

## The Courier Wishes All—"A Merry Christmas"

### WARDEN'S BANQUET LAST NIGHT AT KERBY HOUSE A PLEASING EVENT

Warden Cooke Congratulated Upon the Discharge of Duties of His Office by All the Speakers—Toast List Honored by Addresses From Brant County Notables, and Speeches Exceptionally Able.

The dinner given by Warden Cooke last evening in the Kerby House, will deservedly rank as one of the most successful events of the kind ever held in this city. Perhaps the best of the speeches all of them exceptionally fine, were charged with the import and the impress of this intense Empire period. Mr. A. E. Watts, County Clerk, acted as Toastmaster in a very efficient way. Rev. Mr. Lavell offered grace.

Mr. Littlefield supplied a splendid Christmas menu and the waiting and all the appointments were first class. Letters of regret for inability to be present were read from J. H. Fisher, M.P., and Lt. Col. Cutcliffe, both on the sick list, Col. Stewart of the 84th called on military business to Toronto, and Mayor Patterson of Paris. All of the speakers referred in the most complimentary terms to the Warden and his work.

Rev. Mr. Lavell sang "Rule Britannia" to introduce the toast "British Empire," the audience joining in the chorus. Mr. T. Scott Davidson, M.P.P., stated, on rising to propose the toast, that he wished some abler speaker



MR. GEORGE COOKE, Warden of Brant County who tendered the banquet last night in the Kerby House.

chosen from out the many present could speak in his place. Nineteen years had elapsed since he had first sat at a Warden's dinner, and it was sad to think of the many changes that had taken place since then. He also made sympathetic reference to the illness of Mr. Fisher, M.P., and the very atmosphere was charged with seriousness in these days, and these were serious days, proceeded Mr. Davidson. Never before had Brant stood so strongly for the right. We had every reason to-day to be proud of the Empire. "I am proud, sir, that I am a British citizen, and that you have asked me to propose this toast."

**ENTERING DARK DAYS**  
Canadians fighting to-day were great men. They were fighting despondency. We had to be serious to-night because we were entering into the most serious phase of the war. There was nothing in this life to compare to sacrifice and service. It was all very well for us to talk and boast but what were we doing? Were we sacrificing ourselves? If anyone in the world should be thankful it was the people here to-night. We should thank the Empire and do our bit for it.

Never forget that Britain has a navy. She was not prepared for war with a standing army. She had not looked for trouble. But the call came and it was answered. The Kaiser to-day would not call the British army "contemptible." Not yet had Germany been able to hoist her flag on Britain's soil.

MR. W. F. COCKSHUTT, M.P.  
"I have long had my eye on Geo. Cooke of Oakland," said Mr. Cockshutt in commending the Warden for

his excellent discharge of county duties. The Empire was confronted to-day with the most serious moment in our time. The situation was not altogether gratifying, although we would not lose faith in the final results. On land we were not advancing. He was not at all sure, said Mr. Cockshutt, but that it was up to Canada to stir herself and do more than she had done.

Great Britain has raised four millions. On that basis Canada should raise 800,000. German authorities admitted that if really put to it, Canada could raise 1,000,000 men. The German, himself, states that there was a better soldier than the Canadian. That was a remarkable record for a peace-loving nation.

**WHAT IF WE LOST?**  
It might be too early to count on the consequence of victory, but it was not too early to face the consequences of defeat. If Germany won, all Canadians would be forced to become soldiers, and all that we hold dear, our wives, our children and our territory will be under the heel of the ruthless Hun. Canada would be taken into account when peace is struck. That fact must not be forgotten.

Our Allies have done all that is possible. Why should not Britain do the same share, they will ask. Belgium, Poland and Serbia have been rent from end to end. Canada might be the same. "Think the Lord for the British fleet."

**THE BRANT BATTALION**  
There was a necessity of everybody doing their part. In Brant county was being formed a battalion for overseas service. It was up to everybody in the county to see that the regiment was raised. Brant County had done well; but there was more to do.

**THE WESTERN RANCHER.**  
Col. Cockshutt told of a big rancher in the west who gave several hundred of his horses free to the government when the war broke out and joined himself as a private after three sons had joined as officers. That was the finest bit of patriotism he had ever heard of.

