

The St. John Standard

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ST. JOHN, N. B., THURSDAY, DECEMBER 7, 1916.

"We are fighting for a worthy purpose, and we shall not lay down our arms until that purpose has been fully achieved."—H.M. The King.

TO THE PEOPLE OF THE EMPIRE: Every fighting unit we can send to the front means one step nearer peace.

A FORTUNATE SELECTION.

If David Lloyd George can secure and hold the co-operation of the diversified elements in the British Parliament, his selection as leader of the government will be the most fortunate move in Britain since the beginning of the war. And the retirement of Mr. Asquith will inevitably result in a more active prosecution of the campaign. It cannot be denied that coalition in Britain under Mr. Asquith has not been a pronounced success. It has taken away from the leaders of his government the strongest possible incentive to be found in politics, namely, the active criticism of opponents, and it has developed among members of that government an impression that they are not only right in everything but almost absolutely indispensable to the well-being of the country. Indeed among certain English journals the title of the "Twenty-three Indispensables" has been commonly applied to the coalition ministry and in certain of these independent papers there has been continued and bitter criticism of the half-hearted manner in which some of the government departments have been administered.

Mr. Lloyd George is an outstanding figure, enthusiastically hated by a certain section of the ruling body and just as enthusiastically upheld by another wing. It is true that since the beginning of the war there has been a very marked change in British popular opinion and methods of administration are now tolerated and even approved which would have been heartily condemned three or four years ago. And for this sentimental revolution Mr. Lloyd George is largely responsible. Thus it has come about that his enemies in parliament, in the government, and throughout the country are by no means as numerous today as they were when he first took hold of the administration of one of the principal departments. There is therefore a sporting chance that he may be able to so reconcile the elements of the various parties represented in the proposed reorganized coalition as to provide a reasonable working government. And should this condition be brought about there is no doubt that he will be inclined to prosecute the war in a more active manner than heretofore. Certain it is that in recent public utterances Mr. Lloyd George has suggested lines of action approved by critics of the Asquith government, and which have been advocated by many in view of weaknesses in various branches of the service.

THE ROMANIAN SITUATION.

It is reported from Berlin that Bucharest, the capital of Roumania, has been captured by the Germans, and that the retreat of the Roumanian army has been cut off by the seizure of an important railway junction northwest of the capital. This may or may not prove a decidedly serious development of the Balkan situation. If, as is hoped, the Roumanians have had time to withdraw their army from before the advancing Teutons they may yet be able to put up a resistance against further aggressions. Bucharest may have been abandoned rather than impeded the army and the city itself by a prolonged defense against a superior force.

Even if the worst is the case, and the Germans capture the capital, overrun the country and eliminate Roumania as a factor in the eastern situation, that country may suffer grievously, but the reverse may have a chastening and stimulating effect upon the British and the Canadian people. The Toronto Mail and Empire takes the view that there is and has been too much complacency in the certainty of British victory. Britain will win, but stronger, more aggressive measures must be taken if that victory is to come soon.

The expectation of great benefits from the entry of Roumania as an ally and, it was fondly hoped, as a short-cut to Vienna and Berlin, have not been realized. In the face of an attack on the Roumanian front it was felt that Austria could not long survive. What is the situation viewed in the light of the facts rather than as we would have it? The Roumanians have not invaded Austria or Hungary, on the contrary they have been kept busy defending their own territory and now their capital is gone. There is no occasion for pessimism but events

such as the capture of Bucharest should help to teach the people of the Empire that the war is not yet over and that before victory can perch on British arms much hard fighting must be done, and much sacrifice must be endured. And the men of the Empire must do the greater portion of it.

The Mail and Empire commenting upon the war situation has this to say:

"We have been inclined to regard the naval blockade as a stranglehold upon the throat of the German people; but we ought to remember that if food is dear in Germany it is not cheap in England, and we were warned the other day by a British authority that in the event of Germany being able to avoid a decisive naval engagement, pressure exerted against her imports would not decide the war. Others again have hoped that the German people would wake up some fine morning, perceive the true state of affairs, turn on their rulers and submit to peace terms. This, too, must be dismissed as a dream. It is not the German people who need to be awakened; it is our own people. The German people look at the military map. They see Belgium seized and annexed; part of France and much of Russia in the grip of their armies; most of Serbia in their possession, and Roumania apparently on the point of collapse. Naturally the German point of view is that it is the Entente Powers who are asleep, or are blind to the plain facts of the situation. Until either on the East front or on the West, and probably only on the West front, there is an overwhelming German defeat the German people's confidence in their armies is not likely to be destroyed. What armies are going to win this great victory on the West? Britain must win the great and final victory in this war unless Germany is to win it."

SIR WILFRID'S PROMISES.

Sir Wilfrid Laurier has announced that if he is returned to power at the next election he will form a government that will be national in every sense of the term. From this his friends are led to believe that he would call to his cabinet representatives of the people without regard to party lines.

Of course, Sir Wilfrid Laurier would do nothing of the kind. Even if he had any idea of coalition, his followers would not for a moment stand for such a policy. Sir Wilfrid would probably follow the course which he adopted after his election when he left on the different provincial legislatures for cabinet material, and even in talking that step he did not secure a government out of the ordinary. Any cabinet that Sir Wilfrid would form would be national in a geographical sense only. The leader of the opposition has not yet lost the art of saying one thing while he means something entirely different.

THE DOMINIONS AND PEACE.

