

The Evening Times and Star

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YESTERDAY'S MEETINGS.

The one compelling issue in the present political campaign was presented with grave earnestness in St. John yesterday by Sir Robert Borden and Hon. F. B. Carvell. The Canadian divisions at the front must be reinforced. How can it be done? There are not at present available enough reserves to keep the ranks filled beyond the end of March. If we do our very best under the military service act there is likely to be a period when there will not be enough men to keep the divisions up to full strength. They must nevertheless hold their portion of the line. We know what that means. There will be no rest, but constant fighting without the relief a proper reserve would make possible. The mother who votes against union government will be voting to make her son's lot harder at the front. If we wait for a referendum no men will be available for at least a year, and our divisions at the front will be abandoned—left to see their ranks thinned from day to day and no relief from home.

That is the burden of the very solemn message given to three great audiences in this city by the prime minister and Hon. Mr. Carvell yesterday. Mr. Carvell would not say that Canada will provide the hundred thousand men who will finally turn the scale, but some hundred thousand will do it; and how will Canada face her sons who return if she fails them now? And if for the lack of a hundred thousand men we should lose the war, those who voted against sending reinforcements would have to bear the awful responsibility.

It was necessary to hold meetings in both the Imperial and the Opera House last evening to accommodate the crowds that desired to hear Sir Robert Borden and Mr. Carvell. Not an unpleasant incident of any sort marred these great meetings. The people were profoundly impressed by the gravity of the message brought to them, and the great number of returned soldiers who sat behind the speakers on the Imperial stage were a constant reminder of those other men in khaki who today are asking each other in the trenches in France and Flanders whether their country will rally to their aid or desert them in their hour of need.

These were not ordinary political meetings. There were no attempts to make a point against an adversary such as mark the average campaign. An issue of transcendent importance confronts the Canadian people, and in its presence the cry of the partisan falls on unresponsive ears. In the midst of a life and death struggle the people must be serious, and must give their best thought to the solution of their problems. That was the feeling in St. John last night, and speakers and hearers alike were conscious of the fact that yonder in the trenches are men looking to Canada and asking that faith be kept with them. Does their spirit dominate the folks at home? Does it? The seventeenth of December will give the answer.

THE UNION GOVERNMENT.

The union government is less than two months old, and its members have of necessity been scattered over the country. Not until the elections are over and they are free to get together at Ottawa for continuous work will they be able to deal fully with the problems confronting Canada at this moment.

But they have already accomplished things which would be impossible under party government, as the abolition of patronage. They have put an end to appointments to the civil service for political reasons and made merit the test in every case. That is a great gain to the country, for as a result of political appointments under former governments the public services are badly manned and far more expensive than is necessary. Reform in this direction did not come too soon. But the new government has also provided for taxation of incomes, and will make it more effective. It has ordered that no grain, sugar or molasses be used in Canada for the production of liquor.

These are great and far-reaching reforms, and are only a part of the work already done. When the elections are over and the men representing both of the great political parties are free to act with the full mandate of the people, there is no reason to doubt that they will effect further great reforms. But, most of all, they will not abandon the men at the front, and that must be the first consideration of the Canadian people at a time when the Germans are hurling great armies against the British on the western front in a determined effort to break through to Calais.

The union government and its candidates, Messrs. Elkin and Wigmore, ought to win handsomely in St. John and Albert.

The withdrawal of Hon. Mr. Carvell's opponent is a fine tribute to him and to the union government. He is now free to give to the cause in other constituencies the force and vigor of his advocacy of the cause of the men at the front.

THE GREATER CRIME.

Sir John Simon, forty-four years old and a former opponent of conscription, has decided to don the khaki. He wrote to his constituents: "I can imagine only one crime which is to be compared to the crime of permitting the war to go on for an unnecessary hour, and that is the crime of slackening in our purpose; after all the sacrifices we have made, before a real opportunity of securing it (an enduring peace) has arisen."

Commenting on this declaration, Toronto Saturday Night truly says that "the crime of slackening in our purpose" is the actual and only important question on which the electors of Canada will vote on Dec. 17; and that a proposal to "slacken in our purpose" is the main plank in the platform of nearly two hundred candidates that have been nominated in opposition to union government. Is any proof needed? Certainly not in Quebec province. As to other provinces, see "either the justice or the wisdom of further depleting the population of Canada" while there are available so many men in the United States. That is the coward plea of men who want their fighting done for them. It is the plea of Henri Bourassa, who would withdraw Canada from the war. It is not the plea of red-blooded Canadians who remember the men in the trenches and the other men whose lives were given for the honor and the safety of their country.

