



Canadian Soldiers Into the Last Phase of the Struggle

A FEW days ago the Canadian Buffs boarded a train in Toronto bound for somewhere in England, under the command of Lt.-Col. John A. Cooper, former editor of this paper. A little more than a year ago the first officers for that battalion were appointed in the room where this is being written. In that time Col. Cooper has succeeded in organizing one of the best battalions ever sent overseas from any country in the Empire. Several times the battalion was over strength and as often lowered by drafts for other units, notably artillery and engineers. It was one of the last battalions recruited under the old battalion system.

A second-wind campaign of recruiting is now under way in the city of Toronto. Enlistments for this are by drafts of 250 instead of by battalions. A draft of 250 is practically a quarter of a battalion. That draft can be sent overseas as soon as it is complete. The first 250 do not need to wait until the other three-fourths of a battalion have been enlisted. They do not need to drill their heads and feet off and cool their patriotic ardour in camp while half a unit is being licked into shape for camp in England. Under this system it will not cost at the maximum rate of \$30,000 a battalion to raise the balance of Canada's army. The cost will be at a minimum. The efficiency and the esprit de corps of a draft will not be impaired by long delay in a home camp. Impatience for war will be rewarded. When the Buffs—photographed entraining above—heard that the date was actually set for pulling out, there was a cheer heard for a mile.

That was about the last battalion enthusiasm surviving a whole year that we are likely to see in Canada. The new system is less picturesque and a great deal more effective. A first step in that programme, so far as Toronto is concerned, was the parade of returned soldiers Sunday before last. About 1,400 of these heroes and veterans marched—stumping, hobbling as best some of them might—to St. Paul's Anglican Church. A little better than battalion strong, they had a thousand times any new battalion's experience. Look at them—crutching along. The crutch-man facing this way went one-legged a mile to that service. He knew—they all knew—what work they had left unfinished overseas. They had no desire to chuck it. The grimness and the glory of war got hold of these men. They marched as never men did here; fellows who a year or so ago went grandly thumping along to bugle and drum, hearts high as hope, proud of home and country and flag—now back among the folk at home, willing to take this route march to church just to help along the movement.