

The Charlottetown Guardian

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FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 28th, 1917.

OUR PEAT WEALTH

A number of citizens, who had for a number of years and with unavailing protests, watched with anxiety the soaring price of coal, saw for the first time in this city a fuel in use which is to be found in thousand ton quantities and for the labor of digging with an ordinary spade and drying in the sun. This demonstration was given yesterday forenoon by Mr. James Duncan, of Dundas, in a cooking range in the Domestic Science Department at Kindergarten Hall.

Mr. Duncan is a native of Scotland, and had used peat fuel in his old country home. After coming to this province, and, like many of his neighbors, exhausting all the wood on his farm, he experimented with peat, here known only as swamp mud. Giving it the same treatment as had been given it in the Old Country, namely, digging in regular bricks, sun-drying for several weeks and housing for winter use, he found it in every way the equal of the Old Country product which is being used there very generally as fuel.

His demonstration yesterday was a revelation to those who witnessed it. The fire was laid with paper and wood, just as a coal fire is laid, the peat was thrown on as coal is and the result was a fire equal in every way to a coal fire. It was tested in every way, drafts checked or full open, and in all cases the results were perfectly satisfactory.

Now soft coal costs about eight dollars a ton, and anthracite twelve to fifteen dollars, while this fuel, at least the equal of soft coal, if not of anthracite, can be found in very many localities in this province for the labor of digging and drying. Mr. Duncan estimates that a farmer owning a peat bog could make good money selling it, ready for burning, for about \$3.50 a ton. He has used it in his home for the past six years and prefers it to either coal or wood. The cost of delivery at the centres will of course depend upon the shipping facilities, but to those living near the peat bogs it would mean only the expense of digging, drying and hauling. The thousands of tons which could be used by those living in the vicinity of peat bogs alone or which could be placed on the market would, besides being of great economic value to the users, very greatly relieve the demand on coal.

This peat business is no new fad, and is not now an experiment. There are hundreds of thousands of tons of it in the province, lying idle and waste while our people are adding to their already high cost of living by paying exorbitant prices for coal.

The problem now is, and it is one for the Conservation Commission, how to utilize this latent wealth. Situated as the peat bogs of this province are,—at a distance from the railways and shipping,—it is doubtful if it can be profitably developed in the usual manner by highly capitalized companies and this is perhaps to the advantage of the people. The fuel can better be placed at the disposal of the people generally by its owners by preparing it in as large quantities as possible for the market or by leasing areas of it to consumers as firewood areas are now leased. Letting it fall into the hands of capitalists would only mean monopoly and higher prices. To do this all that is necessary is to teach the people how to prepare it and the government, federal or provincial, could do worse than engage a competent man to do this work. This would be real conservation, the conservation of a most valuable asset at a time when all our assets are so much needed and when economy in everything is one of the first duties.

THE FRENCH SPIRIT

Commenting on the fine spirit of the French people, a British military writer says: "France paid, too, and paid heavily; but now, after fifteen months have gone, takes that for which she paid. Now the weight of artillery is with her. But it is not only artillery. The spirit of France lives in the extraordinary patience of the French soldier, which, combined with his excellent physique, makes his mind and body so untired in spite of the tremendous mental and bodily strain of the war that he seems today just as full of energy and

even more determined than in the first enthusiasm of the rush into Alsace and Lorraine." Verdun was always the key to the defence of France. In the last few days one after another of the bastions of that defence, which Germany won in the spring of 1916, have been regained. There is in this the whole hope and confidence of the Alliance. What Germany has won and still holds she will in due course be made to restore; that, and more also."

SOCIALISM AS A CULT

Socialism is a cult which is against the present civil organization of all nations. If it succeeded in destroying this it would probably require at least two centuries before it developed anything constructive in place of the present fabric of society. These would not be pleasant; they would in fact be extremely unpleasant centuries of human experience. Germany is attempting to use, and is using this force to disintegrate the Allies if possible. That it will recoil on Germany's own head Germany does not believe. The parallel would be exact if we had authentic information that Samson believed that he personally would escape the catastrophe he caused.—Winnipeg Telegram.

