

EDITORIAL COMMENT

What Might Have Been

It is a saddening spectacle to witness a man throwing away his opportunities. It is particularly saddening when the man is a king and the opportunity is nothing less than leading a world in science, in art, in industry. The Emperor of Germany came to the throne when a young man. He found himself lord over an industrious, a frugal, a highly intellectual people. There was nothing within reason they might not have accomplished if properly encouraged and given full freedom of action. Unfortunately, however, there was around the young ruler a band of men who had achieved distinction in war. They placed but small value on the higher ideals—the ideals of peace. They were as caste-bound as the Brahmins, equally proud, equally self-sufficient. It was impossible for the young ruler to escape the contagion. It was not long until he was the most diseased of the lot. He set up as his models Napoleon, Alexander, Attila, Caesar. He dreamed of world conquest, and by all those with whom he associated he was encouraged in his dreaming. Then came the planning to achieve his purposes. Greatest on land, greatest on sea, greatest in the air—nothing less would do. Essen, Kiel, Krupp, Zeppelin, became the most common terms in court vocabulary. A suffering people was overtaxed to minister to the ambition and, may we say, the vanity of the young war lord. Then came dissimulation and duplicity. The lesser nations of Europe were treated as pawns to be sacrificed in the great game the Kaiser was playing. If it had not been for the close check-mating of France and England, the map of southern Europe would long ere this have undergone a serious change. In due time the psychological moment arrived. The young Jove would show the world that he could throw his thunderbolts. And so the war.

Now, had this young man fallen into kinder hands, had his imagination been fired by the deeds of such men as Peter the Great and Alfred the Great, or even if he had derived inspiration from association with the philosophers, the scientists and great industrial leaders of his own land, his life might well have been one of the most helpful in history. But as it is now, no matter whether he succeeds temporarily in attaining his purpose, or whether he is driven in a few months to sue for peace, he will go down in the records of the race as the greatest criminal of all time. All this because in his early years he was taught to look upon life as a battle rather than as a service. To put it in a word, if William of Germany had possessed the heart and if he had accepted the ideals of the Christian, he would not now occupy the dishonest position he holds in a world where honor, righteousness and humility are still revered.

The Navy

It is a fortunate thing that just a few months ago there took place at Spithead the mobilization of the British fleet. "No king in human history has ever commanded such an aggregation of power, such a triumph in war organization, such a devoted and loyal personnel, such vigor and efficiency of fighting manhood as did King George V during his visit to his sailors and his ships—between Saturday, July 18 and Monday, July 20." Not only was the fleet the largest and strongest ever assembled, but there were elements represented which never be-

fore appeared at naval reviews. First, there was mobilization of the ships of the third class—those manned by nucleus crews. These were rendered ready for war in an incredibly short time. When reservists came trooping in from every point in the Island they took their places naturally and worked as effectively as if accustomed to their positions for years. In this the Navy was true to its watchword—"Aye, Ready!" The second element represented was the aircraft—the aeroplane and the seaplane. It is possible that before the war is closed the British Admiralty may show itself more than equal to its great antagonist in aerial warfare.

The meaning of a great fleet of this kind is that it is an insurance for the trade of the Empire. The fleet is a guardian of world-wide interests, the protection of food supplies of our people, and of the raw materials out of which they make their livelihood. It preserves our prestige on international complications, and is even now through the terror it has inspired the one power that will ensure lasting world peace. Without it militarism would rule the world; because of it, militarism will be shorn of its power.

The premium paid on this great insurance policy is less than three per cent of the aggregate trade of the Empire. This may be considered a moderate price for preserving the continuity of industrial and commercial prosperity. Strong as is the fleet, it is not yet in all parts of the world equal to its responsibilities. Perhaps when the war is over and the great menace to civilization is out of the way, there will be less need for such a glorious defence. Thankful we must be for such a defence in the present emergency.

Bear One Another's Burdens

Because the war will necessarily be protracted, and because trade and commerce are so seriously affected throughout the world, it is unavoidable that many should be thrown out of employment. It is necessary in such emergency that the strong should help the weak. It is necessary that it be as true of us as it was of the ancient Romans when the Etruscan hordes were at their doors:

Then none was for the party—

Then all were for the state;

Then great man helped the poor man,

The poor man loved the great;

Then lands were fairly portioned;

Then goods were fairly sold;

Then Romans were like brothers

In the brave days of old.

This war is not that of the poor fellows who have faced such fearful odds on the plains of France and Belgium, it is not that of the thousands who are waiting the summons to proceed from Valcartier to the front. It is a war in which we are all engaged. The liberties of the last man in the Empire and the freedom of a whole world are at stake. The very least any of us can do is to sacrifice our time, our comforts and our means. Our brothers are offering up their lives.

The means of rendering assistance at this time are fortunately varied. The cost of equipping and sending forth the army will fall upon the public purse; the care of the unemployed in the great centres must fall upon the municipal authorities and upon private beneficence. And even yet

there will be hardship and distress. Homes will have to be opened—extra chairs placed at the tables. Rich and poor, city and country must come to the rescue. We are convinced that the three prairie provinces will not be in anywise behind hand in their open heartedness. Westerners were the first to respond to the call to arms. They will be the first to respond to the call of need and hunger. Many a farmer will now decide that it is time he gave his faithful wife a little rest and will obtain for her the services of some young lady for whom the city at the present time cannot provide employment. In that way the gain will be mutual. Many a city dweller will decide that instead of tending this year to his own furnace, he will be glad to pay a little to the married man who is temporarily out of "a job." The cry has gone abroad that we must all economize. That is painfully true, but it is not putting the emphasis in the right place. We must all economize in luxuries, that we may be able to assist our fellows. Our thought of economy must and will include the thought of all those who are even more unfortunate than ourselves.

The Bright Side

When the war is over and peace restored it will be found that there are a few great gains. First of all it will undoubtedly be decreed that the reign of militarism is ended. Then there will be good will among the allies for years to come. Last of all there will be a bond of brotherhood among all the people of the Empire, and this will be felt in every town and village of the remotest Dominion. When it is possible for vitriolic partizan papers to forget their partizanship, and for political opponents in the Province, the Dominion and the Imperial Parliament to forget their differences, surely the war has already done something. Before we are through with it all it will do vastly more than this. If it will only make war among professedly Christian peoples forever impossible, the price paid may not be too high. And yet, in the sight of God, how unrighteous must the whole struggle be.

After the War

After the war, Canada should occupy a new place among the nations. Beginning next year she should greatly increase the acreage in foodstuffs, for it is clear that Europe will not produce the accustomed quantity. Then she should plan to enter more largely into the field of manufacture, for it is evident that Germany will no longer supply the allies with her goods. In all probability her greatest factories will, for lack of workers and capital, be idle for a long time. There are many articles which can be manufactured here as well as in Germany. Canadians will do well to make enquiries, and to lose no time in preparing to meet the new conditions imposed by the war. Above all, should an effort be made to build up a mercantile marine. Canada will not reach her majority until she has provided fully for the transportation of her commodities. Industrial efficiency always necessitates three things: production of raw materials, provision for manufacture, provision for transportation. The more of this we can keep in our own hands the better.