

Mr. Coaker Visits Badger Camps

Describes Logging Conditions and Makes Recommendations

(Concluded)

The A. N. D. Co.'s camps at Badger are supplied with a canvas sack and it is the men's own fault if they do not fill those sacks with hay or birch rods.

Shredded birch-bark makes a very fair mattress, and is better than hay to lie upon. I have slept on a birch-rod mattress and found it just as comfortable as a factory-made mattress stuffed with shavings. Some men just spread the empty sack on the boughs and consequently have a hard bed, especially if the loggers beneath the boughs are uneven—as they usually are.

I have strong objections to the bunks. They are often unseparated and they collect dust and dirt and become incubators of vermin.

At the meeting of loggers I held in the Badger section, the men unanimously voted for hammocks and the abolition of bunks. If hammocks could be supplied and properly fitted the men would soon grow accustomed to them as the tars do on board of warships. Some assert that some of the men would cut the hammocks and steal them when leaving camp. That evil could be cured by chaining each man with his hammock and giving him credit for it when he leaves the camp, if in good condition. Personally I believe in hammocks for the logging camps. It would be an item of expense to the companies at the start, but they would not cost more than a mattress, and would be good for ten years, while the mattresses would be useless after one season. Some assert that the hammock would be cold quarters in a frosty night in a camp. That I will admit, but if the men are desirous to be comfortable they can keep turns in feeding wood to the fire once or twice on frosty nights. A couple of large birch junks will maintain a fire in a giant stove for three or four hours. At present the fire goes out about ten o'clock and the camp soon cools, and in two hours on a cold night a sleeping camp is almost as cold as the air outside. Those camps are draughty. The men find warmth when the fire goes out by huddling close together. It is thought the men would sleep cold if hammocks were used, but I contend a pair of camp blankets wound round them and a fire kept going through the night would provide warmth, cleanliness and comfort that cannot be secured by sleeping in berths.

I discussed this matter with Mr. Cole, at Badger and Mr. Scott, the general manager of the A. N. D. Co. at Grand Falls, and Mr. Scott agreed to fit their camps next year with a canvas bottom, doing away with the loggers and boughs. Each man would be provided with a sort of stretcher canvas mattress. The canvas would be tacked to a wooden frame. Upon this the men would place what they wished. This will be a big improvement on the round sticks that now form the bottom of the bunks.

I hope every logger will appreciate this action on the part of the A. N. D. Co. and abstain from destroying the canvas bottom provided him. Some daredevil may be tempted to use his knife and cut the canvas. I implore all the men to safeguard their interests by preventing such villainy, and if the men will endeavour to appreciate those efforts to improve the loggers' conditions, they will be but the forerunners of other improvements in the camps. It must be remembered that the A. N. D. Co. is here to stay, and while there is a stick of pulp wood on their extensive areas, loggers will be required. Therefore, every year this logging business must go on and unless improvements are made in camp life it will be hard to secure the requisite number of loggers. It is, therefore, desirable on behalf of all interests that the loggers' life be made as comfortable and satisfactory as possible.

The Colony cannot permit the logging camps to become incubators of disease of any sort. The health of the men must be the first consideration of the company and our legislators, for if the Company's undertakings are to be a success and the Colony is to derive benefits instead of evils, the health of our men engaged in logging must be the first importance. The men must aid for F.P.U. in becoming improvements that will eventually make logging life a pleasure, rather than a curse; make it a work that once tried will again be taken up—a work that will be sufficiently attractive and satisfactory to cause a young man to remain at it from the start in November until the finish in April.

To accomplish this the food must be good and well cooked and cleanly served. It must be varied. The food served must not become obnoxious to

the men through continual sameness, and regarded by the President of the F.P.U., the rough logger esteemed him only treated him kindly but fed him well.

If all is well I will visit Millertown camps next season. The A. N. D. Co. were good enough to send Mr. Gillard, a logging boss, from Red Indian Lake, to meet me at Grand Falls and supply me with any information I desired, and I am obliged to Mr. Gillard for a lot of information about the life and living of the logger on Red Indian Lake. From what I gathered I am convinced that the loggers on Red Indian Lake are even better treated than those at Badger section.

