

EDITORIAL

Good Lord Deliver Us!

A VERY active minority of intelligent people in all countries is now engaged in seeing red. Under the pretext that the psychology of wartime, whatever that may be, has upset all conventional modes of thinking, they go on to tell us that after the war we may expect the deluge. Wherever in any country unredeemed and dangerous democracy was engaged in peace-time hatching up topsyturvydoms, it is now rampant, tooth and claw in the advocacy of strange and fearsome doctrines.

We are told, for instance, that after the war every nation will be surrounded by high tariff walls. High tariffs mean power to enforce—armies and gunboats and all. They mean trade wars. Trade wars are the fertile cause of bloody wars. Nationalism the world over, toggled up as protectionism, will be ready for more and more war. Armies will increase. Citizen armies based upon universal training will be the rule. Great navies must become greater still in order to protect trade routes of trade-warring nations. At home the old traditions will all go down. Democracy will demand republics and discard the kings. Houses of lords and aristocracies will be broken up. Great estates will be subdivided for the common people. The nation will take over all industries and public utilities. Customs when paid will therefore revert, not to the capitalist manufacturer as now, but to the coffers of the State. Socialism will be enforced by government ownership. Those who administer the nation's industries and utilities will of course be humble public servants imbued only with the ideals of public service. There can be no room for tyrannies. Democracy—never can be tyrannous; oh, no!

But listen; just to show how searching reform will be after the war: under the aegis of a tremendous and organized world-wide socialism we are to see marriage made optional even when celibacy is not the rule. Men and women may live together, at times, without regard to the encumbrances of homes. Women emancipated into the wage-earning and governing classes side by side with men will no longer be the drudges of domestic life. They are to be free to bear children if they so desire, and the fathers of their children may also be the fathers of others according to personal arrangement. As such parents will not be hampered with homes, the State will bring up the children just as it manages any and every other important industry. In short, as one red-rag socialistic writer pregnantly put it not long ago, the sexual slogan of the future will be Free Love and State Nurseries.

All of which sounds and smells suspiciously like some of the undisinfected fumes that arise from a benighted and godless and dehumanized country known as Germany.

Forget It!

WE may all thank our national stars that behind all the bickerings of those who thrive upon dissension in this country there is a vast common sense that settles big problems amicably without reference to warring politicians—and editors. We have respected the strength and the action of Government in putting through various measures intended for the benefit of the people on the eve of an election. Leaving out all contentious quibbles as to the partisanship of the Wartime Election Bill and differences of opinion about the Military Service Act, we are already committed to the terms of the one and complying with the conditions of the other. They have become law. The law is a definite, established thing. Only as we respect and obey the law can a democratic nation prosper.

Now the law explicitly says that Canadian soldiers may vote without reference to the constituencies in which they are registered on the voters' list; that the wives and sisters of soldiers may vote in this general election, and, of course, no other women; that aliens of enemy origin under certain recognized definition in any part of the country may not vote at all.

These things are law, and they are understood.

Then let us quit contending about them and get down to the doing of national business by means of them. What is the use of complying with the conditions of the Military Service Act if we do not respect the terms of the Wartime Election Bill? Both are enacted for the national good of the country as interpreted by the government now in power. Fighting the power of either is so much un-nationalizing mischief that does nobody any good. We have made progress in spite of differences. Let us drop the differences that we may make more progress. We have lost time enough. We have done well not to lose credit as a nation by reason of our recent quarrels. It is easy to accuse a public man of being a friend of the Kaiser just because you do not happen to agree with his opinions. Small boys nowadays who wish to crush their opponents with scorn call them Germans. Let us get the small boy out of politics and public discussions. Treason is never lessened by labelling traitors. None of us in any party or faction has a monopoly of loyalty to the old flag or of patriotic regard for this country. And unless we work together for the good of the common cause the nation becomes a traitor unto itself.

No Slackers Left

RETURNED soldiers are granted a certain poetic license regarding the war. These men have seen, and suffered, and they have been disillusioned. They come back to us with a sort of cheerful but by no means benign cynicism. When they talk about the war they call a spade a spade. They have no vague patriotic impulses. They understand that the old Horatian motto, *Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori*, was written with a goose quill on a patch of parchment at a time when war was heroic and picturesque or not at all. Trenches have heroes, but they are not picturesque. The things a returned soldier talks most surely about are not the great pictures. They are the grim realities.

