

POOR DOCUMENT

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THE EVENING TIMES AND STAR, ST. JOHN, N. B., SATURDAY, APRIL 17, 1920

Grey Says League Would Have Averted World War

Lone Statesman of 1914 Contends That if Existing Machinery Had Been Available Then, Nations Would Have Gone Into Conference Instead of War.

(Arthur Sweetser in New York Evening Post.)

Sir Edward Grey declares there would have been no world war in 1914 if the machinery provided in the League of Nations had been in existence.

Sir Edward Grey knows. More than any other man he strove to prevent the catastrophe. More than any other man he had his finger on the pulse of the world in these humid, desperate days of late July and early August when the world was shooting down to Armageddon, blissfully unconscious of its fate. Such a statement from him is startling. It immediately challenges proof or disproof.

Most emphatically Sir Edward Grey does not mean that the league is a panacea for all our ills or that it is suddenly throwing a spirit of righteousness and usefulness over men's minds which will make so sordid a thing as a spiritual impossibility. Human nature runs too deep for that. What he does mean, however, is that the war came into being largely by default, because the forces of negotiation and peaceful settlement marshalled against it suddenly collapsed under the unprecedented pressure and allowed all the rest of the world to cave in behind them.

Sometimes we take a course of action not because it is the course which by sheer desire we should select to take, but because it is the only course open to us to take. In other words, we sometimes get ourselves into a blind alley, where all doors were closed except that to war. What Sir Edward Grey means is that the League of Nations, if it had existed, would have opened several other doors of escape out of the Austro-Serbian embroglio.

I well remember how in those same August days I found myself swept along in that vast Niagara of men, guns, automobile trucks, soup kitchens and all the other paraphernalia of war which surged over northern France in the greatest concerted military move in history up to the time of America's crusade to Europe. I had seen the French and British armies and was now with the German. Borne on over hills and dunes, watching the French peasants and the German invaders, seeing the little man relationships that could not but crop up even against the background of flaming villages and mangled bodies, the one great, never resting wonder which churned about in my mind was why an assassin's bullet in a far-off, desolate Balkan town should have so disrupted all these peaceful lives, have torn the Germans out of their shops and the French out of their fields, have thrown them pell-mell across a friendly state in an orgy of blood, have uprooted the desperate French peasants and left these helpless, dumb-eyed women and children cowering under the scourge of the invader. It was a colossal human tragedy. Not a fragment of these people desired it, even knew it was coming. They were but its unseeing victims, caught up in all its horrors by forces they had not learned to control. Why, for four and a half years, did this evil philosophy had been rampant in Germany, that tiny minority of misguided men had wormed their way up to the top and poisoned the wells of German policy, but even these facts did not give me the answer as to why the peoples of these countries, the intelligent, big hearted, earnest, friendly masses, should have tolerated a condition from which war was the only issue.

The picture of those fatal days of negotiation returned. I could see great masses of people who we call nations, dull, inert, unseeing, with a tiny fever spot burning in several of them, a spot where a handful of jeweled perfumed supernumeraries were planning huge offensives, scheming in terms of army corps, writing off ultimate gambling away the futures of their peoples, all unknowingly to the great human world that went its way outside. Then came the picture of a small Balkan nation set upon by a huge neighbor, surrendering, even humiliating itself, then a larger nation rushing up in all its grandeur to the rescue; then still another charging in in its flaming armor; a picture of the tiny fewer spots burning still whiter as they threw the lives of their unseeing millions onto the table, then a series of blind, frantic, misunderstood messages flashing back and forth far above the heads of those who were to pay; and at last the inevitable monster explosion which immersed the world in four and a half years of blood and cost the lives of seven millions of the same kind of innocent people I had seen on both sides of the lines in Northern France.

The catastrophe began without a single conference. The nations were plunged into war by a handful of telegrams which in their portentous official phraseology are even today not fully understood. One false step led to another until the vicious circle was complete. No meeting ground was available, no obligation for discussion existed. The madmen who had worked for war could generate it without a pretence of discussion, without the simple human act of meeting their opponents face to face, without asking yea or nay of their peoples.

Sir Edward Grey proposed the one human course. He asked that the statesmen get together about a table; that they talk over their differences man to man; that they try to settle them by agreement and not by hostility. But no one heard him. And therein lies the whole great crime. Frantically, even as the flames were mounting he telegraphed about Europe to this end. They did not hear, and second, because they had no obligation to hear. They had carte blanche to plunge the world into blood.

