

## In the Fifth Year

ON Sunday last, August 4th, the fourth year of the war was completed. We are now in the fifth year of the great conflict. When Lord Kitchener, in the first days of the war, was asked his opinion as to the duration of the struggle, he replied "probably three years." Many believed then that Lord Kitchener had probably stated an outside limit, and that the war would come to an end much earlier. The protraction of the conflict has surprised many people, most of all, we may be sure, the German Emperor and his military advisers. The marvellous war machine built up by Germany during a long period of quiet preparation had reached a stage of efficiency which perhaps justified the German expectation of an easy march to Paris. But the road that seemed so easy has proved to be extraordinarily hard. France had a new birth, and has made a heroic fight at every point. The "contemptible little army" of Great Britain, as the Kaiser described it, has grown into one of the finest armies that the world has known. The British colonies, which Germany expected to see in revolt, have sent their hundreds of thousands of soldiers to stand shoulder to shoulder with the army of the Motherland on the fields of France and Flanders. In all quarters of the globe Britain has placed soldiers who have successfully fought every enemy. The Germans have been driven out of their colonial possessions. The German flag has been driven from the seven seas. Britannia, now more than ever before, rules the waves. The ships of the British navy ride proudly in the North Sea, while the ships of the German navy are rusting in the Kiel Canal. Italy is making a gallant fight against Austria on land and sea. A score of smaller nations are united with the Allies in resistance to the German assault on civilization. Russia, once great and powerful, has crumbled into helplessness. But a greater than Russia is with the Allies; a million and a quarter of Americans are facing the Germans on the Western front.

After four years of war the Germans are no nearer Paris or the channel ports than they were a few days after the conflict began. They have made a remarkable fight, one must admit. Shut off from most of the world by the British navy, compelled in a very large measure to rely on their own resources, they have been able to carry on the battle much longer than their enemies supposed they could.

What of the fifth year? It would be foolish to predict events with anything like confidence. But it is not unreasonable to expect that before the fifth year closes, the end will be reached. What that end will be can hardly be regarded as doubtful, even by the Germans themselves. The fight between civilization and worse than barbarism can have but one end. There can be no compromise with a nation as lost to all sense of decency as Germany. German militarism and all that it stands for must be crushed by the united forces of the civilized nations. And in that holy cause, Canada must unflinchingly do her part.

## The Postmen's Strike

THOSE who desire to record the achievements of the Union Government will hardly select the management of the Post Office Department as one of the features to be dwelt on. For a year or more, until the re-

turn of Mr. Blondin from England last week, that department, one of the most important so far as the accommodation of the public are concerned, was headless. Mr. Doherty, whose good intentions nobody will question, was supposed to be acting for the absent Postmaster-General, but there is abundant evidence that he was fully occupied with other duties which he regarded as more urgent, and that he was unable to give any considerable attention to postal business. We noted some time ago that the opportunity usually afforded to discuss postal affairs in Parliament, on the departmental estimates, was not allowed this year, the estimates having been taken up in the House for the first time a couple of hours before prorogation, when there was a mad rush to dispose of remaining business. What wonder is it that a great department thus neglected fell into discredit? An appropriation was voted to pay a special bonus to the postmen, but no steps were taken for many weeks to turn the vote into cash payments. Probably if prompt payment of this money had been made, much of the discontent might have been overcome. The neglect of this was the immediate cause of a letter carriers' strike in many of the cities of the Dominion, a movement which in some places brought very great inconvenience and annoyance to the public. Where there was so much lack of departmental direction it is not surprising that public opinion, in a large degree, sympathized with the striking postmen.

In the situation now existing, however, when many of the ordinary rules of life have to be suspended or modified on account of the war, it is much to be regretted that the postmen were not able to exercise more patience and refrain from the extreme step that they took. It requires an exceptionally good cause to justify any strike at this time. Only as a last resort, after all efforts at arbitration and conciliation have failed, can a strike of workers in any branch of labor be justified now. Men in every department of life may properly be asked to submit to inconvenience, and even to seeming negligence, rather than imperil public interests by strikes.

