

America Asks Information From Vienna New Conscription Bill Not Well Received Mr. Henderson Advises Election Reforms

CITY SOLICITOR ADVISES DRASTIC CHANGES IN HOLDING CITY ELECTION

In Letter to Mayor and Council Points Out the Impossibility Under Present Conditions of Having a Correct Voters' List Prepared For a By-law Voted on Regular Municipal Election Day.

That it is a manifestly physical impossibility to have a special voters' list prepared for the vote upon any by-law ten days before the taking of the vote when it takes place on the day of the municipal elections, is the statement of W. T. Henderson, City Solicitor, in a letter to the City Council advising many changes in the conduct of municipal elections in Brantford. The letter is a very frank statement of conditions, which Mr. Henderson believes should be bettered, and he advises the Council to put the whole matter before a special committee to consider measures to overcome these difficulties next year.

NOT ENOUGH POLLING PLACES

The law declares that the number of voters in each polling subdivision is not to exceed 300, yet there are many subdivisions in Brantford which do not observe this rule, states Mr. Henderson. The letter describes the conditions on voting day last Monday, when upwards of 20 to 30 voters were observed standing out in the cold waiting to vote and were kept there for half an hour, and in some cases a whole hour, before being admitted to the polling booth. The letter as sent to the Mayor and Council follows in full:

THE LETTER

January 5th, 1916. The Mayor and Council of the City of Brantford, Ont.

Gentlemen:—A number of difficulties arose in connection with the voting at the recent Municipal Election which served to bring to my attention a number of matters in connection with our Municipal Elections which should be remedied.

NOT TIME FOR SPECIAL VOTERS LIST

In the first place there exists a provision in the Statutes which provides that in the case of a money by-law or in the case of a local option by-law a special voters' list is to be prepared by the Clerk containing the names of those entitled to vote on such measure, and these lists are always late in being ready ten days before the day set for the polling. It is always late in the December before the regular voters' list is finally revised and certified by the County Judge, for instance, in the year the date set for the Court of Revision was the 15th of December, and as there were several hundred applications to be disposed of, and it is before the Court on the 15th of December, it is therefore manifest that it is a physical impossibility to have a special voters' list prepared before the taking of the vote when it takes place on the day of the Municipal elections.

ASSESSMENT ROLLS WRONG

In the recent election, however, difficulties arose because of the fact, which after some investigation I ascertained that the voters' list was compiled from an assessment roll which was based on a total misapprehension of the qualifications of a voter, and therefore the voters' list was far from being correct.

In this regard I would recommend that public notice be given through the press asking for voters in Brantford, whose names were improperly omitted from the list to advise the City Clerk of the fact, so that in making assistance will be at hand in making out a correct list for the current year.

NOT ENOUGH POLLING BOOTHS

It also became manifest on election day that the number of polling places in Brantford is now insufficient and that a new division of the Municipal Act should be made. Under the provisions of the Municipal Act the number of voters in any polling subdivision shall not exceed three hundred, and there are a number of polling divisions in Brantford at the present time in which I am informed the number of voters does exceed three hundred.

In an ordinary Municipal Election in Brantford in which there are four polling places for Council and for the various wards there will be at least six ballots even where there are no by-laws being voted upon, and as we fre-

quently have several by-laws it is manifest that the polling subdivisions should not be too large and that all possible means should be taken to have the votes recorded as rapidly as possible.

STANDING OUTSIDE

I visited a number of polling booths on election day and found twenty-five or thirty voters standing out in the cold waiting for their turn to cast their ballots and in many cases they had to stand half an hour or even an hour before they could do so.

A PRACTICAL SUGGESTION

In every polling place a provision should be made so that there are at least three compartments in which voters could mark their ballots. In one polling place which I visited the procedure was as follows: The door of the polling place was kept locked and a special constable stationed on the inside. He admitted a voter who gave his name which had to be read up on the voters' list and various questions settled as to his right to vote. The deputy returning officer then proceeded to initial the name and fold up six or seven ballots and the voter was entitled to do so. The voter then retired with these into a compartment and after some time returned having opened, marked and deposited in the ballot box and the voter retired, and as he went out another voter was admitted. By this means of procedure about six or seven voters per hour can be recorded and it is manifest that a different method and a much more rapid one should be devised.

BALLOT BOXES TOO SMALL

A further difficulty arises from the fact that in view of the number of ballots and the size of the polling subdivisions the ballot boxes are far too small.

A SPECIAL COMMITTEE

I would, therefore, suggest that these various matters, including the whole election machinery, should be referred to a committee early in the year so that they can consider near-approach which will overcome these difficulties at the next election.