**WHAT OTHER COUNTRIES HAVE DONE.**

Australia had before the war a system of universal training. She already had placed in the field 105,000 men at a cost of 200 millions. She had half the population of Canada. New Zealand rallied in like manner. South Africa had taken care of German Africa. India was to-day the reservoir not yet scarcely tapped. Money and men had come rolling in from all sides.

**THE EGYPTIAN MENACE.**  
The greatest danger to the Empire was the Balkans and Egypt. That danger was at its height to-day. By all and any means, Germany was determined to raise India against Britain, but India knows that the withdrawal of British rule means self-destruction. Great Britain was spending 25 millions a day. Canada's war vote would last Britain six days. Britain was pouring out her wealth to win the struggle. "Isn't that the time for the sons to rally round the old folks? I think it is."

**CONSCRIPTION.**  
Australia was talking conscription. They claimed that the present system worked unequally. Some families gave much, others nothing. That was to talk there under a labour government. In Britain it had been talked of. It might yet have to come. Lord Derby's scheme was still on trial.

The list of casualties from the Canadian first contingent up to July was 1,000. If one must die, the cause was worth it. Britain must finally triumph affirmed Mr. Cockshutt, for truth, justice and mercy must prevail. Out of it all the Lord would deliver us. We would be glad the better for the great trials we had been called upon to go through.

MR. J. H. HAM, M.P.P.  
After felicitating the warden on his excellent record, Mr. Ham touched upon the subject of his toast, Canada had answered the call in life and labor and industry and had given generously of all these things. We had shown to the world that we could put first things first. The first things were to see that our dearly bought liberties should be maintained and that

### Weeding Out Incompetents

Paris, Dec. 24.—General Joffre, Commander-in-Chief of the French army, continues relentlessly his policy of eliminating from the higher commands all officers not maintaining the highest standard of efficiency, both technically and physically. The latest of the statements contains the names of five generals of division, retired, three placed on the reserve list and seven brigadiers placed on the reserve. Men who have distinguished themselves in the recent operations, are being promoted to their places.

The German militarism should be destroyed. Canada had made history and when it came to be written it would be shown that no soldiers had ever fought more valiantly than the Canadians.

**COL. HARRY COCKSHUTT.**  
After congratulating the warden, Colonel Cockshutt stated that he was proud of the fact that Canada was the brightest jewel in the crown of the Empire.

Had our legislatures done for Canada what they should have done? They had not. Natural resources had been wasted. In our own vicinity magnificent forests had been wantonly destroyed. The business of vending fish was not organized and middlemen made too big profits. He urged that a proper storage system should be instituted to get the most value out of the fish product. In such a way could we help the great motherland in the hour of need.

Father and thirty-five year old son met for the first time in Fargo, N.D. The son was born after the father and mother were divorced.

(Continued on Page 5)

### MAYOR SPENCE MAKES REPLY TO MR. J. W. BOWLBY

Explains That Overdraft is Really Amount of Unpaid Taxes.

Mayor Spence has taken objection to the statement of Mr. J. W. Bowlby that there is extravagance in the city council. When seen by the Courier this morning, he stated as follows:

"The \$77,000 overdraft that Mr. Bowlby objects to in his address to the electors of Ward 4, is the amount of unpaid taxes. The city could have collected these taxes by levying on the chattels of the parties who had not paid, but after consultation, it was decided such a course was not advisable under present financial conditions. The city is therefore carrying these taxes to give the citizens a chance to pay up, without these drastic measures being taken.

In reference to his other complaints Mr. Bowlby knows from his long municipal experience, that the city council has no control over the actions of these independent boards. As far as the city council of 1915 is concerned, every committee of the council wound up its year with a surplus on hand, which is a record that very few councils in the past has had."

### OVER HALF A MILLION.

LONDON, Dec. 24.—Replying to a written question by P. A. Molteno, member of the House of Commons, Premier Asquith to-day gave the total British casualties up to December 9 as 528,227.

By Special Wire to the Courier.

Stockholm, via London, Dec. 24.—Sweden is experiencing the severest cold of the last 150 years. The temperature at some points has fallen to 62 degrees below zero.

