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THE BELGIANS

"Horum omnium fortissimi sunt Belgae," said the great Caesar after encountering them at Namur—which by the way, will doubtless be the scene of greater activity in the present struggle—Caesar's expression meaning literally that the Belgians were the bravest of all he had encountered, or in the Canadian idiom, "the toughest proposition yet."

The Belgians of to-day are not the same race that encountered Caesar, having been adulterated by mixture with the Germans and the Franks, but there are some of the old corpuscles running in the veins of all the men and women, and when the armies of the Kaiser appeared at Liege on their way through independent territory, the sons of fathers, grandfathers and great-grandfathers away back to the time when Julius overran the world, stood in the way with the result that thousands of the best men of Germany fell in the encounter and the commanding general was compelled to ask for an armistice in order to bury his dead and care for his wounded. All this in the face of the fact that the German force was far superior to that of the Belgians, although it must be admitted that the victors had the advantage of fighting from behind fortifications.

We cannot refrain from expressing an admiration for the soldiers of this little independent state of Europe that has been the battle ground of history. At the time Caesar tried to overrun the country its inhabitants were mostly Celts, with a sprinkling of Germans. As the years have passed, the German strain has increased, but the mingling of the impetuosity of the Celt and the stolidity of the Teuton has produced a race that will yield to none in warlike valor.

Belgium was declared neutral territory by treaties of 1839, and during the Franco-Prussian war, England succeeded in inducing the two belligerent powers to sign new treaties in accord with those agreements. Following Sedan, where the French were so badly beaten and Napoleon III. met his downfall, a part of the French army took refuge in Belgium, where it was "interned" in accordance with the neutrality laws.

This fight at Liege has been maintained by the Belgians in order to preserve the same neutrality observed in 1870-71. And it has been a glorious one, too. For, since the days of the Emperor of Rome, who carried his banners through Gaul and across the channel to Britain, down through the centuries the dauntlessness of a race that has fought with great gallantry on a thousand battlefields was never more conspicuously displayed than at the battle of Liege in this month of August, during this year of grace, 1914.

But while the men of Belgium have fought with a valor surpassed by no troops since Leonidas and his 300 Spartans held back the hosts of Xerxes at Thermopylae, all the bravery will not compensate for the disaster that occurred and the disaster that will occur. Because this has made Belgium the battleground of the nations and the next struggles will be on her soil. Waterloo or its vicinity may again be the scene of carnage with Belgium, England and France united against Germany, when, as we all know the defeat of the first Napoleon was accomplished by nations now pointing their swords at each other's throats. Belgium is the garden of Europe. Her fields are fertile and well tilled. Her roads are paved from northern to southern line. She is the home for the arts and sciences. Her galleries contain the grandest paintings of the old masters. But the halls where hang the great paintings are now echoing to the tread of martial feet, her cloisters are vibrating with the strains of martial music, her streets are being trod with the feet of the French and English armies landed and crossing the border to protect her integrity, her green fields and fertile plains will be trampled into dust and where the flowers bloom in their crimson beauty the red blood of the soldiers will stain the grasses. Belgium will retain her independence, but the sacrifice will be greater than this brave little people should have borne, for she was entitled to retain her integrity without being overwhelmed by the rushing hordes of nations engaged in a conflict that has for itself no excuse except the glorification of kings and the aggrandizement of those in power.

QUEBEC'S ENTHUSIASM.

