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Semi-Weekly Telegraph and The News

ST. JOHN, N. B., MARCH 6, 1915.

THE FARMERS AND THE TARIFF.

Mr. E. C. Drury, President of the United Farmers of Ontario, at the annual convention of that body last week, devoted some attention to the position of agriculture and the new tariff. He objected particularly to new tariff taxes of a character which will not produce revenue though they will add to the burdens of the consumer. In other words, Mr. Drury takes the ground which many Liberal critics of the new tariff have taken, that in many instances the effect of the tariff increase will be merely to add to the price of the articles without bringing any money to the public treasury. Such taxation is a gift to the manufacturer, pure and simple.

"We are told to produce more," said Mr. Drury. "Personally, I cannot see how we can accomplish this. Lack of labor and lack of capital stand in the way. What can the nation do? Just this: Let it not give artificial aid, but remove artificial restrictions. The farmers stand ready to produce more, but we must be set free. There is no other industry in this country that could exist for six months under the restrictions agriculture has faced for thirty years. What we need is, not to be told our business, but just a little economic justice. The remedy is simply to disburden us.

"The recent tariff change has been a decided mistake from a national standpoint," Mr. Drury continued. Explaining that he thoroughly commended the direct taxation feature of the fiscal policy, the speaker took decided objection to those features which would not raise revenues but would merely add to the burdens of protection. A further dose of the old medicine, he said, would not help the situation.

The farmer, Mr. Drury said, was now unable to pay the wages being set upon farm labor. He urged more definite and practical co-operation, with the cutting-out of the useless middlemen. The useful middleman, such as the local storekeeper, had a very necessary part to play, and such as he did not come in the "useless" class. "I look forward to the day," said the speaker, "when we will have in every city distributing points to distribute direct and at no more than cost our farm products to the ultimate consumers."

This address, the Toronto Globe reports, was concluded "amid salvos of cheering." The farmers of Ontario, apparently, are very well able to distinguish between taxation for the necessary purposes of revenue and taxation for protectionist ends. Those Conservative orators and newspapers who are appealing to the people to accept the new tariff on patriotic grounds have not succeeded in deceiving anyone.

From many quarters, Conservative as well as Liberal, the new tariff has drawn a heavy fire of criticism. The Conservative Ottawa Citizen has this to say on the subject:

"The new Dominion customs tax would seem to be aimed to strike a destructive blow at the British clothing and woolen industry. This important branch of British overseas trade will now be taxed at the rate formerly prevailing against Germany, when Germany had a clothing trade with Canada.

"Before this year's budget the Dominion tariff against imported clothing from Britain stood at 30 per cent.—high enough for any Nationalist. The tax on imported German woolen goods used to be 35 per cent. Now the British navy has put an end to the German overseas trade, and the Dominion government has imposed the 35 per cent. rate against Britain, which ought to strangle the trade from that source.

"While the Motherland is holding the front against the Huns, spending the manhood of the nation and the wealth of the workers to keep them penned in on European soil, Canada is increasing its tariff barrier against the Motherland; the tariff formerly applied against Germany is now to be concentrated against Britain."

Just so. The "interests" did not back Mr. Borden in 1911 for nothing.

MR. GOULD'S NEW RAILROAD.

There was a hearing at Augusta on Tuesday on the proposal of Mr. A. R. Gould that the County of Aroostook shall guarantee the interest on $4,000,000 worth of bonds for fifty years for the purpose of assisting a railroad which he proposes to build across Maine to the Quebec bridge. An Aroostook business man, writing to the Bangor Commercial, in opposition to Mr. Gould's proposal, suggests that "this is a scheme upon the part of certain Canadian railways, who are accustomed to receiving large government subsidies in their own country, together with certain local promotors, to have Aroostook County make them a gift of a short line across the State of Maine, which they can connect with the St. John Valley Railway now under construction just over the border in New Brunswick, and thus obtain a new, better and cheaper (because it will be paid for by the county) railway to St. John (N. B.), and other New Brunswick points."

