such right has ever been denied. The Free Press has, however, criticized, and described as a piece of impertinence, the request contained in this petition that the Ottawa Government take steps to prevent Canadian newspapers from printing articles which offend the susceptibilities of the Saskatchewan German-Canadian Alliance.

It must be admitted that the attitude of a minority—for we still believe it is such—of the German-speaking population of Western Canada has been as surprising as it has been disappointing.