### Big Damage by Fire

Gull Lake, Sask., Dec. 24.—Fire in the business section of this town, did damage estimated at \$60,000.

### PARLIAMENT ADJOURNED WITHOUT RECEIVING RECRUITING FIGURES

#### CHRISTMAS DAY SERVICE

The operator of the Courier a special leased wire will enjoy a well-earned holiday on Christmas Day, but other telegraphic arrangements have been made by this paper, whereby anything which may happen of importance in connection with the war will be bulletined.

#### A NAVAL BATTLE.

NEW YORK, Dec. 24.—A news agency despatch from London published here to-day says:

Rome despatches to-day reported that the Turkish cruiser Midirli, formerly the German Breslauer, has been sunk, and the Turkish dreadnought Sultan Selim, formerly the German Goeben, damaged in a battle with the Russian squadron in the Black Sea.

#### Chilly.

By Special Wire to the Courier.

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Isolated Engagements at the Front Upset Predictions of Christmas Truce—Bulgarians are Preparing to Invade Greece—Russian Successes in Galicia—Paris States There is Nothing to Report.

By Special Wire to the Courier.

London, Dec. 24.—Many isolated engagements on various fronts have upset predictions of the universal Christmas truce. Nothing of great importance, however, has developed.

From Galicia the Russians report success in an action against the Austrians near Trembowla, where there has been an indication recently that the Austrians and Germans are seeking to strengthen their lines. Although no activity is reported on the Mesopotamian front, the Russians are advancing steadily in Persia in an effort to link their forces with those of their British allies.

On Hartmanns-Weerkopf the French claim to have maintained their gains in a front of one mile, but admit their left has been compelled to fall back. The Germans assert they have re-taken the lost ridge, with the capture of a large number of prisoners.

Special despatches to London papers state the Bulgarians are preparing to invade Greek territory in an effort to expel the allies from Saloniki. The Entente forces are engaged in strengthening their positions and express confidence there is no immediate prospect of an offensive against them.

#### THE BATTLE LINE

Paris, Dec. 24.—The battle fronts of both sides in the conflict in the Serbian theatre of war are given in a despatch from the Saloniki correspondent of The Echo de Paris.

The correspondent states that 60,000 Germans are massed around Monastir with the Bulgars concentrated in the center of the Vardar valley and two Turkish divisions taking a position on the left of the Bulgars. The French are ranged in a semi-circle around Saloniki with their left on the Vardar center, facing the Greek frontier near Doiran, and their right connecting with the British troops defending Chalcidice.

#### NOTHING TO ADD.

Paris, Dec. 24.—2.30 p.m.—"There is nothing to add to the preceding communication," the war office announced this afternoon.

### EARL OF DERBY'S SCHEME NOT A BIG SUCCESS

By Special Wire to the Courier.

London, Dec. 24.—The repeated postponements of Premier Asquith's announcement of the result of the Earl of Derby's recruiting campaign are now said to be due to pressure brought to bear on the ministers by anti-conscriptionists. It is also alleged that the Premier can only hold his ministry intact by introducing some form of conscription, although he himself is not in favor of that course.

According to parliamentary gossip the number of single men attested under the recruiting scheme was only a quarter of the total of single men on the national registry and it is asserted that when men unfit for service or engaged in munitions work are eliminated only a very few will be available for the army. Of course it is impossible to confirm these statements before the official figures are forthcoming, but there is little doubt that there is a strong force within the cabinet working for conscription on the ground that the single men responded inadequately to the appeal of the Earl of Derby.

On the other hand there is a very strong party in parliament dead against conscription. According to the Weekly Nation this party numbers two hundred and is well organized and determined to fight. It consists of virtually the whole Irish party, a majority of the labor leaders, and a large number of Liberals and Radicals. The Nation contends that if the conscriptionists prevail a serious crisis will be produced and strong Liberal ministers will resign.

While on a ladder adjusting a noose to hang himself a Michigan man fell on his head and was killed.

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### ALL DIFFERENCES SMOOTHING DOWN

United States and Austria Will Come to an Agreement.

#### AUSTRIAN PRESS COMMENT WITHHELD

Teutonic Power Willing to Do Utmost to Remain Friendly.

By Special Wire to the Courier.

