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THE WAR

The British victory at Messines is now regarded by military critics as much more important and much more significant than the mere fact that the Germans have been driven back another stage and that several thousands of them have been taken prisoners. In the continued successes from the memorable April 9th when Vimy Ridge was cleared of Germans to the great victory on June 7th at Messines, the critics who are in touch with the inner movements of the armies see not only increasing means on the British side but constantly improving tactics born of hard won experience. Our armies in 1914 or in 1915 could not have won Arras or Messines because means were wanting. Today, with ample means, an infinitely better war equipment and the experience of former battles former impossibilities are made possible. They tell us that the "prudent and limited offensive" of which Arras and Messines are typical examples, consort best with the present situation and the relative number engaged on each side. These tactics brought complete triumphs without excessive loss. "When prudent short range offensive" says the Military critic of the London Times, "is combined with complete scientific utilization of all new weapons and contrivances, then we find the enemy not only beaten, but prostrated and reduced to a position of manifest inferiority. At the least possible cost to ourselves we do the enemy the greatest possible harm, when, as at Messines, he allows us 36 hours to consolidate our position and then counter-attacks, with a result particularly disastrous to him. We see again in the operation at Messines all the causes which contributed to victory on April 9, namely careful preparation for attack, through rehearsal operations by the use of models, from which commanders and units learn the exact missions confided to them, concentration of a formidable mass of guns, exact registration of batteries upon targets, thanks to the co-operation of gunners, airmen and survey companies."

We at home, reading our daily war news become impatient when we do not have a great push or a great victory served out to us every morning. We must not forget the magnitude of such affairs as Vimy Ridge and Messines. These were typical climaxes to preparation that had been in progress for weeks, possibly for months. The stage had been set with great deliberation and the outcome justified the preparation. As we impatiently await a repetition of Vimy Ridge and Messines we may rest assured that the stage is being fixed for another performance and in due course we shall see the denouement in events as collosal as any that have yet occurred.

Previous to the battle of Messines the Germans gravely announced that the British offensive was played out; the Kaiser blasphemously announced that the Almighty was still with his own chosen people, the Germans and had vouchsafed them another great victory. The German officers who came over from the Russian front to meet the "broken and disheartened" and "God forsaken English" were sadly undeceived at Messines and were not slow to accept the shelter of the barbed wire stockades prepared for them by the English when an opportunity for surrender came to them.

The "prudent and limited offensive" is still in progress, is still the tactics of the British and French generals and if, these days, our war news is meagre it is because big things are in preparation, not because there is nothing doing.

THE SOLDIERS' MORALS

At the Presbyterian General Assembly in Montreal the other day some of the delegates expressed regrets at the alleged immoral conditions surrounding the Canadian camps in England. These regrets were brought to a startlingly sudden halt when Rev. Dr. Fraser of Owen Sound, a military chaplain who had recently returned from overseas, declared that the Canadian boys were living as clean lives as the members of the General Assembly. The allegations regarding drinking, he declared, were not only greatly exaggerated but he had been told by men on the spot and who were in a position to know, that the Canadians were the soberest troops billeted in the French towns. General Byng who is retiring from the command of the Canadian forces in France has more than once expressed his high opinion of the Canadian soldiers both as to their general conduct in camp and their splendid qualities on the battle field. Among the soldiers as among other men there are, no doubt a few black sheep but it is safe to conclude that there are fewer black sheep among the 400,000 Canadian soldiers than would be found among an equal number of those who are living in the shelter of their homes and of the churches.

It is interesting to note that while much has been said about the morals of the Canadian soldiers, the temptations surrounding them and the number who are falling, those who are in a position to speak authoritatively of the matter by reason of their having been with the soldiers of Canada abroad, invariably discredit those ugly rumors. Our soldiers would not have merited or received the praises that have been heaped upon them had they been living the life in England that some rumour mongers have credited them with.

LORD NORTHCLIFFE'S MISSION

Commenting on the appointment of Lord Northcliffe to follow up the work in the United States so well begun by the Rt. Honorable A. J. Balfour, a United States exchange says in part:

"Great Britain has decided to throw on Lord Northcliffe the immense task and the immense responsibility of co-ordinating the work of British boards and missions in the United States, of creating and maintaining harmony with the representatives of other Entente Powers and with the Washington Government; of hurrying food purchases and shipments from this country; of representing his nation in the biggest and broadest sense in its relations with America.

