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MONTREAL, MONDAY, FEBRUARY 1, 1915.

No Conference Now.

It is gratifying to learn, through apparently authorized reports from Ottawa, that the Dominion Government will not join in the movement for the calling at an early date of a meeting of the Imperial Conference in London. The suggestion of such a meeting seems to have found some favor in Australia, and in London some writers in the press think that the time is ripe for such a meeting. Of the patriotic purpose of those who advance this view there can be no question. The war has undoubtedly enlarged the sphere of influence of the Dominions in the affairs of the Empire. The response which has been made in all quarters to the call to arms has given the colonies generally, and particularly the self-governing dominions, a higher and stronger position than they formerly held, and created a natural desire that as these sections of the Empire are playing an important part in its affairs at a time of war, they should be afforded an early opportunity to participate in the affairs of the Empire generally. For this purpose, it is claimed, representatives of the Imperial and Dominion Governments should be brought together by the assembling of the conference. While the motive that prompts these suggestions is of the highest character, demanding for them respectful attention, we feel assured that on full consideration of the matter the public men of the Empire who have to be responsible for the taking of official action will come to the conclusion that this is not the time for such consultation as is proposed. So far as the war is concerned, it is certain there is nothing that could be accomplished through the conference that could not be as well brought about under the existing order of things; and so far as Imperial questions, apart from the war, are concerned, it is no less certain that while the Empire is engaged in a struggle for its life, those wider questions could not receive the calm and intelligent consideration that will be necessary when such questions have to be dealt with. Even if there were any difficulties between the Motherland and the daughter nations, the conditions brought about by the war would lay them aside for discussion at a future time. But happily there are no such difficulties. There is not a part of the Empire which does not feel that it has enjoyed the largest possible measure of liberty under the British flag. Probably there is nothing in the history of the war that is more likely to make an impression on the mind of other nations than the manner in which the British colonial system has proved its wisdom and its strength, through the splendid action of the colonies in voluntarily placing their resources of men and money at the service of the Crown. Even the statesmen of Germany, slow to understand true liberty, must look with amazement on the results of the British system, and contrast it with the German idea of colonial government.

The paramount duty of the British people to-day, whether they are at home in the British Isles or in the Overseas Dominions, is to recognize the magnitude of the struggle into which they have been plunged and to put forth every possible effort, making every sacrifice that is necessary, until victory is won. What shall happen after the war may be an interesting subject for thought, but it will be time enough when the war is ended, and victory complete to call conferences for the consideration of the problems of the future.

Rivals of the War Horse.

The European war is not devoid of peculiar side lights. From Britain comes the report that a camel corps is among the Indian troops which have reached the Continent. The entrance of this animal into the European conflict takes us back from stern modernism into the romantic past. For, though now to present-day battle in Europe, the camel had its place in the frays of old. Tamerlane, or Timur Beg, who became lord over twenty-seven kingdoms from what is now the region of Moscow down into India, found the camel a medium of victory in a manner which would have made our most blood-curdling melodrama mild in comparison. Tamerlane, terrible and mighty, lived in the fourteenth century, when brute force rather than cannon were weapons of war. He made himself potentate over many Asiatic nations, and finally directed his army against India, the richest of prizes. Heading an immense horde, he marched to the gates of Delhi in 1398. Opposed to him was an Indian Prince who headed a host of fifty thousand men. The Indians sent a herd of elephants, whose tusks bore poisoned swords, against the invading horse. But Tamerlane was resourceful even in distress. He loaded a herd of camels with hay and set fire to the hay. The camels were directed against Delhi. Terrified by the burning hay, the elephants wandered around, killing many Indians in their mad stampede. And Tamerlane won the campaign. No elephants have been employed in the present war. But it will be interesting to note how effective camels are in modern warfare, even though we can hardly expect a repetition of Tamerlane's strategy.

The Salt Mines of Wieliczka.