For the world had failed to create any adequate machinery to settle international disputes peacefully. There was neither judicial court, arbitral body nor obligation to establish either before running to arms. States had grown and grown in power, each a jaw unto itself, each in all its national pride scornful of the others, yet all crossing and recrossing each other until an almost hopeless tangle was created.

Many men had seen the danger ahead. Back in 1899 the first Peace Conference at The Hague had been called together to create new contacts for this new relationship. The nations approached each other fearfully, self-consciously, distrustfully, above all, haughtily. National pride was all powerful. No one could forget he was the chosen representative of a sovereign. Under all these inhibitions an attempt was made to devise a method of settlement which might have prevented just such a world conflagration as some of the more far-seeing statesmen realized awaited mankind in the near future.

Here what John Hay said in his instructions to the American delegates: "The duty of sovereign states to promote international justice by all wise and effective means is second only to the fundamental necessity of protecting their own existence. Next in importance to their independence is the great fact of their interdependence. Nothing can secure for human government and for the authority of law which it represents so deep a respect and so firm a loyalty as the spectacle of sovereign and independent states, whose duty it is to preserve the rules of justice and impose penalties on the lawless, bowing with reverence before the august supremacy of those principles of right which give to law its eternal foundation."

A start was made at those Hague meetings. This start was largely due to American insistence and urgency in pressing for a rule of law and arbitration in international relations. A procedure drawn up except for question of the method of selecting the permanent judges. National hauteur here broke in, for the small nations demanded equality of representation and the big nations demanded representation proportionate to power.

So the Hague court was created, but only as a promise. The second conference, in 1907, stimulated again by the American insistence and urgency, gave the Secretary of State Elihu Root carried it on a little further, but not far enough. It was a promise, a promise explicable into life if the nations wanted to use it, but without any real vitality. It was a promise, a promise of negotiations just before the war were taking place it proved far too undeveloped to turn the nations to it, even if there had been any real desire to turn to it. Sir Edward Grey was left without recourse. They were the opposing statesmen without obligation.

The war thus came into being by default. For four and a half years the curtain was rung down on civilization; but men were thinking, especially in the baffled, dismayed United States, which had led the field in urging the settlements of disputes peacefully and which grasped out in vain to find any real reason for the holocaust. Fourteen months before we entered the war President Wilson, in two fervent sentences at Des Moines, gave expression to this deepest of America's impulses. Whether or not he was right in his later conclusions of policy, he certainly spoke America's heart when he said:

"I pray God that if this contest have no other result, it will at least have the result of creating an international organization and producing some sort of joint guarantee of peace on the part of the nations of the world."

It did. The lessons of the war ran deep, deepest of all perhaps the lesson of humility. The pride and irresponsibility which had choked all previous attempts at united action were thrown to the discard. In the shambles of northern France the nations had consented to unified military command; in the desperation of hunger, of burned-out resources, of diplomatic disasters, they had consented to a unified direction of resources.