Yours truly, W. T. Henderson.

Kut-el-Amara Shelled.

Special Wire to the Courier. London, Jan. 6.—General Townend, commanding the British forces in Mesopotamia, reports that the greatest stress upon what it terms Sir John A. Simon's mercantile analysis of the Earl of Derby's figures and like the Daily News, concludes that the government acted with undue haste.

W. J. Bryan favors Pan-Americanism and evolution of the Monroe doctrine. He told scientific congress as it will lessen expenditures to repel invasions.

TEUTONS ON DEFENSIVE

London, Jan. 6.—The Times learns from its Petrograd correspondent that the Russians have pierced the enemy's positions in the immediate vicinity of Czernowitz, compelling their opponents to fall back to their secondary line, and definitely assume the defensive. The despatch dated Wednesday, says that the enemy's losses have been enormous in these engagements, and also in the neighborhood of Czartorysk where he was pressed back westward for several miles.

CONSCRIPTION BILL DOES NOT SUIT ANYBODY

Voluntary and Anti-Voluntary Papers Denounce It.

THREE CABINET MEN TO STEP OUT

Sir John Simon's Defence of Old System Ruined New Measure.

BY SPECIAL WIRE TO THE COURIER.

London, Jan. 6.—Judging by all the editorial opinions expressed this morning, the conscription bill will satisfy nobody. The voluntary papers denounce it almost as much as the conscriptionist press. The Daily News goes so far as to predict a general election in the next few weeks. This newspaper declares it is almost certain that the Labor conference to-day will decide against conscription, the Labor party believing that conscription in the army will be followed by compulsion in the work shops. It adds that the Laborites have decided at the last moment to throw the onus of the conscription to the newspapers, so that there shall be no doubt in the public mind about the resolutions adopted.

GENERAL ELECTION MAYBE

"And," said the Daily News, "as it is known that Mr. Lloyd George, Earl Curzon and other ministers have been for some time in a general election at this juncture in the war, it is not unlikely that means will be adopted to cut the gordian knot of the recruiting problem." The Daily News argues editorially that Sir John A. Simon's speech smashed the base on which the government acted hastily before it heard the evidence of the Earl of Derby's figures. The newspaper admits that the government can pass the bill through parliament, but it asks what will be the position of the government when it procures Labor to support it, which it says is convinced that the bill is not a military but a political weapon.

COUNTRY NOT IN FAVOR

The Daily Chronicle, which is the least censorious of the Liberal newspapers, says the bill is a workmanlike measure, but it doubts whether the government has the general consent which is essential as the basis for such a great change in national principles. The newspaper lays the greatest stress upon what it terms Sir John A. Simon's mercantile analysis of the Earl of Derby's figures and like the Daily News, concludes that the government acted with undue haste.

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and evolution of the Monroe doctrine. He told scientific congress as it will lessen expenditures to repel invasions.

BRANT CHAPTER I.O.O.F. THANKED FROM TRENCHES

Boys on the Firing Line Grateful for Christmas Presents.

EATABLES WERE SOON DEMOLISHED

Some of Men Under Canvas, Others Billed in Old Barns.

That the presents sent to the Brantford boys in the trenches by the Brant Chapter of the I. O. O. F. were appreciated is shown by the following letters of thanks received by the Secretary. All were delighted to receive their gifts and are unanimous in stating how grateful they are in being remembered by the people at home.

The letters follow:

Brant Chapter, I.O.O.F. Dear Madam:—Many thanks for your thoughtful gift which reached me to-day. It is indeed fine to know that you are thought of by those at home. Yours sincerely, (Sgd) F. Hilton Wilkes. SENDS A SOUVENIR

In the Field, Dec. 18, 1915

The Secretary, Brant Chapter, I. O. O. F., Brantford, Ont. Please convey to the members of Brant Chapter my sincere thanks for the kindly Xmas Greetings received through James Pascoe, Limited, London, England.

It was a very pleasant surprise to me and I appreciate it very much indeed. I am enclosing a little souvenir in the form of Xmas card made by hand by young women and girls of this country. Wish you all a very Happy New Year.

I remain, yours sincerely,

(Sgd) B. G. Cutcliffe.

HEARD WHILE IN TRENCHES

France, Dec. 14, 1915.

To the Secretary Brant Chapter, I.O. O.F., Brantford, Canada.