A hot dinner should be supplied every day. Beef, potatoes, peas, turnips and pudding with tea and bread should compose one meal daily. Soup could be supplied as an evening meal two or three times a week. Fish and potatoes should be available for breakfast at least twice a week and for dinner (optional) twice a week—Wednesdays and Fridays. Apples tart should be supplied four times a week for tea, and cheese should be supplied for tea during three evenings of a week. Many camps now serve a hash for tea, which is very desirable and should be continued. Some camps supply sweet bread for tea, and cold beef for breakfast and lunch, which is much appreciated and should be uniform for all camps.

There is no disputing the fact that the food rations have improved very much during the last two or three years. Where rabbits and caribou are available the camp boss should be permitted to secure a supply for the use of his camp. There should be no restriction upon the supply of rabbits or caribou for the supply of the logging camps. At present the game laws often turn out a hardship for the loggers. This must be remedied.

The camps were all free from sickness this season. Not one man has died from sickness contracted while logging. The doctors have had some slight cases of cutting by the axe, but no serious cases even of cutting have occurred. The winter was, of course, an ideal one for logging, as January and February were unusually favorable for logging.

The horses I saw were well cared for and abundantly fed. They work as no other horses are expected to work, and this winter was a hard one upon horses, for as the weather was open, there was no rest time, and consequently no resting days for horses.

At William Evans' camp a horse that I used at Coakerville is at work. I sold him to the A. N. D. Co. last fall for \$200, and they would not sell him for \$300 to-day. He was a pet horse of ours and splendidly trained and without a single fault. They call him "Coaker" in the camp and we betide the man who would attempt to ill-use that horse. He is a cheap horse to keep, as he is a small eater and digests his food well and I was surprised to find him in excellent order. Bryant, who worked him and cared for him at the farm had something good in his pocket for poor "Jim" and he was glad to take it and seemed pleased to recognise old friends. Poor brutes, faithful and true to man, and the man's greatest helper, they should be well cared for and treated humanely for their devotion and willingness for their masters often surpasses that of man himself. I would much sooner possess this noble animal that served me so well and to which I was so attracted than the \$200 I received as his value.

I have reason to be kind to a horse. While living at Coakerville I was returning from Friday's Bay one February afternoon when a blizzard overtook us. Bryant was with me, and we had two catamarans loaded with hay. We had no compass. The wind changed when we were about a mile from our own island. Night came on and Dildo Run contained many open water tickles. Our faithful old horse acted nobly although the drift piles were often up to his belly. We expected him to give out every minute. We travelled miles and miles that night, bringing up bars and there by could not look to the windward for drift and sleet. Eventually we allowed the horse to proceed and reached a place we recognised and reached Coakerville at two in the morning. We were well tired, but the horse did not seem to be much the worse for the drilling. That night's experience caused me to regard the horse at its true value and I do not like to see a horse ill-used. What's in a name, if poor "Jim" could speak he would reply that in his case it meant much to be called "Coaker" and once owned

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How Belgium Saved England

The Triple Entente has to all appearance ended in failure. It had its origin in an honest desire for peace, and it has landed Europe in the greatest war in history. We had imagined that the understandings entered into with France and Russia had made the three Powers strong enough to defy attack. Between the members of the Entente peace was assured; there was nothing that they wanted to fight for. Was it likely that any enemy or group of enemies would feel so certain of victory as to try conclusions with the world's strongest feet and two of its strongest armies? Yet what seemed altogether outside the range of probability has happened. An arrangement intended to secure one object has brought about its exact opposite.

