# The Toronto World

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WEDNESDAY MORNING, APRIL 11


## A Stroke to Free the World.

Whatever the cost Canada struck a great blow for liberty in the assault on Vimy ridge. It must gratify the hearts of all who have sent their loved ones to the great struggle to feel that after these long dark days something is being achieved in the work of liberation, and that they who have gone to the front have had a hand in the historic actions which our children and our children's children will learn about in the story of the war that set the world free.

Vimy ridge has been a bloody ground. In one battle 60,000 Germans shed their blood to hold it. Again and again the French tried the assault and failed. But what they did was part of the great plan, and every stroke told. It was an honorable task that our Canadian troops were entrusted with. It was known that they could not dare to fail. If their task proved lighter than was anticipated it takes not one jot from the honor of the commission. The finest German troops were placed to confront them, and there is no greater compliment to their valor possible.

It is not the mere winning of a battle in which the chief glory of the Canadians at the front consists. It is in the fact that they realized what the war meant, and that they took their stand for liberty and justice and democracy. As the other great nations take their stand in the ranks of liberty, as Russia throws off the last shackles of autocracy, as the great untrained giant China stands up for freedom and progress, and as the huge republic of the west realizes her responsibility at last, the Canadians at the front may rejoice that they have borne the toil and heat of the day. God's pioneers are a precious band, wherever they come from, and it is an honor for those who come after to join their ranks.

If anything could stir the young men of Canada, who still fail to see their duty, it should be these glowing deeds of their better fellows in France. The army needs all who can join it. There are services of every kind to be rendered. No man with health and strength should hang back. A thousand years from now the men who fought to free the world will be numbered with the very elect.

## "Fixing" the Tax Rate.

Our amiable contemporary, The News, has waked up to the fact that our tax rate is not all that it ought to be. We regret that the awakening had not come a little earlier, before the legislature opened, in fact, instead of just after it closed. But better late than never. We may be pardoned, perhaps, for suggesting that more might have been effected had we been supported in our efforts months ago to have attention directed to the mistaken policy of cutting out essential and indispensable expenditures, instead of readjusting their incidence and devising new sources of revenue.

One flagrant example of what we mean we have pointed out again and again, yet we do not recollect any occasion in which one of our contemporaries supported us in it. In placing a war tax on the municipalities the provincial government was quite within its rights, but the levy of the tax should have been on an equitable basis. The government knows, for it has had it pointed out, that the incidence of the war tax on Toronto is iniquitously unjust and inequitable. We have not objected to pay it, for we are patriotic and desire to set a good example, but this is no reason why the government should impose on good nature. The average assessment in the province is not much more than half that of Toronto, and the result is that a levy of one mill in Toronto gathers in a dollar for every fifty cents collected elsewhere.

In other words we are paying half a mill war tax more than our neighbors. As we lead the record in voluntary and charitable contributions this is not a square deal for Toronto, but The News has nothing to say to the government about the matter. Half a mill on the tax rate would count at this time. Or, on the other hand, if we are to pay the full rate, then the government should see that the other municipalities make a proportionate contribution. The government did talk about issuing a commission for the equalization of the assessment, but there has nothing come of it.

It is in the assessment that we get at the basis of the tax rate. Unfortunately the municipal politicians have made the tax rate instead of the assessment the standard, with the result that the law, the revenue, the citizens, the necessities of the case, and everything else suffer in all directions. If we had a proper assessment according to the act our tax rate, instead of being 27 mills, as apparently it ought to be this year, should be under 19 mills. If the odious and inequitable exemptions were done away with the rate would be very much lower. The News does not appear to concern itself with these fundamental aspects of the case, but we have hopes that having waked up it will get its eyes fully open in time.

