



Shortening Our National Lines

SPRING is fumbling at the door. It is time we had some definite practical propaganda for the summer. A lot of wise people have been talking about the necessity for increasing production. Equally wise people have been telling us that we ought to consecrate ourselves on the altar of more munitions. And those who belabor the drums of obvious patriotism continue to remind us that our prime duty is to send still more men to the trenches. Now, what is the plain truth of the whole matter? Obviously that we can't do all these things equally well. What we must consider doing with the greatest good to the greatest number depends upon what best use we can make of what we have at our disposal. We will assume that we have pretty well manned and womaned the munition factories. We will even claim that it was not necessary to put up half a billion munition orders in one year as a national goal any more than it was a necessarily inspired statement of the Premier that we should raise half a million soldiers for a Canadian army. But it was necessary, and still is now more than ever, to co-ordinate everything we have in order to make ourselves of the greatest possible use in the world's work. None of the belligerent countries has the enormous wealth of the raw material that exists in Canada, most of it useful for winning the war, saving the country and helping the world at large. None but the smallest of them has such a small population. No country in the world has so few people scattered over such an area. Canada is in the position of an army that has enormously extended its lines. In our boom era we flung ourselves prodigally over half a continent; seven millions of people to hold in productive energy a territory as large as the United States with thirteen times the population. The war came before we had even got our trenches all dug. To shorten our lines all over the country means to surrender territory.

We can't possibly do the country's best work in this war by trying to do all things equally well. But we must make the best use of all that we have. If we are to produce more of the world's food, in heaven's name let us organize ourselves immediately for that purpose. Let it not be said of us that in 1917 we fell below 1916, or much below 1915 in producing what the world most needs. Above all, let it not be said that we bit off more than we could nationally chew. We have now a merely hysterical system of recruiting. Let us abandon it. Let us know what the national service cards have to say. Let us find out what our real national service amounts to. If this Government as at present constituted does not know that let the Government add unto itself with the consent of the people any and all such men and machinery as will enable it so to do. And let the farmers of this country face 1917 with a reasonable assurance that they will be able to do all that 1917 calls them to do. Let the towns and cities where a percentage of people may be working at half or low pressure give up some of their people at needed intervals for the purpose of increasing production and holding the country's lines.

Women in Democracy

WE have been asked what is our opinion on woman suffrage. There are people who still seem to consider this particular problem of pressing importance at a time when most crusades of that sort are being jolted into new perspectives by a world tumult. Woman suffrage is only a phase of social regeneration. It is one of those things which if taken by itself will never be solved to the satisfaction of the world. We believe in democracy. The people ought to rule. But by what instruments they are best able to rule is the eternal question. Since man seems to have made such a relative failure at keeping the world in order, it seems to the suffrage evangelists that it is more than ever time for women to take a hand.

That, however, is not a problem for Canada or England or any particular country alone. It is of world-wide scope. The women of the British Empire, even if they all had the vote, could not prevent war. And if the women of one country prevented war while the women of another one let the war lords rampage over the earth at their own sweet will, we should soon be in a position of perilous democracy. We are willing to admit that of all countries in the world Germany has made the worst mess of government, diplomacy and world reputation. And Germany has kept womankind in a state of subdued inferiority recognized by the State. The women of Germany are the kitchenettes of the war lords and of the army. They may not resent this. It is time they did. We may not care to see the women of Germany elevated to the sentimental apex represented by the fair figure on the cover of this issue. That would be quite another story. But even in womanizing United States there is congressional resentment over the fact that next session there will be a woman congressman who must be referred to as the gentleman from—I think it is Nevada.

In our own country the West seems to have made most progress in what is called the liberation of women. The West will soon have women in all its legislatures. In the East the man hangs on to his sole prerogative. In all probability the East will have to follow the West in this matter. Women are not easily balked. If they want the ballot along with seats in Parliaments, and want it bad enough and long enough and for good enough reasons, then by all means let them have it. Heaven knows we have enough worthless male electors in our scheme of manhood suffrage. If we could weed out these incapables and substitute for them a limited number of women franchisers we should be the better off. But to fling wide the gates and give all women of discreet age the vote along with seats in Parliament would, to our way of thinking, be a bad blow at what we call democracy.

Vale Potato!