The war is having at least one beneficial effect, viz., the brushing up of our history and geography. For example, the destruction of Louvain revived our interest in that historical centre, and its many points of interest. At present the fighting in Galicia is raging in the neighborhood of Wieliczka, which is located but a few miles from Cracow. Wieliczka possesses the greatest salt mines in the world, and is annually visited by thousands of tourists. As a matter of fact, the salt mines underneath the city constitute a town in themselves. They extend for a distance of over two and a half miles in length, and two-thirds of a

mile in width. They comprise eleven levels, the lowest being nearly a thousand feet deep. The different levels are connected by flights of steps hewn out of the solid rock salt. The mine possesses chapels, a tramway system, a railway and railway station, a ballroom with a regular orchestra, and many other halls all hewn out of the salt and elaborately decorated. The mine has been worked for over eight hundred years, for the last hundred by the Austrian Government. It employs a thousand workers and turns out sixty thousand tons of salt a year.

The pony tramways in the salt mines extend over sixty-five miles, while twenty-two miles of railway thread their way through the various passages. All the lines meet in a central station, which is equipped with large waiting rooms, offices, refreshment rooms and other modern devices. The chapel of St. Anthony is the oldest building in the mine, having been constructed in 1691. It contains three altars, a pulpit and much statuary all carved out of rock salt. A more modern chapel is that of St. Cunigund, which is reached by forty-six salt steps. The chapel is fifty yards long by fifteen yards wide, and thirty feet high and is used regularly for worship. The ballroom is a very large room where the miners hold festivities, and where tourists are entertained. The latter are now entirely absent, but undoubtedly when the war is over they will again flock to the famous salt mine, as well as to the many other interesting places in Europe, which have been devastated by the warring nations.

Worthless Shoe and Treasonable Manufacturers.

For some time complaints have been made regarding the shoes issued to the Canadians for service at the front. A dispatch received on Saturday stated that when the Canadians cross to France they will be furnished with British-made boots instead of Canadian footwear. This, to say the least, is not complimentary to Canada.

While making every possible allowance for alarmist rumors and sensational journalistic reports, it is clearly evident that the shoes furnished the Canadians were absolutely worthless, for military purposes. If this be true, and an investigation must be made to find out the truth or falsity of the rumors, the manufacturers furnishing such footwear to the Canadians should be prosecuted. There are no words sufficiently strong to characterize manufacturers who will supply soldiers with inferior and defective footwear. Shoes are the most important part of a soldier's equipment, and to expect men to fight for their country in shoes that are falling to pieces is treasonable. Manufacturers who have turned out goods of this character should be treated as enemies of their country and punished accordingly. The penalty for treason is well known. The Canadian Manufacturers' Association should also take up the matter. Some time ago they put on a campaign advocating the purchase of Made-in-Canada goods. The failure of some of our manufacturers to live up to the reputation of the high mark set by the Manufacturers' Association, is a sad blow to our prestige as a manufacturing nation. The men who supplied worthless shoes should be read out of the Association, and their names and the goods they turned out branded from end to end of the country. The Government must investigate this whole matter of supplying shoes to our Canadian Contingent.

The Germans are making good the threat of Von Tirpitz to sink British merchantmen. This indicates pretty decisively that the Germans are becoming desperate.

Our good Montreal citizens who opened the new Baby Hospital on Saturday are not up to date. They should have had some representatives of German "Kultur" at the formality.

Despatches from France tell of the influx of British troops, in some cases twenty-eight transports arriving with men in a single day. This means from 25,000 to 30,000 men are crossing the Channel daily, and at that rate it will not take long to roll up a formidable fighting force.

Fifty thousand spectators attended a football match in London on Saturday. Some time ago an agitation was started in Great Britain, having for its object the suppression of football games, or, failing that, a refusal on the part of the press to publish the results. It hardly seems right that fifty thousand young men should attend a football match when their more patriotic fellow-countrymen are fighting for the defence of their country. The same is true of Canadians who throng to hockey matches and refuse to enlist.