Vienna, Dec. 24.—In all quarters the conviction is now entertained that the differences between Austria-Hungary and the United States which arose from the Ancona incident are susceptible to amicable settlement. The Austro-Hungarian reply to the latest Ancona note may be expected in a few days.

The second Ancona note from Washington is being studied here. Meanwhile the press is withholding comment. The remarks incident to the announcement that the note had been received were temperate and even friendly in tenor, and all circles are convinced that the outlook may fairly be described as favorable.

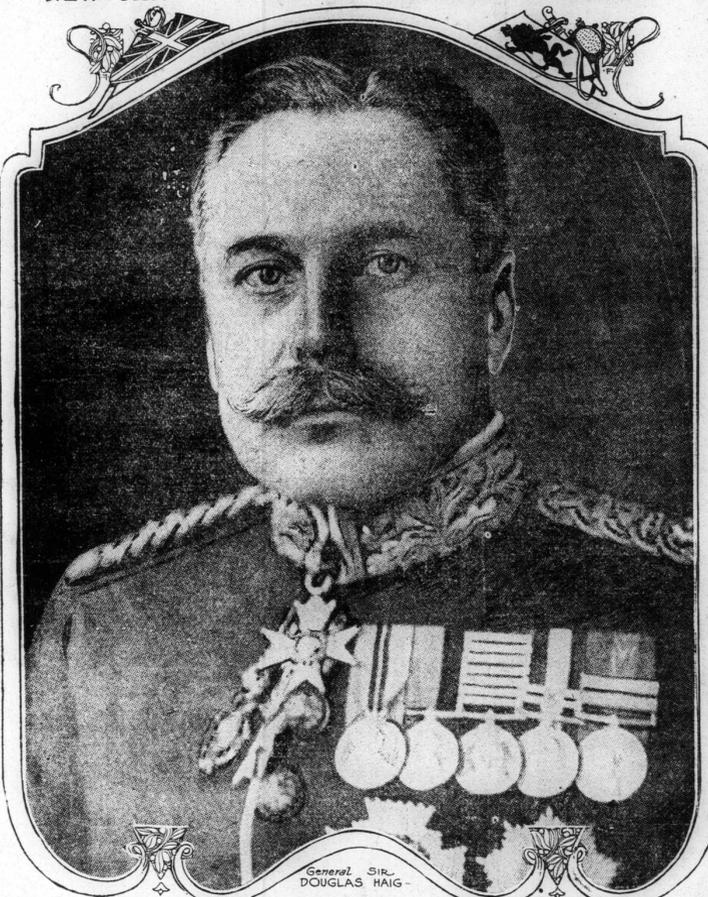
No inkling has been gained as to the nature of the forthcoming Austro-Hungarian communication to the United States, but in this communication interest attaches to an article by Prof. Henry Lammasch, one of the leading Austrian authorities on international law. Professor Lammasch, who is a member of the tribunal at The Hague, suggests that in view of the fact that there is a misunderstanding between the two nations, an international commission of naval experts from neutral countries be appointed to examine the Ancona case as was done in the famous Doggerbank incident. It is felt in certain quarters here that this procedure would offer the best chance of establishing the facts and thus placing the responsibility.

The Associated Press correspondent can state on the best authority that the Austrian government as well as the German is willing to do its utmost to maintain good relations with the United States, provided no conditions regarded as prejudicial to the honor of this nation are imposed.

At the American embassy, the impression prevails that it is still possible to arrive at a solution of the Ancona question.

Dr. G. A. Jones, Dr. A. B. Roshar, Dr. H. Q. F. Thompson, Miss Irvine Robertson (matron) and 28 nurses have left London for the Anglo-Russian hospital at Petrograd.

### NEW CHIEF OF THE BRITISH ARMY, IN FRANCE



General Sir DOUGLAS HAIG

General Sir Douglas Haig has been appointed to succeed Field Marshal Sir John French as commander of the British forces in France and Flanders. The appointment to supreme field command follows a succession of brilliant exploits on the part of Sir Douglas, who has been mentioned in despatches repeatedly by Sir John French. Like Sir John, Sir Douglas Haig also was a cavalry commander and served with General French in the South African campaign.

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