

FROM THE ATLANTIC TO THE PACIFIC, IT IS THE SAME STORY



Halifax and Lunenburg Hospital Corps entraining at Halifax for Valcartier. Halifax has seen much of the panoply of war and is always Imperialistic.



Similar enthusiasm at Victoria, B.C., when the 50th Gordon Highlanders, 88th Fusiliers and some artillery left for Vancouver en route to Valcartier. Photo by Young.

Through a Monocle

Give Us a Real Army

THIS war is making one thing very, very clear; and that is that sea-power is not enough to defend such an Empire as we possess. Of course, sea-power is a great factor in even a land war. The Allies would be beaten now without it. Only our almost undisputed command of the sea has given us the chance we have got. Consider for a moment where we would have been without command of the sea. First, we would almost infallibly have seen Italy compelled to fight with the Triple Alliance. We would have had no sea power to menace her coast and her connections with her army in Tripoli, while Austria would have had land power to threaten Venetia. Secondly, France could not have brought up her North African troops. It required a safe Mediterranean for that. Thirdly, Britain could not have sent her most valuable army to the Continent. Fourth, there could have been no talk of contingents from the Overseas Dominions and India. Fifth, there might have been grave interruptions to the shipping of food supplies to the British Isles—an absolutely fatal blow to us. I have been assuming, of course, that, even if we did not possess the command of the sea, neither did the enemy. It would have been simply in dispute.

BUT sea-power, we are discovering, is not enough. I am writing considerably before the day of publication, and you may know more of how this war is going as you read than I possibly can even surmise now; but enough has happened up to date to afford the most uncomfortable proof that our power to hold an Empire might be hopelessly lost on a Continental battle-field, even while our battleships patrolled the sea with a serene superiority which the German navy did not dare to challenge. In two words, Germany might have made herself master of Europe without ordering a gun-boat to poke its nose outside the Kiel Canal. And we have always known, and always admitted—in fact, it has been the basis of our practical alliance with France and Russia—that Britain could not hope to build battleships against a combined Europe. As I write, the British Government is showing by its actions that it perfectly understands that it simply cannot allow France to be beaten. If it costs her every man and every shilling she has, Britain must win out in this war—and win out on land. She must free the soil of France from every German jack-boot. And Canada, in spite of her pacifist-pampered aloofness and optimism, is coming to appreciate the same grim fact.

WE must have army enough to enable us to count as a first-class Power on the battle-fields of Europe. If we had had such an army this last summer, there would have been no war to-day. Germany and Austria would never have challenged three first-class military powers, with supreme sea-power also in the hands of their enemies. But, even if the compelling forces of human rivalry had driven them into war with us under such conditions, the campaign in Belgium would have turned out very differently—there probably would have been no campaign in France at all. If Britain could have landed a million good soldiers in Belgium as soon as France got her troops to her frontier, it is surely fair betting that our united armies could have permanently held the Germans on the line of the Meuse.

WE should not forget that we were able to enter this war under especially favourable conditions upon which we could not and should not have calculated. Our diplomacy had done excellent work—the German diplomacy was anything but Bismarckian. For example, Italy was detached from the Triple Alliance. That was a master-stroke; and, in spite of the friendly feeling of the Italian people for us—something we all value very highly—we should never lose sight of the fact that Bismarckian diplomacy succeeded in getting Italy into the Triple Alliance not by love, but through fear. Bismarck never trusted love; he always employed fear—and self-interest. At that time, it was fear of France. Well, somebody's diplomacy removed that fear—a mighty clever piece of business. Somebody's diplomacy again turned the Adriatic into a bone of contention between Italy and Austria; and there was no Bismarck to soothe Italian apprehensions. The Italians hated the Austrians as much when they joined them as they do to-day; but they loved Italy more. No longer ago than the quarrel over Scutari, Italy was with Austria in a common fear of a Slav window on the Adriatic. Are you quite certain that a Bismarck might not have managed to bring on this war at a time when Italian self-preservation would have compelled that nation to stay in the Triple Alliance, though full of regrets that she must seem to fight her historic friend, England?