It is safe to say that in no part of the Empire has more enthusiasm been shown over the Declaration of War than in Quebec. This has been manifested over and over again within the last few days in a variety of ways. The anxiety of all our volunteer corps to serve the Empire either at home or abroad is only equalled by the enthusiasm of the non-militant portion of the population as illustrated by the nightly demonstrations of loyalty in our streets and public places. Even when England was at war with

the first Napoleon she had both the moral and the financial support of the entire population of Quebec. The Roman Catholic Bishop of Quebec and the Seminary, as well as the leading citizens, French as well as English, freely subscribed to assist the government in its struggle with France. No wonder that to-day, when, as in the case of the Crimean war, the French and English armies and navies are lined up together against common foes, there should be such unanimity and enthusiasm on every hand for the cause of country and Motherland. This loyalty and this enthusiasm are probably greater than were ever displayed here before. It could scarcely be otherwise when the unselfish reasons for which Britain has gone to war are taken into consideration, and when the proverbial gallantry of the two nations from which our population is drawn is taken into consideration, a gallantry which is particularly responsive to the claims of a struggle undertaken for the defence and protection of weak but plucky people, whose very lives and property as well as their national existence are threatened by unscrupulous and designing despots. Quebecers are doing themselves proud these days and the volunteers are to-day, as they deserve to be, the idols of the community. Private employers of labor, the railway companies, the Governments of the Dominion and of the Province, and all who, like them, are affording facilities to their employees to place their services at the disposal of the Empire are proving how well they know and appreciate the duties and the privileges of citizenship. It has been said that there are worse things than war, and though it may be difficult for those who have witnessed its horrors to agree with the statement, yet it may well be doubted if anything else than war could have fostered such a degree of loyalty and enthusiasm as is at present in evidence here. May it never grow less, even when the reasons for its public expression may have passed away.

—Quebec Chronicle.

THE TROUBLE FORETOLD.

The London Times of July 22, contains an article in which it foretold the present trouble if Austria-Hungary persisted in the high and mighty policy which it was then adopting towards Serbia. The Times said:

"It is not clear that Austria-Hungary, did she draw the sword, would localize the conflict if she could, and it is clear that the decision would not rest with her alone. That at once makes her action a matter of European concern. An expedition into Serbia, or even demands upon Serbia, which could be plausibly represented as made from political ambition, would create a Slav movement in Russia which might force the hand of the government, as Slav movements have done in the past. Slav sentiment is the one chord to which Russian feeling responds, and it is folly to pretend that this feeling would not be deeply stirred by an Austro-Hungarian attack upon the Orthodox Slav State which was not demonstrably free from dubious motives."

"If it be true that Austria-Hungary is determined to make this an occasion for the settlement of all questions affecting her in the Balkans, the risks of an explosion are immensely increased. The situation in Italy is only less critical than in the Dual Monarchy, and the pretence that the two allies see eye to eye in Albania and the Adriatic is daily condemned as fatuous by leading newspapers. The Austrians themselves assert that Roumania is arming, and now we have the report of negotiations with Bulgaria and Turkey. What chance is there in these circumstances of 'localizing' a war between German and Slav, between a Roman Catholic and an orthodox Power in the Balkans; what prospect that such a war would end without disaster to the Dual Monarchy? It is impossible that these reflections are not present to the mind of Francis Joseph. It is incredible that they will not confirm the determination, underlying his proclamations, to judge the outrage committed against him and his state with the justice and the moderation that are his own."

THE RAINBOW'S SPLENDID WORK.

The brilliant performance of the Rainbow in going to the relief of the British ships, Algerian and Sherwater, constitutes a page in the history of Canada's naval operations that for daring and skill may be pointed to with pardonable pride. It was known that two British sloops were down off the California Coast near San Francisco in great danger from two German cruisers much larger and more powerfully equipped. The Rainbow slipped away from Victoria without attracting notice from the sloops and conveyed them safely to Victoria. The enterprise was a hazardous one that some might even have thought too hazardous looking at the odds, but its success justifies the boldness of those responsible for it or of those executing it. That the sloops would have gone to feed the greed of the Germans or of the sea but for the Rainbow no one doubts.

Now the Pacific Coast rejoices in the protection that those ships will afford, while the achievement and return of the Rainbow and the two sloops relieves many on the coast and elsewhere of great anxiety and demonstrates

the great possibilities of service she may render if the opportunity arises.

