

THE EVENING TIMES AND STAR, ST. JOHN, N. B., WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 15, 1917

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The St. John Evening Times is printed at 27 and 29 Canterbury Street every evening (Sunday excepted) by the St. John Times Printing and Publishing Co. Ltd., a company incorporated under the Joint Stock Companies Act.
Telephone—Private branch exchange connecting all departments, Main 2417.
Subscription prices—Delivered by carrier \$4.00 per year, by mail \$5.00 per year in advance.
The Times has the largest afternoon circulation in the Maritime Provinces.
Special Advertising Representatives—NEW YORK, Frank R. Northrup, Brunswick Bldg.
CHICAGO, E. J. Powers, Manager, Association Bldg.
Trade Bldg.
British and European—Frederick A. Smyth, 29 Ludgate Hill LONDON, E.C., England

FREE SPEECH DENIED?

The Standard has served notice that free speech in St. John has been abolished. It intimates also that the returned soldiers who have fought abroad for the principles of liberty will apply German methods to suppress liberty at home. Since conscription is not yet the law of the land it is the right of every man to say what he thinks about it, and to deny that right is to apply the methods of the Hun. It appears that Mr. J. C. Watters, president of the Trades and Labor Congress of Canada, spoke recently in Sydney and was badgered and baited and finally assaulted with eggs, and his meeting broken up, by soldiers and sailors. The report printed in the Standard says that the trouble started before the meeting had got well under way. It was therefore pre-arranged, and was not caused by anything Mr. Watters said in the course of his speech. Certain persons went there to break up a meeting, and they did it, although the mayor of the town was in the chair. Even he was several times ordered to sit down, and his appeals for fair play were not heeded. So far as the report goes, Mr. Watters did not say one word against conscription. On the contrary the report says:

"After a time Mr. Watters was allowed to proceed and stated that some misunderstanding was abroad regarding the subject of his speech. He was not going to speak on conscription or the war, but on labor."

He did make some observations not too palatable for Tory profiteers, and some of his remarks might be construed as censure of the Borden government, but one reads the report in vain to find any just cause for denying him the right of free speech.

But now observe what the Standard has to say to Mr. Watters. After an editorial reference to the Sydney meeting it goes on:

"It is intimated that some local men who claim to represent the thought of the Trades Unionists are arranging for Mr. Watters to visit this city, and speak. If he comes in the interests of labor and confines himself legitimately to a labor topic St. John will welcome him, for nowhere in the British Empire is the right of free speech more highly regarded than in this city. If, however, he intends to repeat his Sydney performance and assault conscription, the plan designed by the government as the measure best qualified to assist the boys at the front, it might be wiser in the interests of peace and harmony, and possibly safer for Mr. Watters, if the meeting does not take place."

GERMAN PEACE TERMS

The peace proposals put forward by the Pope, if the cables summary is correct, might very well have emanated from Germany. That they will be rejected by the Entente Allies is as certain as that Germany is still wantonly murdering women and children, and violating every rule of conduct the Christian church would lay down for human guidance. The Central Powers would welcome peace on the terms proposed by the Pope, just as any murderer would snatch at anything short of the gallows; and it is strange that His Holiness, eager as he is for peace, should suggest a settlement which would regard the promoters of this awful conflict as worthy of any trust whatever. Germany cannot be trusted to keep faith or hold to any agreement she may make. One would think the story of Belgium should excite as much pity in Rome as in London or Paris, and as keen a determination to make a repetition of that crime impossible. No doubt Germany and Austria would be delighted to make peace on the terms outlined by the Pope. It is the duty of the nations to see to it that no such opportunity is offered. German militarism and German aggression are the same today as they were three months or three years ago. Democracy must win in this war, or fight the war over again. Better to finish it now. Whoever thinks otherwise, be it Pope or pacifist, has misinterpreted the lessons of the struggle.

WAR AND ELECTIONS

We hear a good deal about Win-the-War Liberals—but where are the Win-the-War Conservatives? The Borden government got one extension of the life of parliament, thus preventing "the ruin of an election." What did they do

with it? Did they throw partisanship to the winds and set out to unite the country and win the war? Did Sir Robert Borden announce that henceforth he ceased to be a partisan and desired to be known only as the leader of the Canadian people? On the contrary the patronage committees rolled their sleeves higher and dived deeper into the gift-bag. Partisanship continued to rule in regard to contracts, military appointments, the government departments, and everything under government control. This and the general incompetence of the government so alienated public sentiment, while at the same time the voluntary system of recruiting was given a fair trial in Quebec, that certain defeat stared the government in the face. Then conscription was announced, but when Sir Robert Borden saw the effect of the announcement he at last thought him of a union government. But it was to be a government led by him and dominated by Conservative influences. The Win-the-War Liberals, and so escape defeat at the polls. And that is the whole story to date. The showing of Sir Robert Borden to form a strong cabinet from within his own party, or consent to a real national government at the proper time, has brought Canada closer to disunion without having the country mobilized for winning the war.