NOTES

The best exhibition weather ever on exhibition here or elsewhere, was the comment heard on every hand during the past two days.

In the opinion of Sir Wilfrid Laurier the disfranchisement of alien enemies now will make it difficult for us to persuade their kins to come to Canada after the war. Let the disfranchisement proceed.

The Patriot yesterday tried to make it readers believe that the Liberals had "swapped" Mr. Hugh Guthrie and Mr. Michael Clark for Sir Sam Hughes and Hon. Robert Rogers. Not by any means Sir Sam and the Hon. Bob, while no longer in the government, are faithful supporters of the Prime Minister, who has also joined the acting adherence of Dr. Clark, Mr. Turiff and Mr. Guthrie, three leading Liberals from the West and Ontario.

Replies by Germany and Austria to the Pope's Peace proposals have been made public and form an amusing contrast. All the humility and mourning come from the Emperor Charles, the second fiddle in the pan-German orchestra. The Emperor Wilhelm exudes top-loftiness, graciously approving the Pope for his suggestions, and reaffirming the colossal lie that his whole effort since succeeding to the Imperial throne has been to preserve peace for Germany and the world. The Austrian Emperor agrees that in future armaments must disappear and declares that he is guided by a spirit of moderation and conciliation.

The Patriot pathetically remarked yesterday in an article on the coming contest: "As conscription is now the law it is practically taken out of the contest." This means that the Patriot wants to fight under the anti-conscription banner of Sir Wilfrid Laurier, who refused to pledge himself to support conscription even were he returned to power and a further trial of voluntary recruiting failed. So long as Sir Wilfrid Laurier remains leader of the Liberal party conscription must remain an issue at the election. The Patriot cannot get over that fact, and it may as well make up its mind to it now as later. There is one and only one issue for the coming election,—Shall we support Sir Robert Borden and win the war? Or, shall we support Sir Wilfrid Laurier and leave our boys unsupported at the front?

People have wondered why the Kaiser has clung so long—and still clings—to his hopeless task, with all its bloody sacrifice. May it not well be that he prefers even the horrors of war to the terrors of reckoning what peace will bring? War at least is a distraction, and he may well shrink from the cold light peace will throw on a bankrupt Germany—bankrupt not only in the financial sense, but also in the physical, for in using up his 1919 class today the Kaiser is drawing heavily on the future, and working his man-power on credit as well as his finance. No wonder there is evidence of growing peace-hunger among the people of Berlin—many of whom would be glad to hand over not only Belgium and Alsace-Lorraine and all the German colonies but the Kaiser and the Crown Prince along with them. And hence the growing anxiety in the government!

SIR WILFRID LAURIER, STATESMAN OR POLITICIAN, WHICH?

Sir.—Looking back at the other incidents in which Sir Wilfrid Laurier played a part, those involving Canada's responsibility as a part of the British Empire cannot be overlooked.

The South African War

The main facts so far as we were concerned in this war are that the Boers declared war on Britain and were found to be thoroughly prepared for the struggle. The challenge was such that the different parts of the Empire deemed it wise as an evidence of its solidarity that their aid should be tendered voluntarily and promptly. All did so at once, except the largest sister nation—Canada. She, it is true, did not refuse but she could not find the way. Sir Wilfrid Laurier, Premier, gave out a statement that he had no power to send Canadian troops abroad without first calling parliament and obtaining power to do so. But he showed no reason why he would not summon parliament and ask for the required authority. In short he claimed he had not the power and would not ask for it. There was no will and no way would be sought. The troops were finally, under pressure of public opinion, allowed to go, but their expenses were to be borne by Canada but by the Home Government. Could less be done? Yet now when his present actions are questioned he laments what Canada did under him in the South African war is proof of his loyalty to the Empire. The truth is that Quebec governed his actions in that question, and he had to square his views to the prejudices and demands of his followers in that Province,—as a proof to them of his genuine regard for their opinions he had. Mr. Tarte moved a resolution in parliament that what had been done would not be precedent and also by having his disciple, Bourassa, resign his seat as a protest against Canada's action in this war. Bourassa, having Sir Wilfrid's support was returned triumphantly. His course had the government approval so completely that he was again introduced in the House by a member of the government with the cheers of the Liberal side. Canada played the laggard's part at that time, and what little there was done was done under force of public opinion, and contrary to Sir Wilfrid's influence. He did not act as a statesman, he just yielded to pressure as a politician. How amusing it is to read Sir Wilfrid Laurier's speeches of that time, with their tone of apology for his allowing Canadians to go to the aid of the Empire and now read the praise of his friends for his patriotism!