In the House of Commons two weeks ago, when the Valley Railway was under discussion, Hon. Mr. Cochrane said he was unable to say just at what point a connection would be made between the Valley Railway and the Transcontinental. New Brunswick people are more interested in that connection than they are in Mr. Gould's plan for a railway which presumably would run from the Valley Railway in the neighborhood of River de Chute across Maine to the Quebec bridge, although such a road would evidently be a valuable one for Northern Maine traffic, in or out. The uncertainty about the extension of the Valley Railway from Centreville to Grand Falls, and from Gagetown to St. John, ought to be cleared up. The local government used to say that the Gagetown-St. John division would be completed before the end of the present year, but it is obvious that it will take more than two years to complete the bridges alone. Until the Valley Railway has a connection with the Transcontinental and is carried through to St. John, the whole state of the project must be most unsatisfactory. At the present time there is no indication of any particular activity either with respect to the Grand Falls connection or the St. John division. Before the New Brunswick Legislature met last year the public was promised complete information and the pushing forward of construction all along the line. The Legislature is about to meet again, and the public is still waiting for a great deal of information which it should have had more than a year ago.

DR. PUGSLEY ON THE BUDGET.

Even the Standard's awful threat to bring on the elections at once if Hon. William Pugsley did not cease to criticize the protectionist budget of the government has not reduced the former Minister of Public Works to silence or dulled the cutting edge of his speech.

Resuming the budget debate yesterday afternoon Dr. Pugsley made one of the most effective criticisms of the new taxation yet heard in the House. Four years ago, when Sir Wilfrid Laurier was in power and Canada's revenue was buoyant, the government spent about $90,000,000. Dr. Pugsley suggested yesterday that if the present government were reasonable it could very well get along with $10,000,000 more than was necessary four years ago. Yet, he said, this government swells the estimates by including many millions of revotes, repeating vast appropriations which the ministry did not put into public works last year before the war was begun. If the government found no urgency then, where is the urgency now?

Mr. White has shown no reason at all for including these revotes in the 1915 estimates. The reason is known, however. Big estimates and a big deficit are to be used as excuses for boosting the tariff. Dr. Pugsley examined the nature of the new tariff taxes, which are not for war purposes but for purposes of protection. Mr. White imposes higher duties upon cottons, woolens and linens, but not upon silks, velvets and ribbons. He strongly objected to higher duties on British imports as un-Canadian, un-British, and un-Imperialistic.

And now, will the Standard bring on the elections? That journal of excitement threatened to do so unless the Liberals, and particularly Hon. William Pugsley, laid no hand upon the government except in kindness. As Dr. Pugsley struck out from the shoulder we must expect notice of the elections forthwith, unless, perchance, the Conservatives are reluctant to consult the electors on the subject of the new tariff. The country knows, of course, that the "interests" are getting their pay now for the aid they gave Mr. Borden and his associates in the campaign of 1911, and the country knows that the consumer is paying the bill. The country knows that the tariff boost is not due to the war but to the triumph of that wing of the Conservative party which has been demanding a tariff "as high as Haman's gallows." Dr. Pugsley has told the truth bluntly about the new tariff, and rubbed it in. What is the government going to do about it?

CIVIC TAXATION.

A valuable educational meeting on civic taxation was that in the Seamen's Institute Tuesday when a large number of fairly representative citizens assembled to hear and to question Mr. J. Hamilton Ferns, chief assessment commissioner of the city of Montreal. Mr. Ferns did not come here to propose that we adopt the Montreal system, or to present that system as perfect. He came here to explain that system at the request of people professedly dissatisfied with the St. John system and eager for improvement. He explained the Montreal system clearly and patiently, finding simplicity its chief virtue, expressed his admiration for St. John, recognition of its fine strategic situation, and great faith in its future, and advised us as Canadians to "get together" in taxation matters and agree upon a more modern, more simple and more equitable plan than the one which has created so much dissatisfaction. And we may do it. There are pressing reasons why we should.

