

DALHOUSIE Gazette

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THEY DID NOT DIE IN VAIN

Tomorrow morning, at eleven o'clock, we will all pause in whatever we are doing to bow our heads in remembrance of those who died that we might live.

During this moment of reverent silence, marking the thirty-second anniversary of the end of the First World War, we should think just what was accomplished for us by those who died.

On the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month of the year 1918 the first global conflict came to an end. The spectre of a war involving the whole world was still fresh in the minds of all, and on that morning the people of the democratic world really thought that they had just fought the War to end wars.

The last manifestations of imperialistic nationalism, it was thought, had perished in the ruins of the crumbling Austro-Hungarian and German Empires. Now, it was believed, there was nobody who had not what he wants. The only threat to world order, it was felt, was Communism, which has found re-birth in Russia when that country was disorganized by the impact of the Industrial Revolution—but the Bolsheviks, while not gentlemen, would surely never dare to threaten the world.

This belief persisted, and Chamberlain said, with all sincerity, when he stood on the threshold of a greater conflict. "Peace in Our Time".

The War of 1939-1945 was not a war to end wars, but a war to contain the growth of an anti-democratic, unchristian ideology which, coupled with nationalism, raged throughout Europe for over a decade, crushing everything democratic. A return to the dark ages seemed imminent. Those who fought and died in the Second World War saved the world from a danger far greater than that which confronted the world in 1914.

At the present time men are dying in Asia to contain yet another vile ideology: Russian nationalism using Pan-Slavian and Communism as its tools, has posed a still greater threat to the Western World.

There are some who feel that the sacrifices of those who died that civilization might survive, had sacrificed in vain. This is far from true; and, while as yet we do not have peace in the world, many of the greatest advances in well being of the individual were made in the interval between the wars. Democracy remained free to develop itself, uncontaminated by foreign ideology, and, most of all, the hope of mankind remained undimmed. The future may be dark, but the sacrifice of those who died may serve as an example to us who remain, and we may face the future confident in the knowledge of our moral strength.

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Grains of Sand

In this great Canada of ours there is a mighty river that drains the Rocky Mountains and flows through the flat lands of the prairies. In the spring of the year when the ice and snow is melted with the rain, the water rises to dangerous heights, threatening the towns and cities along its course. The inhabitants of those communities, as a yearly chore, throw great amounts of sand against the course of the river, to protect themselves from its raging waters. Then as the sun dries up the water, they look in comfort and security at their dykes, marvelling at the feats of their handiwork. They know that each year the pattern of events will be repeated, and each year they build bigger dykes, fearful of the day when the swirling waters will be too strong for their dykes of sand to hold, and will break through, destroying the advances of civilization.

The angry torrents of the river can be compared to the regular on-sweep of war: one can compare, too, the individual grains of sand to the privates, the craftsmen, and the seamen of our fighting forces, thrown into battle to dyke the flood. Some are washed away, never to return, and others remain to stem the tide on its next advance. The fallen soldier realizes, in the lonely hour of death, that his death will mean no more than the uncountable numbers that have preceded him, and that man will never know peace on the face of the earth.

And, although at times, the course of war has been stymied and the people of the world settle back into a false security, the mutterings of its awful might are soon heard again; the world awaits in fear and trepidation, lest the next holocaust prove too much for its arms to contain, and scourge life all over the globe.

Tomorrow is set aside for remembering the dead of our man-made wars. In conjunction with the remembrance of them, prayers will be raised for the continuance of peace which this generation has never known. For idle talk and propagandizing does not produce any practical results. In this year, 1950, when the grass is just beginning to grow luxurious on the graves in Holland and Belgium, new sod is being turned in Korea to cover the fruits of a new "war to preserve peace." And foolish men the world over praise a war that was started to prevent wars.

It is the dead of such wars we remember tomorrow. Whether we believe their labor in vain or the fruits of their victory within our easy grasp we must bow in humility before their sacrifice.

G. E. C.

"Remembrance Day"

To fewer and fewer Canadians, as the years pass, does 11th November bring back personal memories of that historic date in 1918. But though the ranks of these become ever thinner, there is good reason why the anniversary should continue to be kept with reverence and zeal. In the thirty-two years since the event it recalls, the younger generation have witnessed, at least twice, a scene which, for them, gives meaning to the annual tribute named by the older "Remembrance Day".

The menace victoriously confronted by those of whom we now think as heroes and martyrs of the First World War was the same in essence which, at like fearful cost, was overcome in the Second. Once again it is darkening the international horizon now, and while every resource of negotiation is being invoked to avoid a Third, the warning from London, from Paris, from Washington is unmistakable—that if such diplomacy again fails to stop aggression, it will be again stopped by force. Such has become the burden of every recent pronouncement by western leaders.

In 1914, when the diplomatic preliminaries of the First World War were in progress, the aggressor counted on sacrifice of justice rather than acceptance of battle by the peace-loving democratic Powers. It was a miscalculation. Twenty-five years later, not even the memory of this mistake, and of the price paid for committing it, was enough to prevent its being repeated. Again the challenge was met and resistance was victorious, but at a terrific cost which it is the legitimate pride of the democracies that they refused to count till the cause of justice had been won. As we read now the bulletins about Korea, we may well think of the plight of Poland in 1939 and that of Belgium in 1914: it is the same old picture of falsehood, cruelty, mania for imperial expansion in contempt of the simple virtues of fairness and good faith.

That there were faults on both sides in 1914 and in 1939 (as indeed always in complicated international dispute) does not affect the plain obligation to remember how the central value at stake was that of Justice contemptuously derided by Power. What is now being done "behind the Iron Curtain", excused and even commended on grounds such as Bethmann-Hollweg put forward in 1914 and Ribbentrop in 1939, presents essentially the same challenge. That it can and will, if needful, be met again unflinchingly as before, is a warning in our celebration of Remembrance Day to an aggressor who thinks of risking again the same defiance to international morals. In the Moscow of 1950 it should waken memories—very different from those it stirs in London, in Paris, in Washington, but no less timely.

Canadians look back with well justified gratitude to those of their own country who, a generation ago, won for Canada an altogether new place in the esteem of the world by the great national venture in a noble cause. But it is not of the statesmen who made the decisions of policy (much as we rightly honor them), it is of the soldiers and sailors and airmen whose tireless effort and dauntless courage carried out this high resolve that the anniversary brings chief remembrance. On that great roll there are a great many homes the kindred of those who thus brought new honor to "the Little College by the Sea" recall at this season the details of that proud story. Whatever changes time has brought or may bring in institutional machinery, may the spirit of those days continue to inspire. It is with this in mind that Remembrance Day should be kept at Dalhousie.

Dr. H. L. Stewart.

The Cost of War

In the Preamble of UNESCO are the words: "Wars begin in the minds of men." Heredity and environment are the formative influences of the mind and much of a person's environment is centered around his education. The university exists as a training ground for the mind and thus students find themselves in a strategic position. Students and professors have a challenge to work together so that

the seeds of prejudice and misunderstanding will not arise.

In warfare two kinds of cost appear: the cost in human lives and the cost in materials. Students and educational institutions suffer greatly on both counts. Total war is today accompanied by total destruction as demonstrated by the A-bomb and as promised by the H-bomb, and by total extermination.

(Continued on page 3)

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