

The Charlottetown Guardian

Evening Daily (founded 1907) \$2.00, (delivered or by mail) in Canada, and \$2.50 for U. S. A. Morning Daily (founded 1891), \$3.50 per year. (Delivered in advance; \$2.50 per year (mailed) in advance, in Canada, and \$3.00 for U. S. A. Saturday Weekly (founded 1887) \$1.50 per annum by mail in Canada or U. S. A. Head Office at Charlottetown, Branch Offices at Summerside, Alberton, Souris and Montserrat.

TUESDAY MAY 8 1917

WATCH RUSSIA

The supreme effort now being made by the Germans is to avoid defeat. They have no doubt abandoned the original object of over-running France and dominating the English channel and ultimately England. Their object now is to drag along through slaughter, through privations, through sacrifice, through anything, until by prolongation of the agony and the hopelessness of securing a definite victory, the Allies will be ready to conclude a peace that will leave a starting point from which Germany shall begin again.

Publicly they are depending upon their submarine warfare to secure this end and are boasting that they are going to accomplish it by starving England. In their secret counsels they are unquestionably depending upon another factor of which publicly they say but little. That factor is Russia.

We know nothing of Russia, nothing except that there has been a revolution which in a day turned the policy of centuries upside down, opened up a new Russia, transformed millions of serfs into freemen, kicked out of power those who were in authority and substituted a rule which was proclaimed to be the rule of the people by the people. A nation of one hundred and fifty million people, the majority of them ignorant, made up of some scores of different nationalities and languages and dialects, cannot be remade into another nation in a day. The new Russia is still in the making and Germany undoubtedly has a hand in the making.

Since the revolution there has been an ominous silence from the Russian war theatres. Our despatches yesterday explained—from Petrograd—that the evacuation of Ognott and Mush in Turkish Armenia by the Russians was for strategic reasons. The evacuation of these two positions was announced a week ago. There has been no report of fighting. No battles of any importance have been fought; the Russian armies on every front are scarcely mentioned in the telegraphic reports. Why?

There can be no doubt as to the loyalty of the new provisional government. It is, we believe, made up of the best men in Russia, men who meant what they said when they declared they would fight with the Allies to the end. But what have they to contend against? How are they to secure the allegiance and the assistance in fighting of soldiers who saw the officers of the old regime turned down and substituted by others under the new doctrine of general equality?

That the Russians on the fighting fronts should have remained quiet for so long may be partly due to the Spring conditions of the country and the difficulty of moving heavy artillery. The curious quietude on the part of the Germans along the eastern front may also be due to this condition but it is not the habit of the Germans to desist from fighting because of ordinary difficulties. That both Russians and Germans should have kept away from each others throats so long after the fierce hatred expressed in many a hard fought battle before the revolution is a singular coincidence.

While our telegrams regarding the Russian situation are reassuring as to the attitude of the provisional government the silence regarding the armies is ominous.

THE CRITICS

In the course of an address some days ago Sir William Robertson, Chief of the Imperial General Staff, speaking of the need of men and of general operation in carrying on the war, had a few words to say to the critics, words which are as applicable in Canada as in England. He frankly admitted that the War Office had made mistakes, "but marvellously few considering that we have had to improvise new armies." The critics, he said, "are chiefly disgruntled and otherwise undesirable members of the community who, having failed in their own professions think they know all about the professions of others and instead of putting their shoulders to the wheel employ most of their time in sowing discontent and distrust of those in authority." "Let us treat them," he continued, "with the contempt they deserve as do the soldiers at the front. I am gratified to say that, more than in any campaign in which I have taken part, criticisms within the army itself have been practically non-existent and this I regard as a great tribute to the loyalty and discipline of the nation which has produced the men of whom our new armies are composed."

"Criticism within the army non-existent," criticism among those who know nothing about the army, who know only that if their criticism is effective, it is sufficient to discredit the government, they may have a chance to climb into office—this kind of criticism is rampant and everybody knows what is behind the criticism. "Let us treat them with the contempt they deserve," says the soldier, the man who knows.