Montreal, Mr. Ferns explained, does not tax income or personal property. It taxes real estate; it taxes rental values; and it has a special tax in the form of licenses. There is, also, a water tax. Unless a man has a business or occupies a house he has no vote in civic matters. The man who pays a house rent of, say, $200 a year pays a water tax of $8, but no other taxes. Real estate pays the bulk of Montreal's taxation, and is the basis of the system. People living outside Montreal but earning their living in the city pay no taxes in Montreal unless they occupy premises there. There is no "head tax" on laborers or others seeking employment in the city as there is in St. John. The stocks of merchants and manufacturers are not taxed. The personal property of residents is not taxed. These two latter facts, Mr. Ferns suggests, make Montreal attractive to two classes which the St. John system repels, just as Montreal welcomes incoming labor which St. John hastens to punish by a fine. Mr. Ferns did not institute these comparisons. They were suggested by several questioners, and no doubt sprang up in the minds of most of those present.

Mr. Ferns comes to St. John at a good time. The ground is ready for taxation reform. In order to go at the thing right it will be necessary to kill off several taxation proposals now afoot, which, if carried out, would make the present bad system worse. Vote-seeking changes in the present system, designed to create class feeling for political purposes, are vicious and dangerous. The way to reform lies in the careful examination of the Montreal system, and of others, and the preparation of a new system to replace our present one in its entirety. If the income tax is to go, the personal property tax must go with it; yet the new system must tax, directly or indirectly all who live in the city. Montreal has little leasehold property. St. John has much. This leasehold system is continually held up as an insuperable obstacle to tax reform. It is nothing of the sort. It is easily possible to do justice both to the landowner and to the holder of the lease. A proper tribunal must see to it that each of them pays his right proportion of the taxes which should fall upon the property because of its present value. Committees should get to work on the material presented last evening, collect more from other sources, and set on foot a real campaign for taxation reform. If this is done the Legislature should easily be convinced of the wisdom of rejecting taxation amendments which are to be presented to it in the near future, including not only civic amendments but also the bill relating to the county valuators. There is no time to lose.

WAR COMMENT.

"It is not the time to talk of peace," says the Prime Minister of Great Britain in announcing the decision of the Allies to shut off supplies from Germany. "Those who talk of peace now, however excellent their intentions, are victims of grievous self-delusion. It will be time to talk of peace when the great purposes of the Allies are in sight of accomplishment." He reminds the Empire that the gravity of the task before the Allies increases each month, and that the call for men has never been more urgent than it is today.

The neutral part of the world is disposed to accept calmly enough the announcement of the Allies that the blockade of Germany is to be enforced with greatly increased vigor. It is well that it is so, for the work is one of necessity, and the Allies will set about it with iron determination, exercising such care and prudence as they can with respect to neutral interests, but constantly mindful of the fact that the first duty is to reduce Germany to helplessness.

From the beginning of the war the official statements of the British government, coming from the Prime Minister, or the Foreign Secretary, or other members of the cabinet, have been marked by high qualities in point of dignity, impressiveness and good faith. The world has been quick to realize that these statements, made in a great crisis, represented the fixed determination of a mighty Empire the whole force of whose manhood stands ready to make it good. When Mr. Asquith speaks of the task before the Allies as one of constantly increasing gravity, his meaning is not that the Allies are any less confident today than they were when the war was a month old. On the contrary, he says with obvious conviction that Great Britain, France and Russia have never been so confident as now of their ultimate success. But it is true that the conflict is one of increasing gravity, because the time is now at hand when the great resources of the Allies can be brought to bear. The blockade of Germany's supplies is but one feature of the campaign. It is to be accompanied by attacks in force upon both of Germany's fronts when the weather permits the opening of the spring campaign, a campaign which should find the Allies at the height of their fighting efficiency.