"Balfour's marvelous tact, his superb poise, his high cultivation, have made a strong impression here. Yet it is no reflection on one of the first gentlemen of England to say that Northcliffe, former news reporter, lawyer, captain of industry and Cabinet smasher, is easier for the average American to understand, and that the average American is easier for Northcliffe to understand. And in finance and commerce, a Balfour always has his limitations.

"Baron Northcliffe of the Isle of Thanet made his own career as Alfred Harmsworth. He is now the owner of the London Times, of the London Daily Mail, and a large number of other publications. He has vast paper-making interests in Newfoundland. And as a fearless, patriotic Englishman, ready always to point out the sloth, the crookedness or the despotism, of men in power, he holds a unique position in the minds of his own people.

"It was Northcliffe who let the subjects of the King know that shrapnel was being used at Neuve Chapelle instead of high explosive shells; it was Northcliffe who analyzed and condemned the Gallipoli fiasco; it was Northcliffe who insisted that Kitchener was overtaxing his physical and mental powers trying to run everything himself, and continued to insist till a change came; it was Northcliffe who hammered and hammered at the Asquith Ministry until that Ministry fell; it was Northcliffe who urged in season and out of season the promotion of Lloyd-George. The newspaper man has sought no honors and no power for himself. He has been the Warwick of British politics.

"America will welcome Northcliffe and look for the best possible results from his coming. That he can make valuable suggestions as to the co-ordinating of our own efforts to do all that can be done for our Allies we have no doubt at all. That President Wilson and the leaders in both branches of Congress will be glad to listen to him goes without saying. He is the right man in the right place, and only Germany has reason to regret his coming here."

NOTES

He who says conscription should be referred to the people hopes the people will defeat it.

The Detroit Free Press, discussing in advance of the failure of the party leaders in Canada to come together on the war, said among other things: Sir Wilfrid Laurier, a former Premier of Canada, and now leader of the Liberal minority, has at this moment a greater responsibility than he ever bore in the supreme office. He must take his stand for or against the Government's conscription plan and the greatness or littleness of his place in Canadian history will be determined by his attitude."

GREAT BRITAIN'S NOTE TO RUSSIA

(Canadian Press Despatch.)

LONDON.— In reply to the Russian Government's request for a statement of the British war aims, Great Britain has forwarded to Petrograd, a note in which is expressed hearty acceptance and approval of the principles which President Wilson laid down in the historic message to Congress. The British Government believes, broadly speaking, that the agreement made from time to time with Britain's Allies are conformable to these standards.

The purpose of Great Britain at the outset, says the note, was to defend the existence of the country and enforce respect for international agreements. Since then there has been added that of "liberating populations oppressed by alien tyranny." The note bespeaks not only the liberation of Poland by Russia, but of that section of Poland within the Dominions of the Germanic Empires. Following is the text of the note:

"In the proclamation to the Russian people, enclosed with the note, it is said that free Russia does not purpose to dominate other peoples or take from them their national patrimony, or forcibly occupy foreign territory. In this sentiment the British Government heartily concurs. They did not enter the war as a war of conquest; they are not continuing it for such an object. Their purpose at the outset was to defend the existence of their country and enforce respect for international engagements. To those objects have now been added that of liberating populations oppressed by alien tyranny.

"They heartily rejoice therefore, that free Russia has announced her intention of liberating Poland, not only Poland ruled by the old Russian autocracy, but equally that within the Dominion of the Germanic Empires. In this enterprise the British democracy wish Russia Godspeed.

Stop Future Wars.

"Beyond everything we must seek such settlement as will secure the happiness and contentment of peoples, and take away all legitimate causes of future war.

"The British Government heartily join with their Russian Allies in their acceptance and approval of the principles laid down by President Wilson in his historic message to the American Congress. These are the aims on which the British peoples are fighting. These are the principles by which their war policy is and will be guided.

"The British Government believe that, broadly speaking, the agreements they have from time to time made with their Allies are conformable to these standards, but if the Russian Government so desire, they are quite ready with their Allies to examine and, if need be, to revise these agreements."

NEW RUSSIA MAY BE GREAT AID TO ALLIES

LONDON.— The Government has declined to cancel the passports of James Ramsay MacDonald and Frederick W. Jowett, who have been prevented from sailing for Petrograd to meet Russian Socialists by the National Seamen's and Firemen's Union. The Government explained that they were issued in response to the request of the Russian Government, upon the advice of Arthur Henderson, member of the War Council and representative of Labor, who is now in Russia, and the British ambassador, Sir George Buchanan.

