

# THE BRITISH COLUMBIA MONTHLY

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## Notes of the Month

A self-righteous spirit either on the part of an individual or a nation is to be deprecated. But we should fail in observing the signs of the times if we did not perceive that the disintegration of the Central powers, which has culminated during the past month in a series of humiliating events, has been the natural result of a departure from the path of fealty to high principle. It has taken more than four years to vindicate the sacredness of the treaty with Belgium, but it has been done, and now the Germans no doubt wish that they had regarded it as something more than a "scrap of paper."

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One of the most important steps towards winning the war was taken when the Allied Council met at Versailles and gave the supreme command to Marshal Foch. The events that have happened since have formed a continuous chain of evidence that the choice was justified. Little did the young Foch of former years, perseveringly studying the theory of military operations, imagine that the day would come when his knowledge would be put to such world-stirring use.

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The council of Versailles made Foch an autocrat. The enemy also had their autocrat, but he was of another kind. His autocracy enabled him to break and ruin a nation that might have continued to stand fairly well in the world's estimation. The All Highest is now the All Lowest, for all the world now knows him as an abject coward and poltroon. His crimes have been so flagrant that even his deluded people are waking up to the recognition of their enormity. As an autocrat he cannot escape an autocrat's responsibility. Whether this will bring him to the scaffold or not seems at present uncertain. But his definite removal from the stage appears to be one of the necessary steps towards the world's security.

In the heart of the Empire and in the heart of the city of London the little Welshman from the Antipodes, Hon. W. M. Hughes, the Australian premier, recently said some cogent words. Justice for Germany was his demand, and in his mind justice can only be done to Germany by doing justice to a world which Germany has impoverished. Mr. Hughes pointed out that of all the belligerent nations, Germany is the best prepared—save for raw materials—to resume pre-war activities. She has ruined the French and Belgian plants, but her own are ready to start at the sound of the gong tomorrow.

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In the heroism of the nurses and doctors whose lives were sacrificed to duty during the recent epidemic we cannot help seeing the effect of the noble examples set by our soldiers on the field. It was noticeable that some whom their friends had thought rather frivolous and empty-headed were among the first to volunteer their services. That these should have taken their places among the more serious-minded shows that our estimates of human nature may sometimes be wrong. The desire that some permanent memorial shall be erected to the memory of those who have given their lives is one that will commend itself to all.

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The epidemic was a test in many ways. It tested our institutions as well as our human nature. Our provincial and municipal arrangements, and especially the capacity for resource that was displayed by our medical health officers and hospital officials, were things to be thankful for.

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The regulations forbidding assemblies during the existence of the plague were, with a few exceptions, loyally obeyed. This was sufficient evidence that, in the view of the great majority, they were