Speaking of the progress of the war Sir William said that Germany has many more divisions in the

field than last year, that she has increased the number of her soldiers by about a million. Germany has been able to increase her armies by her domineering autocratic government acting in total disregard of the most elementary principles of humanity and international law. After over-running Poland she compelled thousands of men to emigrate to Germany and to work in German mines and munition factories, thus releasing large numbers of men for military service. Her next method of obtaining men was to pass what is known as the auxiliary service law last November by which all persons, male and female, between the ages of 17 and 60 were placed at the disposal of the government. This measure alone, it is estimated, added fully a million men to her fighting forces. By her slave raiding in Belgium and Northern France she has added other thousands to her working forces enabling her to keep the work in the munition factories and on the farms going on without interruption while every man who can handle a gun is sent to the front.

This is what our armies are up against, what our military authorities and our governments are providing to meet. How they have met it both in the United Kingdom and in Canada has amazed the world, has amazed all but the critics whose hands are raised only to obstruct, to find fault, to arouse discontent instead of helping in the greatest undertaking ever attempted by any nation. Why should they not be treated, as Sir William Robertson and the army are treating them, with contempt?

CAUSE OF HIGH COST OF LIVING

Some eminently sensible remarks touching upon the causes underlying the high cost of living were uttered in Parliament the other day by Dr. J. W. Edwards, of Frontenac. Following is an extract from his speech as reported in the official Hansard:

"In all the discussion we have heard this evening in regard to the high cost of living and foodstuffs, not one has attempted to get at the real reason for these high prices. Why is cheese the price it is today? Would any hon. member opposite say that the Government should step in and tell the farmers that they must take fifteen cents or eighteen cents or twenty cents a pound for cheese instead of the price they are getting, which is fixed by the demand across the water? Will any member opposite, as a member of the Liberal party advocate that? The hon. member for St. John (Mr. Pugsley) said that he would fix the prices. He did not say at what figure he would fix them. In regard to the price of butter and nearly all of these articles, if you look into the facts you will find that there is reasonable cause at least for the great part of the increase in price. Take grain for instance. What about the grain crop of the United States for last year? The corn crop there was about 40,000,000 bushels short. The wheat crop was hundreds of millions of bushels short. The oat crop was short. Look into the number of head of cattle, sheep and swine in the United States, and you will find an enormous decrease; not only last year but for several years. The same holds good in this country and has held good for many years back in the countries of Europe. These are the natural causes for a part, at least, of the high cost of foodstuffs. You have also to take into consideration, when you are considering the price of butter and eggs and things like that, the produce of the farm, the difficulty that the farmer has in securing labour for the production of these articles. Not one hon. gentleman who has spoken with regard to the matter has touched on that phase of the question. And yet that is something which every farmer in the country is thoroughly aware of. He is up against the difficulty of getting labour and has to pay many times what he paid a few years ago.

"The hon. member for St. John (Mr. Pugsley) said that the Government should have foreseen all these things, the need of ships, and what was about to happen in this war. When the members on this side of the House sounded a note of warning in regard to the war which is now on, every hon. member opposite, including the member for St. John, ridiculed the suggestion. We were talking utter nonsense when we spoke of the war cloud hovering over Europe. They ridiculed the idea of war coming and did not want us to make any preparation for the effective carrying on of our part in this great struggle. It is true that the price of food products is high, but I will venture the statement that during the winter which has just closed, taking into consideration the wages paid, the demand for labour in almost every walk of life you could speak of, at high prices, and the cost of foodstuffs, there has been less actual distress in the centres of population in the Dominion of Canada than there has been during any winter in the last ten or fifteen years. And if you are considering the question of the high cost of living and foodstuffs and all that sort of thing, it is only fair to consider the ability of the population to pay the prices which are being demanded at the present time, as well as to inquire into the real causes for the prices being high. But I believe that during the last winter and at the present time there has been, as I have said, less distress throughout the Dominion of Canada because of the high cost of living than there has been in this country in the last fifteen or twenty years."

