

The Canada Lancet

VOL. L. TORONTO, NOVEMBER, 1916

No. 3

EDITORIAL

SOME OF THE COSTS OF WAR.

In the first place there is the destruction of property. Buildings that have stood for centuries and have been the admiration of nations are levelled to the ground. Fine old bridges are thrown down to the bottom of the river. Roads are torn up and become a dreary waste. Orchards, vineyards, farms are reduced to chaos. Homes disappear from the face of the earth as completely as the vanished nation of South America. Ships that were the pride of the ocean go down to the depths of "the blue lone sea." All this is absolute waste.

Then comes the waste of money. Some may say that money cannot be wasted; it only changes hands. True, but there is remarkable misdirection of its use. It is expended on the production of explosives, that once discharged, disappear into primary elements, and are lost. The same money, but for the war, would go into some abiding product. Or, again, it is put into guns of all sorts and kinds, to become in a short time scrap of almost no value. Or it goes into great war vessels that are a burden upon the people and serve no purpose but that of war. Or is it used to buy horses, many of which will be killed, and all of them that live will be impaired. In all this there is a misdirection of labor to the production of things that do not better the people.

Then there is a vast amount of time removed from the ordinary callings of life. In the present we are told that 40,000,000 of men are either fighting or training with this end in view. While so engaged they are not producing any wealth; but are consuming that which has been accumulated. Such a vast amount of man time lost to the world for several years can hardly be estimated in money.

Then there is the loss of life, the most of which is in its prime, and much of it of very high order of value. Up to date in this war not less than four millions have perished, and many more are hastening onward to the last post. Each one of these lives has a definite value to his country in the form of work he could do, thought he could send forth,