The next source of our high tax rate is the evil system advocated by The Telegram and its myrmidons, of a low tax rate, the most expensive policy the city can adopt. If we had had a tax rate of 30 mills annually for the last ten years—some people think for the last twenty years—our tax rate would this year not be above 22 mills. In Mayor Geary's administration, sanctified by the benedictions of the saint of Bay and Melinda, four million dollars were charged to capital which should have gone in the taxes, and half a million overdraft was left for those who came after in order to make good the boast of a 16 or 17-mill tax rate. Follies like these led to the present situation. Toronto has been cursed by cheap-jack and tomfool financing, and now that there is a real financier at the head of the treasury department, his advice should be followed.

We have no fault to find with The News' proposals, beyond their belatedness. Now is the time to begin to organize for next year's tax rate. It is mere folly to cut down the necessary expenditures this year in such matters as garbage collection, and it is equal folly not to collect fair cost for such services as the water system, the registry office and such matters.

With regard to the civic car lines, it must be remembered that they are an alternative to a wider and fairer proposal which would have unified the whole city car service. The cost was objected to by some, and we were told there were cheaper means of attaining the aim in view. The civic car lines were part of the cheaper means, and they are proving to be not so cheap. It is proposed that the citizens who use them bear the extra load, and there seems to be nothing else for it. The World regrets that a better plan was abandoned for one the cost of which is by no means at an end, and which obviously gives less satisfactory results than a unified car system would have provided. We can only acquiesce in the meantime with the majority, and ask the minority to pay pleasantly. Ten tickets for a quarter on the civic lines should be sufficient to carry them.

# EXPLOSION CAUSES BIG LOSS OF LIFE

(Continued from Page 1).

lighted by the flames from the burning building. Rescue squads composed of other employes at the plant were quickly formed, and a call for assistance was sent to Philadelphia and other nearby points. The entire Chester fire department responded, and ambulances from Philadelphia and Chester were soon at the scene.

**Financial Loss Small.**

The Eddystone Ammunition Corporation, which was organized originally by interests identified with the Baldwin locomotive works and operated by those interests, was taken over last September by a commission representing the British and Russian Governments. Since that time this commission has been carrying on the manufacture of munitions for the entente allies.

The financial loss as a result of the explosion is estimated at less than $25,000, not including the ammunition destroyed. Work will be resumed tomorrow in all departments except the box, packing and base charging departments. All departments will be in full operation by April 24, according to an official of the company. More than 10,000 persons are employed at the plant.

Special to The Toronto World.

Chester, Pa., April 10.—The horrors of the war came to Chester today.

Shells screamed and carried death in all directions over the little city. Bursting shrapnel rained venomously upon the fleeing people, killing and maiming as it spat from the sky.

Mothers, racing from the city to escape the leaden storm presaged by terrific explosions in the Russian Government's Eddystone plant, were mowed down. Men, women and children of all ages joined in the frenzied flight.

Back in the plant itself, the nine shell houses of the exploded sector blazed and crackled over the bodies of 105 factory girls and youths who had recently quit their lathes and machines in the textile mills to make "big money" in munitions.

Scarcely had the dull roar of the several mysterious explosions died and the flames began to leap above the scene of death and destruction, than a small army of secret service men from Washington were on the job.

Officials of the department of justice privately said they did not believe the explosion was accidental.

**Resembles Battlefield.**

Chester and the surrounding country tonight resembled a miniature battlefield. Occasionally flares from the ruins were flung against the sky. An occasional shell whined as from an ambushed battery and screeched thru the blackness to spread its deadly missiles for yards about.

The "sput" of shrapnel, the cries of the women, shadowy groups bearing silent burdens shuffling awkwardly towards points of light which marked the location of hastily organized field hospitals; ambulances rolling and lurching thru open fields—all lent the local color of a battlefield.

Parents, relatives and rescuers hurried grimly along, some still searching, others having sought and found.

**Pathetic Scenes.**

One woman with a little boy stumbling thru the morgues, paused before one of many bodies in a row. There was no recognizable feature about the charred form. But clinging to it was a tatter of calico print. The woman picked it up, looked at it closely, and, falling on her knees, began to cry. She had found that which she sought.

In Chester, Crozier, Evangelical and other permanent and emergency hospitals 60 frightfully burned and wounded girls and men writhed in agony. Many of them were expected to die before dawn.