We earnestly commend these observations to that class of people who suppose that the cost of living in this country could be reduced by the stroke of a pen.

NOTES

General von Stein, the German Minister of War, admits "a certain amount of discouragement" among soldiers at the front, but reminds them that "in a war like the present one could not expect an unbroken series of victories." It is a good argument, in some situations. It is a splendid argument to address to a nation which has sometimes been victorious and sometimes not. It is a thing to remember when victory sways back and forth. But suppose a nation has been uniformly victorious, has carried everything before it for two years and a half, and suppose it then begins to lose on every field. That situation is a little different, isn't it?—N. Y. Times.

KING GEORGE URGES THE SAVING OF FOOD

LONDON.—King George has signed a proclamation exhorting the people to lessen their consumption of wheat and to practice the greatest economy and frugality in the use of all other kinds of grain.

The proclamation particularly urges the population to reduce the consumption of bread in their families by at least one-fourth of the quantity consumed in normal times. The proclamation follows:

"We, being persuaded that abstention from all unnecessary consumption of grain will furnish the surest and most effectual means of defeating the devices of our enemies and thereby bringing the war to a speedy and successful termination, and out of our resolve to leave nothing undone which can contribute to these ends or to the welfare of our people in these times of grave stress and anxiety, have thought fit, by and with the advice of our Privy Council, to issue this, our royal proclamation, most earnestly exhorting and charging all those of our loving subjects, men and women of our realm, who have means to procure articles of food other than wheat and corn, as they tender their immediate interests and feel for the want of others, especially to practice the greatest economy and frugality in the use of every species of grain and wheat; and we do for this purpose more particularly exhort and charge all heads of households to reduce consumption of bread in their respective families by at least one-fourth of the quantity consumed in ordinary times, to abstain from the use of flour in pastry and, moreover, carefully to restrict on whenever possible to abandon the use thereof in all other articles than bread; and we do also in like manner exhort and charge all persons who keep horses to abandon the practice of feeding the same with oats or other grain unless they shall have received from our food controller license to feed horses on oats or other grain, to be given only in cases where it is necessary to do so with a view of maintaining the breed of horses in the national interests; and we do hereby further charge and enjoin all ministers of religion in their respective churches and chapels within our United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland to read or cause to be read this, our proclamation, on Lord's Day for four successive weeks after the issue thereof.

The Food Controller, Lord Davenport, has ordered that after May 9 maize, barley and oats, and their products are to be used only for seed or for human and animal food. Tapioca, rice, and arrowroot will be restricted to use as human food.

KNUTSFORD BOYS' EXPERIENCE IN THE TRENCHES.

The following letter received from Private W. Morehead of the 105th to his sister at Knutsford reveals that he and his mates, are not by any means having a picnic.

April, 1917. Dear Sister:—Just a few lines to let you know that I am doing as well as can be expected. I have been sick for about two weeks. They call it trench fever, but it is only a new name for Rheumatism. My temperature was very high for a week or ten days. Once or twice going as high as 104°. The pain in my legs was pretty bad. There are quite a few in this hospital suffering from the same. I do not see how anyone that went through what we did last winter could come out without rheumatism.

59 BRITISH SHIPS SUNK LAST WEEK

LONDON. The British official announcement of the number of vessels sunk in the week ending on Sunday last shows that 28 merchant vessels of over 1,600 tons each were sunk. Those of less than 1,600 tons numbered 13 and 8 fishing vessels were sent to the bottom by submarines or mines.

The announcement says: "Arrivals of all nationalities, over 100 tons, 2,716; sailings, 2,690. "British merchantmen sunk by submarines or mines, over 1,600 tons, including three not previously recorded, 38; under 1,600 tons, including one not previously recorded, 13. "British vessels unsuccessfully attacked, including two not previously recorded, 24. "British fishing vessels sunk, including two previously recorded, 8."

