

THE EVENING TIMES AND STAR. ST. JOHN N. B. WEDNESDAY, MAY 19, 1915

Important War Events Pending; Kitchener Wants 300,000 Men Italy Near to Decision—Austria's Offer —Kitchener Gives Lords Review of Conditions—The British Cabinet

London, May 18, 11 p. m.—The next few days, if not hours, will it be believed, find Italy renouncing her old allies of the Triple Alliance and joining the Triple Entente powers as a belligerent. At the same time, some change is expected in the government of Great Britain.

The German imperial chancellor in the Reichstag announced the offers that had been made to Italy as the price of her continued neutrality, and while he said he had not entirely given up hope that peace would be maintained among the powers of the Triple Alliance, he left no impression on the minds of his hearers that the end of the alliance, so far as Italy is concerned, is far off.

It is anticipated that the expected changes in the government of Great Britain are aimed at a closer consolidation of all parties for the purpose of carrying the war to a successful issue. Whether the leaders of the Unionist, Irish and Labor parties will be taken into the cabinet, or admitted into the Committee of Imperial Defence, has not yet been made known. Whatever the changes to be made, however, they have not, in any way, interfered with the operations in which the British forces are engaged.

Earl Kitchener gave a general review of the situation in the war zone before the House of Lords adjourned for the Whitsuntide holidays. Speaking of the British offensive, he said the action at Neuve Chapelle was fought with great gallantry which enabled us to occupy positions of considerable military importance previously held by the enemy.

"The Germans," said Lord Kitchener, "have persisted in the use of these asphyxiating gases whenever wind favored or other opportunity occurred, and His Majesty's government no less than the French government feel that our troops must be adequately protected by the employment of similar methods so as to remove the enormous and unjustifiable disadvantage which exist for them if we take no steps to meet on his own ground the enemy who is responsible for the introduction of this pernicious practice."

The secretary spoke of the gallantry of the Canadian division, which defended its position tenaciously, notwithstanding the poisonous fumes. "This was an ordeal to try the qualities of the finest army in the world," he said, "and all the more credit is due the soldiers of Canada, who, unprepared for such an attack and exposed to a withering fire, reluctantly and with perfect steadiness withdrew their left flank to conform to the newer alignment of the Allies' position."

Referring to the delay in producing the ammunition, Earl Kitchener remarked: "I am confident that in the very near future we shall be in a satisfactory position in regard to the supply of these shells."

After referring in highest terms to the men in the new army, Earl Kitchener concluded:

"I SAID I WOULD LET THE COUNTRY KNOW WHEN MORE MEN WERE WANTED FOR THE WAR. THE TIME HAS COME, AND I NOW CALL FOR 300,000 MEN TO FORM NEW ARMIES."

"THOSE WHO ARE ENGAGED IN THE PRODUCTION OF WAR MATERIAL OF ANY KIND SHOULD NOT LEAVE THEIR WORK. IT IS TO MEN WHO ARE NOT PERFORMING THIS DUTY THAT I APPEAL, AND I AM CONVINCED THE MANHOOD OF ENGLAND STILL AVAILABLE WILL LOYALLY RESPOND."

Turning to the Dardanelles, Earl Kitchener said that the progress of the Allies was necessarily slow, since the country was most difficult.

"But the Turks are gradually being forced to retire from positions of great strength," he continued, "and though the enemy is being constantly reinforced, the news from this front is thoroughly satisfactory."

Meanwhile, the British first army to the north of La Bassée and the French forces to the south of this town, continue their offensive against the German line and, according to their respective commanders, progress is being made. The German official statement, however, takes issue with the allied commanders in this respect, and declares that all the offensive movements against the Germans have been repulsed.

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ulation of the details of the concessions to be appointed.

"Eleventh, after the conclusion of the agreement Austro-Hungarian soldiers, natives of the occupied territories, shall not further participate in the war."

AN OPEN LETTER TO PRESBYTERIANS

To the Editor of Times and Stars—

Sir—Sad would it be, if the Church, which should be a source of unity and strength and comfort to the nation at this sad time, should be made, instead, an element of division and weakness.

May I suggest a way to avoid it, without any one surrendering what he thinks to be right. The situation in brief is as follows—

The majority of the union committee, at its meeting in December last, agreed to recommend to our assembly, which meets in Kingston in June, to proceed this summer to another vote on organic church union. On the other hand, the minority of the union committee has recommended the assembly to drop for the present, the question of organic union.

If the assembly should now proceed to another vote, it could only create division. Pressure only leads to further steps in resisting that pressure; as witness the following—

At the recent meeting of the Synod of British Columbia, early in April, there were present about fifty members. Twenty of these, ministers and elders, gathered at a meeting called for the purpose, and organized for the province, for the preservation and continuance of the Presbyterian church.

At the recent meeting of the synod of Alberta, about the middle of April, thirty members of the synod, ministers and elders, gathered at a meeting held for the same purpose, organized for the province, and appointed a large committee of prominent ministers and laymen.

These two committees are in two of the largest western home mission provinces, and include well-known pioneers and leaders who have been active in furthering home mission work for a generation. The Alberta committee has just issued a statement claiming "the almost complete elimination of overlapping in that province, through the co-operation of the Methodist and Presbyterian churches," and quoting the report to the synod of Alberta of its home mission convener, "that out of a total of six hundred preaching points under the care of this committee there is overlapping with the Methodist church in only twenty-one cases."

Still further, there has been recently organized a "woman's league for the preservation and continuance of the Presbyterian Church in Canada."

Besides all these there is the "organization for the preservation and continuance of the Presbyterian Church," with its general committee of over six hundred ministers and elders. This general committee represents the more than fifty thousand who voted against terminating our own church organization, and as many of the non-voting half of our church as may choose to remain in it.

These tens of thousands believe in unity with all true Christians; but they believe that where there is not room for two churches, it is better for the people to worship together, in connection with one or other of the existing denominations, than attempt to compel the whole church into a new organization. They believe that it is not best to give up the Presbyterian system, with its scripturalism, freedom and efficiency in exchange for a system so greatly inferior as that of the basis of union, regarding the general question to be answered every consideration.

"Ninth, Austria-Hungary, after the conclusion of the agreement, to give a solemn declaration concerning the concessions."

"Tenth, mixed committees for the regulation of the details of the concessions."

either report, but to suggest that, on account of war conditions, wholly unforeseen by last assembly, both the majority and the minority reports presented to this assembly be referred to the following assembly in 1916. That assembly can deal with these reports in the light of conditions then existing.

The great body of the best people in both political parties have been strongly opposed to a war election; and when our empire is in a struggle for life, when so many members of our church are absent at the front; when families are in anxiety and bereavement and sorrow all over our land; when even the negotiations for reunion between the two great Presbyterian churches in Scotland have been entirely discontinued during the war; when no true interest can suffer by referring these two reports to the following assembly; would it not be unwise, unworthy, unpatriotic, strangely lacking in sympathy with the one tremendous issue—to force a needless vote which can only bring division and strife. If contention must come within, let it be deferred till the war without is ended.

E. SCOTT.
Montreal, 14 May, 1915.

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