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How War Feels in Victoria, B.C.

Once it was Tourists; It's Soldiers and Sailors Now

IT may be a long, long way from Chili to Vancouver Island; but last week, when our old enemies the Leipzig and the Nuremberg, with three other German cruisers, sunk the Good Hope and the Monmouth, not far from Valparaiso, the inhabitants of Victoria and Vancouver began to realize that it isn't such a long way after all. When the "elusive Emden" was sinking British merchantmen in the South Seas, and the Karlsruhe kept out of reach of the Bristol and the Suffolk on the Atlantic, the inhabitants of our coast cities were not particularly interested more than those inland. But the sinking of the Good Hope and the Monmouth was different. Both these cruisers were in Halifax some weeks ago, part of the squadron which afterwards convoyed the Canadian troops across the Atlantic and captured a German tramp on the way—without sinking her. Their appearance in the Pacific along with the Glasgow had something to do with rounding up the Leipzig, the Nuremberg, the Scharnhorst, the Gneisenau and the Dresden. But the five got them; all but the Glasgow, which steamed away at high speed. The Good Hope was 14,100 tons and the best British ship in the Pacific. The crews fought as British sailors always do; but their ships were no match for the modern German cruisers, either in number or efficiency.

By N. De B. L.

HERE is a picture of Victoria, the Western outpost of Empire on this continent—before the war: Men in flannels and women in duck and blazers strolling to the boat-houses or the tennis courts; motors laden with those on pleasure bent; tallyhoses crowded with American tourists, smiling their usual amused tolerance upon the Victoria public in general; cars filled to overflowing with workers on their way to the cement works; little groups of women and children laden with hampers and bundles containing towels and bathing suits, going picnicking to the beaches; Chinamen trotting along under their heavily laden fruit and vegetable baskets; Chinese women with babies on their backs or toddling beside them, looking in the shop windows, and chattering like magpies; turbaned Hindus driving their high carts full of mill-wood.

All the kaleidoscopic movement and colour of an ordinary summer day; such was Victoria on the morning of the fifth of August, with the war in Europe very far away.

Evening of the same day, eight o'clock to be exact, as we hurried along through the cluster-lighted avenues to the business section, we heard the first intimation of what had happened in the shrill calling of the newsboys, "Great Britain declares war on Germany." A few moments and we were down on Broad Street as near as we could get to the newspaper offices for the dense crowds. It was the same scene that was being enacted in a thousand towns and cities

that night, but one incident stands out vividly.

Some one had procured a Union Jack, and about him had congregated a hundred men or more singing "Rule Britannia." Suddenly a touring car with two German women in the back seat, and a man, a German also, driving, came up.

"Run the English down!" cried one of the women excitedly, and when the crowd closed about the car, and it was stopped, perforce, she stood up, and leaning over the hood used her fists quite freely on the faces of those within reach. She was a small woman, too, young, with fair hair, and her face was scarlet and distorted with anger.

THREE months since the beginning of the war, and what a difference in our peaceful community! Tourists have described Victoria as a vast pleasure garden, set down in the midst of the sea, and have laughed at us for our love of holidays, our devotion to sport, our late hours for opening and our early hours for closing business. Victoria, with its beautiful parks, its avenues of trees, its broom-covered hills and its hedge-enclosed gardens has been for American travellers chiefly a place to come and get married in, or to come and rest in. Even down in the business centres one never gets quite away from the smell of the blossoming fruit-trees in the spring, or the fragrance of the roses in the summer, and there is so much that is lovely to look at out of doors, so many pictures of mountain and sea and sky, with a different frame for each picture, that we have learned to make haste slowly, and there is none of the rush here, none of the nervous hurry that characterizes the neighbouring American cities.

But times have changed. Gone is all our holiday-making spirit, our implements of sport and our sporting regalia have been laid away. The streets are full of people, and all are hurrying, and some of them are anxious-eyed. There is more kaleidoscopic movement and colour than ever, for every other man is in uniform, and one constantly meets groups of soldiers or sailors marching from place to place, or companies of cavalry on duty or out for exercise. The incoming cars from Esquimalt discharge men of half a dozen different regiments, and sailors from as many ships including the little dark men from the Japanese cruisers in port, who look about them with intense curiosity, and always travel in companies of from six to twenty or more. The Japanese sailors take a great interest in the five and ten cent stores, and buy largely of small, useless things, all seeming to fancy the same purchase: one day the favoured article was a child's beaded hand-bag, which the little sailors fastened to their belts, leading us to believe it was some peculiar part of their uniform.

There are more old country people in Victoria than in any other Canadian city of its size, and all of them have relatives at the front in France, or on Jellicoe's ships in the North Sea. Some of them wear the band of mourning, showing that already they have felt the pitiless stab of war. Small wonder



No. 1 Company, 88th Fusiliers, of Victoria, with their Colours, Presented by the Daughters of Empire.



The Little Brown Men from the Japanese Cruisers in Port.



Reading the War Bulletins at the Colonist Office in Victoria.