

THE COURIER

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Wednesday, December 16, 1914

THE SITUATION.

By far the outstanding feature is the important news, conveyed early this morning over the Courier special leased wire, that German vessels commenced to bombard the British coast.

They were enabled, apparently, to get at close range under the dense folds of a fog. At the time of writing it is not known to what extent the demonstration has developed, but if it leads to a final test between the rival fleets in the North Sea, the action should become decisive.

This is the first shell bombardment of the shores of Albion. A Dutch admiral by the name of Van Tromp had the best of a British fleet under Admiral Blake in the Straits of Dover, and afterwards sailed the main there with a broom at the masthead; but that was away back in 1652.

Later, in 1658, the Spanish Armada made a bold attempt to attack the shores of Great Britain. They had 130 vessels, mostly of large size, bearing 19,295 soldiers, 8,000 mariners, 2,000 oarsmen and 2,000 volunteers of the most distinguished families of Spain.

They called themselves invincible. The British force held in readiness to meet them was only 30 vessels, but before the actual conflict the number was augmented, mostly by volunteers in small ships, to 181. The total was 17,472 men as against 31,295. What happened is a matter of history. Fire ships were sent among them, with disastrous results; in boarding contests the British got all the best of it, and later a terrible tempest further decimated the shattered vessels.

It was the most disastrous naval defeat in all history and shattered the power of Philip, throwing open the commerce of the Indies, hitherto closely guarded.

With regard to the general aspect, the Allies are still doing gradually well in France and Belgium, while events in Poland are still largely a case of as they were.

THE SITUATION IN MEXICO. The wide nature of the world's greatest war has completely overshadowed events in Mexico.

They are still at each others throats there to an even worse extent than ever, and the temporary occupancy of Uncle Sam did not abate the chaos one whit, on the contrary seems to have accentuated it.

Theodore Roosevelt who recently spoke of himself as having become "the privatized kind of a private," could not in the natural course of events stay very long that way.

He has now entered the lists in his usual vigorous manner as an unsparing critic of the United States government with regard to the state of affairs in the land of the sombrero.

His views are being widely published in U. S. papers through a press syndicate. "To say," he remarks, "that we did not go to war with Mexico is a mere play upon words. A quarter of the wars of his- tory have been entered into and carried through without any preliminary declaration of war, and often without any declaration of war at all.

The seizure of the leading seaport city of another country, the engage- ment and defeat of the troops of that country and the retention of the territory thus occupied for a number of months constituted war."

The ex-President goes on to show that when President Wilson refused to recognize Huerta he committed a definite act of interference of the most pronounced type. Further, that he actively sided with the factions which ultimately triumphed—and which immediately split into other factions which are now no less actively engaged in fighting one another. He considers that the United States has thereby made itself responsible for the frightful wrong-doing still continuing including terrible outrages committed by the victorious revolutionists on hundreds of the religious people of both sexes.

Pointing out that Wilson in an address said: "Nowhere in this hemisphere can any government endure which is stained by blood," Roosevelt exclaims that at the very time he uttered those lofty words, the leaders and lieutenants of the faction which he was actively supporting were shooting their prisoners in cold

blood by the scores after each engagement, were torturing men reputed to be rich, were driving hundreds of peaceful people from their homes, were looting and defiling churches, and treating ecclesiastics and religious women with every species of abominable infamy, from murder and rape down. He quotes affidavits in this regard, which most people would not consider fit for publication. They include un- speakable outrages upon hundreds of Mexican women and nuns, and also the murder and mutilation of priests.

The ex-President concludes: "As things actually are, shame must be mingled with our indignation, for the action of the President and Mr. Bryan has been such as to make this country partly responsible for the frightful wrongs that have been committed."

TWO SIDES TO A STORY. Not long ago a Canadian hardware-manufacturing firm solicited orders from a jobber in the United States for goods on which there happened to be no import duty into that country. The answer was very prompt: "Dear Sir,—

Replying to your favor of the — we beg to say that we cannot place any orders with any foreign houses at present, even at a difference of ten or fifteen per cent. in favor of their goods. The sole and simple reason is that we have to keep our own factories busy on this side of the line, and we consider it worth while to make a few sacrifices for the sake of doing it."

