

A MESSAGE FROM OUR COMMANDER

[The following letter from Major-General Sir Arthur W. Currie, K.C.M.G., C.B., Commanding Canadian Corps, has been very kindly forwarded for publication in the "Listening Post" by Brigadier-General F. O. W. Loomis, C.M.G., D.S.O., Commanding a Western Infantry Brigade.]

CANADIAN CORPS HEADQUARTERS,
13th July, 1917.

DEAR LOOMIS,

On this, the second anniversary of the "Listening Post," may I be permitted to offer my congratulations on the success achieved by this, the pioneer regimental journal in the Canadian Corps?

But it was bound to succeed, for I have never yet known any undertaking begun by the 1st "British Columbian" Regiment, and continued under the auspices of the Western Canadian Infantry Brigade, to be a failure. How proud I am that I can make such a statement—proud that the privilege has been mine to serve very intimately with a unit for three years, over thirty months of which have been spent on the battlefields of France and Flanders, and to know that the unit has never yet failed.

It would be interesting to examine the factors chiefly contributing to such a record. It seems to me, Loomis, that it is because you started right. From the beginning a high standard of discipline was set, and has been maintained; a determination to thoroughly master all the details of your training, not forgetting the lessons of the War has ever been present in all ranks; an appreciation of their responsibilities by the leaders (the Officers and Non-

commissioned Officers) has ever been most marked—the cheerful devotion to duty on every occasion, a pride in the glorious traditions of your Brigade, a high ideal always kept in view, a valour always irresistible—these, Loomis, are the factors that have made your record possible. The Western Brigade cannot—must not—fail. Why? Because it is the Western Brigade.

Like thousands of others, I have enjoyed reading the successive numbers of the "Listening Post," and profited very much thereby. I well remember when the first one appeared in the summer of 1915, shortly after we took over the Line near Messines. We considered ourselves war veterans then, didn't we? Ypres, Festubert, and Givenchy had come and gone. The old Brigade had lost many of its best, but it had won an honoured name amongst the best fighting units of the Army. Following our long stay at Messines, ever memorable for the raids of November, 1915, and where we filled up with just as good fellows as we had lost, came our five months at Ypres once more. The strenuous but glorious month of June last year stands out in that period. Many times the Brigade was sorely tried, but most nobly responded to every call. Mount Sorrel, Hill 60, the Bean and Pollock, and the Bluff, are more than mere names to you.

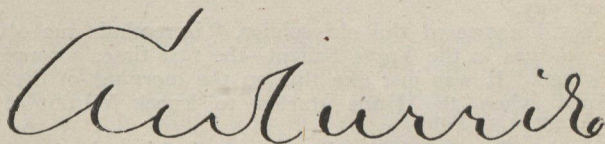
In August, as you know, we went to the Somme. To-day I rode from Bapaume to Albert, past Destremont Farm, Courcellette, the Sunken Road, with the Zollern Graben, the Hessian Trench, and the Regina Trench in the distance, past Pozieres Ridge, the cemetery, and the quarries. Nature, as if ashamed of the madness of man, is fast changing the appearance of the battlefield. The ragged, shell-torn landscape is now covered by green grass and poppies, and nothing seems to indicate that it was

once a battlefield except the battered villages, the up-turned tanks, and the wooden crosses which mark the resting places of our gallant dead. Dead they are, but not forgotten. Gone, but with their spirit still remaining, and some time, Loomis, before returning to our beloved Canada, the Canadian Corps must there erect a monument to their memory. To us those places will ever remain hallowed ground, and as I rode along I breathed a prayer to the Great Ruler of the Universe for guidance, a prayer that we, the survivors and the successors, would ever hold inviolate the great trust bequeathed to us. From the Somme we came to Vimy. Of our successes here I shall say nothing in this letter. The story is still fresh in the minds of all, but with pardonable pride the Canadians can say that the splendid reputation already enjoyed has not only been maintained, but greatly enhanced. Do you ever tell the story to your men? You have been through it all, and no one knows it better. Tell it often,

for it is a proud story, and men will be better men for hearing it.

Throughout all these varied successes and for over two years the "Listening Post," full of piquant satire and wholesome humour, has regularly appeared, and has done much to drive away dull care. Its influence for good has been truly great. Long may it live and prosper.

Ever yours faithfully,



BRIG.-GENERAL F. O. W. LOOMIS,
C.M.G., D.S.O.,

Commanding —nd Canadian
Infantry Brigade.



[Photo]

[Elliott and Fry, Ltd.]

Major-General Sir ARTHUR W. CURRIE, K.C.M.G., C.B.