As Mr. Asquith says, this is no time to talk of peace. The time to talk of peace will be when Germany asks for peace, and when "the great purposes of the Allies are in sight of accomplishment." That time will not come until Germany has been driven from France and Belgium, and forced back until the weight of the fighting, east and west, falls upon its own territory and its own people. Whether that time will come during or at the end of the coming summer, before the next snowfall, or not until another winter has passed, is as yet only a matter for speculation. We shall have more light upon it before midsummer, or perhaps earlier, for by that time Germany will have felt for the first time in this war of its seeking the full shock of battle in every quarter.

LLOYD GEORGE'S WARNING.

A more complete report of Lloyd George's speech in Wales on Sunday last, now at hand, shows that the Chancellor of the Exchequer spoke more plainly regarding the evil of drink in war time than the cabled summary of his speech indicates. Here are a few impressive passages:

"This war is not going to be fought mainly on the battle fields of Belgium and Poland. It is going to be fought in the workshops of France and Great Britain and must be fought there under war conditions. Our enemies realize that the employers and workmen in Germany are straining to the utmost. France also realizes this and with a Socialist Prime Minister, a Socialist Secretary of War and a Socialist Minister of Marine, the employers and workmen are subordinating everything for the protection of their beautiful land.

"I have something more to say and it is unpleasant. Most of our workmen are putting every ounce of their strength into this urgent work loyally and patriotically, but there are some who shirk their duty. Some workmen in the armament works refuse to work a full week's work for the nation's need. They are in the minority. The vast majority belong to the class that we can depend on, but a small minority of workmen can throw whole works out of gear by reason sometimes of one thing and sometimes of another. But to be perfectly candid it is mostly the lure of drink. They refuse to work full time and when they return their strength and efficiency are impaired through the way they have spent their leisure.

"Drink is doing us more damage than all the German submarines put together. Russia has stopped drink. M. Bark, the Russian Minister of Finance, with whom I conferred in Paris, told me that the output of Russian workmen had increased from thirty to fifty per cent. since the sale of vodka had been prohibited. He admitted that he had lost £56,000,000 ($280,000,000) in yearly revenue, which he certainly could not afford, but he added that if it was proposed to revert to the old conditions there would be a revolution in Russia. The stoppage of the sale of drink in Russia had been due entirely to the Czar, and it was one of the most heroic things of the war.

"France abolished the sale of absinthe by a ten to one majority in a single afternoon. This shows how these great countries are facing their responsibilities."

"We propose nothing so drastic, but we are armed with full powers for the defence of the realm. We have great powers to deal with drink and we mean to use them. We shall use them in a spirit of modification and wisely, but quite fearlessly, and no doubt the country will support our action."

He warned the people of the United Kingdom that they were not treating the war seriously enough. They would win, but they did not yet realize what the price of victory would be. These are grave words by a great leader, spoken to a people who already have three millions of soldiers on the firing line or in training. They give reason for deep thinking. Are we in Canada yet taking the war seriously enough? Who believes that, as a people, we are?

THE PORTS.

Montreal's lead over New York in grain export for 1914 is a long one, though New York is an all-year port and Montreal is closed for five months. The figures for 1914 are:

Montreal	75,085,482
New York	64,582,190
Baltimore	45,000,000
Galveston	35,821,506
New Orleans	34,624,000
Philadelphia	23,294,252
Boston	16,555,140
Portland	9,500,000
St. John (N. B.)	6,269,000
Newport News	2,826,620

The tonnage of the vessels visiting Montreal increased from two millions to nine millions in the last twenty years. In that period the receipts of the port rose from $275,000 to $1,466,000.