THEN we are fighting this war at a time when Belgium preferred to defend her neutrality to seeing the Germans march over her roads. This was not always so under the late King Leopold. Again, every one of the three big Allies is heartily in earnest. Still again, Sweden and Norway, with their suspicions of Russia, are quiet. Once more, American sympathy is with us, and was not alarmed by the activity of Japan. Take it all the way round, we have every diplomatic advantage we could possibly hope for, and Germany every disadvantage. She has but one Ally—the Ally that got her into this mess. Now, it would be fatuous for us to calculate that we shall always be able to defend our Empire under such favourable circumstances. And yet, in spite of these favourable circumstances, it has been, and is going still to be a hard struggle. Obviously, if the gods had not smiled on us, we should have needed a real army very much more—indeed, the lack of it might easily have been fatal.

BRIEFLY, it seems to me that we must either provide ourselves with a real army, or abandon the idea of keeping a real Empire. If we will give up our Empire, then we shall have nothing to stir the cupidity of the powerful. But if we are to keep an Empire, which has been "hand-picked" through the centuries and contains the choicest jewels set in the belt of the world, we must be ready to defend it in an age when national marauders pay about as much attention to undefended "meum" and "tuum" as so many highwaymen.

THE MONOCLE MAN.

France's Military Dictator

GENERAL JOFFRE may not be a Divine-Right autocrat like the Kaiser; but since the war began and for some time before that he has been the virtual dictator of France.

This elderly chieftain of the Latin army of the Republic was not caught napping when the great war broke out. He had taken a few leaves from the book of the late Von Moltke, who always won his battles first on the parade ground. He knew that whenever the Kaiser decided to fling his legions into France it would be with a cut-and-dried programme rehearsed in manoeuvres and conditioned upon the certain loss of hundreds of thousands of men. So while the Germans were fighting sham battles in the vicinity of Potsdam and the Kaiser was dismissing generals who made mistakes in tactics, Gen. Joffre was holding manoeuvres and calling for the resignations of some of the best generals he had because they went wrong in rehearsal. With a Frenchman's respect for good opera he knew that he could not put on a good show without good rehearsals; and that men who made mistakes in rehearsals would make worse ones on the field of battle.

When he was a lad, Joffre started as a military engineer. But because he feared that if he became too much of an engineer he might become too little of a soldier, he joined the French forces to do some real fighting in the colonies. When he came back and for many years afterwards the world heard little about Joffre. He quietly worked himself into the machine that was being rapidly reorganized after 1888. Other men became more or less famous and passed out of the machine into obscurity. Joffre held on and rose to eminence. In the series of magnificent retirements which his army effected between Mons and the environs of Paris, Gen. Joffre proved that he had just so much respect for a mere war machine and no more, and that the emotional French army should not be allowed to become spec-

tacular just because it might happen to be brilliant. And the chances are that when the war is over, the French army will be immensely improved through the associations of Joffre, French, Smith-Dorrien and Co., with Kitchener of Khartum as the man behind.

The Mad Ghurkas

KIPLING, in his story, "Drums of the Fore and Aft," gives some idea of how the mad Ghurkas fought with the Highlanders and the "Fore and Aft" against the Afghans. When the black men from India get to the front these men of the kukri will be with them. They are totally unlike any other fighters in the world. They are born to the fray as a wolf is. Since England conquered these elements, in 1814, they have been among the most loyal of the native troops in India, which number from all races and castes and religions about 170,000 men. Of all these, the Ghurkas are the most ferocious. They have no use for horses except to hamstring them for the enemy. They fight on foot as wildcats do. They use the rifle as a preliminary. The weapon on which they depend to show what a Ghurka really is differs altogether from any other known in war. It is the kukri, a crescent-shaped blade which is more deadly than the sabre of the Cossack or the dirk of the Italian. When they go out on foot to meet a cavalry charge the Ghurkas grin. When the horses are fair on to them they grin some more and fire once with their rifles. Then they drop, rifles and all. They are supposed to be dead. The cavalry sweep over them. Midst of the charge the mad little Ghurkas rise again. One snick of a kukri hamstring a horse at the same moment that the mannikin wildcats to the saddle and snicks the life out of the rider.