

## A Priceless Dower.

You that have faith to look with fearless eyes  
Upon the tragedy of a world at strife,  
And know that out of death and night  
shall rise  
The dawn of ampler life:

Rejoice, whatever anguish fills the heart,  
That God has given you a priceless  
dower—

To live in these great times, and bear  
your part  
In Freedom's crowning hour;

That ye may tell your sons—who see the  
light  
High in the heavens, their heritage to  
take;

"I saw the Powers of Darkness put to  
flight;  
"I saw the Morning break."

—Author unknown.

## With the Canadian Press Party at the War Front.

EARLY in June, as you may have learned from articles which have appeared in other departments of this paper and elsewhere, the Ministry of Information of Great Britain extended an invitation to a number of publishers and editors in Canada, to visit Great Britain and the Western war-front, as the guests of the British Government, in order that they might see, at first hand, conditions and accomplishments, in the Mother Land and closer to the battle lines. Among those invited was Mr. John Weld, of the *Farmer's Advocate and Home Magazine*, who, since his return a fortnight ago, has been kept rather continuously under interview by the editors of the various departments of his paper.

To the Home Department have fallen the stories of the trip through France, from a spectacular point of view, and of women's work in the old land and in the war zones. Not both of these can be given to-day,—but all in good time.

The party, it may be remarked, set sail from New York on June 27th, and sailed from Liverpool, on the return journey, on August 22nd. In the meantime they went through all sorts of munitions and other plants in Great Britain; visited the Grand Fleet; explored submarines and tanks; flew in airships, over old London; inspected hospitals; were introduced to the King and Queen, Premier Lloyd-George, Premier Clemenceau and other eminent folk; and motored 1,000 miles through the war-zone of Europe, there seeing, not only the chief cities, including ruined Verdun, but visiting also Vimy Ridge and other places where so many of our gallant Canadian boys have laid down their lives.

"What impressed me most," said Mr. Weld, after recounting the story of all this, "was the excellent organization everywhere in Great Britain and France. The people are tired of the war, but filled with the idea of victory. They are determined to keep on until the enemy is put in his place. Our fighting men, too, are fighting under the best conditions. They are well supplied with everything they need, well-fed, and well-officered, in the very pink of condition for continuing the drive."—In short, Mr. Weld has come home more optimistic than when he left, and more enthusiastic in regard to the great work that is being accomplished—though with bloodshed and suffering—for the great cause of Democracy throughout the world.

Now to the story of the trip through France, which must, of necessity, be greatly condensed.

IN July 17th the party arrived at Boulogne, where, as an indication of what might be expected, they were put through gas tests and taught how

to put on a gas mask in six seconds. Each man was then given a mask and steel helmet and the order was given that any man who lost his mask must drop out of the party. Subsequently these life-savers were always at hand, and, while in positions of danger, the steel helmets were continuously worn. The gas-mask, it will be remembered, was invented by Col. Nasmith of Toronto, although many types have since been evolved.

On July 18th a trip to Calais was made by motor-car. Along the road was seen a queer motley of nationalities working at various tasks, German prisoners everywhere assisting West Indians, dark-faced Algerians and coolies from China. In Calais itself—that city so long desired by the Kaiser, but from which his hordes have been twice intercepted and turned back by our indomitable armies—a visit was made to the places in which salvage work is being carried on, at so great a saving of time, money and material. Here workers were seen busily engaged repairing shoes, guns and all sorts of material sent back from the battle-lines. At this place, also, some of the hospital transport ships, which ply constantly to and fro across the strait to "Blighty", were visited. Afterwards a trip was made to the American Headquarters of the second army corps, under General Lewis, at Bruges, where the welcome news was heard of the opening of the great allied offensive.

NEXT day was an interesting one indeed, for it was then that the party, conducted by our own General Currie, took its way to Vimy Ridge. "The General, is a big man every way," said Mr. Weld, "big of body and of mind,—a fine commander." There, on the crest of the hill, looking over the shell-pocked ground, the little party stood, with varied emotions, while General Currie told the story of the great battle,

indicating this point and that where our boys advanced so gloriously, paying the price, but barring the way of the Hun from one of the most important positions on the war front. At this place a great crater could be seen about which, at one moment of the battle the opposing forces swarmed, so close on either edge that they were within speaking distance of each other, had speech been necessary or practicable during the roar of a great battle. It was the battle for Vimy, it will be remembered, which our boys had prepared for and rehearsed so many times, that when it occurred it was gone through as definitely as would have been a match of football after many weeks of preparation.

Speaking of the desolation of the shell scarred ground, Mr. Weld told of one interesting spot which, under the direction of Captain Hudson, M. P., for Wainwright, Alta., a large area of ground has been reclaimed and made luxurious with a rich growth of foodstuffs. Here were 125 acres given over to potatoes, 8 to cabbage, 8 to carrots, 8 to turnips, with other areas covered with tomatoes, pumpkins, celery, peas, onions, lettuce, parsnips and cauliflower. Even mushrooms were grown, and in no inconsiderable quantity. "Everything was tip-top," said Mr. Weld. The question often arises as to whether the shell-torn lands of Europe can be made fertile in any short period after the war. Captain Hudson's experiment, as well as others undertaken in the same way, would seem to show no reason for any apprehension. An interesting fact in connection with this "farm on no man's land" is that the land has been worked altogether by soldiers and horses unfit for service in the trenches, and with implements salvaged from the battlefields.—Talk about farming under difficulties!

