

## The Weekly Ontario

Aorton & Herity, Publishers

The DAILY ONTARIO is published every afternoon (Sundays and holidays excepted) at The Ontario Building, Front Street, Belleville, Ontario. Subscription \$5.00 per annum.

The WEEKLY ONTARIO and Bay of Quinte Chronicle is published every Thursday morning at \$1.00 a year, or \$1.50 a year to the United States.

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MONDAY, JANUARY 31, 1916.

### THE CAMEROONS CAMPAIGN.

The British official statement issued recently with reference to the operations in the German operations in the German Cameroons indicates that that campaign of the Allies on the Western Coast of Africa is fast drawing to a close. On January 1st a British force occupied Jaunde, the centre of the German resistance and the government headquarters since Duala was abandoned in the first stages of the operations. The enemy retreated to the south and southeast, but marching on Jaunde from that direction were important French forces which have fought their way from French Equatorial Africa. The latest report shows that the Germans have had to evacuate other towns, and the prospect is that the last organized body of the enemy with whom is the German Governor-General, will not be able to hold long in a country so difficult as the Cameroons.

The entry of the British forces into Jaunde and the subsequent advance which has been made are the most notable successes in the operations against the German colonies since the fall of Windhoek. The attack on this 200,000 square miles of territory, whose rich coffee and rubber plantations and pasture lands stretch from Lake Chad to the sea between Nigeria and the French Congo, was begun early in the war, and the operations of the Navy in the Cameroons River gave the Anglo-French invading force a ready hold on the coast. The seat of government, Duala, fell in September, 1914, and the capture of the whole coast-line soon followed; but thereafter progress was slow. With Duala as a base, British and French columns pushed gradually inland, while additional forces from French Equatorial Africa to the south and from Nigeria to the north began a complete encircling movement. In this they had the assistance of a Belgian column from the Congo, which, by a spirited attack on the rear of the German colony, showed how fine a morale the native Congo troops had developed as a result of the ending of the Leopoldian regime.

The invading forces considerably outnumber the garrison of the Colony, which probably does not exceed 3,000 men, with perhaps a score of machine guns, while General Debell, who commands the Allies, cannot have less than 8,000 men at his disposal. But to an even greater extent than in Southwest Africa, the nature of the country is its best defence. It is interspersed with vast stretches of jungle where the grass grows more than man-high, by patches of impenetrable forest, by swamps where malaria and blackwater fever are bred, and by crocodile-infested rivers. The enemy have made the utmost use of these advantages by adopting ambushing and sniping tactics that have entailed the utmost caution in the advance.

In the Cameroons both sides are fighting in the main with native troops. The British West Africa Frontier force which has never before been so severely tested has come through the campaign so far with flying colors. The "Waffs" as they are popularly called, are officered from British regiments, and the service is so exacting that an officer who elects to serve continuously with them gets twenty-two weeks leave for every year he spends on duty. One of these officers has recently given a very interesting account of his men and their fighting qualities. He says:

They are big, strapping fellows, very black, and rather appalling to look at owing to their custom of tattooing the face with hideous and fantastic designs. The head is either shaved clean or odd little topknots are left, somewhat like those of a circus clown! They are armed with the .303 Lee-Enfield rifle, with sword-bayonet. They take their fighting very seriously, and when they go into action they have a peculiar way of stamping their feet in a sort of rhythm, at the same time giving vent to the most blood-curdling and ferocious war chants! If properly led they will do anything and go anywhere.

The Allies had in their attack been denied the advantage of numbers not only by the difficulty of deploying them, but by the need of stringing out behind their lines of advance well-garrisoned blockhouses to preserve their communications. But with the ending of the rains in the autumn they began a general forward movement from all points of the compass, and

succeeded in penning the enemy on the high plateau which surrounds Jaunde. The town of Jaunde was the pivot of his remaining defence. Its capture, English military writers think, will reduce him to ineffectual guerilla warfare if it does not force him into the hands of one or other of the columns advancing on his flanks and rear. The report that they have escaped into Spanish territory is not yet confirmed. In any case the end of German rule in Africa is at hand.

