

THE CANADIAN CORPS READY FOR BATTLE 11

tion of its own strength and superiority over the foe. Passchendaele had been the last of these occasions. On that field fell many brave young Canadians, but the Corps went on to victory, not daunted by loss nor unduly elated by success.

A number of special causes contributed to the pre-eminence of the Canadian Corps—"As good as the old Guards," they said in London. One was that it was at full strength throughout. Where owing to the waste of war other Corps were obliged to cut down the number of their bayonets, the Canadian Corps always maintained its forty-eight Battalions of Infantry, divided into twelve Brigades and four Divisions, with unusual strength in Artillery and Corps Troops. Right up to the Battle of Cambrai reinforcements of trained men were always forthcoming, and this proved the wisdom which resisted proposals to create the 5th. Canadian Infantry Division, and then a sixth, with the ultimate prospect of two weak Corps of three Divisions each. By a rather happy chance this proposal went so far as the actual formation in the depots in England of the 5th. Division, whose trained units proved highly valuable reinforcements, while the 5th. Canadian Divisional Artillery was brought over to France intact and thus the Canadian Corps had at its disposal no less than five artillery divisions, besides a number of heavy artillery brigades, throughout these operations.

Much of the success during the intensive fighting to follow was due to the great strengthening the Canadian Corps received during the winter and spring of 1918. On Aug. 8 the Corps went into action stronger numerically than any other Corps in Europe. How this was brought about, and in face of what dangers, is best explained in Sir Arthur Currie's own words:—"At this time (*i.e.*, the winter of 1917-18) the British Army was undergoing far-reaching alterations in its organization. The situation as regards man-power appeared to be such that, in order to maintain in the field the same number of Divisions, it was necessary to reorganize the Infantry Brigades from a four-battalion basis to a three-battalion basis. . . .