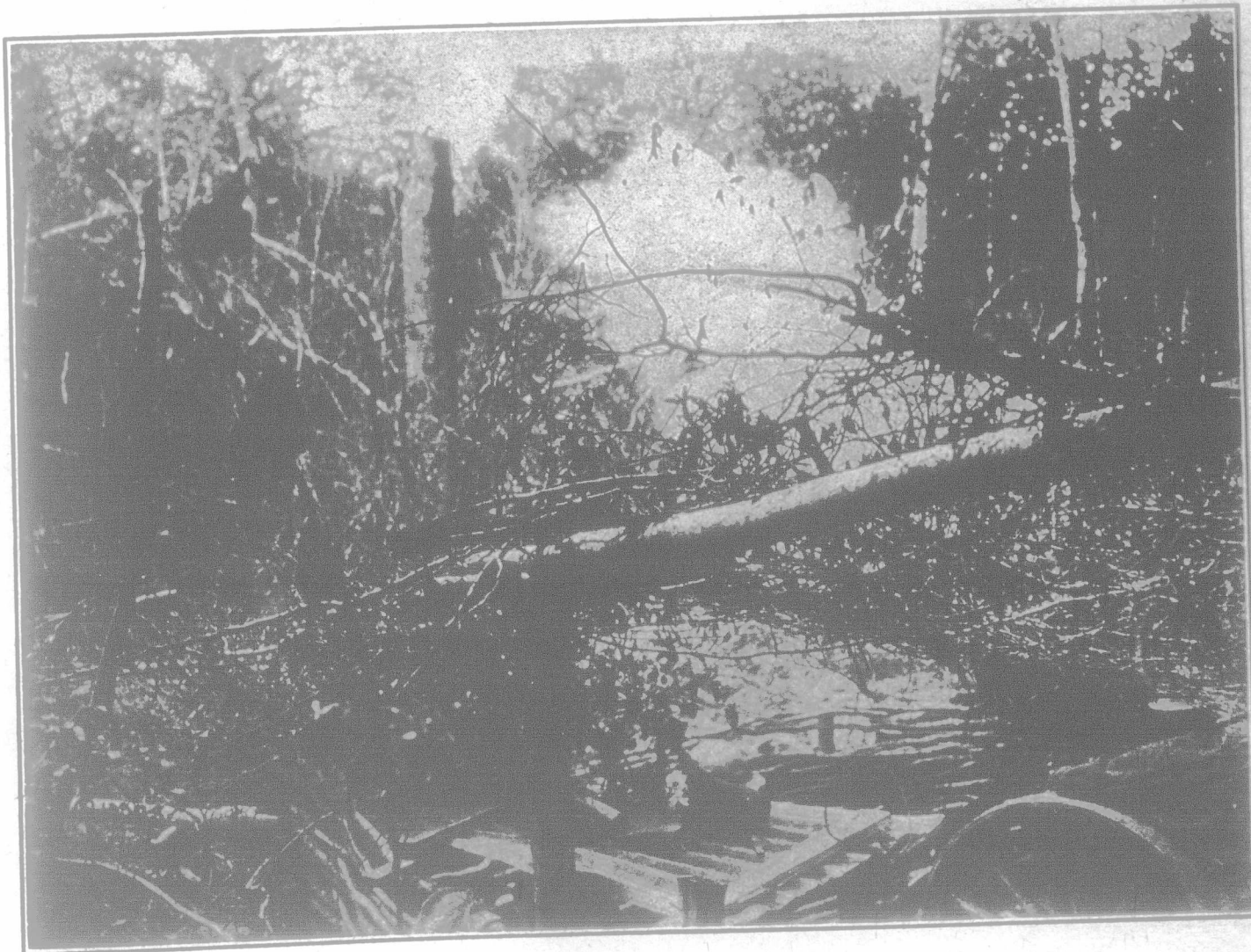
Upon Vimy crest has been erected a great stone cairn surmounted by a lofty cross. The inscription reads:

Erected in memory of  
Officers, non-commissioned officers  
and men of the  
Canadian Corps Artillery  
who fell during the Vimy operations  
April, 1917  
Canadian Field Artillery  
Canadian Garrison Artillery  
South African Heavy Artillery  
Royal Field Artillery  
Royal Garrison Artillery

ON July 20 a visit was paid to the Canadian front lines. Here Mr. Weld was greatly impressed with the wonderful way in which the supplies of ammunition and food are taken in to the men, always after night, with great motor lorries that carry no lights. "In places", he said, "we passed roads where, for a mile or more there were thousands of auto trucks, as close together as they could move, two lines of them, the one going in the other out."

The Canadian light railways, too, were samples of what Canada can do in rapid construction when she is put to it. Here the work of the Forestry Corps comes in. "It is a marvel", said Mr. Weld, "how much timber has been cut from the forests of France, and for how many purposes it is used. Everywhere necessary during the muddy season, for instance, the roads are covered with heavy planks 6 inches wide and 4 inches thick. If it were not for this the roads in many places could not be kept in shape at all for the heavy motor trucks. The Canadian boys are at home in the bush," he went on. "They can do this kind of work twice as fast as the Old Country men."

The medical corps and the nursing sisters also came in for praise that, were it not for their great accomplishment, might almost seem superlative. "They don't mind the gas much. They don't mind anything,—and they don't lose many cases."—So perfect has become



A Glimpse into No-Man's-Land.

This shows a camouflaged battery on the West front. Note the smoke from the concealed guns. Central News Photo Service.