

The Charlottetown Guardian

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WAR TIME EXTRAVAGANCE

A correspondent asks, and the question is on many lips with more or less misgiving, if the extravagances and pleasuring of the present time are justifiable in view of the tremendous drain upon the resources of the country for the carrying on of the war. Extravagances no doubt there are many of them unjustifiable perhaps; pleasure seeking no doubt there is, much of it also unjustifiable and perhaps out of place, seeing that all around there is mourning for the dead and anxiety for those who, we know, are standing face to face with death. And yet, after all, both the extravagance and the pleasuring are perhaps a necessary, or should we say an inevitable, accompaniment to the war and its cost and its terrors.

Living under abnormal conditions we have become abnormal and, while extravagance and pleasure seeking have always abounded, they have both assumed more feverish proportions than in the normal days before the war.

Extravagance? Yes, the great majority are more extravagant than ever before. One good cause for this is to be found in the fact that there is more money in circulation than ever before because of, in our province, the extremely high prices received for farm produce, to which we may add such extraordinary revenues as separation and other allowances to soldiers' wives and dependents. This money is not hoarded up. It is put into immediate circulation and merchants, mechanics, labourers and others receive their proportion of it and out of it all come the war funds and other contributions on the liberality of which we justly pride ourselves. We are well within the mark when we say that this province has in the past two years contributed more in voluntary giving for beneficent purposes than it did in the previous ten years or in any ten years of its history, so that largely because of our extravagance we have been able to provide the sinews of war, to help the poor, to maintain our churches and schools and charitable institutions.

But some one will say, wisely, "could not our merchants have contributed directly from their increased business without indulging in the extravagances of automobiles and other luxuries? Could not our farmers have contributed directly out of their increased prices without indulging in extravagant buying? Could not the beneficiaries of soldiers' allowances have done likewise?" To which we, wisely or unwisely, reply: "They could but they would not." The circulation of money, even though that circulation may in very many cases spell needless extravagance, makes for general prosperity. It may also, it is quite true, spell ruin to the reckless spendthrift whose extravagance may lead to poverty but all the same his recklessly spent earnings go to swell the general revenues which make up the country's wealth and out of which our funds for war purposes and charities are derived. In this we are not encouraging extravagance, on the contrary we denounce it as sinful and foolish but in the world as at present constituted, the "fool's pence" are an important factor in our prosperity.

Pleasuring? Yes, perhaps too much of it in the midst of a world war, "death following us and ours," but the sources of tears and of laughter are very near together and there may be more sorrow and concealment of sorrow in the pleasuring than appears on the surface and it too may be one of the inevitable accompaniments of the strain of war.

THE SCHOOL GARDENS

The School gardens in Victoria Park are looking well considering the fact that so many of the gardeners are off on holiday, many of them out of the City. The potato bugs, whose holiday is taken only during the winter months, have taken advantage of the absence of the gardeners and are doing some damage in some of the plots. Fortunately however the potato plots are small and the bugs do not appear to have attacked very seriously, their ravages being confined generally to small patches in a few of the plots. The other vegetables are growing well and the recent weeding

given has made a great improvement. The children who have taken charge of plots should keep in touch with their work as the weeds are great recuperators and require almost constant attention. This however, is not so easy a matter during holidays but it would be well for the teachers to appoint a day now and again for a general clean up. The more attention the plots receive now the better will the harvest be and the harvest cannot be too great for the market. It will soon be time to put the green beans on the market and there are several very promising plots of these, but they still require nursing and weeding. Everyone is anxious that these school plots shall be a success and we feel sure the children are equally so but they need to be reminded during these pleasant days as there are many other attractions. If called out some day, and the sooner the better, the children will respond cheerfully and so will the gardens.

GOOD NEWS FROM THE FRONT

The story has been freely circulated in this country through certain newspapers, in clippings from United States papers, that a number of American officers who went to France with General Pershing for the purpose of obtaining first hand information regarding the situation at the front, brought back very "grave" reports. It was said that these officers were impressed with the "impregnability" of the German lines on the western front, and that, altogether, the situation looked very serious.

On the matter being brought to the attention of the United States Secretary for War he questioned each of the officers and then issued a statement to the effect that they had expressed no such views as those attributed to them. On the contrary, they were convinced that the French and British lines could not be broken, and that the German lines could and would be broken. They saw nothing at the front which gave them ground for the slightest pessimism as to present conditions or the final result of the struggle. They were greatly impressed by the eagerness of the British army, which is so strong in reserves that it can fight indefinitely without fear of exhaustion.

They also expressed the opinion, current along the Western front, that the recent strong attacks made by the Germans against the French were ordered by the Crown Prince, who desires to make an impression on the German public. There is a report that the Kaiser's health is such as might well cause grave anxiety on the part of his friends in Canada, and that the Crown Prince is anxious to appear as a hero at this time, to make sure of his accession to the throne. Undoubtedly if anything should happen to the present Emperor, those forces in Germany which are opposed to the war might make a demonstration for the purpose of altering the succession, or of extinguishing the dynasty. These attacks have failed of their object, and have resulted in greater losses to the Germans opposing the French than they have suffered since the disaster at Verdun. On the whole, the observations of the American officers were such that when they were communicated to the General Staff that body made no effort to conceal its enthusiasm.

A BOOST FOR CANADA

"Almost daily deputations from some American organization visit some one of the Canadian centres to see what Canada is doing for her returned soldiers. Almost all of them have expressed themselves as of the opinion that the Canadians have not overlooked much in facing the problem. They predict that the United States will follow closely in the steps of the Dominion in this work."—Toronto Globe, July 14.