The Woman's Council and its president, Mrs. E. Atherton Smith, are to be congratulated on the splendid organization which made Rosebud Day so remarkable a success. The Children's Aid Society are to be congratulated on the handsome addition to their fund for a new and much needed home. Most of all the citizens are to be praised for the fine spirit of generosity shown by all in response to the appeal for a worthy cause. It is really amazing with what readiness the people give of their means to every cause that is worthy of their sympathy.

Sir Robert Borden told his audience last night that many Conservatives were strongly opposed to union government and that he gave the alternative of action to the people. He said that the British carried out their withdrawal, the Germans being still disorganized. So well was the retirement conducted that the Germans were not aware that the evacuation of Masnières was accomplished in a masterly manner. It came at the end of a day of sanguinary fighting in which nine German attacks had been repulsed with unprecedented losses to the enemy. During the fighting the suburb of Les Ruesvortes to the south had been captured by the Germans, but late in the day they were ousted from this place. It was under cover of this enemy defeat that the British carried out their withdrawal, the Germans being still disorganized.

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Farmers' sons are to be given the full benefit of the appeal for aid. Indeed every man will get that benefit. And if there are places where exemption tribunals are making a farce of their work, as seems to be the case in one province, the remedy will be applied. The government stands for a fair and equitable application of the Military Service Act in every province.

The nationalisation of the medical profession, with free medical attendance for everybody, is the amazing proposal made in England by the minister of reconstruction. Premier Lloyd George is said to favor the plan. In St. John we do not even provide medical inspection in the schools.

Washington believes Germany is preparing to bring on a decisive engagement on the western front. In the terrific fighting that has already taken place the Allies have had the best of it, with heavy losses to the enemy.

Canada's first battle line is in France and Flanders. The second line is in Canada itself. The Germans are driving hard against the first line. Will the second line send reinforcements?

Mr. Elkin and Mr. Wigmore get a fine reception by every audience before which they appear. In their speeches they keep to the issue, and make a strong impression.

The Germans have been cleared entirely out of German East Africa. That is a great blessing to the natives, who were treated with barbarous cruelty by German officers and taskmasters.

Yesterday's meetings in St. John cleared up many misunderstandings and set the issue of the campaign in a clearer light before the people.

New Brunswick believes in free speech. A very considerable amount in speech does not. Union candidates there are brutally treated.

Vote for Elkin, Wigmore and prompt aid for the men at the front.

A Thirst for Learning. The Illissus is a small Greek river with a great name. The story is told that the late President Pelton of Harvard declared that on his first reaching Athens he made his way to the bank of the Illissus, stooped down, and drank it all up.—Christian Register.

Second Effort To Break British Line

Desperate Fighting as Germans Attack In Great Force; Nature of Gun Fire Shown in Statement That One British Machine Gun Battery Fired 70,000 Rounds in Day

With the British Army in France, Dec. 3.—(By the Associated Press)—The Germans today were making their second great attempt to break through the British defenses in the Gonnelle sector and pluck off the salient which General Byng recently drove into the enemy territory a little further to the north. The German assault was launched against La Vacquerie a little before 9 o'clock in the morning and spread rapidly. Within two hours a heavy battle was in progress over a considerable front from La Vacquerie southward towards Vendhuile. The enemy was employing great force of infantry, which were sent forward under terrific artillery bombardments from a concentration of guns which the Germans had perfected since the smashing of the Hindenburg line.

By noon there were indications that the German onslaught might equal if not surpass in fierceness their drive which carried them through the British front south of Gonnelle on last Friday.

The British infantry and artillery had met the shock brilliantly and were holding their own strongly through the first grim hours of fighting. The Germans approached La Vacquerie from the east and southeast and at the outset it appeared that the attack was comparatively local. In their initial charge the enemy came up against a stone wall and they were forced to fall back. They kept coming in waves, however, and finally secured a footing in the town, but immediately were ejected.

Intense fighting at close quarters followed, and as this progressed the Germans developed an offensive operation farther down the line. By 11 o'clock their artillery was maintaining a drum fire against the whole front involved.

The British guns replied with a destructive fire. The duel between guns of all calibers reached terrifying proportions. The battle which raged about Gonnelle yesterday took on renewed bitterness this morning.