Some $25,000,000 has been spent in developing the harbor of Montreal and its equipment. London has spent $200,000,000 in improving and modernizing her harbor equipment; Liverpool has expended $155,000,000; Hamburg, the great German port, $115,000,000. Other large expenditures are: Manchester, $100,000,000; Newcastle, $90,000,000; Antwerp, $60,000,000; Glasgow, $80,000,000; Rotterdam, $50,000,000; Bristol, $40,000,000; Marseilles, $40,000,000; Havre, $30,000,000; Southampton, $30,000,000; Genoa, $25,000,000.

There is a word of counsel for St. John in the annual report of President Ross of the Montreal Harbor Commission. He shows (says the Journal of Commerce) "that the ports which are doing the largest business throughout the world and doing it the most efficiently, are those that have kept their facilities ahead of actual requirements, and, conversely, the ports that have remained stationary, or have fallen behind, are those whose authorities have had neither the imagination nor the enterprise to plan for the future. He also shows that the expansion of Canadian trade, especially in the past few years, makes it imperative that the sea terminals shall be further vigorously developed if Canadian business is to be handled by Canadians; otherwise our trade will go by routes over which we have no control. He also points out that the development of great national ports stimulates the trade and commerce of the whole nation. A port that has been adequately developed and equipped not only gives a tremendous impetus to the manufacturers and commerce of the whole of its tributary territory and builds up its population, but is an impetus to the whole country."

MILITARY TRAINING.

The system of compulsory military training adopted in 1911 in Australia and New Zealand does not give the men of those countries very much real military training, but the State always knows how many men it has who have had at least some preliminary training, and who are physically fit for active service.

At the age of twelve every boy is registered with the militia authorities, failure to so register being punishable by a fine of $50. Boys, beginning at the age of twelve, receive a certain amount of training as junior cadets. This training, in physical exercises and elementary drill, amounts only to ninety hours' instruction each year. This is done during school hours, by school teachers who have received special instructions from the Commonwealth authorities. At the age of fourteen the boy becomes a senior cadet, and then passes for the first time under military control. From the age of fourteen to eighteen he is required each year to attend drill as follows: Four whole-day drills, of not less than four hours each, twelve half-day drills, of not less than two hours each, and fourteen night drills of not less than one hour each. At the age of eighteen he becomes a member of the Citizen Force, in which he remains for seven years. In this Citizen Force he has a drill of sixteen days each year, of which eight days together must be spent in camp. In the case of the naval branch, the artillery, the engineers, or any other technical corps, the men of the Citizen Force spend seventeen days in camp in addition to eight days' home training. These men receive three shillings a day during the training period for the first year, and four shillings a day for each training day in the subsequent years.

Australia has about half a million boys and young men between the ages of fourteen and twenty-five who are liable for military service in one grade or another; many are excused on medical grounds, and exemption is permitted for those who live more than a certain distance from a training centre. A writer in the United Empire Magazine estimates that under this system, which came into force in Australia at the beginning of 1911, the Commonwealth will have in a few years a total force of 118,000 men with from four to eleven years training. The New Zealand force will bring the total up to 150,000.

The South African system is somewhat different from both the Australian and the Canadian. In South Africa all male citizens are registered for military service so soon as they come of age, but service is not compulsory. From the registration figures the State learns how many men are available in case of need, and if the number of volunteers for military training is not great enough to make up a proper militia force, the State reserves the right to choose by lot as many more men as may be necessary from the list of those registered who have not volunteered. Volunteering in South Africa thus far has been very satisfactory; the Union had men enough to cope with the rebellion and to carry on the campaign against German Southwest Africa without resorting to any form of compulsion.

