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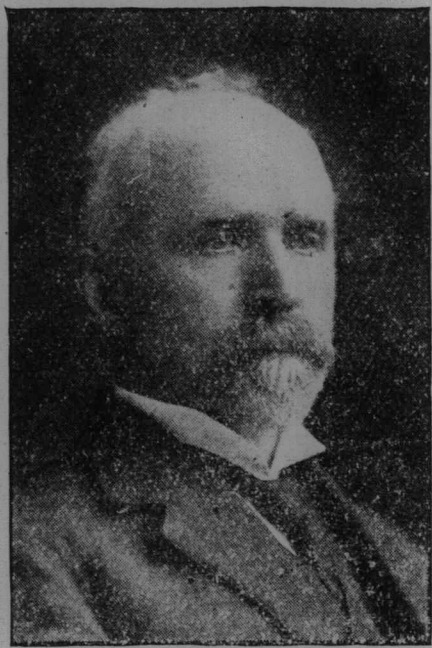
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## Virtue Treads Paths That End Not In the Grave

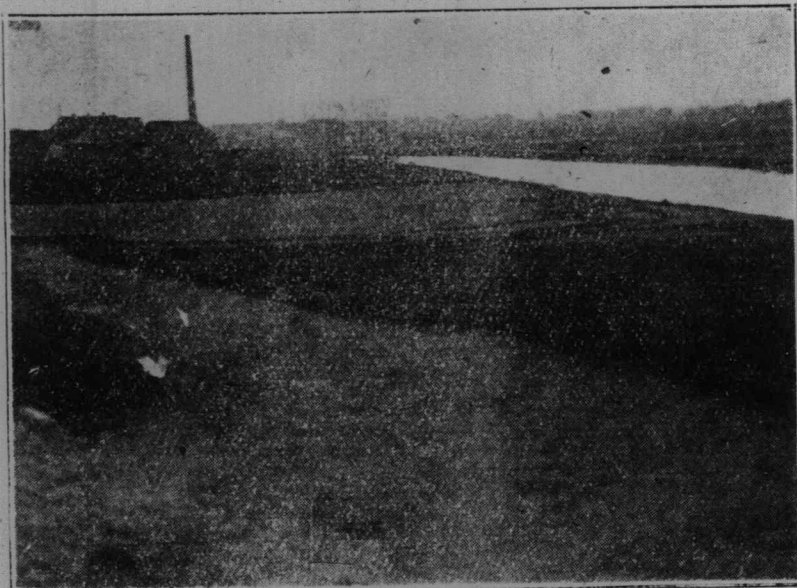
By DR. J. ALEX. ROBINSON.

BEAUMONT HAMEL marked an epoch in the History of Newfoundland. Whilst it may not yet be said "the grief is past" surely "the glory dies not." The War's aftermath has brought many illusions and many disappointments, but not all the unrest and wretchedness can rob the world of memories that must enrich it so long as time endures. Those gallant lads who so promptly answered the call of country, when all that its manhood cherished was threatened, recked little of consequences; to them it was a crusade on which they entered, and, come life or death,



Hon. Dr. J. Alex. Robinson.

they were content, so long as the freedom of their land and nation, and the safety of their wives and mothers and families was assured. The inherent spirit of adventure may have been theirs, and God forbid that ever it should disappear from British breasts. A nation of shop-keepers our erstwhile foes but present friends and cordial allies were once wont to call us, but it is far more, — a nation of adventurers, of pioneers and of builders, a nation to whom the arts of industry and Peace most appeal but prepared at all times to place Honour before the truce of pusillanimity, and duty before ease. The spirit that animated the forefathers whose strong right arms and fearless courage had built up the mightiest Empire the world has



Where our boys crossed the Lys—a spot that many of them will recall.

known, burns as brightly to-day in the breasts of her sons whether in the Motherlands, in the young and lusty Dominions, or in the colonies overseas, as during the long, sad years of conflict and of carnage.

Newfoundland's history is a history of daring and of loyalty,—a daring that has been displayed in storm and tempest on sea and land, amid Arctic ice and furious blizzards; a loyalty at times, little appreciated and that has been strained by misunderstanding and hampered by obstacles. Through all its troubles, the neglect, indifference and frequent sacrifice, that loyalty has burned with undiminished flame, fanned by faith in the ultimate triumph of right and justice, and fed by pride in British heritage. Not bonds or imprisonment, buffetings or other persecution,



The Allied Cemetery at Albert.

not even ingratitude and contemptuous neglect could rob Paul of his loyalty. With what pride he answered the captain's boast of Roman citizenship, in the words, "I was born free." It is an old story now, that of restrictions on residence, by prevention of land-ownership, government by fishery admirals, the sacrifice of settlers and the barter of Colonial rights to foreign foes, and, happily, it is almost forgotten. The British spirit triumphed. Newfoundland entered into her own, and the deeds of her sons, aye, and of her daughters, too, have placed her to-day, small as she may be, daughter in her mother's house, and mistress in her own. The days of isolation and of non-recognition have passed. A new era dawned when in 1914, the first contingent sailed to take its part in the greatest struggle of the ages, and the baptism of blood, at Beaumont Hamel on July 1st, 1916, changed the status of the self-centred colony to partnership with the Empire, sharing with her younger, but more vigorous sisters, the honour and glory and duty of saving the world from military domination and the nation and homeland from virtual slavery.

