

The St. John Standard

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ST. JOHN, N. B., WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 22, 1916.

"We are fighting for a worthy purpose, and we shall not lay down our arms until that purpose has been fully achieved."—H.M. The King.
TO THE PEOPLE OF THE EMPIRE—Every fighting unit we can send to the front means one step nearer peace.

CONCERNING RECRUITING.

The recruiting returns for the past few weeks, which have been far from meeting the requirements indicated very plainly that Canada has entered upon a new phase of recruiting and that the work of securing men for the Empire armies now is a much more difficult matter than in the earlier periods of the war. The slump in recruiting is not due to any sudden lessening of patriotism or loyalty on the part of Canadian men but can be traced to economic or psychological conditions, conditions bound to occur and from which there can be no escape.

The quality of Canadian patriotism has not been reduced, on the contrary it is higher than it was, and it is probably no reflection on the men who enlisted in the earlier months of the war to say that the man who decides to don the khaki now is entitled to as much credit for that decision as if he had arrived at it many months sooner. It is nothing more than truth to say that the first flush of enthusiasm has gone. The excitement incident to the first few months of opportunity to wear a khaki uniform and thus escape the monotony of civil life has passed and will not return. Men who don khaki now do it very largely because they are convinced that it is that way their duty lies. They have judged in colder blood of the responsibilities and sacrifices entailed by this war and have determined to take the step. There may be some who will hesitate to believe that more of the men who enlist now do so because they regard it as a duty than was the case in the first year of war. The public mind has changed and is changing. Where it once was enthusiastic it is now less excited but steadfastly determined, determined that Canada shall see this war through no matter what the cost and determination is a very worthy substitute for enthusiasm after all.

There was a time when the sight of a battalion on the streets of St. John was enough to set watching crowds cheering; in more than two years of war St. John has become accustomed to the sight of marching men and the sound of rattling drums. The crowds now are less demonstrative though the sight of soldiers may cause them to think more deeply than of yore. Two years of war have afforded food for thought. As with the general public so with the individual. The uniform of the soldier no longer appeals in the same manner it did. During the first six months or twelve months of this war young Canadians had little or no appreciation of what war really meant. The uniform of the soldier stood for a change from humdrum civil life, an opportunity to visit foreign lands with a prospect of just enough danger to give zest to the adventure. Now the soldier's khaki stands for hard work, danger more keenly realized than before and an amount of hardship which at first was but vaguely dreamed of. Consequently the man who, today, exchanges muff for khaki does it only after counting well the cost.

The difficulty which confronts the country in the matter of recruiting is also either of a practical nature. There is not the same class of young men to appeal to and draw from as in the first year of war. Apart from the shirkers—and there are comparatively few self-conscious deliberate shirkers—the men with no definite family or business responsibilities to whom military service offered attractive adventure have been pretty well exhausted. They are doing their part on the battlefields of France and Flanders—and doing it in a way to add new laurels to the name of Canada. The country now has to deal with men for whom family or business ties have a force sufficiently strong to affect their decision to enlist.

Many men have family ties of such a nature that enlistment would bring hardship on dependents, a man has a widowed parent to support and by his removal from wage winning occupation that parent's source of maintenance falls. It would entail a considerable sacrifice on the part of the parent to permit the son to go—a sacrifice many a son would be loath to ask and little shame to him for his solicitude.

There is the father of a family, disinclined to enlist because his absence from home and accustomed employ-

ment would mean hardship and suffering for wife and children. That man's excuse may or may not be good, at any rate it is the excuse that keeps him out of khaki. Business ties are next in order. There are men whose absence on active service would mean the withdrawal of one hundred pounds of pressure from the necessary commercial and industrial life of Canada without the acquisition of one pound of pressure to the Canadian armies. For such men to exchange civilian life for army service would not be patriotism as much as poor business. Skilled hands and minds are required in the necessary peace undertakings of the country as well as in the army. Some must remain to keep the home fires burning. But what the country should make very sure of is that the men remaining at home are of more value here than they would be in khaki.

It may be possible to withdraw from any branch of industry and place in the army one hundred skilled workmen without seriously impairing that industry. Were one thousand to be withdrawn the industry might be ruined beyond repair, and such things must be avoided. The time has passed when Canadians can be scolded, cajoled or browbeaten into khaki. Intelligent and judicious selection of the men who can best be spared from the life of the country must soon take the place of indiscriminate solicitation, and the first step preparatory to such selection is what the National Service Commission proposes to take by a census of our man power. Canada still requires 125,000 men to complete the promised army of half a million. They must be secured, and they will be secured, but it cannot be done by a general deploing of a slump in recruiting without also examining into the cause.