**Many Unrecognizable.**

Nurses and doctors worked in relays to relieve their sufferings. Dozens of men, women and little children, with minor shrapnel wounds, had to wait until far into the night before more than the scantiest first aid could be given them.

Many of the dead never will be identified. Some of the munitions girls caught in the ruck of the explosion were so mangled as to be almost unrecognizable as human beings.

Mothers, fathers, sisters, sweethearts, friends, stormed the morgues and hospitals late into the night, frantically seeking information, which only time and the non-appearance of loved ones could give them.

**Canadian Victim.**

A man giving the name of William Harper McKay, of Charlottesville, Canada, died in agony at a field hospital, after gasping that it was all right to bury him anywhere; he had neither friends nor relatives near.

One little girl, the lower part of whose body was nothing but a char, struggled to tell her name, but lapsed into unconsciousness with the effort. Another man, the father of two girls he knew to have been killed, raced like a madman from morgue to morgue. Finally, on the verge of collapse, he was taken into custody.

"It was horrible," said one of the Baldwin guards, who witnessed the series of explosions from an elevated sector of the plant. "I heard the first explosion at ten minutes after ten. The first one was not loud, something like an explosion of powder. Instantly it flung a pall of smoke up to hang like a mushroom over the shell house.

"A few minutes later the second explosion came, a terrific blast. I knew it was the shrapnel. I looked and saw the roofs of the shell houses blown sky-high. Arms, legs and bodies shot up with the debris. It was ghastly."

The government is working on rumors that a plot may have been hatched inside the plant. Three minor fires have been stopped in various parts of the plant during the last week.

## JUST THE BEGINNING OF HIS LUCK

## MEXICO'S NEUTRALITY CREATES NO SURPRISE

Announcement of Like Attitude by Chile Was Not Anticipated.

Washington, April 10.—Much of the uncertainty as to Latin America's attitude in the war between the United States and Germany was cleared away today by definite advices that Chile and Mexico will remain neutral, and increasing indications that Brazil, Guatemala and Peru will join Cuba and Panama on the side of the United States and her allies.

The decision of Chile, the first of the American republics to announce her neutrality, caused some surprise among officials here. In many quarters it had been expected that she eventually would break with the Berlin government, but would postpone her decision until advised definitely of the course of Argentina and Brazil, the other members of the influential A. B. C. group in South America.

Mexico's decision, on the other hand, caused no surprise and is regarded as certain to have little influence with her sister republics.

It is assumed that as a neutral the Mexican Government will take such steps as it is able to protect the oil fields supplying a considerable part of the fuel used by the British fleet.

## SOLDIERS GET POSITIONS.

Special to The Toronto World.

Brockville, April 10.—Three returned soldiers residing here have been appointed to positions in the customs service. Corp. W. A. Bannerman is landing waiter at the C. P. R. dock; Pte. Bedlow is on duty at the G. T. R. freight sheds, and Lance-Corp. James Cleland has gone to Rock Island, Que., for relieving duty. All three were severely wounded in action, Pte. Bedlow having lost a leg. Corp. Bannerman, enlisted with a detachment of the mechanical transport service at Toronto.


SAVE SAFELY

Having decided to spend less than you earn and to save the surplus, the next step is to deposit the surplus in a strong, safe financial institution, where it will be absolutely safe and earn a fair rate of interest. This should be done regularly and systematically. Whatever you can spare from your weekly or monthly income, if only a dollar, should be immediately deposited to your credit. Open an account now—one dollar will do it—and add to it at regular intervals. Saving will thus become a habit, and your surplus will be safe and growing. Three and One-Half Per Cent. Interest will be credited to the account twice each year.

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## Real Estate Notes

Among the hotels that have closed on account of the Temperance Act is the Hotel Mossop. It is an eight-storey building of steel fireproof structure, and erected at a cost of $135,000. The operating expenses were large, having a land rental alone of $5920 a year, or $148 a foot, and taxes, besides, amounting to $5000. The land rental on the hotel site far exceeded the rental on the building adjoining the hotel on the north, the latter paying a land rental of only $810 for 27 feet, or, in other words, $30 per foot, which is a vast difference between the two rentals. The large overhead expenses caused the hotel to close its doors. The hotel accommodation in Toronto has for years been inadequate and conditions, apparently, are not improving.

