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Personal Sacrifice

WE are reaching a stage of the war when measures of a more drastic character than those hitherto employed may be necessary in all parts of the Empire to make all the resources of the people available. While there are signs that the enemy nations are weakening, it is too much to expect that they will quickly surrender. The war may yet last for many months. The end will come all the sooner if Great Britain and her Allies put forth increased efforts. That much has been done in Canada, in all directions, is readily admitted. We have sent the very flower of our youth to bear arms for the Empire's service, and many of them have made the supreme sacrifice of their lives. We have turned many of our workshops into munition factories, which are supplying the material without which the war cannot be carried on. Our people have sustained with splendid liberality a hundred movements for the benefit of our soldiers at the front, for the support of their families at home, and for the relief of those who are coming back wounded and disabled. The calls of the Government for assistance in the form of loans have been handsomely met. Our women have done, and are doing, noble work in many directions. All this we may have the comfort of knowing. But great as this service has been, and still is, it is not enough.

that the great meeting at the Guildhall to inaugurate the War Savings Campaign, that was held in the summer of 1915, was thronged by over-dressed people of both sexes, who arrived in elaborate motor-cars; and a few months later the extravagances of a great political wedding, and the menu at the Guildhall banquet of last year, set up a rock of popular opposition against which the eloquence of war-savings preachers beat in vain. Since then, the rise in prices and the big profits earned by shipowners and coalowners and others have roused a natural suspicion among the working-classes that they are being exploited, and have made still more difficult the task of those who urge the workers, in their own interests and in those of the nation, to self-denial for the cause of victory. Example at the top is still, though many rich people have set it with excellent results, plentifully lacking.

It is a picture of English life that is thus presented by the sober-minded financial journal. But does it not, in part at least, depict the condition elsewhere? Is there not even in Canada too much money spent on the luxuries of life, money that is needed for the many branches of war work? It is not only the diversion of the money from the field where it is needed to the field where it is not that is regrettable. The example that is set when money is so spent by those who can afford it is not a good one, especially at a time when the need of economy among the masses is preached everywhere.

When a rich lady in New York was criticized, a few years ago, for having given an entertainment characterized by great luxury and extravagance, she pleaded in defence that most of the money spent gave work and profit to hundreds of poorer people, whose labor went to supply the luxurious dress and decoration and food and drink which made up the entertainment. She claimed that the economy that was advocated in some quarters would mean the depriving of such people of their means of livelihood. How far an argument of that kind can properly be used in defence of luxury will always be a question for debate. If interference with any given line of industry deprives a large number of people of employment, when no substitute work is available, there will be some argument against interference. But such an argument cannot apply to our Canadian conditions. If there is a cessation of work in any class of luxuries there is abundance of work in other directions. There is no need that anybody blessed with health shall be idle. More time and more money for the things that are necessary in the prosecution of the war; and less time and less money for the things that do not really matter—this will be a good resolution for the New Year.

In every branch of war-work, in every avenue of service, there is need for renewed effort, for patriotic sacrifice. It is more than ever necessary that effort shall be concentrated on the things that matter, and that there be a stern resolve to set aside the lesser things. Is there all the personal effort and individual sacrifice that are called for? The masses of the people are being appealed to for the exercise of economy and thrift. Are those of the more well-to-do class setting a wholesome example? The London Economist has been discussing that question as it relates to affairs in England. "When all allowance is made," says that journal,

"the fact remains that the financial and productive resources of the nation have been left to be frittered away, according to the taste and fancy of the individual citizen, in a way that does us little credit as a nation of business men, and, if allowed to continue, may jeopardize the cause of liberty and justice which we and our Allies have now the honour to champion. Ministers have tried appeals and persuasion, which have had some effect, but not nearly enough. They might have had more if those who made and organized the appeals had set the example, which even a sense of humour, to say nothing of a sense of national duty, might have shown them to be needed. The public never forgot

Special Articles

Is a Dominion Income Tax in Sight?
By H. M. P. Eckhardt.

Banking and Business in the United States
By Elmer H. Youngman.

"Hospital" Elevators
By E. Cora Hind.

Optimistic Feeling in Hardware Circles.

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