### THE TRUE PERSPECTIVE.

In reviewing the military situation a few days ago, we urged the importance of preserving a proper perspective lest we should be distracted, by minor operations, from the main facts of the war. There is a too prevalent opinion that the military advantage is still on the side of the Teutons. The adventure in the Balkans, with the overrunning of Serbia, and Montenegro, has given an altogether inflated value to the German successes. Even if the present position of the Montenegrin army should correct, it would not be so disastrous as it might appear at first blush. It does not mean that the military advantage is on the Teutonic side, much less that Germany is winning.

It is useful at a time such as this to look at the situation from a neutral point of view. The New York Tribune, whose reviews of the war have been, perhaps, the most authoritative of any printed in the American press, places Montenegro in its proper perspective, and does not regard its conquest, or even elimination as a fighting force, as an event of real importance in the main campaign. It is a triumph which has no real existence and very little significance, spectacular as it may appear.

The real issue of the war, as the Tribune points out, depends and has depended from the very beginning, on the outcome of the duel between Germany on the one hand and Great Britain and France on the other. Austria's mission has been to deal with Russia and the Balkans. Austria has never been able to perform its mission alone, and Germany's position has thus been weakened in the face of her true foes. Germany with her long years of preparation, and maturing of her plans, had, of course, the initial advantage. After eighteen months, Germany with a population of sixty-five millions has been able to take from the Anglo-French alliance a little more than 8,000 square miles of French territory, or about a twenty-fifth of France. But, let us not forget the conditions when this conquest was effected. France had little more than a million troops in the field and Britain less than 150,000 while Germany, armed to the teeth with her great war machine, ready to strike the treacherous blow, was able to throw against France and Britain on the Western front, a million and a half soldiers. Look at the situation today. Britain has probably a million and a quarter troops in France, and France on the first line, has something more than a million and a half. On the same front Germany cannot muster more than 1,500,000, or 1,750,000 at the most. The exhaustion of Germany's reserves is inevitable, while Britain and her Dominions are recruiting millions of new troops, which, added to the French reserves, ensures a permanent superiority in men over the enemy.

Take the matter of munitions. In the early stages of the war, Germany was able to throw five shells for every one of her enemies. Now the proportion is reversed, and Great Britain and France have a decided preponderance in artillery and munitions. So we may accept, as a prime fact, the statement of the Tribune that "in man-power and gun-power Germany is now and will remain for the period of the war at a disadvantage." As to financial resources the combined wealth of France and Great Britain before the war was not less than twice that of Germany and the reserves of capital were much greater. That superiority has increased as the war has progressed. It will become more accentuated the longer it lasts.

The gain of territory in France has been more than offset by the great losses which Germany had suffered elsewhere. Her colonial empire has been swept away, her overseas trade has been destroyed, her ships have been driven from the seas, and her industries, so far as the outside world is concerned, have been completely paralysed. She is hemmed in on all sides by walls of steel, and the tightening of the British blockade is likely soon to deprive her of the supplies she has been receiving through neutral countries. Added to this, of course, is her enormous losses in men—the very flower of her manhood, the finest of her first line troops,—who cannot be replaced.

As the New York Tribune puts it, "what we have is the plain fact that before the war the resources of France and Great Britain in men, in money and in all save preparations, were incomparably greater than those of Germany. Thanks to superior preparation, Germany was able to strike first, and to take a small portion of French territory, but in sixteen months her progress in the West was brought to a halt, and she has never been able to move forward again. Since then the latent resources of Great Britain and France have permitted them to overtake and pass Germany, and British sea

power has enabled the Western Allies to deprive Germany of all commercial activity, and to paralyze her foreign trade."