MANKIND in North America seems about to say a temporary farewell to the potato. Only in Germany, and so far as Canada is concerned, in the Maritime Provinces, has the potato now an economic status. Ireland may decline to go on raising potatoes for a United Kingdom which will not give the potato home rule. England will increase her production of the great tuber imported by Walter Raleigh along with tobacco from somewhere in the southern seas. Canada is not likely to get much relief from the potato paucity unless we have a good moist summer in 1917. We continue to let Maritime potatoes slide away down to the Bahamas and such places instead of sending them over our transcontinental railways to points west. The West is not strong on potato culture, though it can grow good potatoes and should produce enormous quantities in those black soils of northern Alberta and Saskatchewan.

But whatever we intend to do in potato culture in 1917, for the present and at least until the farmers' pits are open, we are turning our backs on the potato. We are told to turn our faces towards rice. This is a act of temperamental violence. We dearly love the potato. Boiled, mashed, baked, French fried, hash brown, creamed, scalloped or in shepherd's pie—we have raised the tuber of the manifold eyes to the position of a domestic tyrant. Scarcely any meal has been immune from this genial carbonaceous intruder. We have even welcomed it when it was heavy as lead, soggy and sad and scabby. Domestic art, along with a promiscuous use of various sorts of grease in the form of fryings, gravies or butter, has invested the potato with a glamour that it never possessed in the days of Raleigh. We have even known people to eat raw potatoes. We have made the spud do team work with the corn-cob on oil-cans. We have paid a dollar a peck for seed

potatoes in the spring in a summer when we got back the price of the seed after all the hoeings and hosiings and buggings. Even that did not destroy our ultimate faith in the potato. All that was left was to make it into a negligible luxury along with grape fruit, oranges and apples. A bad summer along with worse freight conditions on the railways has done this. Sadly we relinquish the potato, without so much as an Irish tear; stoically we turn to the farinaceous rice, emblem of productivity. In so doing we are conscious of a great emotional wrench. But since the war began we have grown accustomed to violent revulsions. Even the valedictory to the potato can be endured.

The Unterseaboote Maniacs

WHEN the gang of underwater maniacs on the U 3 sank 30,000 tons of inoffensive and non-contraband Dutch shipping off Falmouth last week, the world that comes to a climax around Washington must have been a bit startled. The torpedoes and the bombs that sank these seven harmless Dutch vessels and cargoes to the bottom must have echoed in the "whispering gallery" on Capitol Hill. But, of course, the vessels were only Dutch and the cargoes intended to keep Dutch people alive. And, of course, the Germans merely uncorked their bottle of crocodile tears for the occasion, and admitted it was all a blunder, all the while the Hindenburg-Tirpitz crowd chuckled that in one swoop Germany had at last got her bag of 30,000 tons at the promised rate of a million a month.

However, President Wilson has metaphysically determined to let American ships go into the barred zones if they want to carrying American cargoes for any port whatsoever, and manned by American crews. Why should American cargoes and American seamen be exempt from destruction? Suppose the cargoes are foodstuffs or munitions intended to support the Allies and to kill Germans. Has Germany the right to sink such vessels? Undoubtedly. Just as much right as England has to blockade Germany. The point comes in not killing Americans. And that all comes from the character of submarine warfare. Under the old system of sea warfare no unarmed merchantman was sunk without warning. Only enemy battleships were sunk. Merchantmen were captured as prizes of war and convoyed away to port, to be disposed of in a prize court at the end of the war. It was not counted good warfare to sink a non-combatant ship if it could be saved. International agreement saved the ships and, of course, merely interned passengers and crews if such ships were shown to be destined for enemy ports. Submarines, however, cannot capture and convoy. They can only destroy. They can, but do not choose, to visit and seach, in order to discover whether the cargoes are legal contraband of war. And a submarine has no facility for carrying captured crews. The world has not yet adapted itself to the genius of unrestricted submarine warfare. And the best part of the world does not propose to do so. Unrestricted submarine warfare means unlimited destruction of both lives and property among non-combatants. It is considered as much a hostile act as an invasion. Until the nations constitute it good international law to practise unlimited destruction on the sea the world will place a limit on submarine warfare. But then, of course, it's positively outrageous that Germany should be limited in anything.

A Matter of Appeal

MONTREAL'S success in raising over four million dollars for the Canadian Patriotic Fund outshines Toronto's recent achievement, and is a fitting rejoinder to any who may have been inclined to suppose Toronto was the only really patriotic city in the Dominion. Patriotism and generosity are not the monopolies of any one part of this country, nor of any one class of people, once the appeal has been properly made.