When the details of this event come to be written with the display of cool courage, the patient, careful, sustaining watch for days, the realized peril constantly impending, the unhesitating rush into probable disaster and death the abounding delight of finding the objects of their quest, the nervous tension and strain of hope and fear during the whole venture, the narrow almost hair-breadth escapes from being compelled to engage in an unequal combat, the delirium of joy indulged by their anxiously waiting nearly distraught friends and other exciting experiences of the voyage, a most interesting chapter will be recorded in the history of Canada's naval operations. Every true Canadian will experience a thrill of new and hitherto unknown emotion in a realization of the event and will be delighted that our own Canadian boat, manned by our own citizens has so splendidly upheld the best traditions of British achievement, daring and seamanship.

It is of interest to remember that Sir Wilfrid Laurier some time ago declared that the ships of our navy would on the first occasion rush to the aid and relief of the Royal Navy, and this is precisely what has been done by the Rainbow in the Algerian and Sherwater rescue. We have every confidence that the Niobe will, when afforded the opportunity, give just as good an account of herself. We need not restrain our satisfaction and exaltation over the Rainbow's excellent work.

THE WAR CORRESPONDENT DISAPPEARS.

The day of the war correspondent is over. In the Balkan war the correspondent had a place in the field that was merely nominal. What he was not permitted to know, much less to send out to his newspaper, was exactly what he was there to discover and to cause to be published. The Balkan people have set the pace for the European nations in this regard.

Announcement is made from the British war office that no war correspondents will be allowed to accompany a British force. Some passes were issued but these have been recalled. It is announced at the same time that the French and Belgian army officials have taken like action. There will consequently be no war correspondents on the field of battle or within range of it.

This policy is quite in accord with the close censorship which was established at the opening of hostilities. The early cutting of the German cable and the seizure or taking over of every known wireless telegraphic plant has largely isolated Germany from getting news of the progress of her enemies' manoeuvres. This cannot fail to be of great strategic assistance in the development of the plans of the allies. Germany has already taken steps to preserve herself from the operations of foreign spies, but she has evidently been fully retaliated upon and her own famous spy system set at naught.

The public have confidence that the British war office censor will exercise the best possible judgment in dispensing news, but it must be remembered that the conditions are extraordinary and that no demand for news from the battlefield can be met at the risk of giving advantage to the enemy in a contest where the results are bound to be so far-reaching.

OVER-ZEAL.

A German who enquired for the German Consul at the police station was arrested as a prisoner of war, according to the press. There may be reason in this sort of action, but we don't see it.

There are a lot of Germans in this country, and they should be able to go about freely unless detected doing something more suspicious than enquiring for the German Consul at the police station. A secret service agent would not do that.

In Parliament on Wednesday, several speakers, including Sir Robert Borden and Sir Wilfrid Laurier, paid a touching tribute to the worth of Germans in Canada. It was said that they would not be men if they did not feel sympathy with their countrymen, a deeper sympathy than all of us feel for a great race whose only fault, in our opinion, is that it has permitted itself to be misled.

The Germans in Canada must be protected against over-zealous guardians of the law. They must be shown the difference between British and German methods of police administration. The fact that a man openly enquires for the German Consul is no more ground for suspicion than the fact that he is a German.

Tolerance and calmness in the treatment of Germans in Canada can be shown without relaxing vigilance and appear nowhere more becoming than in authoritative circles. It is the easiest thing in the world for the unpracticed to be over-zealous in this matter of rounding up alleged spies.

When the Austrian ambassador left England the London crowd which gathered sang his National Anthem. Exhibitions of tolerance like this proclaim the greatness of a nation. Canada must not fail to show them. There is nothing personal in international war, and on that rests

the hope of all rational pacifists. Patience is the highest tribute of statesmanship, and when the British public exhibits patience as it has in so many recent incidents, it evidences its right to a commanding position in the world's affairs. —Montreal Mail.