The Canadian militia system, like that of Great Britain, is wholly voluntary. On paper the Canadian militia force has a strength of 3,850 officers and 44,500 men, but it is generally considerably below this number. The cavalry, artillery, and army service corps, have sixteen days training a year, and the other arms twelve days. Considering that only Canadians of more than sixteen years are given a militia training, and that a great number of new men receive some training each year, it seems probable that the number of men in each thousand in Canada who have had some military training would be quite as large as in Australia under the compulsory system. The weakness in both systems appears to be that neither gives sufficient real training, say in three years, to fit the recruit for active service. In Canada, of course, all citizens from sixteen to sixty can be called into military service at any time the government thinks it necessary. The present war may lead to a very considerable change in military conditions in every part of the Empire. The South African system appears to be one of much promise, and it is capable of useful extension when necessary.

TWO VIEWS OF IT.

Capital is proverbially timid. In a recent stock market letter issued by Hayden, Stone & Co., Boston, that firm discusses the effect of Germany's recent war zone proclamation upon the stock market and American business generally. For a day or two, this firm says, it was feared that American people, against their will, would be dragged into the war. But now, it seems, the danger of being dragged in has passed, for reasons which Hayden, Stone & Co. set forth in this pacific fashion:

"As day after day has gone by without disaster, people have begun to get their nerve back. In the first place, a week has now passed without any American vessels being intentionally destroyed by German submarines. If another week goes by without loss caused by intentional attack, it will begin to seem as though American ships would, after all, be immune.

"Secondly, a calmer view is daily being taken of the mishaps that may befall American vessels through coming in contact with mines. If a citizen of this country chooses to send a vessel through mine-strewn fields and if he can find a crew to man her, then the owner and crew take their risk with their eyes open and if their vessel is lost it is a matter to be settled, for the time being, with the insurance underwriters and after the war is over, with the responsible nation, but we think that public sentiment will be overwhelmingly against taking any serious steps because a merchant has lost in a risky venture."

The broker's view is, in other words: the loser pays and that is all there is to it.

Meantime Colonel Theodore Roosevelt and some other militants are raising in New York State a volunteer command called the American Legion, a movement which is expected to spread through other states, and which is designed to enlist in a sort of loosely-knit volunteer organization men between the age of eighteen and fifty-five who are physically fit and who have some natural aptitude for war under modern conditions. It is proposed at the present time that these volunteers shall be wholly self sustaining, but we may expect later on, if the movement commands public support, that the government will be pressed for grants to cover at least a portion of their expenses. The idea is that they shall be given target practice with high-power rifles, taught to march, and generally hardened up and made fit for active service. The promoters of this movement represent a current of opinion the very reverse of that expressed by the Boston brokerage house quoted. Mr. Roosevelt and his associates are loud in their expression of hope that the United States may not become involved in the war, but they find themselves compelled, albeit reluctantly, to acknowledge that American participation may come, and they are urging the active men of the nation to prepare accordingly. The movement is well worth watching.

"UNTIL THE MOMENT COMES."

"We shall not relax our efforts until we have achieved all our aims. To achieve them we must draw on our resources, both material and spiritual. The appeal on the material side is before the House. The appeal on the spiritual side is to the ancient and inbred qualities of our race which have never failed us in times of stress—namely, self-mastery, self-sacrifice, patience, tenacity, willingness to bear one another's burdens, the unity which springs from a dominating sense of a common duty, never-failing faith and an inflexible resolve."

"There is much to encourage and stimulate us in what I see in the heroism of Belgium and Serbia, in the undaunted tenacity with which our Allies hold their far-flung lines UNTIL THE MOMENT COMES FOR AN IRRESISTIBLE AND DECISIVE ADVANCE."—From the speech of the Rt. Hon. H. H. Asquith, Prime Minister.

NOTE AND COMMENT.

When those two protectionists, Mr. W. F. Cockshutt and Sir J. A. M. Aikins locked horns in the House of Commons yesterday the country got some inside information. It was a highly diverting and instructive encounter.

* * *

The Standard is in difficulties. It kills Dr. Pugsley every day, but he refuses to stay dead. It is almost as discouraging as the sale of some shares of Standard stock at $1 a share the other day in Fredericton.