It was Beaumont Hamel, with its deathless glory, its tale of sacrifice and devotion, its splendid selflessness and unbroken courage that marked the parting of the ways. Newfoundland may have many troubles to meet and overcome; and to the timid and foreboding the future may seem dark with difficulties, but she can never lose what her sons have gained for her in France and Flanders and Gallipoli, and what her sailor sons have won in British and alien waters and on the seven seas. The harvest of death has brought bitter tears to many a home, and racked the heart of many with sorrow, that only the fall of life's last curtain, can obliterate, but amid sadness and regrets, amid tears and heartache, must ever be the consolation, growing with the passing years, that Newfoundlanders knew how to live and also how to die. Time may not wholly heal the scars, but the joy of sacrifice and the triumph of unselfish service belong not alone to those "who went and who returned not," but to those who gave them birth and the heritage of courage, and bid them go where honour beckoned and duty called. Death at the post of duty, be it on the battlefield, on the warship's deck, amid the flames or tempests, or amid the quiet humdrum of every day activities, is a death that all might covet.

"Not once or twice in our rough island story  
The path of duty was the way to glory."

said the greatest of Laureates. He sang of the glory that dies. Death at duty's post is greater glory, which neither time, nor the shifting sands of popular acclaim, can diminish or destroy. It is glory that endures, a legacy to loved ones, rich and imperishable.

Beaumont Hamel is to-day an inseparable part of Newfoundland; the resting place of those gallant men, who fell facing the deadly hail of shell and shrapnel is hers by right of possession, purchased and paid for by her daughters and sons. The plan outlined by the Hon. Mr. Coaker, and carried out so praiseworthy and promptly by the loyal women of the land,—in humiliating contrast to the delay or neglect displayed by those in charge of the Memorial to our heroic dead,—has achieved this result. But the soil in which our sons are buried has been purchased at a greater cost than that of gold. The price has been paid in sacrifice and in tears. To any spot where sailor or soldier lies, is the national ownership inalienable, not that of foolscap and registry offices, but the spiritual ownership which recks naught of legal barriers. There are ties that bind more strongly than cords of hemp or coils of steel, those of affection and of vision. It is not in the



Front line at Ypres—1914 to 1917.

sepulchre or the cemetery, on the bed of ocean or in the shell-torn earth that the fallen warrior rests. His is a larger life; he has burst the bonds of mortality, and though earth or sea has claimed its own, to their disembodied spirits,

"The air around them  
Looks radiant as the air around a star."

What the limitations of the unseen world may be none may say with knowledge, but it is not to the grave that the mother-heart looks and yearns. Her vision, human and limited though it is, can pierce the clouds. Whether or not the air is peopled with ministering spirits, to the eye of faith is ever visible the loved ones gone before. The



Graves of five lads who fell at Vechte—Pte. Dean to left, L/C. Corbett in center and remains of three unknown bodies recovered from the burnt barn. These graves are well cared for by the Flemish women residing nearby.

soil of Beaumont Hamel, is British soil, because it holds British dead within its kind embrace. It is part of Newfoundland, because within her bosom, her earth is mingled with the mortal remains of Newfoundland's sons. The land is ours by purchase, but were it not for the larger claim, it would still be French; the meaning of that larger claim only those who have loved and lost can understand, and even then but imperfectly. They, as their great Exemplar, have burst the barriers of the tomb, for them the sting of the grave is passed, the victory over death accomplished.

And so on this Memorial Day, when thoughts of our splendid men, the Crusaders of the Twentieth Century, are ever before us, let us not picture them as dead, but as gloriously alive; not as fallen but as risen; not as having passed away untimely, but in the fulness of time, with life's work accomplished, for he who does his duty has surely done all. It is only those of us who refuse to do our duty that fail.

Soon it will be the privilege of many of us to stand around the cenotaph and pay reverent and loving tribute to the sacred and heroic dead. The deeper feelings may not always find articulate expression but the poet Lowell's words interpret the inarticulate utterance that swells from thousands of proud and grateful, though sorrowing hearts, to-day,—

"I with uncovered head  
Salute the sacred dead,  
Who went and who return not,—Say not so!  
'Tis not the grapes of Canaan that repay,  
But the high faith that failed not by the way;  
Virtue treads paths that end not in the grave;  
No bar of endless night exiles the brave;  
And to the saner mind  
We rather seem the dead that stayed behind."

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