Naval Aid

Coming now to a more important topic, and one involving to a greater degree Canada's duty regarding her share of the burdens of national defence. Germany having entered on a policy of building a navy that would challenge the mastery of the ocean at a near future forced Britain to enlarge her navy at enormous cost,—so great was the load becoming that the subject of all parts of the Empire bearing a portion of it was dealt with by the Imperial Conference of 1902. Australia, New Zealand, Cape Colony, Natal and Newfoundland were willing to bear their share of the load, but Canada represented by Sir Wilfrid Laurier refused. His statement to the First Lord of the Admiralty was: Sir Wilfrid Laurier informed me that His Majesty's government of the Dominion of Canada are contemplating the establishment of a local naval force in the waters of Canada, but they are not able to make any offer of assistance analogous to those enumerated above (that is, the offers of Australia and the others.) We must remember that his offer of establishing a Canadian navy was made in 1902, yet the sessions of parliament 1903, 1904, 1905, 1906 and 1907 passed without a reference to naval defence in the speeches from the Throne. And all that had been done to start a navy up to his defeat in 1911 was the purchase of the old warships Niobe and Rainbow. He practically did nothing to implement the promise made in 1902, and so far as showing a disposition to render aid to Britain there is not an item of record to bear out any claim of such, but on the contrary there is ample proof of his opposition to Canada rendering any such help. This proof is quite recent. The naval policy of the Conservative party as enunciated by Mr. Borden when in opposition was contained in a statement made in parliament previous to the general election of 1911. He (Borden) said that if his party were returned to power he would ask the Imperial Government to state what form of aid by Canada they would esteem best, and would follow their advice. Borden having won in 1911, soon took steps to carry out that promise and having conferred with the Imperial Government he was put in possession of secret information of an alarming nature, and the nature of the best form of help plainly stated. On return to Canada Mr. Borden gave all this information to Mr. Laurier. He was made fully aware of Britain's apprehensions regarding Germany's designs. But Mr. Laurier treated that information with contempt. Canada's position may be put this way: We asked Britain through our government what will you have us do? The Home Government replied: Our safety lies in the navy. Give us ships. Canada having asked for direction and having received it, should in honor have attempted to act on Britain's request. That request being made in the name of Canada was more than a party matter, it was a national matter. Mr. Laurier, however, saw an opportunity of possible party advantage in this question. He opposed it straight and claimed that the electorate should again be consulted before such a request from the Home Government should be granted by Canada. The Naval Bill did pass the Commons, but he succeeded in having it killed in the Senate. And now we have Sir Wilfrid issuing a statement of his policy if returned to power viz., to have Britain say what aid Canada can best afford and of course give that aid. Here we have a man who in 1913 refused to do what Britain would have us do, coming out in 1917 with a policy of doing what Britain requires. He might as well say: I was wrong or better, I was insincere in 1913 when I opposed the request of Britain, but give me another chance, and I will do the opposite of what I did then. He did not act the statesman, he acted the politician. More anon.

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I am, sir, etc.

STUDENT.

OUR OTTAWA LETTER

(From Our Own Correspondent.)