The Mossop Hotel is now being offered for sale for $75,000, which is a decrease of $60,000 in the value of the hotel in the last five or six years.

The Imperial Hotel, No. 7 East Adelaide street, which is another one to close its doors since the Temperance Act came into force, was bought four years ago, and remodeled into an up-to-date hotel. The building has now passed into the hands of the original owners, who will again remodel it for business purposes.

R. B. Rice & Sons state that the real estate conditions are constantly improving, and report the sales of several houses in North Toronto at a price ranging from $4500 to $8000. Mr. Rice states the renting proposition is still serious, and it is almost impossible to get a house for renting purposes. They are looking forward to still greater activity in the buying of houses, which will stimulate building operations.

F. A. Wood, real estate broker, says if he had two hundred houses to rent he could do so within forty-eight hours, so great is the demand. He not only reports the sale of several houses in North Toronto, but 150 feet in the same locality, upon which houses will be erected at once.

## OFFER NINE BILLIONS.

Special to The Toronto World.

New York, April 10.—Nine billion dollars more for Uncle Sam to fight with was offered by the trust companies of the United States tonight.

The trust company section of the American Bankers' Association adopted resolutions providing that the nine billions of cash resources now forming their gold reserve be placed on deposit with the federal reserve banks, which are actively conducting the government's war financing.

This nine billion is exclusive of the many billions held in connection with their individual and corporate trusts.

The bankers feel that this step "should be an important factor in strengthening the position of the government in facing the problems of war finance; and adds an important element of strength to the credit of the country."

## Temperance Act Violations Bring Big Revenue at Cornwall

Special to The Toronto World.

Cornwall, April 10.—This afternoon License Inspector McDonald prosecuted a case before Police Magistrate Danis, in the local police court, in which a resident of the Township of Charlottenburgh, County of Glengarry, was charged with selling liquor in contravention of the Ontario Temperance Act. The man pleaded guilty and was fined $200 and costs, or $215.95 in all. Three young men of the same neighborhood were charged with purchasing liquor at the place. One entered a plea of guilty and was fined $50 and costs, or $54.70. The other two pleaded not guilty at first, but subsequently changed their plea, and they were also fined $50 and costs each, the amounts being $54.10 and $54.65 respectively. The total receipts of the sitting amounted to $379.40.

# U.S. WAR BUDGET SEVEN BILLIONS

Five Billions in Bond Issue and Two Billions in Certificates.

## PLANS FOR MUNITIONS

Resources of Nation to Be Mobilized for Huge Task.

Special to The Toronto World.

Washington, April 10.—The government's first war budget will be $7,000,000,000—$5,000,000,000 in 3½ per cent. bonds and $2,000,000,000 in one-year certificates of indebtedness, to be issued by Secretary of the Treasury McAdoo. This was agreed on today at a meeting of the house ways and means committee, at which Mr. McAdoo was present.

Not more than $3,000,000,000 of the bonds will be issued, so that this government can buy 3½ per cent. bonds of its allies. The remaining $2,000,000,000 of the bond issue and the $2,000,000,000 in certificates—a total of $4,000,000,000—will be used for the war expenses of the government up to July 1, 1918.

**Mobilizing Reserves.**

Plans are now complete for the United States to assume the burden of supplying its own military forces and those of the belligerent nations friendly with this government with war munitions in vast quantities.

Frank A. Scott, chairman of the munitions board of the council of national defence, in an interview to the United Press today outlined detailed steps that will include mobilization of all this nation's resources for this huge task.

"The United States," Scott said, "begins its task of supplying and arming its military force with many conditions in its favor.

"It has large quantities of practically all requisite raw materials; it has a very large and patriotic body of skilled labor; it has engineering, designing and organizing ability developed to the highest degree.