Replying to a question in the House of Commons whether he would ask for an American expert to help the Foreign Office in making the blockade effective, Lord Robert Cecil, Minister of Blockade, said today that arrangements for the most effective co-operation of the United States with the Allies in the prosecution of the war were proceeding satisfactorily.

Sir Edward Carson, First Lord of the Admiralty, said there had been suggestions that enemy submarines which destroy Allied and neutral shipping had been finding their way out from enemy ports through neutral waters. He added that this subject had been under consideration from time to time.

PARIS. Concerning the extent of losses from submarines, M. Cambon, General Secretary to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, said today:

"There is no occasion to be pessimistic over the submarine menace, which is now receiving attention from the Americans. It is foreseen that American energy and precision will again aid effectively in that and in the settlement of the questions of feeding and of freight."

"It is not doubted that the end of the destruction of submarines employed against them by the English and French navies is viewed with much satisfaction, and it is interesting to note the recent successes obtained near Dindirk by scouting and bombing hydroplanes in operating against submarines."

Last week's statement showed that forty vessels of over 1,600 tons were sent to the bottom by mines or submarines. Fifteen vessels of a tonnage under 1,600 tons each and nine fishing smacks were also destroyed. The number of vessels unsuccessfully attacked was given as twenty-seven.

For a spell we wore hip boots and I have gone over the tops of them in mud and water and stayed in the mud all night, going out at four in the afternoon and back to breakfast about seven or eight the next morning, then to our dug out and "turn in". One thing that helped us was a dry pair of socks every day. So we had dry feet to sleep with, if the rest of our clothes were not. For all the discomforts we are a fairly jolly bunch. It is said that the rest of the 105th went over to France in the fifth division, but I do not know if it is true. How are they getting along recruiting on the island.

Good-bye with love from your Brother, WILL.— W

National Service FARM HELP

A Bureau for the enrolment of Volunteers for Farm Labour is now open in the Office of Mr. G. J. McCormack, Kent Street, (next Revere Hotel) Charlottetown. An Office is also open at Summerside, and each National Service League throughout the country will be supplied with forms for this work.

Every person who can possibly do so should assist in some manner to increase the production of food supplies this year. Next to enlistment for active service, this is the most important patriotic duty which confronts our men and boys today. Increased Food Production means Increased Fighting Power!

DO YOUR BIT TOWARDS INCREASING THE PRODUCTION OF FOOD SUPPLIES. Register Now! Stating how much time you are prepared to give, and when.

Boys should have the consent of their parents before giving in their names.

Farmers may apply for Help through this Office, or the nearest branch of the National Service League.

Let everyone co-operate in this important movement. It is of vital importance that there should be a general increase in Production this year, and by patriotic co-operation everyone can help himself and the country. Help to Increase Production!

J. A. MacDONALD, Director of National Service.

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DAILY SELECTIONS FOR GUARDIAN READERS

Furnished by W. S. Louson,

GIFT OF FORGETTING

WHAT CAN A LITTLE CHAP DO?

What can a little chap do? For his country and for you What can a little chap do? He can play a straight game all through That's one good thing he can do. He can fight like a knight. For the truth and the right, That's another good thing he can do. His soul he can brace, Against everything base. And the trace will be seen All his life in his face That's an excellent thing he can do. He can shun what is mean, He can keep himself clean, Both without and within.— That's a very good thing he can do. He can look to the light.

He can keep his thoughts white, He can fight the great fight, He can do with his might What is good in God's sight.— That's a very good thing he can do. And in each little thing, He can follow the King, Yes—in each smallest thing He can follow the King, He can follow the Christ, the King. —JOHN OXENHAM

Advertisement for G. H. Taylor Jeweler, featuring an image of a pocket watch and text: "Get your standard R. R. 5 Position Watch from us. Our terms are liberal. Waltham, Elgin, and Hamilton. G. H. TAYLOR Jeweler"

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