OTTAWA, September 24.—With the prorogation of Parliament and the departure for their homes of the members of the Commons and Senate come thoughts of the election. The life of Parliament expires on October 7th, and on that date the end will come automatically. There is, however, no intention of permitting automatic dissolution. Parliament, it is semi-officially announced, will be dissolved next week, following the return to Ottawa of the Prime Minister who is spending a week or two out of town after the strenuous session. The election will be held in the first or second week of December, or in February. The election, when it does come, promises to be a battle royal. The soldiers will have a vote this time, and so also will their family relatives. Aliens will not be permitted to vote. These innovations will complicate matters somewhat, and make the outcome more of a guessing contest. The chief issue will be conscription. Around this issue will centre the fight. There will be attempts made to ring in other issues, or side issues, but it is unlikely that these will make much trouble. Thinking men and women, the men and women who are really anxious to win this war, can be depended upon to see to this.

The medical examining board here is busy these days examining recruits. On Friday of last week between ninety and one hundred men were put through the "third degree" at Base Headquarters, and on other days the classes were also quite large. Most of the men examined so far have been declared physically fit for service overseas or at home. There is evidence of wide response to the appeal made to employers throughout the country to encourage their men to submit themselves for medical examination

tion before the first call is actually issued. Class "A" men only will be called to the colors when the first proclamation is issued. In this class are men fit from the medical point of view for actual combatant service. The call for reinforcements from General Currie is for fighting men, and the first drafts will be to meet this need. Men in the lower medical classifications will not be required to go on active service perhaps for some considerable time, if at all. There is no guarantee that "B" and "C" men will be even called to the colors. Future developments will depend entirely on the war situation and military requirements. Medical classifications under Act may be summed up as follows: "A" Class, combatant service at home. "B" Class, non-combatant service overseas. "C" Class non-combatant service at home. The "D" class is really not a medical classification at all. When a medical board considers that a man cannot properly be classified at the time owing to his physical condition he is ranked as a "D" man, and is stood aside to be re-examined at some future date. The remaining class is that of the total rejected.

Prominent financiers here are most hopeful of the success of the new Dominion war loan to be floated before the year closes, and of its wide acceptance by individual investors, small and large, throughout Canada. Contrary to the opinion expressed in some quarters of the best authorities do not think it at all necessary that Canada should establish at this time a six per cent. rate for its domestic loans. The existing war loans have recovered from the slight price depression coincident with the strain of floating the third war loan last March. It is true that the issue of last March, which was a twenty-year bond, maturing in 1937, sold slightly under the issue price shortly after the subscription list closed, but the absorption of the semi-digested subscription has since that time been steady and consistent, until at the present moment the demand exceeds the supply, with the price holding steady at the issue cost, and at a premium thereon. The suggestion has been made in several quarters that a 5 1/2 bond at or near par would be most acceptable to Canadian investors on the coming war. Different classes of investments funds would undoubtedly be attracted to this issue if a choice of a short maturity and a long maturity were given prospective buyers, and at the same time this would undoubtedly be a factor in helping to increase the number of individual subscribers to the issue, which is most essential. Should an issue containing these terms materialize there is no doubt but that the Canadian public would give it a most hearty welcome, and once more give ample evidence of Canada's position economically and internationally by a substantial oversubscription of the loan.

The Minister of Finance the other day discussed with the executive of the Canadian Bankers Association the important question of the financing of the exportable surplus of Canada's great wheat crop, which is to be purchased chiefly by the Imperial Government through the Wheat Export Company. Arrangements have been made whereby the banks will supply a credit of eighty million of dollars holding the wheat as security, until it reaches the seaboard, when they will be repaid by the British Government. It is expected that this arrangement will at once start the purchase of western wheat which has been held up pending the completion of financial arrangements for its movement to the seaboard. This, by the way, was one of the matters which the Minister discussed with Lord Reading at Washington. Because of the large crop and the high price the financing of the year's wheat movement involves very large figures, much larger than in any previous year.