WHERE GERMANY RISKED AND LOST.

That England had no recourse but to insist upon the neutrality of Belgium being strictly observed is clearly shown in the treaty signed by France, Germany and England to prevent any of these three nations from passing the Belgian boundaries. The contract entered into was a solemn and binding one upon the signatory powers. The injustice to Belgium, aside altogether from the international aspect of using this little country as a battleground, is one of the outstanding brutalities of the great conflict. Belgium was in no way concerned. She desired merely to be left alone in pursuit of the arts of peace and Germany was apparently a willing party to Belgium's independence.

At the first suggestion of self-interest, however, Germany ruthlessly broke this contract. It was no matter of chance with her. She was not forced into Belgium. France was not threatening in any manner to break through the neutrality contract, nor was she likely to do so, as Germany well knew. But in order that she might gain an advantage over her French foe, against which she was prohibited by sacred treaty, Germany rushed into Belgium, and within four days from the declaration of war was engaged in storming the forts of Liege. Just how indefensible was this act is apparent in the fact that it has taken France two weeks to accomplish what Germany accomplished in four days in entering Belgium.

Germany's highly reprehensible act has cost her dearly, as she well deserved. It has brought upon her the contempt of the world. It has made of Belgium an antagonist ready to fight to the death. Worst of all, from the German standpoint, it has brought England into the fray. Had Germany's foresight been the equal of her hindsight it is safe to say that Germany would have kept out of Belgium. A more stupid and disastrous act in diplomacy it would be difficult to find. Confident in the belief that Belgium opened to her a clear way to the French capital, Germany threw honor to the winds and braved the danger of inviting war with England. Her act produced a result contrary to her expectations. Her advantage of having been ready to strike in apparent anticipation of the outbreak has been wholly lost. France, Russia and England have been able to mobilize, if not completely, at least nearly so, and through the forcing of England into the war Germany has been robbed of the force of her great navy. With this she could have operated against France and Russia with tremendous effect. Instead, her own overseas commerce has been destroyed and her navy has been compelled to accept the humiliating refuge to be found behind her land forts. The perfidy of Germany in tearing up the Belgian treaty and in dragging the little kingdom into Germany's ruthless war must ever remain as a foul blot upon the German escutcheon.

The Boston Transcript says that the American kids are so prejudiced that they won't even have the German measles.

Our thanks are due to the Rev. F. Woodger, St. Ola, and several other correspondents for additional copies of "The Church and the World."

AN APPEAL TO REASON.

[Note: Though practically all the war news allowed to come through tells of the German troops being repulsed, they seem to be steadily pressing forward.]

Censors who sit at the centre of knowledge, List to the plaint of the people outside. Vary the dope you emit from your college, Not that we think that you always have lied, Still we are weary of constant successes, Surfeited we with each German defeat. Tell us what's what, as the foe onward presses Isn't there ever a Franco defeat?

Dope that you've fed us since the war started, "Germans hurled back and their losses immense," Makes us suspect that from truth you've departed, Always to lick 'em don't seem common-sense.

So we implore though we try to believe you— Surfeited we with each victory sweet— Lull our suspicions that you would deceive. You

Tell us for once of a Belgian defeat. While we are willing to finally baffle Hordes of the Kaiser's turned loose in the strife.

We do not expect off-hand victory to snaffle, Fact is we look for the fight of our life. De not accuse us, we beg you, of treason, This is our view-point, we calmly repeat, "Foe presses onward." There must be a reason,

Do not our allies e'er meet with defeat? —Toronto Daily Star.

THE BATTLE OF DIEST.

Twelve Hundred Germans Fell to Victorious Belgians.