NOTES

The Winnipeg Free Press (Liberal) also asks: "Are we going to stay in the war or are we going to sneak out of it?"

"Shall Canada be the first of the allied nations to slink out of the war"? This is Canada's burning question and will be until the electors answer it at the forthcoming election.

Mr. Bureau, a Quebec Liberal declared in the House of Commons: "Go outside of Quebec and you will find that the hypocrites, when they get behind the door to make their mark will not mark it for 'no election'; and they will not mark it for 'conscription either'." In these circumstances perhaps it would be better to have an open election and then we would know exactly where the opposition to the "win-the-war policy" comes from.

TREATY BETWEEN BRITAIN AND GERMANY REGARDING PRISONERS OF WAR

LONDON—In the house of commons today J.F. Hope, announced the terms of the Anglo-German agreement regarding prisoners of war, which has been ratified by both governments. The agreement is as follows:—
"First—All existing agreements for direct repatriation shall be resumed.
"Second—The qualifications on medical grounds, both for repatriation and internment in a neutral country of combatant prisoners shall be more lenient and shall be based, for the time being on the arrangements already in force between France and Germany.
"Third—The more severely wounded and seriously ill in Switzerland shall be sent back to their own countries, in order to make room for others who may now be qualified.
"Fourth—In addition to the last named and such others as Switzerland may be able to accommodate, there shall be selected for internment in Holland 7,500 sick or wounded combatant prisoners of all ranks. That means the total for both countries, and not for each country.
"Fifth—All officers and non-commissioned officers, whether in health or not, who have been in captivity for eighteen months or more, shall be eligible for internment in a neutral country, and shall be so interned, as far as accommodation can be provided. Precedence shall be according to the length of captivity. The Dutch government will provide places for 6,500 of this class.
"Sixth—The Dutch government will further provide for 2,000 civilian prisoners, invalids being given the precedence.
"Seventh—If the number of combatant prisoners eligible for internment, whether on grounds of health or time, exceeds the accommodation, a division shall be made between the British and German prisoners of each class in proportion to the eligible men of the two nationalities. As in the case of civilians, it would give Germany seven or eight to one British it has been agreed that internment should proceed on the basis of proportion.
"Eighth—Prisoners, for attempts to escape, in both countries, is to be reduced to fourteen days special confinement for a simple offence, or two months for an aggravated offence. All combatant prisoners now undergoing punishment for such offences shall be restored to ordinary captivity at the latest by the first of August.
"Ninth—All reprisals against individuals shall be immediately cancelled, and any future reprisals shall only occur after four week's notice, while the execution of all sentences for offences committed by combatants and civilians between the date of capture and the first of August shall stand over until the conclusion of peace."

Mr. Hope added that the government was considering the offer of Denmark to intern a certain number of prisoners at Copenhagen.

SETTLE DISPUTE BY "MANLY ART"

LONDON.—Should Maj. Archer Shee, M.P., accept the challenge of Penberton Billing, M.P., to a twenty round boxing contest at the National Sporting Club, there would be a gala night at that institution, and the championship of the House of Commons (presumably with belt) will be no longer in doubt. The first meeting between the combatants has already taken place with an indecisive result. It was a short, sharp affair. On Wednesday they had a set-to on the green sward outside the House of Commons, when after a brief encounter both fell to the ground. Then the police arrived and parted the gasping and disheveled tribunes. What damage the pugilistic M. P.'s sustained is not known, but neither was present at prayers today.

The affair rose out of an exchange of words in the Commons, during which Archer Shee called Billing a cad. Billing invited the major to repeat the charge outside the House with the result noted. Major Shee is said to be dissatisfied with the result, so Billing issued a challenge to the major to fight twenty rounds at the National Sporting Club, the loser to pay a hundred guineas to the Red Cross Fund, and the management of the National Sporting Club to charge admission to those who wish to witness the contest, the whole proceeds to go to war charities. Manager Bettinson, of the N.S.C., said he was sure the club committee would willingly entertain such a contest.

DAILY SELECTIONS FOR GUARDIAN READERS

EDITH CAVELL'S LAST LETTER

Thoughts of Life were stronger than those of death in Edith Cavell's last hours on earth. Her anxieties were directed toward the future welfare of a young girl friend afflicted with an appetite for drugs. A letter written to this girl on the evening of the 11th of October, 1915, the night before the execution, is here reproduced:

"My Dear Girl:
"How shall I write you this last day? Standing where I stand now, the world looks already far away. I worried about you a great deal at first, but I know God will do for you abundantly above all that I can ask or think, and he loves you so much better than I. I do earnestly beseech you to try and live as I would have you live. Nothing matters when one comes to this last hour but a clear conscience before God, and life looks so wasted and full of wrong doing and things left undone."
"You have helped me often, my dear, and in ways you little dreamed of, and I have remembered our happy holidays with mother and many small pleasures. I want you to go to England at once now and ask..... to put you where you can be cured. Don't mind how hard it is, do it for my sake, and then try and find something useful to do, something to make you forget yourself while making other happy."
"If God permits I shall still watch over you and love you and wait for you on the other side. Be sure to get ready for then. I want you to know I was neither afraid nor unhappy, but quite ready to give my life for England."

"I am sending you my wrist-watch by Mr. Gahan because it was always with me and I know you will like to wear it. I shall pray God for you at the last that he will keep you in his tender care. Forgive me that I have been severe sometimes; it has been a great grief to me to remember it. I think I was too anxious about you this last year and that was why. I am sure you will forget it now and only remember that I loved you and love you still."
"EDITH CAVELL"

"Going to plant potatoes in your garden this summer."
"I thought I would, but when I looked up the way to do it I found that potatoes have to be planted in hills, and our yard is perfectly flat."



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