**Benefit By Experience.**

"It has the advantage—which is most important—of the experience developed by the other warring nations during the past two years, and most important of all, a vast body of producers trained in the production of substantially every needed article. I know of one factory alone that is turning out 15,000 perfect shrapnel shells a day that two years ago couldn't distinguish an explosive from a milk bottle.

"The experience gained by our people in supplying war needs during the past two years of the European struggle cannot be overestimated.

"The task of the munitions board will be to co-ordinate efforts of the war and navy departments in supplying their needs to insure that our efforts create no interference with the demands of the belligerents friendly to this government which are now being made in our country and in so far as possible, to prevent the war demands from disadjusting the normal industrial and commercial life of this country."

## NEARLY EIGHT HUNDRED NEUTRAL VESSELS SUNK

Special to The Toronto World.

Washington, April 10.—Since the beginning of the European war 786 neutral vessels have been sunk by German submarines.

Of these 416 were Norwegian, 111 Swedish, 61 Dutch, 50 Greek, 33 Spanish, 19 American, one Peruvian and one Argentine.

Seventy neutral vessels have escaped after being attacked.

## ARRIVE IN ENGLAND.

Special to The Toronto World.

St. Catharines, April 10.—A private message received today announced the safe arrival in England of the 256th Construction Battalion.

# RUSSIA TO FOREGO CONSTANTINOPLE?

Some London Observers Thus Interpret Declaration of Premier.

## NO WAR OF CONQUEST

Petrograd Expects Announcement of Policy to Placate Soldiers.

Special Cable to The Toronto World.

London, April 10.—Democratic Russia has abandoned the demand voiced by autocratic Russia for domination of Constantinople.

This action, indicated by the formal manifesto issued at Petrograd tonight, aroused the most favorable comment. The proclamation was received gratefully, as it is believed it will relieve a dangerous situation, threatening internal disorders.

The policy meets the demands of the council of workmen and the soldiers' delegates. It assures the army's continued enthusiasm for war.

Announcement of the new policy also indicates the defeat of those in the provisional government who were seeking to line up the Cossacks and other troops for purposes of division in resisting the demands of the council. Whether the council desires an early formation of a constituent assembly to consider internal problems, such as land reforms and other matters, is not yet known.

**Not to Humiliate Foe.**

The proclamation, as signed by Prince Lvoff, premier, said:

"The government deems it a duty to declare that free Russia does not aim at domination of other nations, nor to occupy forcefully foreign territories. She does not lust to strengthen her power abroad at the expense of other nations. The government does not aim to subjugate or humiliate anyone. These principles constitute the basis of our foreign policy."

On January 22, when President Wilson made his "peace speech" before congress, one of the principles he then enunciated was that every nation should have "free outlet to the sea."

Russia, thru Minister Pokrovsky, promptly accepted this view as that animating Russia, and announced the war could not end until Russia dominated the Dardanelles.

**Require Dardanelles.**

A few days ago Foreign Minister Milukoff, in an interview printed in London, said regarding the Dardanelles:

"In the event of neutralization of the Dardanelles, the entry of foreign warships into the Black Sea would force Russia to think perpetually about fortifying the Black Sea coasts and to maintain a powerful navy. Such a condition of things would be worse than what existed before the war.

"While closing the Black Sea ports to the warships of the other powers, Russia preferred to allow the straits to remain in possession of a feeble and crumbling Turkey. If this situation becomes impossible, it is due to the fact that Germany laid claim to the heritage of the Turk and raised the question as to whom the straits were going to belong to—Germany or Russia."

## Roosevelt's Nobel Prize May Become War Fund

Washington, April 10.—The $40,000 Theodore Roosevelt got as the Nobel peace prize may be used as a war fund. Senator Lodge today introduced a resolution in the senate to dissolve the foundation for industrial peace, to which Roosevelt contributed the money, and to return the $40,000 to Roosevelt. This was while T. R. was explaining to President Wilson his plan for a volunteer army to help fight Germany.


READ THE SUNDAY WORLD



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