Motion Was Defeated.

A motion to adjourn the House last night, as a protest against the granting of the passports, was defeated with division, after Mr. Bonar Law, Chancellor of the Exchequer, had made the foregoing explanation.

Mr. Bonar Law pointed out the difficulty of guiding the Russian revolution or foreseeing its course, but said it was quite certain that there was a possibility of new Russia playing in the war a part as effective as, or even more effective than that ever played by Russia under the former Czar.

Under proper guidance new Russia could materially help the Allies. The Government believed that the Russians realized freedom had to be fought for, and that they intended to fight for it. Was it not clearly the Government's duty to make easy the path for her? MacDonald and Jowett had not been granted passports as representatives of any particular shade of British opinion, but in response to the invitation of the Russian Government and on Ambassador Buchanan's advice that great harm would be done if passports were refused, and because Mr. Henderson, now in Russia, had expressed the opinion that in the interests of the war these two members should be allowed to go.

Their Position Uncertain.

The position of MacDonald and Jowett is still uncertain. They are still at the port from which they intended to depart, with George H. Roberts, the Labor whip, who considered it inadvisable to proceed, while others were detained. But Mrs. Emmeline Pankhurst and some of the other delegates sailed.

According to a Central News report, MacDonald and Jowett have signed an acceptance of a guarantee that they would insist upon restitution to allied merchantmen for the murder and destruction committed by German submarines, which would mean that the Seamen's and Firemen's Union would withdraw their embargo. This, however, is not confirmed officially.

DAILY SELECTIONS FOR GUARDIAN READERS

Furnished by W. S. Louson.

HOW DID YOU FIGHT

(Reprinted by Request) . . .

Did you tackle that trouble that came your way
With a resolute heart and cheerful?
Or hide your face from the light of day
With a craven soul and fearful?

O, a trouble's a ton, or a trouble's an ounce,
Or a trouble's what you make it;
And it isn't the fact that you're hurt that counts,
But only, how did you take it?

You're beaten to earth? Well, well, what's that?
Come up with a smiling face.
It's nothing against you to fall down flat,
But to lie there, that's disgrace.

The harder you're thrown, why the higher you bounce;
Be proud of your blackened eye!
It isn't the fact that you're licked that counts
It's how did you fight—and why?

And though you be done to death, what then
If you battled the best you could;
If you played your part in the world of men,
Why, the Critic will call it good.

Death comes with a crawl, or comes with a pounce,
And whether he's slow or spry;
It isn't the fact that you're dead that counts,
But only, how did you die?

—Edmund Vance Cooke.

920,000 HORSES EXPORTED

NEW YORK.—A compilation by the National City Bank, issued yesterday, showed that the number of horses exported from the United States since August, 1914, is in round numbers 920,000, and of mules 330,000. The stated value of the horses was $194,000,000 and of the mules $66,000,000.

The bank's statement said the fact that this was not a "cavalry war," and that automobiles, motor cycles, airplanes, and observation balloons were performing much of the service formerly required of the horse in war time did not seem to have checked the demand for American saddle and draft animals. It was estimated that in the fiscal year which will end June 30, 300,000 horses will have been exported, a slight decline from the corresponding period of 1916. Whatever reduction there is in shipment of horse is being made up by an increase in the number of mules sent abroad.

There has been no advance in the prices of horses, the average export valuation having been in the first year of the war $221 per head, in the second year $205, and in the third year $214. The average export price of the mules was in the first year $193, in the second year $205, and in the third year $206. The loss of so large a number reduced the total value of horses in this country from $2,229,000,000 in 1914 to $2,175,000,000 in 1917.

"It is not surprising," said the statement, "that the countries at war find it necessary to draw upon the United States for horses, since we have one-fifth of the 100,000,000 horses in the world, and far more than any other country except Russia, which has about 30,000,000 against about 22,000,000 in the United States. Russia's supply, by reason of war conditions, was wholly unavailable except for her own armies."

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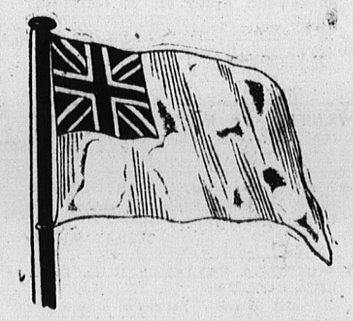

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Charlottetown Guardian

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