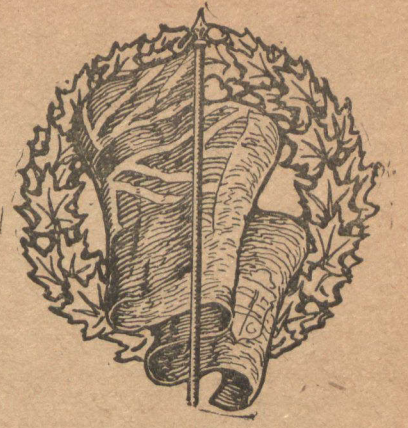




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LET'S GO AFTER BEAR!

AFTER assimilating with modest pride—or possibly a slight swelling of the head—the kind plaudits of friends, relatives and neighbours on our war record and effort, we seem to have temporarily fallen down, and to be in danger of falling further. We have reached a species of national dog-days, an equinox, a slackwater, a flat crisis, or whatever you like to call it.

The average Canadian who does a little thinking in his spare time has an uneasy feeling that he does not know where he is at; neither does he know what he is headed for. He knows that events are impending, but he does not know what they are, and the lack of knowledge worries him.

In his heart, consciously or otherwise, there is impatience and with it a longing for a national Moses, individual or composite, to lead him to the Promised Land of something definite. He would be relieved to see a Pharaoh's daughter or even a bulrush. He does not expect a land of milk and honey, but he earnestly desires to get somewhere. He wants to get out of the doldrums, to see the national sails curve hard-bellied in the wind of progress and hear the deep-sea song of it in tautened national stays; he wants to see the national ship snoring through deep water with a bone in her teeth and a flat wake behind. But the deuce of it is that the fair wind does not strike the ship. When ever the hard, dark-blue line of it bears down and all hands and the cook get ready to haul sheets aft, something intervenes and it veers off. There are a dozen baffling political catspaws ruffling the surface, with stretches of flat calm between. Wherefore the average A.B. citizen—of the West at least—whistles for a wind, sticks a knife in the mainmast, and occasionally uses strong language.

Getting down to brass tacks, the average citizen of the West wants to do everything that can be done to win the war; and he wants to start doing it at once.

Now to win the war it became evident not nearly as soon as it should, that every nation in it and every individual of every nation in it, must get in and dig—not merely gentlemanly “delve,” but dig—in some way, with coat and collar off and sweat instead of gently perspire. The only limit to the men, money and supplies needed is the ability of the nation to come through with each and all.

Even yet some of us don't see that. We persist in the old idea that we are a dinky little raised-by-hand colony which it is somebody's duty to protect and feed and shelter. We are ready to let George do it—with special reference to George Windsor and his home folks. We are ready enough to howl to heaven about our autonomy, but when it is a case of proving that we are fit for it—a case of assuming war responsibilities like a grown-up nation—some of us want to shelter behind the ample petticoats of good old nurse, who is already as busy as a cat on a tin roof, protecting herself. Some of us read of present events just as impersonally as we used to read of old Waterloo, and with the same comfortable sense of ultimate victory. That unwillingness to assume national responsibility to the full limit, and that impersonal feeling, are curses to

A Non-Partisan Chinook

By The Man From Windermere

WHETHER you agree with the writer's point of view or not makes no difference to the fact that you will enjoy this article. The Man From Windermere, B.C., has party politics of his own and no mistake, when things are in order. Just now he gets out on the roof and blows a non-party blast that in our opinion is as thoroughly all-Canadian a production as any speech made in Parliament or out, since the war began.

By A. M. CHISHOLM

Canada. One of these days, if we remain wilfully blind and comfortably dabbling in our little, old before-the-war mud pies of various kinds, the God of Things as They Are may lose patience and smite us hip and thigh, and we shall deserve it.

On the other hand, others of us—and I think the great majority—are coming out of our trance to a realization that so far as effort is concerned too much will still be too little, and that the effort must be not only individual and governmental, but national in the widest sense. The blow of the Canadian mailed fist must have the weight of the national body behind it. We must “swing from the heel” as the celebrated Mr. Fitzsimmons used to say. And it follows logically that only a strong, trained-to-the minute organization can make us deliver the punch of which we are capable, and land it with every last ounce of steam.

Peace-time democracy in war-time is folly. To fight efficiently for democracy or anything else the democracy itself must establish a practical autocracy, and temporarily forego a number of the excellent things and individual liberties which it enjoyed before the world turned upside down. Which, be it understood, is no veiled assault on or sneer at the principle of democracy, but the highest application of the very principle itself. A fighter to be fit for a hard contest must cut out many of the pleasures of life. To last through a hard season a team must obey an autocratic trainer. There must be deprivations, curtailments of sorts. But if there is any finer little democracy than a well-trained, hard-muscled set of boys curbing most of their natural desires in order to satisfy the greater desire to win, I have yet to see it. In war, coaxing has no place. It is a case of somebody having authority to say “go, and he goeth, and come, and he cometh,” without argument or delay. The highest proof and the highest point of democracy is the voluntary establishment of a temporary autocracy within itself, in order that democracy itself may survive.

ONE of the first manifestations that Canada wanted a national organization in the fullest sense was the Win-the-War convention in Montreal. It can scarcely be called more than a manifesta-

tion, because it had no authority, no “sanction,” to use the legal phrase. It couldn't do anything but discuss and pass resolutions. Nevertheless it drew men from all parts of Canada. But the announcement by Sir Robert Borden of a measure of compulsory service coincided with the convention and took most of the wind out of its sails. It largely flivvered out, because among other things no men bulking large in the national eye were prominently connected with it, and also because it was rumoured that other men in whom Canadians reposed no special confidence were behind it. It could not have accomplished anything, anyway. But it was quite a respectable straw showing the quarter from which the wind was going to blow.

After that a number of things happened. Following the announcement of a compulsory service measure came Sir Robert Borden's coalition proposals, their refusal by Sir Wilfrid Laurier, the proposal for an extension of the parliamentary term, opposition of that by Sir Wilfrid, its consequent withdrawal, and a general election in prospect as the inevitable result.

TO digress briefly and more or less personally: The purpose of these presents is to put in plain language what I believe to be the attitude of the great mass of citizens of Western Canada toward playing the win-the-war game. If I fail to do so it will be because I can't write plain English, or because I don't understand the sentiments of the people among whom I live, or both. But it will not be because I am not endeavouring to tell the straight-grained truth, without varnish and without putty on the knot holes. I desire to keep clear of all party corns and avoid all party tunes. This article is non-partisan, with the accent on the non. But I am trying to interpret the views of the average citizen, Grit, Tory and non-party man, and these views are strong, and definite and united on questions which have been and are tangled up with party politics. One of them is the view of party politics itself. Hence it is vain to tender-handed stroke the nettle. Though plain truth is often rough stuff it never hurt anybody. One of the things we suffer from in Canada is mealy-mouthedness. Too many things are taboo and verboten, lest rude comment thereon should peel a strip of tender hide from somebody. But at the risk of that my endeavour is to state fairly what I believe to be the sentiments of nine men out of ten in Western Canada. With which digression “let's go,” as our American friends recently say.

Now as to conscription or compulsory service or whatever you like to call it, the West is practically a unit of approval. If anyone doubts that and has financial faith in his belief, let him pick out any western constituency, go there, and offer to bet real money that an anti-conscription candidate can or will be elected. In very short order he will have a large investment. The West is not only strong for but insistent on conscription, which it regards as the only fair and adequate method of obtaining men. Not that the voluntary system has failed to get men in the West; everybody knows it has not. But