Dear Madam:—I am a happy recipient of that delightful "preserve" I have the utmost pleasure in expressing the Brantford Boys' appreciation for your kind thought. We had withdrawn from the trenches, after having had a strenuous spell; in which we lost three of our Brantford Boys. The word was breathed around that a present had arrived from the Daughters of the Empire while we were at the front. The recipients were so grateful that they have given their last that they were filling the trenches with the splendid Daughters of the Empire.

We all join in thanking you again, and further wishing you a Very Prosperous New Year. Yours truly, (Sgd) A. Abbott, S.S.M., 4th C.M.R.

EDIBLES SOON CONSUMED

Somewhere in Belgium, Dec. 15th, 1915.

To the Secretary,

Brant Chapter, I. O. O. F.

Dear Madam:—I would like to be the recipient of your kind and thoughtful present, consisting of a box of biscuits, yesterday, and I wish to tender to the ladies of the Brant Chapter my appreciation and thanks. Needless to say, my fellow officers participated in demolishing the good things contained in the box and on their behalf, also, I thank you. It came as a pleasant surprise, and was therefore, all the more acceptable.

Our ration, which has been good and made an excellent supplement to our rations, which, although good, are by no means noted for their wonderful variety. I am pleased to say that I am in the very best of health and spirits, although we are under canvas and are experiencing some very wet and cold weather. However, we are hoping that the happy time will soon arrive when this struggle is brought to a satisfactory end and we are able to return to peace and comfort.

Once more thanking you I remain,

Yours sincerely,

(Signed) F. Dickson.

POOR OLD BARN.

December 16, 1915, McG. 287.

No. 3, Co., P. C. L., C. E. F. To the Ladies of Brant Chapter, I. O. O. F., Brantford.

Dear Ladies:—I received on Tuesday last a parcel from Pascoe, London, containing your card. I wish to take this opportunity of thanking you for your kindness in remembering me in this manner and to let you know how greatly your parcel was appreciated. In the part of the coun-

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UNITED STATES ASKS AUSTRIA FOR INFORMATION ABOUT PERSIA

Sinn Feiners of Ireland Against Fighting For the Mother Country

Though Ireland's Contribution to the War Has Been Remarkable, Yet It is Wise to Exclude Her From Conscription Bill.

BY SPECIAL WIRE TO THE COURIER.

New York, Jan. 6.—Under the caption of "Ireland and National Service," the Tribune this morning says editorially:

There are many reasons for dealing delicately with Ireland when it comes to enforcing military service in the United Kingdom. Since the war began disloyalty in Ireland has been treated with singular leniency. It is very likely that the government was well advised in winking at the efforts of the more mildly sedulous. Ireland was in a dangerous state of tension, and any attempt at coercion might have been followed by disastrous consequences. It was hardly reasonable to look for whole-hearted loyalty throughout the war. Lord Kitchener said to Mr. Redmond:

"Can you guarantee me 50,000 men if you can, I will say 'thank you.' If you can guarantee me 12,000, I will say 'I am deeply obliged.'"

IRELAND HAS DONE WELL

Ireland has done far better than that, better than the most sanguine had reason to expect, considering how stupidly the business of recruiting was managed from the first. But there has been a good deal of disaffection there, and though it has been very little doubt that it has been allowed to spread to a degree that is disquieting, if not exactly menacing.

OPPOSED TO WAR

The Sinn Feiners from the first have been openly opposed to taking part in what they call England's war.

They fail to see that it is a matter

that concerns Ireland at all. They are not, properly speaking, pro-German, though many of them doubtless would be glad to see England humiliated; they are simply pro-Irish in the most parochial sense and concerned only in their own welfare, as the title indicates. They have gathered about them malcontents of all sorts, but the majority are merely indifferently loyal in the sense that they refuse to regard the war as any business of theirs. Among them are many who at one time supported Mr. Redmond, but who think that he betrayed Ireland's cause in suffering the government to suspend the home rule act.

OBSTRUCTING RECRUITING

The split in the National Volunteers resulted in the creation of a new armed body of men known as the Irish Volunteers. This body is frankly rebellious, and as Mr. Birrell admitted recently in the House of Commons, it has endeavored to obstruct recruiting and to foment disloyalty. Such endeavors have been condoned under the defense of the realm act. It is difficult to determine the strength of the Irish volunteers, but it is said that their numbers have increased of late and that they are well armed.

THE THAMES CARRIES TO THE SEA AN AVERAGE OF 1,865,903 CUBIC FEET OF SEDIMENT A YEAR.

Italy Turned Down Peace Proposals Offered by Huns

BY SPECIAL WIRE TO THE COURIER.

Paris, Jan. 6.—Germany, in the name of Austria, offered to make peace with Italy at the time when the latter prepared to sign the London pact of the allied nations against separate action in making peace, says the Petit Journal.