* * *

The New York Sun says that while the Allied fleet still has much work to do in the Dardanelles, the fall of Constantinople is now definitely foreshadowed. The taking of Constantinople, it says, would mean that the Turkish campaign against Egypt would be a failure, and that the Turks would no longer be seriously considered as allies of Germany. If necessary, it says, the way would be open for the transportation of a great army of Russians to Marseilles, for employment in the western campaign. It is unlikely, however, that any such army will be brought to the western theatre. If the Russians succeed in invading Germany and Austria, the French and British will be quite able to do the work on the western front. As a matter of fact, they will do it anyway.

* * *

Mr. Norman Hapgood, editor of Harper's Weekly, speaking in Montreal a few days ago, said it was singular that the United States seemed to be more certain of the victory of the Allies than the people of England. The best sentiment of the United States was in favor of the Allies. Even the German-Americans were less "one sided than we imagined." "There is no doubt whatever that if the United States should get into trouble with the Germans," the speaker said, "the race would be a unit. It is hard to find an American who does not feel intensely on the side of the Allies. (Cheers.) The solidity with which the United States stands behind the Allies is based on two things." The speaker lauded the presentation of the British case by Sir Edward Grey; then came the invasion of Belgium and from these the United States, he said, formed its judgment.

* * *

"Leading British papers are beginning to point out that the hunger war conducted by German submarines is a failure," says the Toronto Globe. "Since the 18th eight British merchant ships, five Norwegian, three from the United States, one French, and one Swedish have been sunk within the war zone. Of the total, seven British, one French and one Norwegian are known to have been sunk by torpedoes from submarines, and nine are believed to have been destroyed by mines. So far as is known only eight lives have been lost. The German submarines operating in the English Channel have been more successful than those in either the North Sea or the Irish Sea. Almost two hundred ships daily arrive at or depart from British ports, so that the average of daily loss is less than one in two hundred. To put the figures in another way, eight British ships have been sunk in eight days. This would mean but 365 in a year, or 200 less than the total of new ships turned out from British yards. The hunger war cannot be made a success on these figures."

Opposite Party Views.

(Ottawa Citizen, Con.)

The Prince Albert Daily Herald, one of the strongest of the smaller party papers in the West, is not disposed to join the chorus of praise set up by the Conservative organs throughout the country regarding the new tariff adjustments. The Herald strikes out rather vigorously in this fashion:

"Is it the studied policy of Mr. White to arrange taxation in this country that the poor will be ground still further into the muck while "unto those that hath shall be given"? The new taxation measures seem very much to that effect."

This expression comes at the right moment to offset the comment of the Toronto News regarding some unknown western journal of the Grit variety which has come under the censure of the Toronto organ.

LETTERS FROM THE FRONT

An interesting letter from Corporal George Dalzell, son of Mr. and Mrs. G. Y. Dalzell, Fairville, has just been received from the fighting line, though exactly where is not known. He is in the 89th Royal Field Artillery. He said that he was back in the fighting line after being injured by an accident, and says:

"As I am writing, the shells are screaming all around us. They have been in front of us, behind us, both sides, but they will not come here, as my luck is in.

"I would not have missed this war for anything.

"The German is a crafty beast and it takes us all the time to steer clear of their shells but we have them beaten already. We get plenty to eat and are comfortable and have plenty of good warm clothes."

William Hayes, of the C. A. S. C., in a letter to his mother, Mrs. Henry Hayes, 122 Marsh road, tells of his detachment having received orders to leave for France on the following Sunday. The letter is dated from Tidworth, and he says that "Sharkey and all the other St. John boys have left for different places," but whether in England or for the front he does not explain. He had just returned after six days leave, which he enjoyed in London.

A letter received by Mrs. Duval, wife of Dr. J. L. Duval, captain of "A" section, No. 1 Field Ambulance, British expeditionary force (the old name of "Canadian expeditionary force" is changed with the removal of quarters), tells of the safe arrival of himself and his men in France. The letter was dated from France, February 10, and said that the doctor and his men were all in good health. Only one member of his section had been left behind at Salisbury Plain, Ernest Earle of North End.