AN IMPORTANT REPORT.

The representatives of the National Board of Fire Underwriters who recently visited this city and charted and examined it from the standpoint of fire hazard and protection have completed their report to the New Brunswick Board of Fire Underwriters. It is an interesting, if rather disturbing document, and on reading it many people will think that if it has one characteristic more than another it is a tendency to overdraw the risk and under-estimate the preparations to meet it.

In the matter of St. John's water supply and consumption the report recommends that a leakage survey of distribution be taken. This has already been done under the direction of Commissioner Wigmore and the consumption of water considerably reduced as a result. The recommendation of new mains in the water distribution system is also being carried out as rapidly as possible.

The fire department, the investigators found to be fairly well manned but incomplete as regards plant and they recommended the expenditure of a considerable sum for the provision of new and additional apparatus and the creation as soon as possible of a fully paid fire force. No one will be inclined to dispute that in cities where the expenditure can be made, a fully paid fire force with ample apparatus is an excellent investment but in this, as in other matters, St. John must "cut its coat according to its cloth." Expenditures on the fire department or any other public service must be gauged by the money available and to create a department such as the insurance department might entail a larger expenditure than would be prudent at a time when there are many other equally important claims upon the civic treasury.

The report is absolutely right in its condemnation of the building laws and in that regard an improvement can be wrought without much expense. That there should be municipal control of all electric wiring, etc., so that the fire hazard would be reduced to the minimum will also be admitted.

As to the general hazard the report makes some sweeping statements but, at the same time, leaves great room for doubt that there is a bigger risk here than in other cities of similar size and location. Citizens themselves, by care, can do much to reduce the fire hazard in the case of the premises owned or occupied by them. The report is decidedly interesting even though there may be a disposition to regard it as somewhat overdrawn in one or two respects.

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Principal

Little Benny's Note Book

My cousin Artie had a book called Oswald the Brave, being pretty tickle-able, all about the time when people sed, Catliff, zounds, odspokens and diffrent things, and he lent it to me and I red it and this afternoon me and Artie started to play Oswald the Brave, doing it by pulling our caps down over our faces and wawking up and down on my pavement, Artie saying, Catliff, be gone.

Whom is a catliff, low fellow? I sed.
You, fickle jade, sed Artie.
Zounds, marry come up, I sed.

Odz boddikins, avast, sed Artie. And we keep on wawking up and down tawking Oswald the Brave lawf, and all of a sudden I saw Gertrud Simsin settin' out on her frunt steps, and I sed, Zounds, the Lady Gwenty-vera has played us false, look you waze she sets on her balcony yon.

In another if she aint, marry come up, sed Artie.
And we wawked over to her with big steps, swinging our arms, and Artie sed, Wat ho, wench.

Yes, wat ho, you have played us false, varrit, I sed.
Wat? sed Gertrud Simsin.

You may well wat, but we wot not, sed Artie, marry come up, tis a pritty pickle.

Zounds, I sed.

I tell my mother if you boys call me names, sed Gertrud Simsin.

Wat care we aught, scurviens wench, I sed.

Youll see, sed Gertrud Simsin, and she ran in the vesterbule yelling, Mamma, mamma, and her mother started to come out, and me and Artie ran up the street so fast you mite of thawt we never herd of Oswald the Brave.

PREMIER BORDEN AND SIR SAM

(Kingston, Ont. Standard.)

It is very clear from a perusal of the correspondence which has passed between Premier Borden and Sir Sam Hughes that Sir Robert could not with self respect or in justice to his position as First Minister of the Crown allow Sir Sam longer to remain in the Cabinet and this though the Premier appreciated to the full, as Canadians generally do, "the great ability, the wonderful energy and the unequalled resourcefulness which you (Sir Sam) have placed at the service of the country ever since the outbreak of the war." Twice at least in the course of these letters, if not often, Sir Sam practically gave the lie to the Premier's statement referring to Sir Robert's statement respecting the control of the overseas forces, he wrote to Sir Robert, "No one knows better than you that this statement is incorrect" and again, in discussing the failure of Sir Sam to secure the necessary order-in-council respecting the sub-committee when Sir Sam wrote, "May I be permitted to force that both you and I know to the contrary." Such words addressed to the Prime Minister who is the responsible head of the Government, under the constitution, are so utterly subversive of discipline and so altogether destructive of the unanimity which should and must prevail in any cabinet, that there is no room for a hint, that Sir Robert but to ask for the immediate resignation of the cabinet officer who penned them.