Bread has gone up a cent in Chicago, and hereafter a loaf will cost six cents instead of five. From St. John, N.B., comes advice stating that bread in that city has been advanced a cent, and from today on will cost nine cents to the householder. In view of the abnormal advances in the price of wheat these advances are not to be wondered at, but will nevertheless be felt by the poor.

WHY DOES SNOW MAKE US GLAY?

Snow brings a curious sense of friendliness and gaiety. Though a child of the cold, the gentle sister of the frost, it has a warm, caressing, playful way with it, and, particularly in the city, at once evokes a mood of holiday-making even in the most serious and care-worn hearts. Mankind at large seems to be filled with a boyish glee at its coming, and, at whatever expense to our convenience, tie-ups of traffic, and other interruptions of our serious business, the wilder it whirls and the thicker it falls the better pleased we grow. We read of telegraph wires down, of trains north and west snowed in, of snowplows fighting their way through twenty-foot drifts, and the like excitement with kindling eyes. We take a personal satisfaction in the triumphs of this wild, white, simple thing from the wilderness that is able with such ease to throw out of gear all the complex machinery of our boasted civilization, and with its soft fingers stop so effectively the pompous work of the world. Deep in our hearts, I am sure, we are glad of the enforced interruption of the dull routine of our lives. It was so at school we might have rejoiced in any happening, however calamitous, from the burning alive of the head master to an epidemic of scarlet fever, that for the time made going to school an absolute impossibility. So the coming of the snow proclaims a sort of elementary holiday, and, however the superficial grown-up side of us affects irritation at the state of the streets, and fumes and fusses at the blocked trolleys, the eternal schoolboy in us secretly exults and entertains a wild desire to snowball the passers-by and roll in the luscious gathering drifts.—Richard Le Gallienne, in Harper's Magazine.

CHECK LOAFING.

Dr. Wiley, the food faddist, recommends lump sugar as an article of diet for athletes in training. It may have a tendency to check loafing.—Vancouver Sun.

WASTREL COMMONWEALTHS.

(From the New York Post.)

The multiplication of Minnesota's talents proceeds at a rate that must leave her sisters ruefully conscious of the saddest words of tongue or pen. Her auditors' pertinacity in discovering that previous estimates of the public land values were all too low is nothing less than an attempt to rub it in.

Last year the prediction was that Minnesota, from her iron, timber, and farm lands, would ultimately have a fund of \$200,000,000; now it appears that it will be still greater, and may be much greater. Her iron lands this year bring in a million; by 1920 they should bring in four millions. North and South Dakota are abetting her, moreover, in the humiliation of the remainder of the west. Each is likely to have, in the end, a fund of above 10,000,000—the one having 2,500,000, the other 3,000,000 acres.

In painful contrast Iowa has sold all but 200 acres, and has \$4,800,000 to show for it; Wisconsin has sold all but 16,000, and has a debt; Michigan has sold all and has \$5,800,000; Illinois has sold all, and has \$1,200,000. The original patrimony of each of these States was from 6,000,000 to 9,000,000 acres. Texas alone is an exception, with an enormous area expected ultimately to accumulate \$30,000,000. All these wastrel commonwealths must now suffer the spectacle of Minnesota buying their state bonds and batten on the interest.

ROMANCE IN WAR.

An American Red Cross surgeon has married a Russian princess: was serving her country as a nurse. Modern methods have not yet succeeded in knocking all the romance out of war.—Nelson News.

Postal Savings deposits in the United States have increased \$15,750,000 since January 10th. Total deposits \$59,200,000.

"A LITTLE NONSENSE NOW AND THEN"

A countryman in Savannah observed a gang of darkies laboring on the streets, each wearing a ball and chain. He asked one why that ball was chained to his leg. "To keep people from stealing it," said the darky; "heap of thieves about here."—Argonaut.