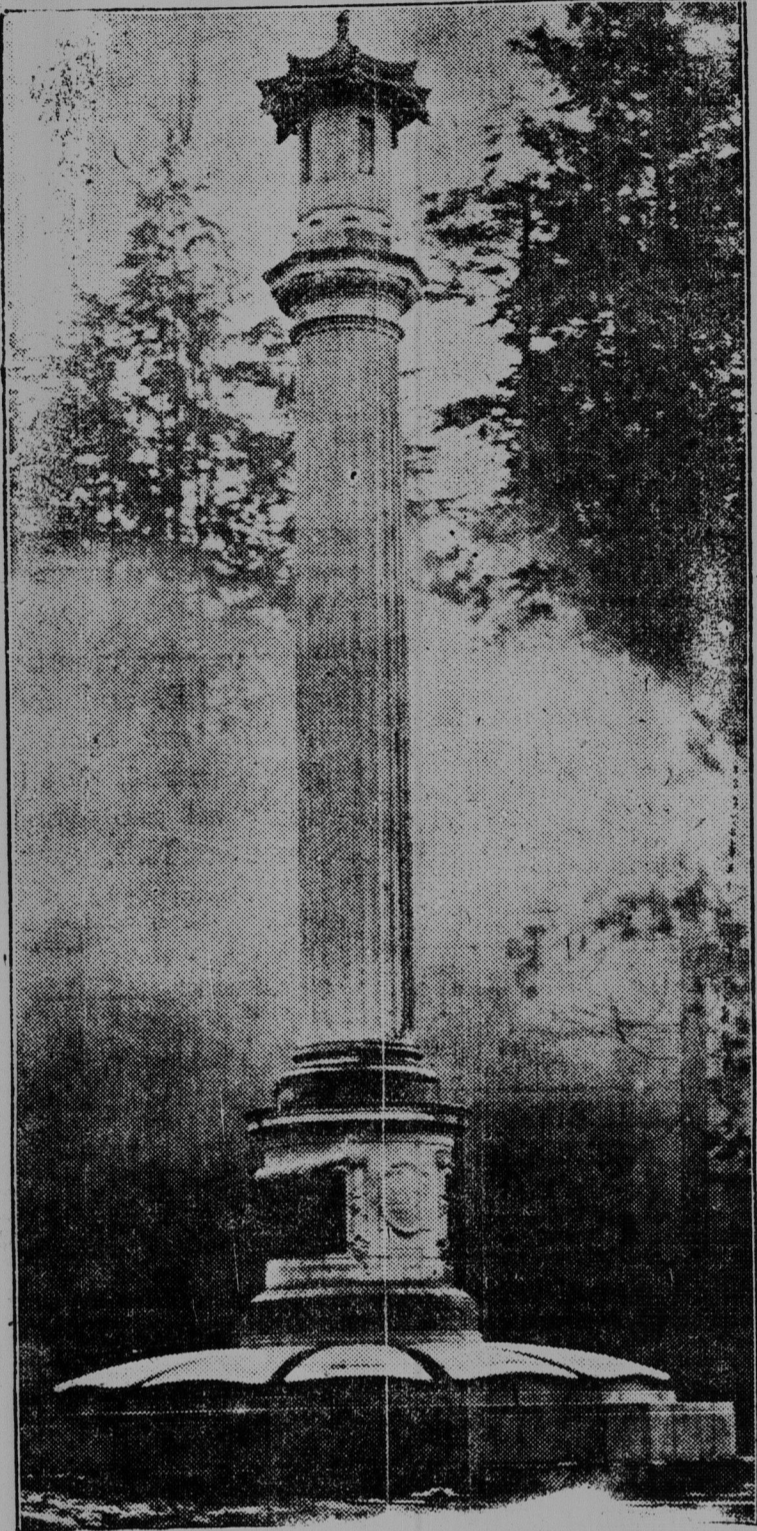
So when they came to Paris they came chastened and more humble. Out of their past they realized they could co-operate in the future; out of their war sufferings they realized that they must unite to prevent new wars. The arrogant, irresponsible pride which had held the nations apart at The Hague and prevented the development of anything but the paper shell of international co-operation had been curbed. Men's minds were ripe for great advances; were receptive, indeed, to proposals which a few short years before they would have regarded as mad.

In casting the lessons of the war into a charter for the future the little selfish follies of the past fell helplessly away. The question of international co-operation as against international license stood answered against the grim spectre of 7,000,000 of dead. The smaller nations which before had appeared as mountains were crushed under foot to make an end to the system of disorganization through whose yawning cracks the war had been allowed to creep. The League of Nations commission, representing the better personality of the peace conference, built up a whole great new machinery, and set in place the scaffolding for still more.

I only wish people on this side could realize the hopes and idealisms amid which the league was born. True, there were remorseless pulling and tugging at Paris and much playing of the old family game which has proved so disastrous throughout history, but alongside it was another, a newer and a better feeling. Men were writing visions, not of some dread superstate, but of mutual helpfulness and co-operation; and if those visions were blurred in many places by the fears, hatreds, jealousies and greeds of the preceding four and a half years of terror, they remained in large degree pure when it came to the League of Nations itself.

With the new machinery is, how it will work in actual practice, how it might have proved a safety valve to Europe's surcharged condition in 1914 I hope to show in the succeeding article. For it has been my fortune to see the league in birth, at work, and under criticism. Chance has put me in touch with the ideals of its creators through eight months as a member of the American peace commission at Paris with the plans of its present directors through having crossed over to London after the conference as one of those directed to prepare the detailed plans of the league.

JAPANESE WAR MEMORIAL IN THE FAMOUS STANLEY PARK AT VANCOUVER, B. C.