Nor does it need any deep insight into the manner in which government affairs must be administered or any profound understanding of the constitution under which we are governed to see the justice and the reasonableness of this position or of Sir Robert Borden's action—practically upon him in spite of his admiration for Sir Sam's great work and his desire to do full justice to the Minister of Militia. Sir Robert Borden was summoned by the Governor General to assume the reins of Government and, so summoned, it devolved upon him to choose out of his followers a cabinet the members of whom would loyally and bravely support him in his policies as leader of the Government chosen of the people. To this cabinet once chosen, is entrusted the determining of policies and the shaping of legislation which in the judgment of the Prime Minister and the men composing that cabinet, are in the best interests of the country and of the people who have elevated them to power. It may be that at times there is not absolute unanimity in the council proceedings and that, as in many other matters of policy, there must be a giving and a taking, as it were, to the end that finally there shall come out of the discussion and the exchange of ideas and councils a policy or policies which to the majority seem the wisest and the best under the circumstances. Thereafter, and once a policy is finally determined it is the fiction of the constitution and the fact in practice that any dissenting minister shall yield his individual opinion to the majority or, if he be not willing to so resign his seat as a Cabinet officer. Loyalty to the government demands this, as also does the unwritten law; and we have seen it worked out in a number of instances, as in the cases of Tarte, Blair and Sifton who withdrew from the Laurier Cabinet because of inability or unwillingness to agree with the policies determined upon at a Cabinet Council.

Why Shoes Cost More

Leather is a Munition of War and has gone into war uses in various ways and the Consumption during the past year has been far beyond the Output. Furthermore, the Sources of Supply have been greatly impeded, as tremendous invasions have been made upon them and as a consequence the Supply cannot possibly be recovered immediately upon the signing of peace.

The advanced Cost of Leather and in fact the principal lines of Merchandise is due, then, not so much to the shortage of Labor or the difficulties of Transportation, as to the real growing scarcity of the basic raw products themselves, for it is these very products that have been consumed to such an enormous extent in the various theatres of War.

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he has selected to help him. Were it otherwise and the individual should dominate, and not the government, we should have speaking figuratively, The Man on Horseback in the saddle and despotism rather than popular government in control.

More: when the Prime Minister has it thrown in his very teeth that his words do not conform to the facts—are, putting it brutally, false and untrue—then even were the minister responsible for this monstrous charge wholly in sympathy with his chief and his other advisers (which in the very nature of things is impossible) it would nevertheless be incumbent upon the Prime Minister to resent such a charge in the only way open to him, to wit, by calling for the resignation of the minister who has given him the lie. Were he not to do so this would be practically tantamount to a confession on his part that the charge was true, or worse still, that not he but the subordinate minister uttering the charge was Master of the Government.

Thus we see clearly that Sir Robert after days of patience and trial and forbearance which do credit to his largeness of heart and to his infinite fund of patience, took finally the only course left open to him did he wish to retain his self-respect and act in conformity with the traditions and the responsibilities of the high office to which the people had called him. Less could not have been expected of him—and less he did not do.

But what a pity—what a tragedy, almost—that it should have been necessary, and especially in respect of a man like Sir Sam Hughes who, despite his faults and shortcomings, had done a wonderful work for the Empire in these last two years and by his great driving power, his wonderful organizing capacity and his genius for administration, could have continued to do it!

As one of Sir Sam's staunchest friends and warmest admirers, The Standard can only regret that he should have put himself in the present unfortunate position. Not abating one tithe of the praise we have bestowed upon him for his splendid work since the outbreak of the war, we must nevertheless as one of his real friends counsel him, if he is willing to accept the counsel that hereafter, so that he may not further alienate his friends, he curb his tendency to riotous speech.

To Premier Borden, a great statesman and a Builder of Empire, we present our compliments that under the trying circumstances through which he has just passed, he preserved his dignity and his self-esteem and, holding true the scales of justice, kept faith with himself, his colleagues and the people of Canada and lived up to the best traditions of Constitutional Government.

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