Every little while a warship is reported off the coast of Peru. On closer investigation they have proved to be Peruvian banks.—Vancouver Sun.

"Now, then, young man," said the angry farmer, "didn't you see that board when you came trespassing in these woods?"

"Yes, sir," said the culprit meekly.

"Well, what did it say?"

"I dunno. 'I was too polite to read any more when I saw the first word was 'Private.'"

The little fellow was crying bitterly by the roadside, and the good kind lady stopped and patted him gently on the head.

"Why, my little man, what's the matter?"

"Matter, mum? I have been playing truant all day, and I've just remembered the holidays began yesterday."

When Mark Twain, in his early days, was editor of a Missouri paper, a superstitious subscriber wrote to him saying that he had found a spider in his paper, and asking him whether that was a sign of good or bad. The humorist wrote him this answer and printed it:

"Old Subscriber.—Finding a spider in your paper was neither good luck nor bad luck for you. The spider was merely looking over our paper to see what merchant is not advertising, so that he can go to that store, spin his web across the door and lead a life of undisturbed peace ever afterward."—Exchange.

Weights and Measures Commissioner Hartigan said, in New York, the other day:

"These short weights, these short measures, all attributed to the war! Pah!"

"I heard a story about a man in a restaurant. This man, as he sat at a table in a restaurant with his wife, frowned, and took his napkin and made as if to wipe off the surface of his plate—but the waiter grabbed his arm."

"Hold on, sir," he said. "Don't."

"But," said the man, "there's a speck on my plate."

"That ain't no speck, sir," said the waiter. "That's yer steak. Wartime portions, sir."—New York Press.

The usual large crowd was gathered at the corner of a busy thoroughfare waiting for cars. An elderly lady, red in the face, flustered and fussy, dug her elbows to convenient ribs irrespective of owners.

A fat man on her left was the recipient of a particularly vicious jab. She yelled at him, "Tell me!" He winced slightly and moved to one side.

She, too, side-stepped and thumped him vigorously on the back.

"Tell me," she persisted, "does it make any difference which of these cars I take to Bethnal Green Cemetery?"

"Not to me, madam," he answered, slipping through an opening in the crowd.—Weekly Scotsman.

JOIN IN THE TRENCHES.

"No, mither, get you in the hoose."

I needn't bear the brunt of one night in the trenches, like Oor sodgers at the front."

D'y'e ken, I couldn't settle down."

We'll think of my son."

"He'll get his death of cold," I moaned.

"And he my only one."

And thoctht that I'd keek out again."

Afore tea bed I'd go."

Guid sakes, eh, this is terrible!"

It had begun tea snow!"

Next morning, back at six o'clock."

Outside I hears a moan:"

"It was a living telele."

John frozen tae the bone!"

I got him thawed, an' aff tae bed."

"What like wis it, my son?"

"Mither," he said, "oor sodger lads are heroes, every one!"

"Aye, heroes every one of them."

You're richt, my son," says I.

"Willing to battle for their King."

And for their country die."

No thought of self, in freedom's cause."

They're over in the van."

Hate off, you stay-at-homes, salute."

The British soldier man."

—Scottish American.

WHERE ZEROS COUNTED.

When President James A. Farrell of the United States Steel Corporation visited Farrell some years ago, in the course of his remarks he stated that the Farrell payroll amounted to \$5,000,000 annually. The wide-awake business men conceived the idea of adopting as the town's slogan, "Farrell's payroll is \$5,000,000."

An electric sign bearing this inscription in big letters and figures was placed near the Pennsylvania station to greet the eyes of all travellers. The sign, however, became somewhat neglected, and one by one the little electric bulbs have winked out until it fixes the payroll at only \$5,000. This was brought to the attention of the citizens, who lost no time in getting an electrician on the job, and they have again increased the payroll to the original figures.—Wall Street Journal.

WINTER IN INDIA.