The Tribune cites the history of the American Civil War and the Napoleonic wars, to show that, unless the smaller nation, the country of fewer men and smaller resources, can achieve its victory while its superiority in preparation is clear, it is beaten and the only question is the length of time that the war must run before exhaustion strikes it down. This, then, is the situation as the Tribune sees it:

The real truth about the Great War is that day by day and week by week the nations which have every advantage in resources, number and sea power are bringing up a greater part of their strength, and the nation which, with smaller ultimate resources, was able to bring a greater strength up in the opening days, is falling behind, by reason of approaching exhaustion. If Great Britain or France should decide to stop the course of the war would be changed, but aside from this there has never since the Marne and the Yser been any real question of the outcome of the war.

Germany has already failed in her main object; she planned to defeat France completely and take from her a tremendous indemnity; she planned to turn her armies to the East and dispose of Russia. She was then prepared to challenge Great Britain, her real rival and her true enemy. She planned to dominate not only Europe, but the world. Today she is fighting not Great Britain alone, but Europe, with only weak allies, and on no side is there any promise of a victory.

The decision of the war, then, has been had. It could be changed only by a changing of the alignment of the contestants, and history does not show that in tremendous struggles like the present such changes are to be expected. Germany is not exhausted, but exhaustion is coming in her case first because she is inferior in all resources and because she made greater early drafts upon her strength. The war is proceeding quite as normally as any disease whose periods and progress have already been established by science. The outcome is not in doubt and has not been for many months.

As for unlucky Montenegro, its miseries are certain to excite sympathy, its defeat to make the German gazettes talk, but it has no meaning in the war. Cattaro and the Montenegrin coast were a part of the empire Napoleon resigned at Fontainebleau, but possession on the Adriatic coast did not postpone or prevent decision in Champagne and Ile de France.

Let us not allow ourselves to be carried away by the idea that the defeat of gallant Montenegro, with a population of about the same as that of Nova Scotia, is a triumph, that it alters the main facts of the situation of materially lessens the constantly growing pressure which is closing Germany in on all sides. The doom of Germany is written on the land as on the sea.

### THE SHELL GAME.

While it makes claims to independence the Montreal Star has been a "thick and thin" supporter of all Conservative Governments. In particular, it claims the lion's share of the credit for the defeat of Reciprocity and the selection of Sir Robert Borden as the Prime Minister of Canada.

Any view expressed by the Montreal Star, therefore, cannot by any stretch of the imagination be considered as prompted by a desire to make political capital for the Liberal Party. Respecting Dr. Pugsley's speech the Montreal Star says:

Charges of the gravity of those which Dr. Pugsley has made against the late Shell Committee should not be allowed to remain as the mere casual remarks of a debater on the Speech from the Throne. So old a parliamentarian as Dr. Pugsley knows that there is a proper way to bring statements of this sort before the House. And doubtless he will make good his accusations by some such formal step before the session is very much older.

In any case, the Government cannot permit these shocking and humiliating charges to remain uninvestigated. We are confident that no Canadian Government will hide behind the technicality that the money, said to be worse than wasted,

money, entrusted to us to be carefully spent amidst the strain of a great war, and not our own money. That would be to confess and proclaim that we would be less honest in dealing with sacred trust funds than in handling our personal property.

If a pound of British money, entrusted to a Canadian Committee to buy the greatest possible amount of war material, was allowed to be diverted to Canadian private purses, in inordinate profits, then the men guilty of this sordid and despicable treason were guilty of weakening by just so much the fighting forces of the Empire in the face of an appalling peril. They might as well

have gone to the trenches and taken the rifles out of the hands of our boys fronting a German attack, and then sold these rifles for their personal profit to the first second-hand dealer whom they met. If this has been done, the country wants to know it, regardless of legal technicalities or partisan politics.

A thorough investigation into this whole shell game should be set on foot at once.