WHAT ARE THE FACTS?

The Canadian commander in France has sent a cable to parliament in Toronto urging that reinforcements be not withheld. Has Gen. Currie seen the statement of the number of Canadian soldiers available as reinforcements for his divisions? Does he know the actual conditions concerning the Canadian reserves in England—as to their number and availability as drafts? The force of his appeal depends entirely upon whether or not he possesses that knowledge. The people of Canada ought to be given full information concerning the Canadian army, and it should be secured through some other channel than a partisan government which is more concerned about politics than about anything else. There is a steadily growing conviction, greatly strengthened by the information received from the front, that the government has withheld the truth about actually available Canadian reserves, and rushed the conscription issue in the hope of lining up the other provinces against Quebec. It is in need of reinforcements, even if there is an abundance of material in England for fresh drafts for a year to come. The Canadian people want the full divisions at the front kept at full strength, but they also want to know the truth about the length of time the available reserves will be sufficient to ensure that condition. They have a right to the information, and should insist upon getting it.

Of Germany's waning man-power an exchange says: "Germany's need of men for military purposes has been demonstrated in many ways. She is using even on the battle line men older and younger than have been called by her opponents and this is proved by the ages of prisoners taken and by the old and young men found among the dead. But the most conclusive proof of Germany's need of men is the official report of a great German hospital for the insane which states that the use of its inmates for military service has not been found successful as they proved more care and bother than of value. As might have been expected they were incapable of understanding orders and wherever used lessened the percentage of efficiency."

British casualties for the first two weeks of August were less than one-third of those for the corresponding two weeks last year. Nevertheless, they totalled 21,722, of which 4,647 were killed or died of wounds.

In view of the coming elections the Borden government is looking very carefully after the interests of the big financiers, in connection with Canadian Northern Railway affairs. The interests of the people are a minor consideration.

Last night's news from the Russo-Rumanian front was much more satisfactory. Grave fears were expressed regarding the situation there, but the latest report showed the Rumanians to be on the offensive.

The death occurred at Lower Hainesville on Saturday last of Nellie Florence Reynolds, at the age of twenty-three. She is survived by her father, Benjamin, one sister, Mrs. Price, one brother, William, at home, and two brothers, Walter and James at present on active service at the front.

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LIGHTER VEIN.

The Healing Art. It is not unusual for persons to talk glibly about certain "style" of costume or decoration without any intelligent ideas whatever concerning them. Such was the young woman who entered a shoe-maker's and said to the salesman: "I think these Louis XV heels are too high for me. Give me a size lower, please—or perhaps Louis XIII would be high enough."

The Pleasure of Expense. That the amount of one's expenditure has little to do with happiness is cleverly suggested by this little story. An American, who was entertaining a distinguished English gentleman, was showing his visitor, round Newport "You observe," remarked the host, "that when we Americans devote ourselves to pleasure, we do so regardless of expense."

A Paying Interest

An Irishman was employed one morning to dig a garden and some time later the owner found Pat smoking, while another man was digging. "Why, Pat," said the owner, "I thought I engaged you for this work."

The Plumber's Plumb

It may be that the feat attributed to the plumber in the following anecdote is impossible outside the realms of the imagination, but within them it is a singularly pleasing achievement. A young man of the family on whom it was practiced. "You're wanted," said the small boy. "The plumber wants me."

GREAT SHORTAGE OF WHITE METAL EXISTS

When Great Britain placed what practically amounted to an embargo on the export of silver to India, the price of the white metal broke; at that time well-posted silver men predicted that the slump would be but temporary, and their judgment was vindicated last week when silver again crossed 50c. There is no question but what a silver shortage exists, and the white metal, quite as easily as gold, is causing no end of difficulty in stabilizing trade and prices, particularly in India and China. The trade balance in favor of India for the last British fiscal year ended March 31, 1917, was \$270,002,229. The Indian demand has caused a large movement of silver from China, and has exhausted the available supplies elsewhere without satisfying trade requirements. Press reports say that large plantations in Ceylon have lacked rupees to pay for their labor and money has been tight in the financial centres of all India.