The Japanese war memorial in the famous Stanley Park at Vancouver, B. C. It was unveiled at an imposing ceremony recently on the anniversary of the Battle of Vimy Ridge. At the base of the column which stands out in bold relief among the tall timbers and can be seen from incoming liners on the Pacific, are inscribed the names of fifty-four Japanese members of the Canadian expeditionary force who gave their lives in the war. At the top of the column is a light which will be kept constantly burning as a symbol of undying appreciation of the sacrifices of the brave men who died in the cause of the Allies.

FINE GIFT FOR ACADIA COLLEGE

C. P. R. Presents Model of Evangeline, Work of Late Philippe Hebert.

Montreal, April 17.—Through J. M. Gibbon, general publicity agent of the C. P. R., the original burnt clay model of Evangeline, designed by the late Philippe Hebert, and used by Henri Hebert, A. R. C. A., his son, as the basis of the statue to be erected by the C. P. R. at the well of Evangeline, at Grand-Pre, Nova Scotia, has been presented by the C. P. R. to Acadia University, Wolfville, N. S., in recognition of the services of the university in promoting Canadian literature.

The model represents Evangeline at the moment when she turns back for a last look at the land from which she is being exiled. It bears the inscription "Fleurant Le Pays Perdu." It will be sent to Acadia on Monday.

WILL REBUILD KING'S COLLEGE AT WINDSOR, N. S.

King's College is to be rebuilt at Windsor as the result of a decision reached by the board of governors, which was held in the Church of England Institute yesterday. The board also made arrangements to hold the Enochian at Windsor in May.

His Lordship Bishop Richardson presided over the meeting, which was held when he was obliged to withdraw his place was taken by Archdeacon Forsythe of Chatham. Other members present were: Dean Lloyd, A. B. Westwell, Dr. M. A. B. Smith, Rev. Dr. Harris and R. V. Harris of Halifax; Rev. N. H. Wilcox of Dartmouth; W. Kerr Dimmock and Rev. W. W. Harist; R. W. Hewson of Moncton; Rev. Canon Simmonds of Fredericton; Rev. T. Prenter of Norton; Rev. Canon Simpson of Charlottetown; Rev. R. A. Armstrong, St. John; Archdeacon Draper of Loughbury; Rev. J. B. Bayra of Antigonish.

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Boys Arrested in Case of Setting Fire to Another

Lancaster, Ohio, April 17.—Darrel Pool and Kenneth Baker, both aged 11, were under arrest here yesterday, charged with being leaders in an attempt to burn Charles Kneller, aged 10, at the stake on Tuesday evening. The Kneller boy while delivering evening papers was assaulted, tied to a stake and a bonfire was lighted underneath him. He was badly burned, but will recover.

PREDICTS 32-CENT SUGAR BY LAST OF JUNE

New York, April 17.—So serious is the sugar situation confronting the United States that when the heavy consuming season starts, near the end of June, the staple will then be selling to the public at from 32 to 37 cents a pound.

This prediction was made by a man who has been for the last forty-four years in a position to study the sugar trade, from all angles. Most men in the sugar market are of the same opinion, he said.

No permanent relief in the situation may be expected before two years at least, this informant asserts, depending entirely upon how quickly the best producing nations of Europe can recover their pre-war productivity.

TRAIN HITS AUTO AND TWO MEN ARE KILLED

Somerville, N. J., April 17.—Thomas Egan and Thomas Short, of New Brunswick, N. J., were killed yesterday when a Central Railroad of New Jersey train struck an automobile in which they were riding.

PILES

Do not suffer from Piles. Dr. Chase's Ointment will relieve you as soon as you apply it. Sample box free if you mention this paper and enclose 10c stamp to pay postage.

Special Sale of Factory Seconds

Our factory has just shipped us an attractive assortment of Voile Blouses. We thought they were regular stock but the letter accompanying them said to sell them as seconds at only \$2.49. You would hardly distinguish them from firsts. The same high quality D'ALLAIRD Voile is there, and the same fine laces: pin-tucking and embroidery is used, and of course only the best of pearl buttons. Every style is a new one.

Come early and pick out two or three of these bargains.

On Sale Monday at \$2.49

D'Allaird's New Spring Blouses are here

Come in Monday and select a blouse to match your Spring Suit from our wonderful Display of new blouses in suit shades.

The choice of fabrics is as varied as the choice of style. There are Crepe de Chine,orgette, Tricolette and Silk Jersey, and the styles include such new features as basque effects, tie backs, Russian Blouses—long or kimona sleeves. In all the popular new colors and in sizes 34 to 48.

On Sale Monday from \$7.50 up

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