These are strenuous days for the men in uniform who have a Grist which two-per-cent will not satisfy. In General Orders just issued from Military Headquarters attention is drawn to the fact that Hull is "out of bounds" to every man under the jurisdiction of the officer commanding this Military District. When the various units which have been stationed here in the past have reached Ottawa many of the officers commanding have placed Hull "out of bounds," and it is to remove any suspicion of discrimination or unfairness that the present order has been made. The inclusion of this warning in General Orders is also taken to mean that there is now a certainty of a large number of soldiers being quartered in Ottawa during the coming winter and the authorities are guarding against any laxity on the part of regimental officers commanding. Passes will be issued in

certain cases, but it is understood that generally speaking these will be available for staff clerks at Militia Headquarters who are living on or beyond Hull, and cases where a man is allowed leave to visit relatives there. On demand from the proper authorities every uniformed man found in Hull must produce his pass or explain why he is there without one.

How a man can be of most service to his country is going to be the question asked when the tribunals under the Militia Service Act get going. It is unlikely however, that a hard and fast line will be drawn between trades and branches of trades. To lay down the rule that certain occupations shall exempt without conditions would lead to unfairness. While, therefore, tribunals will act under general regulations, each case of appeal for exemption will be considered on its merits especially in regard to its bearing on national conditions. If a man's occupation is essential and the tribunal feels that he can render greater national service while following it he will be exempted from the army. Again, where undoubted hardship would ensue from the man being called to the color as in the case of an only son with a dependent widowed mother—the special circumstances will be taken into consideration.

The Dominion police the other day took in charge a man giving the name of Fred Archer, who is suspected of being a German spy. Just what the charge under which he has been arrested is I cannot say as Colonel Sherwood refuses to discuss the matter with newspaper men. It is rumored that Archer came here from the United States and that he has admitted being in Canada for the purpose of securing information for the German Government. The alleged self-confessed spy was arrested at the Russell House the other day, and it is stated that since his arrest the secret service men have been endeavoring to get a line on Archer's previous career in Canada. In reply to a question as to what their investigation so far has revealed or whether he expected to be able soon to give out some details, Colonel Sherwood declared, "I do not know that I will give out further information on the case at any time."

It seems to be settled that the pensions for soldiers, which are to be increased by Order-in-Council, will show an increase of not less than 25 per cent. Lack of time prevented a measure being introduced into the House to grant increased pensions; therefore this will be done by Order-in-Council at an early date. At the next session of Parliament the whole matter of pensions will be gone into and some much-needed changes made.

LINING UP BOATS FOR GRAIN TRADE

CLEVELAND, Sept. 24.—A small carrier was placed for prompt loading in the Lake Superior grain trade to-day, and boats have been named for all cargoes that will be ready at Duluth until the middle of next week. Duluth to-day received 398 cars of grain, and a steady increase in receipts is looked for at that port.

Canadian boats are taking most of the grain that is being sent forward from Fort William and Port Arthur, but considerable American tonnage will be wanted in that trade in another week. The United Grain Forwarders, who are lining up vessel capacity, expect to get the requirements for the Canadian Government to-morrow for the next two weeks, and it is expected some figures on the movement for the season will be received next week. The vessel owners' Forwarding Committee will then be in shape to get a line on the amount of tonnage that will be wanted and how the business will be handled.

ALSACE-LORRAINE WILL BE RETAINED

AMSTERDAM, Sept. 25.—The Berlin correspondent of the Rheinische Westfälische Zeitung, of Essen, learns from an "especially well-informed quarter" that the German Government has abandoned the idea of giving Alsace-Lorraine the status of an independent federal state.

NON-STOP AIRPLANE FLIGHT.

LONDON, Sept. 25.—Captain Laurent of the Italian Army, accompanied by an observer yesterday made a non-stop airplane flight from Turin, Italy, to London. He covered the 656 miles in seven hours and twelve minutes.

WHILE IN TOWN EXHIBITION WEEK
 Call and see our good values in BOYS and GIRLS strong boots suitable for fall and winter wear. A great variety to choose from.

GOFF BROS
 THE SHOE MAN