The demand of the postmen for the appointment of a board of conciliation under the Inquiries Act will seem to many to be a fair one. It is applying to the public service the principle that is applied to disputes in utilities services controlled by corporations. There is, however, much force in the objection taken by the Government to the proposal. In the case of a dispute between a corporation and its employees the interests immediately concerned are private and they are presumably mindful of their own profit. Under the Inquiries Act provision is made for introducing into the question a representative of the public, who is unbiassed. The case of employees of the Government is not quite the same. There, the employer has no private interest. He is the Government; he is the public; and having no private interest to serve, he should be free to exercise the unbiassed judgment which is not to be expected from a private employer. The voice of the public, which in the case of a corporation's dispute can only be heard when a board of conciliation is appointed, is always present when the Government is the employer. What is a fair and reasonable step in the case of a business in the hands of a corporation looking after its private profit may not be necessary or reasonable in the business of the Government, which has no private interest to serve. The Inquiries Act can hardly have been intended to apply to a question between the Government and its employees. It should be possible to have the postmen's claims dealt

with by negotiation between their representatives and members of the Government, without the intervention of any others. But if the trouble has gone too far to admit of any adjustment in this sensible way, some sort of arbitration might well be agreed upon rather than have the public in any city suffer the inconvenience and loss that will be the fruit of a strike. A too rigid regard for rules, which are in themselves commendable, may not be the best way of handling the troublesome questions of the present day.

## The English Strikes

THE important part that labor plays in war's affairs is universally recognized. Much of the almost marvellous success of the British people in meeting the emergencies of the last four years is due to the patriotic spirit manifested by the working classes, and the very energetic co-operation of their leaders with the Government. In the United States, too, the same spirit has been widely manifested. The strike of munition workers in Coventry and Birmingham last week threatened to cause serious trouble, but in the end the difficulty was overcome by the action of leaders of labor. An effort by the Munitions Department to stabilize operations by preventing skilled workmen from going from one factory to another, was the cause of the dispute. Some of the men claimed that this "embargo" was an improper restriction on their freedom, and their objections were for a day or two endorsed by thousands of their fellow-workmen. It was the labor leaders of other places who came to the rescue. Prominent among these was Mr. Havelock Wilson, the representative of the merchant sailors of the country. No class of workers has suffered more from the Germans than the sailors, the victims of the submarines. No class has felt a stronger resentment, a stronger determination to see Germany thoroughly punished for her infamy. Any movement of workmen which threatens to interfere with effective war work is recognized by the sailors as one that gives aid and comfort to the enemy. There is no doubt that the patriotic and vigorous appeals of the British sailors, represented by Mr. Wilson, had much to do with convincing the munition workers of the English towns that they should resume work.

## An English Discovery

LATE London papers give prominence to the opening of a "National Restaurant" at which the high cost of living is to some extent met by a system which provides meals of good character at a very low cost. With much detail the press writers describe the new institution. The food is good, the surroundings clean and attractive, the prices of the several articles remarkably low. The cost of serving is reduced by the absence of attendants. Each visitor goes to the counter, selects what he wants, carries it on a tray to a little table at which he sits while he eats. The only attendant is one who cleans up after the visitor leaves. This system is presented to John Bull as a new and important addition to his machinery of food supply. What it all means is that John Bull has only now found the "Cafeteria" system which has long been in operation in the cities of the United States and Canada.

## Forty-two

Canada's are briefly out by the

Canada e ly 3,000 m

had sent o on the sam

60,000 men makes a t

less than t war, for m

overseas, w as the stri

out. Canadian en their liv

killed in ac died of dise

The name casualty li and 40,000

000 have be ther servic

neutral mil missing.

TE The brave nursing sis

Some 10,000 kind or ano

have been v adian Expe

Victoria 432; Bar to

Cross, 1,467 Conduct M

227; second Service. Me

Royal Red

In supply allies, Cana

arsenals. I shrapnel sh

that in the no less than

army for the ada Most o

tion, which our munition

portion of t during this

Forty-two 27 per cent

of the tota per cent of t

total of 9.2 The exten

tions of war Total prod

000,000 poun propellants

pounds; tota lue of order

ernment, \$1, has been los

purpose by t There have

350,000 men EXT

In external possible, on

confined to t needs of Gre

materials as ing and texti

ities having exported in g

fiscal year 19 portant artic

three years l dred per cen

Canada is d have been p

with a total will be launc