### GERMANS IN CANADA.

The Montreal Star, an ultra-Conservative paper continues to urge that a complete investigation be held in regard to the manner of letting shell contracts. The following scathing editorial comment appears in a late issue.

"It must be increasingly apparent to every well-wisher of the Government that a public investigation into the work of the late Shell Committee and other war purchases cannot be denied. If the consent of the British War Office must be secured to legalize such an enquiry, then it should be asked for by a unanimous Canadian Parliament. Too much has been charged to enable public opinion in this country—deadly in earnest as it is in its determination to win the war—to sit down in patient ignorance as to the real facts of the case.

"The charges are far too serious—the questions at issue far too vital. The finest young men in Canada are giving their lives to defend the Empire and the fixed principles of liberty and honor for which it stands before humanity and history. If, while these noble young men have been going out of our homes to die 'somewhere in France,' ghoul in human shape have emerged from homes of similar outward appearance next-door to padded pocket-books with unfair and unearned profits on the arming and equipping of these young men, then the whole country wants to know it—and to know them—and to know what the government proposes to do to them.

"Every dollar taken unfairly from the money which this nation has to spend in self-defence, is like striking up a rifle aimed at a German. Worse still, it may even be disarming a Canadian lad in the face of a German charge. The whole business must be searched through and through with the vivid lights of patriotism and publicity. If the monies we are literally sweating out of ourselves to save freedom and the flag, are being diverted into traitorous pockets, then there are far worse Germans in Canada than those whom we have interned."

### COMMISSION BY WHOLESALE.

Governor McCall of Massachusetts, in his inaugural address the other day, directed attention to the great increase in the cost of government and the multiplication of commissions for overseeing public services. This criticism of a far too prevalent tendency to unload responsibility on irresponsible bodies appeals very strongly to the Montreal Gazette. It seems to have been "viewing with alarm" the Commission habit as developed by the Borden Government, which loyally supports Sir Robert Borden's administration, but it is honest enough to say that "the legislator who seeks to put on a costly Commission work it is his duty to understand and direct and one who seeks to pass a new law rather than to study his task and see if there is need of it, or of any law on the subject at all, flourishes everywhere and makes heavy the burden of the taxpayer, he is usually also a man afraid of some indefinite influence and is not fitted for the place he wins."

We do not know if any stronger criticism could be directed at the methods of the present Administration at Ottawa. It has appointed times without number, Commissions to investigate practically every subject under the sun, and as Sir George E. Foster admitted, in a burst of candour in the House of Commons last session, their reports are pigeon-holed and are not worth the paper that they are written on. At this time, when the demands of the war are making a tremendous drain upon the resources of the country, these costly commissions should be abolished. It is nothing less than a scandal, that a Government of highly paid Ministers should be unloading every question of importance or difficulty, that should be investigated and solved by the Administration itself upon "Commissions," at large additional cost to the treasury. The "commission business" has been scandalously overdone by the present Administration.

Professor Maxim Kovalevsky, the famous Russian, tells in words of warm tribute what Europe owes to Great Britain, the Motherland of civil liberty. Britain is winning new prestige and enhancing her old glory in this war.

The Eightieth Battalion is to be complimented on its enterprise in bringing Frederick Palmer, the world's most famous war correspondent, here to deliver his lecture on the Great War. It is rarely indeed that the people of this little burg have the opportunity to listen to a lecturer of the eminence and ability of Frederick Palmer. Nothing less than a capacity audience should greet the speaker.

## Other Editors' Opinions

PRINTING TRADE HARD HIT

"The dye situation having become acute, we are compelled to notify trade that on and after this date all tinted and colored papers are subject to an advance in price." This information is the subject of a notice received by us last week and is merely another sample of what we have been receiving for the past few months in regard to almost every item in the trade. The notice further advises that the printers quote prices such as will protect themselves in regard to the advance. Type has doubled in price during the last six months. Inks have increased enormously in price and some are unobtainable. Printers' rollers have doubled in cost and are still on the increase owing to the glycerine employed in their manufacture. In fact everything the printer uses has advanced to such an extent that it would be business suicide to quote prices for the finished product that were listed a year ago.—Campbellford News.