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EMERGENCY RATION FOR THE SOLDIER

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American Medicine comments on the emergency ration of hardtack and sweet chocolate suggested by Dr. Vedder. It weighs only one pound, but gives the soldier the proper amount of food on which to carry on the work required of him. The writer says: "The problem of rationing the soldier is of the utmost importance, not merely for the purpose of preserving his military health, but of conserving his military efficiency. Regardless of what the civil population sustains upon, the ration of the soldier must be reduced so as to curtail his food requirements. "It sometimes becomes necessary to send in advance scouting parties for whom adequate food supplies cannot be prepared to be carried by them. The soldier's ration is essential. "As Vedder has pointed out in 'The Military Surgeon, June, 1917,' an emergency ration must be balanced and possess a reasonable energy value and tissue-building power. Palatability must

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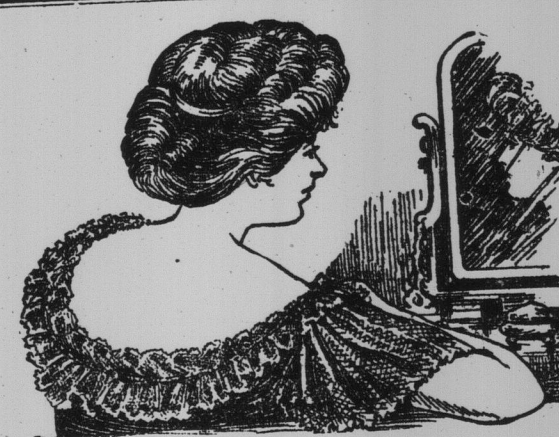
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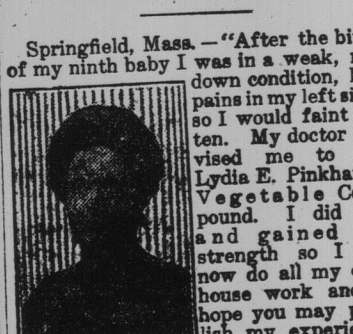
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the civil population, as well as those engaged in military duties. To be sure, hardtack requires mastication, but hunger provides sufficient impetus to guarantee that it will be properly masticated for the action of the digestive fluids. The high carbohydrate content makes thorough mastication of pronounced value as the first stage in its digestion. "Taking it all in all, this combination of hardtack and sweet chocolate constitutes itself as being particularly well adapted to the needs of the soldier and the requirements of an emergency ration."

A SOCIAL CANCER AND GROWING EVIL

Alarming statistics of the prevalence of social disease among civilians and soldiers were presented to representatives of a dozen Ontario organizations who met at the City Hall yesterday to discuss ways and means of checking the evil. The outcome of the instigation of the military authorities, was that police, press and medical officials, all promised hearty support in a campaign of suppression. A committee of men and women was appointed to suggest means.

Among the organizations represented were the Board of Trade, Rotary Club, Daughters of the Empire, Women's Liberal-Conservative Club, W.C.T.U., Y. M. C. A., and the Local Council of Women. The committee which was appointed to consider the situation was composed of Miss L. A. Hamilton, Mrs. Torington, president of the National Council of Women; Dr. Margaret Patterson, Mrs. Willoughby Cummings, Major J. T. Fitzgerald, Major J. W. S. McCullough, G. A. Putnam of the Women's Institutes; Capt. Dr. Gordon Bates, F. B. Paul, Dr. J. A. Macdonald, A. E. S. Smythe, Mrs. A. M. Heustis of the Local Council of Women, Alex. Sinclair, Crown Attorney Seymour Corley and Deputy Chief David Archibald.

According to the suggestions put forth at yesterday's conference, well paid is to be one of legislation as well as education. Crown Attorney Corley declared that there were improvements which might be made in existing laws and he promised to make some suggestions at the next meeting. Capt. Dr. Gordon Bates of the Base Hospital, Toronto, said that an educational campaign must be carried on throughout the province, whether by literature, lectures or moving pictures.
Capt. Bates reported that the admissions at the base hospital from the disease are approximately 1,200 a year, while in the Toronto General Hospital during the first three months of 1917, twelve per cent. of all the patients were diseased. The situation was such, he said, that the authorities and the general public must adopt its ostrich-like attitude and take immediate action toward wiping out the evil.

Leslie Frank Carney of MacDonald's Point, and Miss Blanch Edith Northrup, of this city, were married yesterday afternoon by Rev. Gideon Swin. Mr. and Mrs. Carney left last evening on the Montreal train for Winnipeg where they will spend their honeymoon.