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EDITORIAL

THE “CHINKS” IN IMPERIAL GERMANY’S ARMOR.

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THE first bugle blast of the German Government in the pending Reichstag elections is to this tune:

“We need a Reichstag which will be ready to continue the economic policy of commercial treaties and the protection of national labor; one ready to pursue quietly and deliberately our social policy which is a guarantee of peaceful development at home; one ready to keep the army and navy permanently in a state of the highest efficiency and stop the chinks in our armor.”

While the supposition that the “chinks” can be stopped, betrays a false diagnosis of the armor’s failings, the recognition that there are “chinks” in its armor is to the credit of the German Government.

The German Government is a sociologic monstrosity. Like the hippopotamus—which is a dwindling survival of the early days in the world’s geologic history when the breathing contrivances of mammals had to enable them to live above and under water alike—the German Government is a sort of social amphibian, a creature neither all bourgeois, nor yet all feudal. A Government that, by its very structure, is forced to move in two such distinct atmospheres, about evenly and not alternately in each, but simultaneously in both, can not choose but have an armor so loosely put together as to present “chinks” manifold.

The feudal character of the German Government pants after armaments; these demand heavy taxes; and utterly indifferent is a feudality to the burden of taxation: it is virtually exempt. On the other hand, the bourgeois interests of Germany, as elsewhere, while needing navies, also military armaments, do not look upon these in the manner that a feudal class does; to a feudal class armaments are a sort of nec-

essary luxury; to the bourgeois, armaments are a necessary expenditure, to be paid for by themselves; to a feudality, consequently, the larger the armaments, all the huger the luxury and the opportunities for enjoying the same; whereas to the bourgeois, the larger the armament, all the heavier its own burden of expenditure. As a final consequence and contrast, a feudality cares not how large the armament; the bourgeois, on the contrary, seek to keep armaments down to the minimum needed.

The friction between these two “tastes” is enough to produce a “chink” of no mean dimensions. It is a “chink” which to stop is impossible. It is a “chink” which can only widen—and which the powerful breath of Socialism, breathed by the Social Democracy under many difficulties, is certain steadily to rip into a bigger and bigger hole.

The first official Governmental bugle blast in the campaign blew, when it tooted that particular note, when it tooted the “chinks” note, blew a funeral, rather than a triumphantly martial note.

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