The statement made to a special correspondent in Northern France by a high dignitary from Persawar that "we see more snow in our parts than you ever see in England," will help to remove a popular misconception. When England's Indian troops landed at Marseilles German newspapers expressed the belief—no doubt the wish fathered the thought—that England's mahogany warriors would never survive a winter campaign in Western Europe. It is often forgotten that in India you can find any kind of climate. In the northern zone, where curiously enough extremes of heat are greatest, the night temperature on some of the elevated plains often fall to within a dozen degrees of zero. Troops accustomed to a weather glass that may rise or drop 60 degrees or so in twenty-four hours are not likely to succumb to the rigors of a French—or German—winter.—London Chronicle.

THE BUSINESS AND FINANCIAL WEEK.

Industry and trade continue their slow but steady return to normal conditions. All accounts agree on this, and the news items from various parts of the country substantiate the general impression. The important thing is in the re-employment of labor now involuntarily idle, and this involves the appearance of the railroads and others as active buyers in the iron, steel, equipment and other markets. Caution on the part of the great industries and of the prospective builders in our cities and towns is not unnatural, but there is such a thing as unreasonable caution. The manufacturers on the Chicago committee on unemployment, who, like Mr. Crane, are announcing extension and repair work for the first part of February, are setting a good example.—Chicago Tribune.

GUNS AND SPEED.

The action in North Sea reveals again that war is a question of legs and guns. On the sea superiority will be final and decisive and inferiority will be catastrophic. The "get there fastest with the most men" means, on the sea, bring into action the heaviest guns with the most knots speed per hour. The ship that keeps its opponent in range and itself out of range has destroyed its enemy regardless of the skill, courage, and devotion of the men on the inferior ship.—Chicago Tribune Commercial.

ALWAYS THE SAME.

Item in Forty Years Ago To-day column, Winnipeg Free Press: "The Bishop of Paderborn has been imprisoned by the Germans in the fortress of Wesel." The same yesterday, to-day, but not forever.—Lethbridge Herald.

ARMS AND THE MAN.

A Prince Rupert man lost an arm and is suing for \$3,500 as a result. A Granby Bay, B.C., man also lost an arm and is asking \$25,000. Seemingly there is a difference in arms.—Medicine Hat News.

A MODEST MAN.

The Kaiser has modestly decorated himself with the Iron Cross. There's a man, says the Boston Transcript, who never lets his left breast know what his right hand is doing.

ANY PORTE IN A STORM.

Some people find it difficult to account for Germany's alliance with Turkey. Probably the Prussian War Lords acted on the old seaman's motto, "Any Port in a storm."—Belleville Ontario.

FACING STARVATION.

The Association of Physicians of Frankfurt-on-Main says that guinea pigs are excellent food. Germany seems to be drifting toward the zoological gardens to keep herself from starvation.—Saskatoon Phoenix.

The playing of German music by London orchestras has been discontinued. Experience with German diplomatic notes did not tend to make it popular.—Vancouver Sun.

The Day's Best Editorial

THE GERMANS AND THE DACIA.

After making due allowance for partisan bias, the British interpretation of the significance of the Dacia incident still carries a conviction of accuracy of diagnosis which commends it to the thoughtful. We had almost said to the prayerful, consideration of the American nation.

Agents of the Teutonic peoples have already been guilty of several attempts to sow the seeds of distrust and ill-feeling in this country. Men like Dr. Dernberg, Herman Ridder and Ambassador von Bernstorff and publications such as "The Fatherland" have striven without pretense of concealment to this end. They have tried to revive old and forgotten and forgotten enemies which have been buried under the fact of a hundred years of peace. Some have even gone so far as to give voice to implied threats of what will happen to this nation in the event of Germany's final triumph unless we show more friendship for Germany at this time.

In this matter of the projected voyage of the Dacia it is easy to believe the British have the details as well as the general scenario correctly portrayed. If Great Britain recedes from its position and allows the vessel to proceed to a German port it affords a precedent whereby all the German merchantmen now interned in American harbors may be set free by the observance of a mere technical formality and at once become food carriers to a besieged nation. Great Britain would recede only under pressure, and friendship between it and America would suffer in consequence. But if Great Britain refuses to give way and Washington insists, then arises a situation that may easily cause most serious complications between the two governments.