### SMASH SNOBBERY ON SIGHT.

Can a newspaper aid recruiting by suppressing mention of such incidents as that reported from the Walker House?

No. The incident that gets into the conversation of the people is more slowly, but not less surely, published than the incident that gets into the columns of a newspaper.

Incidents kept out of print are not necessarily kept out of publicity. The publicity of print only widens and anticipates the publicity that must have attended the amazing performance of the two officers who refused to remain as guests at the Walker House because a private soldier was registered as a guest at the same hotel.

The Walker House incident has been turned into the best sort of recruiting literature by a policy of faithful dealing with the haughty authors of that incident. Fine young Canadians who seek commissions or serve in the ranks of their country's army should be delivered from the possibility of having to associate with empty-headed upstarts. Word of mouth publicity magnifies regrettable incidents in transmission from tongue to tongue, and from house to house. Word of mouth publicity may be a greater obstacle to recruiting than the publicity that truly described the Walker House incident in print. Officers capable of producing such an incident should not be left in the ranks of the Canadian army. Publicity can expose the prompt removal of the causes of the incident. Such publicity can stimulate recruiting just as recruiting would have been retarded by ineffectual newspaper attempts at the concealment of the Walker House episode.—Toronto Telegram.

### WHITBY MAY HAVE ALL LICENSSES CANCELLED.

Whitby electors won a big victory, a victory which will have far-reaching results, when on election day they practically carried local option. The lack of only two votes of the statutory three-fifths requirement is not likely to prevent the will of the people being realized. With a majority of 108 votes of 554 polled, Whitby deserves, and will probably get, its desire—the abolition of all shop and tavern licenses in the municipality. Whitby Local Option Committee have cause to be proud of the result. While a shade of disappointment cannot be prevented that several local option voters were absent who did not return to town in time to vote, since the result was so close, yet considering the turnover since the vote of 1913, the outcome is most gratifying. The electors have realized the economic waste and the moral shame of the traffic and have decided to throw off the thralldom of the traffic which has been lording it over free men, women and children for so long. We congratulate and thank those who polled their votes for local option and thereby said, "as for us, we don't want to longer be a partner in the drink business."—Whitby Gazette.

### COMMISSION GOVERNMENT.

Some of our Ottawa newspapers are investigating the merits of commission government. The Ottawa Journal publishes a statement by Frederick J. Haskins saying that more than 400 cities had government by commission at the beginning of 1916, in the United States and Canada, their combined population being about ten million. Mr. Haskins says only seven of all the cities which have tried commission government have ever held elections to determine whether to go back to the old form of administration, and that only one American city has taken the back-

## Pte. Russell

Was Struck Here by telegram of the death of son of Mr. and Mrs. Pearce had a message came to apartment at Ottawa. Pte. Pearce had been killed in action in December.

The news of town and was regretted. Pte. Peardon and was Battalion, Mountain Expeditionary Division particulars that Pte. Pearce other young man struck with a train on active service in Europe. Pte. soon after from village to lay in country in the his loss is deep parents and other family, they had compensate that in the struggle.

It is a touching that Mr. and Mrs. sitting down to 54th wedding a Ford conveyed particulars. Another Russell bid good friends here just to the very day here of his death. Day here, leaving received a message from his reached Montreal might particularly was ill at George.

Pte. Pearce, year, attended spent the great heart. He good heart and athletic circles in this district, by town's once famous ball teams. He of the South African Register.

Sudden trans a cold temperature sitting in a dr substitution of ling, are fruitful the resultant of persons of weak many medicines ders so arising, than Bickle's A. rup. Try it and Price 25 cents.

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