Across the battlefield of Diest there is a brown stretch of narrow ground a half furlong in length. It is the grave of 1,200 Germans who fell in the first fight on Wednesday. All over the field there are other graves, some Germans, some Belgians, some horses. When I reached the place this afternoon peasants with long mattocks and spades were turning the soil, says F. J. Phillips, correspondent of The London Daily News. For two full days they had been at the work of burial, and they were sick at heart. Their corn is ripe for cutting in the battlefield, but little of it can be harvested. Dark paths in their turn are made as they wade with the blood of men and horses.

The battleground should be called Haelen rather than Diest, for it was in and through and behind the little village of Haelen that the deadly test of strength took place, the result being already stated. The Germans lost three-fifths of their force of 5,000 men. Two thousand were killed, 800 wounded and 300 taken prisoners. So far as the numbers go the fight was small compared with the enormous armies in the field, but there is ample evidence that it was fierce, out of all proportion to its size. The battleground is roughly three miles long. Near one end is the village of Haelen, which was held Tuesday morning by Belgian troops. On Tuesday afternoon it was attacked by a large body of Uhlans, artillery and infantry, and entered late in the evening.

It would be easy now at the beginning of the war to write of its tragedy. The villagers have each a tale to tell of loss. All the twelve hundred men in the long grave were men with wives, sweethearts and parents. All the Belgian soldiers and others are buried where they fell and have mourners, a letter which I picked up on the field and an endeavoring to have it identified and sent to her whom it was intended will speak for all. It is written in ink on a half sheet of note paper. There is no date, no place and probably was written on the eve of battle in the hope it would reach its destination if the writer died. This is the translation:

"Sweetheart (where am I). Fate in this present war has treated us more cruelly than many others. If I have not lived to create for you the happiness of which both our hearts dream, remember my sole wish is now that you should be happy. Forget me. Create for yourself some happy home that may restore to you some of the greater pleasures of life. For myself I shall have died happy in the thought of your love. My last thought has been for you and those I leave at home. Accept this last kiss from him who loved you.

The signature, I think, is "Bontienne," and on the back is a postscript that his photographs should cause her unhappiness she should return them to his parents.

WHAT G. B. SHAW THINKS.

Author Says Blow at Potsdam Is Blow For Labor.

Germany is so important a factor in the world's civilization that even when at war with her, we must aim finally at the conservation of her power to defend her Russian frontier. This need not discourage us in the field. On the contrary, we shall punch Prussia's head all the more gloriously, if we do it for honor and not for malice. Then when we have knocked all the militarism out of her and taught her to respect us we can let her up again.

As to non-intervention, it is merely an insular superstition. The leaders of the modern labor movement know that labor politics is international, and that if militarism is to be struck down a mortal blow must be aimed at Potsdam.

Consider for a moment the mischief already done by this peace re-entrenchment reform superstition. Why dare to tell the Commons we had entered into a fighting alliance with France and Germany?

Solely because they were afraid that if they told the whole truth both the Labor members and the non-interventionists, as well as the anti-arms Liberals, would have revolted and have abandoned the Premier and Cabinet to the mercy of Ulster.

The mischief of all this was that it encouraged the continental conviction that we would not fight. This conviction, true enough, might have restrained France from declaring war, but this is just what France did not want. On the other hand, its effect on Germany must have been disastrous. Germany was the country that needed restraining, and the official preparation by which the Liberal party was duped encouraged Germany to believe we would back out in the end and thereby precipitated Germany's desperate rush at France.

Had the Government possessed a real modern foreign policy, Asquith might have said furiously to Prussian militarism: "If you attempt to smash France, we two will smash you. We have had enough of the Germany of Bismarck, which all the world loathes, and we will see whether we cannot revive the Germany of Goethe and Beethoven, which has not an enemy on earth."

Can it be doubted that, if this had been said resolutely, and with the vigorous support of all sections of the House, Potsdam would have been thought twice before declaring war? Can it be alleged that anything could have happened worse than has happened?

Instead of offering Germany a way out, we drove her to desperation.

Their Majesties Set Example. The King and Queen of England have ordered that their chefs shall serve only the simplest foods on the royal table.