The British line at Masnières today was much stronger as a result of the withdrawal from the town on Saturday night. General Byng's troops had held this place against repeated heavy enemy counter-attacks, but because of the sharpness of the salient which bulged about the town, the British position here was a difficult one in view of the dominating high ground to the south and southeast held by the enemy. The evacuation of Masnières was accomplished in a masterly manner. It came at the end of a day of sanguinary fighting in which nine German attacks had been repulsed with unprecedented losses to the enemy. During the fighting the suburb of Les Ruesvortes to the south had been captured by the Germans, but late in the day they were ousted from this place. It was under cover of this enemy defeat that the British carried out their withdrawal, the Germans being still disorganized.

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In the Moeuvres region, where the Germans kept sweeping forward over a ridge all day, there was a veritable slaughter. The nature of this may be seen from the report from one battery of machine guns stationed here. This battery fired 70,000 rounds during the day at an average range of 1,200 yards against the enemy advancing in masses. Many other batteries were doing similar work and riflemen and anti-aircraft guns were firing steadily. A large number of German troops involved in this carnage were brought in from the Arras front.

FORMER PRINCESS TATIANA OF RUSSIA



The Ex-Czar's second daughter, after romantic experiences in escape, is to dance in America.

Masnières was not occupied until Sunday afternoon. Throughout Saturday night and Sunday morning the German artillery kept pounding away at the town. The true situation was discovered before noon and the Germans pushed up into the town under intense punishment from the British guns. The new positions established by the British were on the southwestern outskirts of Masnières and Les Ruesvortes also was abandoned. If the Germans are today as they did last Friday these reports of last week's fighting all emphasize the first statements that the German death toll had been exceedingly grievous.

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**Germany Suffers From General Deterioration**

Railroads and Factories Wearing Out and Human Misery Weakens the People, But No Signs of Revolution

Herbert Corey, writing in the Boston Globe from Switzerland, says in part: Germany is suffering from progressive mechanical deterioration and cumulative human misery. There will be more food in the next twelve months than in the twelve past and military demands for men and munitions will be met. Weakness is not one of material, but morale. It is not possible that any people can withstand the pressure of misery indefinitely. About June of 1918 the Germans will be talking peace again. It is in June the pangs of hunger are greatest. Railroad road beds are going to pieces. Engines steam badly and cars are racked. Factories and trains are wearing out. Only forced repairs are made.

Every one gets the calories scientists figure will sustain life. But everyone is hungry all the time. There is no nakedness, but Germany is wearing rags because no new clothes may be bought while the old hang together. Few will freeze but still fewer will have heat in more than one room.

The Germans can get no release of nerve tension. There is plenty of money, and many workmen get three or four times old pay, but there is nothing to spend it on. They are restricted to three glasses of watery beer a day.

Germany is weakening but not weak yet. There is no indication yet of revolution, as the greater part of Germany, told only part of the truth, still believes Germany will win. It has been told the Allies are as badly off, and the United States bluffing. Epidemic of dysentery, fatal in many cases, is sweeping Germany. In Hamburg last summer funeral services in churches were restricted to ten minutes, with churches "running to capacity." In many cities street after street has been closed to them in contagion, and whole towns quarantined. Burial regulations forbid the use of wood or wool, corpses getting paper shrouds and pasteboard coffins.

Germany reached food production maximum in 1917 and is counting on peace before winter of 1918-19. Every available inch was cropped last year. Decreased fertility now means a decreased yield. Germany is eating up food capital and cutting into herds for which she has not enough fodder. Little or no grain has been received from Roumania, and Turkish crop is bad.

Germany is now restricted to two suits of underwear and one of clothes. Apparently the effort to make paper clothing has been a failure. Sandals

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and wooden soled shoes have been common, and there has been much going barefooted the past summer. Boys of 16½ have now been summoned to the colors and men of 55 are now liable. Moral standards have been breaking down, with juvenile misbehavior, thefts, and illegitimacy increasing. But German plans for next year's war are more sweeping, scientific and murderous than for any past years.

**PRISONERS TO CUT WOOD.**

(Bangor Commercial.) That prisoners in Bangor jail may be used for cutting cordwood to help relieve the fuel shortage, was learned Saturday from Sheriff White, who, with the county commissioners, is seriously considering taking this step.

The fact that the county jail workshop has been shut down has led them to the conclusion that some method of keeping the prisoners busy should be devised and just now they cannot think of anything better than putting them to work getting out cordwood.

The adoption of this step will not mean that the food situation will be ended right away, but every little helps, and the jail inmates would be given something to do. It is safe to say that they would not take the innovation with any great degree of joy, as the jail is a warm place in the winter, and working at a cordwood job is not one of the pleasantest tasks, especially when it is cold. Should this plan be carried out, the popularity of the jail as a winter resort would immediately decline.

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