That reply was kept by the Canadian manufacturer as an admirable sample of American loyalty to American institutions. It was respected as the kind of business co-operation that has made the United States the third exporting nation in the world.

Admiration for such a spirit and business long-sightedness can very well help teach us a lesson that is being brought home to us in these days. Canada just now needs all the business she can get to keep her own factories busy. Canadians are learning that in nearly every line there are made-in-Canada articles as good and cheap as anything imported, yes and frequently both better and cheaper.

Before purchasing the latter they are taking steps first to consider if there is not a Canadian article of at least equal value.

A VITAL FOUR MONTHS. More than once the questions have been asked, especially after some German triumph at sea, "What in the mischief is the British navy doing? Where are her dreadnaughts, her super-dreadnaughts, her battle cruisers and all the rest of the world-beating outfit?"

With reference to this class of interrogation, one New York paper remarks:—"To the naval strategist this silence is the token of a victory as complete as any that could be won by the shock of 12-inch salvos and the wrecking of armor belts, turrets and barbettes; for it is the unspoken evidence of the persistent, remorseless pressure of the most remarkable blockade in all the history of naval warfare."

Correctly stated. The holding of the big German fleet in the Kiel Canal, for a period of over four months, has been in itself an immense and unparalleled achievement. For years the German Empire has lavished millions of money and used every possible ingenuity upon the development of an all-conquering armada.

During the early period of this skulking, the rumor was spread that the delay in seeking battle with British leviathans, was because of an outfitting with some sort of superior naval gun. That Germany, so ready in every other department of war, would be lacking when she thought the time had come to strike, with reference to the latest possible equipment for her ships, from the first seemed doubtful. If anyone did entertain the idea of such a cause for hesitancy, it must by now have been thoroughly dissipated. Their original plan was to first decimate the British fleet by submarines, but the rate of their success in this regard has been notably small—much more so than if the British submarines had possessed an equal number of targets in the open.

This bottling up of the Kaiser's carefully developed fleet would of itself be a most notable act, but even more than this has been accomplished. Trade routes on the seas have been kept open and policed, tens of thousands of troops have been brought at will from all portions of the Empire with not one transport

vessel or man destroyed and, outside of the devilish mines, practical safety and security have been guaranteed. There has now come an effort on the part of the enemy to join open issue, with results yet to be determined, but let us not be lost in sight of that the first four months of keeping the German fleet within bounds proved of priceless importance—where would the transportation of troops have been without such an immunity?

DEBT OF THE WARRING NATIONS. The debt burdened nations of Europe are adding enormously to their load as a result of the present titanic struggle. At the commencement of the war, the total debt of the five leading nations engaged in the struggle amounted to \$2,700,000,000. In the four months' war, it has been increased four and a quarter billions, or nearly one-fifth.

Great Britain is the only one of the warring nations which is financed ahead. Her recent loan of \$1,750,000,000 will furnish her with money for several months. All the other warring nations are living more or less in a hand-to-mouth manner. For some months before the war broke out, Germany, Austria and France all engaged in special financing with the object of increasing their military strength. The expenditures made by these three nations added \$616,000,000 to the burden they were already carrying.

The following table shows the debt of the five nations as it stood in 1912, what has been issued since then, and the present debt:—

WAR STORIES FROM FRONT. An officer of the Duke of Edinburgh's (Wiltshire Regiment), writing to his wife under date November 8, says:—

We are living in fair-sized "dug-outs," about 5 feet deep and 8 feet wide, and 200 feet long. There are five of these "dug-outs" on the edge of a wood all connected by deep communication trenches. The "dug-outs" are roofed over with pine logs and about 18 inches of earth. We have tables and chairs and straw inside, so we are fairly comfortable. We cannot go outside much as shrapnel keeps on bursting over us and bullets that have gone high over the trenches in front keep on hitting the trees all round, which are all pitted and cut with bits of shell.