Austria, declares the newspaper, proposed to cede to Italy, the Italian Trentino and the region now occupied by the Italian forces on the Isonzo and Grado to the south. Albania was to continue autonomous, Italy retaining Avlona with the hinterland. In addition, concessions are declared to have been promised in Asia Minor and the free and peaceable enjoyment by Italy of her African colonies, Tripoli, Massowah and Somaliland guaranteed.

These conditions, says the Petit Journal, were unhesitatingly rejected, and the engagement against a separate peace was signed.

CENSORSHIP IS RIGID

A despatch to The Temps from Rome, says: "The Italian military authorities, regardless of the impatience and nervousness of the newspapers, continue to conceal the details of the operations of the Italian army in Albania. It is difficult to justify by circumstances, yet the situation admits of some general information."

"The Italian expedition is encountering immense difficulties in building roads through the rough country in areas with lagoons, marshes and streams. The expedition has not been able to build roads quickly in the semi-tropical rains, but the road from Durazzo to Elbassan has been greatly improved. The practical work being done is in preparation for the free movement of Italian and Serbian troops and their supplies."

NEVER MORE CONFIDENT

Rome, Jan. 6.—"Never as now has the Serbian race felt so unified, strengthened as it is by faith in its destiny," declared M. Markovitch, who is here among the refugees from Serbia.

M. Markovitch, who has been in Greece, said the Austro-German forces north of Saloniki, were not yet sufficiently strong to attack that city. He saw former Premier Venizelos, who considers his return to power now impossible, said M. Markovitch, but has confidence in the ultimate triumph of the allies.

LABOR'S VOTE.

By Special Wire to the Courier.

LONDON, Jan. 6, 4:10 p.m.—The temper of the Labor Congress was tested to-day by an amendment to the official resolution to the effect that the congress should support a measure of compulsion by forcing the single men to attest. The amendment was defeated on a card vote by the overwhelming majority of 2,121,000 against 541,000.

HENDERSON BACKS ASQUITH.

London, Jan. 6.—4:15 p.m.—Arthur Henderson, president of the Board of Education and leader of the Labor party in the House of Commons, served notice on the Labor congress to-day that if it decided to oppose the refusal to accept such a decision; that he would immediately resign his seat in the House of Commons and would ask his constituents whether they endorsed his action or not.

NOT A DIPLOMATIC MISSION.

Special Wire to the Courier. Peking, Jan. 6.—The Chinese minister of agriculture and commerce Chow-Tzu-Chi will leave on January 15 for Tokyo as special envoy of President Yuan Shi Kai, to confer with the highest Chinese order on the Japanese Emperor. The foreign office issues a statement denying that the mission of Chow-Tzu-Chi relates to Japanese recognition of the Chinese monarchy.

NEWFOUNDLAND ANNUALLY EXPORTS 1,000,000 TONS OF WOOD PULP FOR PAPER MANUFACTURE TO THE UNITED KINGDOM.

Ambassador Penfield Cables Washington That up to That Time Had Received No Reply From Austrian Officials.

Washington, Jan. 6.—Ambassador Penfield cabled to-day he had presented informally to the Vienna foreign office the American Government's request for any information on the destruction of the British liner Persia and at the time of filing his despatch, had received no reply.

NO FURTHER PROOFS

American Consul Garrels, at Alexandria reported that the survivors he has gathered from the Persia survivors gave no more proofs that a submarine torpedoed the liner, or regarding its nationality than were contained in his first despatches.

ASK INFORMALLY

Ambassador Penfield was instructed to ask the Austrian Government informally for any information it might have on the Persia which would develop the facts in the case and help the American Government decide how the liner was destroyed. Consul Garrels was instructed to get affidavits for the same purpose.

So far the only actual statement tending to prove that the ship was torpedoed came from one of the officers of the ship. He said he saw what he thought was the wake of a torpedo. No submarine was seen at any time.

Further despatches from Ambassador Penfield are expected at the state department probably late to-day, and at any event to-morrow. Meanwhile other consular agents along the Mediterranean coast, like Consul Garrels, seeking further information.

THE ABSENCE OF FURTHER DEFINITE ADVICES IS HOLDING THE UNITED STATES CONCERNED AT A STANDSTILL.

President Visited. Chairman Stone of the foreign relations committee, discussed the situation with the President to-day and talked of other questions expected to come up at a meeting of the committee to-morrow.

The president told Senator Stone no additional information of importance has been received on the Persia incident and expressed the hope that until the government had formulated its policy there would be as little discussion as possible in the Senate.