This is the reading of the situation which at one time appealed to some English men—to more, perhaps, than now care to remember that they ever entertained it. But there is another view of the facts which suggests a very different conclusion. No doubt the primary object of the Triple Entente was the maintenance of European peace. But there was a remote object which was all along associated with this one—the punishment of any Power that wilfully broke the peace. This second purpose was the necessary complement of the first, and the essential identity between them must never be lost sight of. Dealing with this as an unlooked-for disaster, but as a piece of good fortune on which we had no right to count. To some of my readers this may seem a wild exaggeration. I believe that when the events of the last few years are properly considered it ought rather to be regarded as a sober statement of fact. The disasters the War has brought upon us are but trifles by the side of the catastrophe from which it has saved us.

stant war. But with what prospects would such a war have been entered upon? By that time the isolation of England would have been complete. She would not have had a single ally or a single well-wisher left in Europe. Her command of the sea would have been lost, and her shores, her food supply, and her trade would have been at the mercy of every enemy.

More dangerous, perhaps, because less seemingly selfish, was the assumption not infrequently met with that the obligations of Great Britain to her partners in the Entente would be fully discharged when she had given them the aid of her Fleet. Even in the first days of the War certain newspapers were arguing against the despatch of an Expeditionary Force, and seeking comfort in an earlier declaration of the Prime Minister for that the understanding with France committed us to no overt action on land. The Liberals whom this statement was probably meant to reassure saw in it an importance to which it had no real title. So far as the Ententes existed on paper they probably contained no reference to either military or naval operations. The help the Powers were expected to give one another was not limited by specific declarations; it covered the whole area of the needs which the Ententes were designed to meet. The considerations which would in the end govern the kind and amount of support which England was to give to France would be such as would naturally arise out of the situations which the future would bring with it. The Expeditionary Force which is now fighting in France was not sent there to fulfilment of any promise, verbal or written. Statesmen are not usually in a hurry to give promises in black

and white when they are ignorant of the circumstances in which their words will have to be made good. We have helped France with our soldiers because the attack on her was made by soldiers. We might have distributed our ships along the whole length of the French seaboard without in any way affecting the result of the conflicts on the Marne and the Aisne. Help of this kind would have been worthless to France, and equally worthless to ourselves. Consequently, it would not have fulfilled the real purpose of the understanding of 1907. That purpose—or, more accurately, the purpose which has grown out of that understanding—was the defence of France against unprovoked invasion by a Power which had twice shown unmistakably that she contemplated action of this sort. When the invaders had crossed the frontier, the occasion for helping France to meet it had plainly no choice but to give the necessary assistance in the form which could alone be of any value. If France had been defeated for want of that assistance it would have been no answer to her or to our own people that we had offered it in quite another shape. Ships have a value of their own, but the sphere of that value is seldom the land, and it was on the land that the German attack on France had to be met. The Prime Minister's answers in Parliament had no bearing on any question but that actually put to him. Nor had they any on the object with which that particular question had been asked. What certain dissatisfied members of the Liberal Party really wanted to know was whether in the event of Germany declaring war against France, the Liberal Government

meant to play the part of an ally or of a neutral. It would have been useless to ask this in so many words. No Minister—least of all Mr. Asquith—will ever commit himself to the particular course he means to take in an imaginary situation. They were welcome, however, to shed comfort as they could derive from the knowledge that the policy they disliked had never been reduced to writing. When the question had been asked and answered, Ministers and followers parted—the one knowing that his freedom of action was in no wise affected by what he had said, the others pleasing themselves with the reflection that they had at least conveyed to their leader their dislike of any positive action against Germany.

A second thing from which the country has been delivered is the ignorance in which it was content to live so long as Europe remained at peace. I say this with no desire to charge the Government with want of patriotism. No doubt they were extraordinarily indifferent to the consequences and to the proper training of the Territorial Force. The position of the contingent first despatched had numbered 300,000 men and it every Territorial recruit had received six months' training on enlistment. If Mr. Asquith had warned us a year or two back that as soon as we were engaged in an European war we should want at once to raise half a million of competent soldiers, and that this would be only an installment, we should have been very much better prepared. I am not, I repeat, going to blame the Government on this account, partly because they have since labored to the very utmost of their power to make up for past omissions, and partly because the responsibility must, in a great measure, be shared by the Opposition and by the country at large. If Ministers

(Continued on page 3)

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