The immediate duty of the Government is to act firmly, decisively and wisely. The nation can only hope for the best and put up a prayer that headstrong statesmen in Washington will be guided at least in one by prudence, will recede from the false position into which they have been betrayed and will at once withdraw the support hitherto given by them to the Dacia undertaking.—Detroit Free Press.

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THE PRESIDENT'S NEUTRALITY.

We are not at war, but we are in the midst of war. At such a time all interests should stand behind the President as far as our foreign relations are concerned. Attacks on him and his foreign policy encourage the belligerents to play the game of dragging us into the conflict or, at least, of creating strained relations with one side or the other. Former President Taft has set a good example which some of his old associates and supporters should follow. The Federal administration has been strictly neutral and that is the best that we can do while we have to sit on a powder barrel that nine other powers are trying to touch off.

Opponents of the President in both Houses of Congress are trying in divers ways to attain the same result, the embarrassment of his administration in dealing with foreign relations. Some denounce him as being too friendly to the Allies, while others charge him with conspiring to aid Germany by purchases. The German ships interned in our ports. President Wilson has explained candidly his attitude and the reasons for it in the open letter from Secretary of State Bryan to Senator Stone. Every reasonable complaint has been attended to and the dignity of the United States has been upheld in every case. This letter contains a clear and comprehensive definition of the rights and duties of neutrals.

We cannot blow hot and cold in dealing with half the world at war. When the Civil War and again belligerent in the days of the Civil War and again during our little war with Spain, it set up certain rules regarding contraband that cannot be consistently set aside. We cannot protect against the enforcement of rules which we followed in our last two wars. We then declared all articles from which arms and ammunition are manufactured to be contraband of war and we expressly included copper in the list. The President's task is a heavy one and he should be helped to bear it. Our little slip might inflict tremendous losses on our export trade, disorganize our industries and drive our own farmers to the verge of revolution. The President is and must be neutral at home and abroad. This very contradictions of his opponents prove that they do not know what he is personal views, which proves how evenly he holds the balance.—New York Commercial.

A SHORTAGE OF COPPER.

A recent price quoted for a ton of copper delivered in Germany was \$276. The price in England at the same time was \$221. Germany's need of copper for war purposes steadily increases. Cartridge cases for rifles and quick firing guns are made of an alloy of copper and zinc, and the metals must be of a high degree of purity. Copper wire is indispensable for field telephones, and in the electrical industry generally nothing but copper will serve for many purposes. As for instance, the windings on dynamos. Aluminum has been tried as a substitute, but the use of it would involve risks in the making of war material. Before the war Germany was consuming 250,000 tons of copper, and the home production was only about 25,000 tons.—New York Sun.

GREAT BRITAIN AND THE DACIA.

Great Britain is within her rights as a belligerent in declining to assent to the voyage of the Dacia with a cargo of cotton to Rotterdam. Great Britain proposes to test the good faith of the transfer of the ship from German to American registry, and it is better for the relations of the United States and Great Britain that the question should be settled as soon as possible.—New York Sun.

TOOK OVER 150 SHARES U.S.

New York Syndicate Said chasing all of Stock Lick by Europe

GOOD GENERAL BU

Sears-Roebuck Responded to 50 per cent dividend by an Extremely Substantial Investment Sentiment is Strengthened

New York, February 1.—At the opening of the market was moderately active and there was a disposition to wait for news as to whether or not the new dividend would prove low enough to the stock.

The opening on Steel was made at 33 down to 33, but a few minutes later a rally of a fraction from the minimum Interboro-Metropolitan preferred on 33 and was an active feature on the dividend would be declared for the second year.

New York, February 1.—During the day the market was dull without discernible tendency.