Orders had been received for the section to proceed to the front at once, Captain Duval wrote, and in a few days they expected to see all they went for.

Philip Simms, a son of Mrs. T. S. Simms, who is in the signalling corps under Major Powers, wrote from Paris that they had crossed to France and hoped to get into the firing line soon. He and his comrade, Lewis Creighton, were well. This is the first intimation that the signallers have crossed the channel.

Kitchener's Genius.

(Montreal Mail).

In a recent discussion of the personality of Lord Kitchener, Harold Begbie insists that the war minister is devoid of many of the qualities of genius attributed to him by contemporary writers. He says Kitchener is not a military genius in the same class as Napoleon, for instance; but he states that Kitchener possesses certain peculiar qualifications which make him an excellent man for the place he holds just at present.

Kitchener's unusual and most remarkable qualities are, in the opinion of this observer, his passion for efficiency and his disregard of everything described as "red tape." He is possessed of bull-dog tenacity, and his plan is to work steadily along certain well defined lines until he gets to his destination. He arrives.

Begbie says Kitchener's most creditable and remarkable performance since he assumed the direction of the British forces in this war is his holding out against popular pressure exerted to have the raw new British forces sent into the field as soon as organized. This, he says, shows Kitchener at his best. The old soldier knew the Germans and he knew the kind of war they were able to wage. He stuck to the recognized, safe and sure military principles. The temptation of popularity did not bother him. He insisted that his men should be trained and tried before they took the field, and he had his way. As a result, the Germans today have lost their original habit of jeering at the raw levies England intended to put into the field, and are making desperate plans to block, as far as possible, the transportation of these troops to the continent. They are forced to fight, not untrained troops, but men ready and prepared for the field.

Great Britain needed a strong man in the place of war minister, a man fitted to resist popular pressure. Kitchener was the logical man for the post. The public, unfamiliar with military matters, was bound to get the impression that men were ready to fight as soon as they put on their uniforms. That impression has been noted many times in the press of Canada, too. But Kitchener was given, from the first, a fair measure of autocratic power, and he has made good use of it.

DAWN.

From the hills they come, from the plains they come,
From over the ocean's widest span,
From where in its vastness Earth lies dumb
And out of the huddling haunts of Man,
Tarough forest and swamp, through snow and sand,
Wherever the gusts of heaven have fanned
The fiery cross of the Motherland,
To the foot of the flag they come!

Gather you all, young nations grown,
Sons of a noble manhood free,
Children once—and we stood alone
Over the shoots of our liberty;
Branches now are you fairly spread,
Steady to shade and strong to bear;
One alone is the blood we shed;
One alone is the heart we share.
Come you around us! Dark the dawn
That homage to our hopes must pay,
Heavy the cloak to be withdrawn
From off the happy form of Day;
But who shall falter in this hour,
Who shrink from year of travailling?
Let us be girded with your power,
And round the earth your answer ring:

"From the hills we come, from the plains we come,
From over the ocean's widest span.
From where in its vastness Earth lies dumb
And out of the huddling haunts of Man,
Through forest and swamp, through snow and sand,
Wherever the gusts of heaven have fanned
The fiery cross of the Motherland,
To the foot of the flag we come!"

—R. G. B., in Westminster Gazette.

The First to Break.

(London Daily Mail.)

Unquestionably the first of the Great Powers to break under the strain will be Austria-Hungary. There are already other signs that she is beginning to bend. The war has brought her nothing but suffering and humiliation, and throughout the realm of the Hapsburgs the consciousness deepens—in Budapest it may fairly be called acute—that the Dual Monarchy is fighting under German direction for purely German ends.

A machine has been perfected that brushes bugs from potato vines as it is driven over a field, and crushes them to death between steel plates.