So, when a returned man jibes at a "conscript" we consent to regard it as his version of a joke. He believes that all true soldiering is voluntary. The man now going into khaki—let's forget the word "slacker"—did not believe in the voluntary system. To him war was and is a grim set-to which any man would as lief postpone till he had to take it on by law. Once he has obeyed the law and taken it on he is as much a soldier as the man who went before. He has the same country, the same king, the same cause. Let us assume that he will demonstrate the same red badge of courage for the sake of Canada. There is no man in the King's khaki at whom any other man should point a finger except in encouragement and approbation.

Compensation

CRITICS who accuse Mr. Hanna of inconsistency are themselves illogical. Mr. Hanna has made it perfectly clear that Mr. Hoover wants us all to save on flour, wheat, bacon and beef in order that we may have more of these things to send abroad. We are given the figures in the case and we believe them. But belief does not always lead to the right kind of action. We are all weak and in need of guidance. But the Food Controller can't be in everybody's kitchen at once. Even if he had a million glass eyes and left one on every kitchen cupboard, there would still be some people who would be wilfully blind and go glutting the garbage tins with things they had paid good money to get and didn't eat. It's human nature to ignore authority wherever possible. We don't like to be stood over with birch rods, and Mr. Hanna knows it. His wide experience as a public man and a humanitarian has taught him many things about the infirmities of human nature. He knows we are all doing as well as can be expected under the handicap of our infirmities and our lack of regard for complete authority.

Therefore he proposes to let the facts discipline us. The facts are that we are paying insanely high prices

for all the things he asks us to save, and for most everything else besides. Is it not a fact, also, that the very best way to make us save on the consumption of these things at home so that we may send more abroad is to increase the price? Double the price and we shall consume only half as much. The higher the price the less we shall eat. The less we eat the more the country saves. As the money is all spent somebody must get it. We presume the customary and legitimate agencies will get the money and hand it out in war loans at a good interest with their names in the papers as public benefactors. It really makes no difference how much of our money these organizing gentlemen get so long as they disburse it and we are prevented from consuming the goods. And as some of these people are supposed to be storing for export the goods we don't consume we imagine they will get a large price for these also. Which again will filter back to us in the channels of trade as we come back to the game another season—on a still higher level of prices.

Really, when we come to analyze the thing, it looks to us as if Mr. Hanna had better leave prices alone if he wants to be absolutely sure that this country called Canada with ten dollars worth to export for every one it consumes is to export all he and Mr. Hoover have decreed that we shall do. The critics had better retire and be seated. Mr. Hanna has the front of the stage.

Leuze Wood

CAPTAIN GILBERT NOBBS, once a Queen's Own officer, afterwards a prisoner in Germany, minus both eyes, has written a book. We have not read it yet. But we know Captain Nobbs. A glance at almost any page is a bit of a jolt from the sedulous commonplace. In a just-so, hang-it-all mood one glances for instance at this page, at the end of what took place in Leuze (Lousy) Wood:

They were only Territorials! That man, panting hard at the bottom of the shell-hole, and still clutching at his rifle, is a bank clerk; that man who fell at the last jump, with his stomach ripped up, was a solicitor's clerk.

Look at the others. Their faces are pale; their eyes are bulging. But they are the same faces one used to see in Cornhill and Threadneedle street.

Yes, they are only Territorials! But here in this filthy wood they are damned proud of it.

And what is taking place in England to-day?

Is it really true that while all this is going on in Leuze Wood, orchestras are playing sweet music in brilliantly lighted restaurants in London—while a glutinous crowd eat of the fat of the land? Is it really true that women in England are dressing more extravagantly than ever? Is it really true that some men in England are unable or unwilling to share the nation's peril—are even threatening to strike?

No! No! Do not let us think that this is the true picture of England. If it is, then, Territorials, let us die in Leuze Wood!

For London, read Toronto, Montreal, Winnipeg, Vancouver, Halifax; for England, Canada; and in place of the Territorials write the Princess Pats, or the 22nd, or the number of any battalion you know that has gone through its sub-section of hell upon earth again and again!

Then decide that war may be a long way off, but Lord help us! it never becomes a commonplace.

Peach Days

PEACH weather is here—or was at the time of writing. Two or three postage stamp corners of Canada outside of British Columbia are peach countries. Wherefore the peach is suspected of being a local topic. Not so. A good peach is a universal boon. The man who pretends he would rather have a dish of prunes than a dish of peaches is the making of a traitor to his country. Such a man would desert his family and give away the high signs of the Masonic Order. In these young October days of mellow, dry sunlight, when the nectar is going into the peach and the pink gauze lies in wait for the unwary, let us all glorify the fruit of Niagara. One man down there has a hundred acres of peaches from which he expects to get a net profit of \$700 an acre; total net profit, \$70,000! But he is not selling them by bushels. They go to the canning factories at 21-2 cents a pound. At what price will they come out? Heaven only knows.