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PRESS DECEPTIONS.

At the present time it is apparent that an atmosphere of gloom pervades throughout the British Empire on account of the war outlook.

We meet a friend, and after the usual formulae as to the weather have been properly gone through and disposed of, the friend, or if he is a wee bit slow, you say, "Gee! This is an awful war! Things certainly look black now," and so on, ad lib. Your friend agrees with you, unless, perhaps, you are unwise enough to predict the date—there or thereabouts—of the termination of the war. On this point he will take issue with you; and in spite of his gloomy attitude, and yours too, he will look forward to a satisfactory settlement of this strife.

It is only the British stoicism, bull-doggedness—call it what you will—that really saves the country from collapse at this stage of the game. The determination to see a job through is born in us; we've started to lick the Hun, and we're going to do it. But why this gloomy state of being?—Have we come to our last man or last pound?—A negative is the answer to these and all such questions.

This state of gloominess is just a temporary state of being which really has no bearing upon the ultimate result, and which has been created for us by the press. For the past two years we've been told in glaring headlines, in bold type of the Allied supremacy in men, guns and aircraft; of the dejected and forlorn condition of the German troops; of the starvation and riots, attended with mailed fist rule in German towns; and a score of other soul-comforting items. The net result of all this is now coming home to us. True, the editor of a newspaper has to 'feature' his 'stuff' in order to sell his paper and he, poor devil, could not foresee the Russian debacle nor could he from his cramped viewpoint, controlled as he is, do anything but what he has done. It is not him we blame for leading us astray, for buoying up our hopes, but rather the system of newspaper display in vogue today.

One can almost read the news by scanning the headlines, is an expression often made use of, and in many instances it is quite a correct assertion; but if we go a little more carefully into things we will often find that the headline is not always designed to condense the news but rather to 'catch the eye', to pander to popular sentiment. Look a little more deeply and you will sometimes find that the headline represents, in boldest type, the most insignificant part of a despatch so featured to produce the feeling of security and satisfaction of the public.

Such a system is all right so long as nothing happens of any grave nature. When, however, the 'bottom falls out of things' it is too late to recover; and the headliner is 'up against a stiff proposition'. His bluff is called.

We are in that state today. We've been nurtured on startling, misleading 'heads' until the 'bubble has burst'. The headliner has fallen down completely and has at last, had to feature the worst. This wonderful 'back kick' of the Russian that he has been setting up in captions for months past is a myth, and we now face the grave situation as a genuinely fooled public.

Our press has become Americanised, it is true, in the respect of headlines and features and front page stuff. That's all right enough but there is no real reason why we should mislead our public by our headlines.

The Britisher is never better than with his back to the wall. Let him know the worst at all times. Give him a newspaper with the news dispatch and if headlining has come to stay, let us have a truthful caption, representing as nearly as possible the general trend of the dispatch. We don't, as a public, mind how you refer to a murder case or the actions of a city council; but when you give us war news let us have it right.

ATTEMPT TO BESMIRCH OUR CHARACTER.

"Knots and Lashings" has no need to come out as champion of the soldier against a clergyman 'run wild'. Others have done this for us, and in the public statements of the Rev. A. H. Moore, Mayor Black, and the chief of police in St. Johns, Mr. Hughes has his answer.

The character of the officers and men of the E. T. D. has had an indirect attack made upon it. We are jealous of our reputation and feel that in spite of this dastardly attack our good name has not suffered as the statements are admittedly false.

If Mr. Hughes made the statements as reported, his only way out is by a public apology. Is he man enough?

GRAND CONCERT IN
SERGEANTS' MESS

As announced in last week's issue, the "Grand Concert" in the Sergeants' Mess was held on Tuesday, March 12th, before a large and fashionable audience including representatives from the Elite of St. Johns.

R.S.M. Johnstone presided and after a few well chosen remarks, the concert proceeded. The numbers given were all good but special mention must be made of several.

The first number—a "comic" song by C.S.M. Evans—was well rendered, this gentleman knowing whereof he sang, his song brought tears to the eyes of the audience—his own being noticeably "frothy".

Sgt. Boyd was unfortunate in his first selection. His song, "I go to Church on Sunday like a soldier and a man" not having been properly rehearsed. This popular melody should always be sung and acted by one familiar with the theme. His second selection, "They go wild, simply wild, over me" was more suitable to his style and brought deserved applause.

The fifth number, "Cohen on the telephone" by Sgt. Henson, was changed at the last minute due to this gentleman's indisposition. However his cousin Pte. Dlott (who happened to be present) saved the day by taking his place. This gentleman gave a splendid interpretation of this little drama.

C.S.M. Estey's selection was beautifully rendered. His powerful "Base" voice and disposition being well suited to the piece.

REPORTER.

RIGHT DRESS!

To you dear Editor
I pen my tale of woe,
I'm greatly in distress,
It worries me, and though
It's nothing more nor less
Than a simple thing like Dress,
It seems a bally mess,
Don't cher know

We're dressing in the morning,
We're dressing on the square,
There's dressing on our roast beef,
Though I admit it's rare.
We learn to 'dress the officers,
And how to 'dress our mail.
I've puzzled now for hours,
Alas to no avail

It's "Right dress", then "Left dress",
Or "Dress up by the flank".
"Throw out your chest like all the rest",
"Dress up the rear rank",
It's "Form fours", then dress again,

Now here's my simple quest—
What do you think would happen if
The army wasn't dressed.

Poet Lowrate.

Real heroes act as their own press agents.