Our kitchen is just next door in a deep hole, with a trench connecting up. You wouldn't very much like us all bobbing in and out like a lot of rabbits. The firing line is about three quarters of a mile in front of us. We have great difficulty in getting water, which is scarce, and we have to boil it. However, we manage to do ourselves pretty well all the time. We get our government rations every day and supplement them with what we can scrounge out to us. Our menu to-night is going to be: tinned oat soup, fried fillet of beef, potatoes and peas, rice pudding and whiskey and soda.

Don't you think I am pretty good at raising a dinner. We sleep in one hut all huddled up as it is very cold, but I use the sleeping bag and find it very warm. We have not been able to make our clothes of now for four days. Although we are in the best of spirits, we are going through a pretty critical time as the fighting has been very heavy indeed.

MARK YOUR MEN, HIGH-LANDERS. Sapper George Comber, Royal Engineers, the son of a Redhill tradesman, relates his experience, speaking of the grim horrors of war being relieved by the football instinct of our soldiers. He says:—

Those who condemn football would not say a word against the game if they had seen or heard what I have in passing to and from the trenches and firing line. The grim horror of war is relieved by the football instinct of many of our soldiers. When the Royal Highlanders were ordered to make a charge in the engagement they jumped out of the trenches, and might have been kicking off in a cup-tie final. They commenced to shout "On the ball Highlanders," and "Mark your men," and the experience, speaking of the grim horrors of war being relieved by the football instinct of our soldiers. He says:—

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WAR STORIES FROM FRONT

THE TERROR OF WAR. Sapper James McLoughlin, of the Royal Engineers, who has been wounded, and is now in the hospital at Stroud, Gloucestershire, wrote to his Bolton friends from the front:—

All that I see from morning till night, is wounded, blood and shot, every day the same. I am quite fed up. I had a few pals, but they were put out. When I see the children looking about in the sky for 're-planes it makes me think that I will be lucky if I get away from here. It is murder day and night. If ever there was a terrible sight in the world there is one here, and it will be the talk of everybody for years to come. Men, women and children are walking from village to town, creeping where they can get—under shrubs, hedges, in stations, empty houses and under broken carts."

RELECTIONS AT THE FRONT. Pte. T. Schofield (10,451) of the 1st Loyal North Lancashire Regiment, of 9 Barton street, is now lying in the British rest camp at Le Havre, recovering from a shell wound. In a letter to his parents he says: "I have got the much needed rest at last. It is the first since I left England. I was hit by a piece of German 'coal-box' on the left big toe, and have been transferred to the rest camp until I am fit for the front again. It is cruel at the front, facing the ter-

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LOCAL

MEET TO-NIGHT. The regular meeting of the Town and Labor Council takes place evening in their hall on Colborne Street.

UNDER NO BUSHEL. The City Hall clock has not been illuminated at night, and Picher saw to it this morning that this state of affairs was remedied.

MAY BE PRESIDENT. The Mayor has been requested to act as president in this section of the British Empire and India League, a society formed for the promotion of home industries and to see to the matter of establishing home manufacturers.

READY FOR 1915. The Township Council yesterday cleaned up all matters for the year and every thing will be in shape for the new council to take over the affairs of the Township on January 1st.

FROST AT WORK. The cold snap will cause a number of men to be employed who otherwise be without work. Hands have been required on the Drive work and an extra complement has been set on the storm under construction. Some thirty men were rendered necessary yesterday morning.

ATTENDANCE DEPLETED. Santa Claus arrived in the city yesterday, and acted as such a magnet upon the children that the hour was practically deserted, only a handful of the faithful attended. In consequence the story by Miss Stephanie Jones was abandoned and she will tell it in its complete form on Thursday. Her subject, Kate W. Riggin's story "A Christmas Carol."

SUCCESSFUL PUPILS. The Brantford students who passed the recent University of Toronto music examinations which were held in Hamilton. They are: Miss I. Senz, who obtained first-class honors in junior theory, coming first in all entrants in this class; Miss Ferguson, who passed the intermediate piano examination, and Alice Casey, who successfully passed through the junior piano examination. All three are pupils at the Acad of Music.

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