The pledge given in 1915 that the Dominions would be fully consulted and their agreement secured before the Empire agreed upon terms of peace has been solemnly reiterated. This does not necessarily mean that only such terms of peace as Canada or South Africa or Australia may consider the best will be granted. It means that they will consent upon acceptance by themselves of the paramount reasons for their consent. So far as Canada is concerned, the matter is not of high practical importance in regard to this war, says the Winnipeg Telegram. We certainly do not intend that Germany shall have any possibility of lodgment upon this hemisphere, north or south, but as the United States intends the same thing, though without the same power as the Empire and its allies possess, the risk of any German sovereignty being established in America is small.

To South Africa and Australia, the question is of great practical importance. We need not forget that Canada was once on the bargain counter in determining peace terms. If the Brit-

RHEUMATISM

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ish Empire were simply Great Britain, there might be an irresistible inclination to use German East Africa in that way to placate Portugal or gain something somewhere else for Great Britain. Anything of the kind attempted, or even suspected, would threaten the disruption of the British Empire. Australia, too, must not be sacrificed on the Pacific in the interests of either Japan or Russia.

Constitutionally, the recognized necessity of consultation and consent is not merely important, it is vital. Getting out of war with honor and profit is a matter of great concern to everybody (at times also a matter of difficulty, as Germany is discovering), but it is a more trifling concern with keeping out of war, and getting into it when necessary. The people who say that it is never necessary to get into war and that this is the last war are not optimists, but idiots. In a hundred years we have had three "last" wars, the Napoleonic, the Crimean and the Franco-Prussian. The others have had, not so recognized, are as countless as they were sanguinary.

Wars depend upon a long course of national policy in international relations. They never break out until they are invited. The idea that a nation declares war is a man chooses between a sausage and an omelet, when they are both on the table as he sits down to breakfast, is too crude. There are times when peace is simply another way of spelling cowardice.

The British Empire has been at a good school and knows how to spell. From this it follows, that consultation and consent before getting out of war means also consultation and consent before getting into war; in other words, foreign policy. The Empire must have a representative Imperial foreign policy. Foreign policy is not exactly a matter for popular discussion, but the helm of the Empire must be held by representative men in whom all the people have confidence. Salisbury, Rosebery and Grey were and are such men for Great Britain. They could not be such men for Canada, because of being products of British, not Canadian, environment. The Empire must have such men who are Canadian, Australian and South African products at the helm of Imperial policy as well, if its course is to be straight, both to avoid war when it is avoidable, and to fight effectively when it is not.

WHAT GERMANS DID IN OLNE.

An Appalling Vignette Illustrating the State of the Unhappy Land of Belgium.

The report of the Commission of Inquiry in the violation of the rights of nations in Belgium has recently been published by the British government. Here is a sworn statement of what happened when the Germans invaded the little country town of Olne:

"As the vicar and communal secretary lifted a window curtain to see the troops pass, they were torn from the house and shot. The Germans burnt the house of Madame Desenay, a paralysed widow, who was killed, as well as her daughter Josephine. They dragged from the house the schoolmaster Warnier and his family. The house was burned at once, and Mr. Warnier shot before the eyes of his wife.

"A few paces off, his two young daughters, two brave teachers were cowardly shot in the back. The elder, whose head had only been grazed by the bullet, recovered consciousness in the ditch beside the road. A dead body was washing upon her—it was that of her sister, who had been killed on the spot by a bullet. The survivor remained there, motionless, until the last soldier had gone. Then she heard one of her brothers in the throes of death a little way off.

"The spirited girl only found out later that her left arm was broken in two places, that she had a wound in her head, and bruises all over her body. Subsequently she found her mother and her little sister. Her father, her sister of 18, and her two brothers of 18 and 16, were lying stretched on the road dead, with two other inhabitants of Falveu and three victims from Forest. All the houses in the neighborhood were in ashes."

This simple description is a vignette

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Little Benny's Note Book

THIS WEEK.
The Park Ave. News.

Weather. Assorted
Bold Robbery. Some unknown highway robbers with their caps pulled down over their eyes held up the Willie boy in the corner house at the point of a cap pistol while he was coming home from a errand last to the government authorities, and then stole a lot of grapes out of a bag. If the Willie boy claims he recognized any of the voices, he is mistaken, as the robbers were all strangers.

Editorial. The high cost of living has to stop. You can only get one all day sucker for a cent at Mommy Stimmines now instead of 2, and there awt to be a law about it.

Joak. Who makes more noise than Sid Hunt getting a licking? Nobody.

Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star.
Pome by Skimpy Martin.

Twinkle twinkle little star,
Wat makes you look so small?
If someone fell off you at 4 a.m.
Wood it be a early fall?

Dawgs tawt tricks as follows, speaking, 2 sents, standing on three hind feet, 4 sents, playing dead dawg, 7 sents, sneezing, 9 sents. See Low Davis. Advertisement.

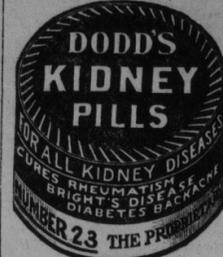
Short Story.
The Innermost Child.

O dear, the gas is escaping, sed the innermost child's mother.
Ill shut the door and then it cant escape, thawt the innermost child.
Wich it did, and everybody suffocated.

The end.

Illustrating the state of all Belgium. Houses and other property destroyed everywhere, and the survivors only remnants of families, with the breadwinners killed or carried off into slavery.

Canadians can only faintly picture the destitution and misery in the unhappy land of Belgium. But they can bring some comfort to the people by subscribing to the relief fund, which is holding the grim spectre of starvation at bay in Belgium. Subscriptions should be sent to the local committee or to the Treasurer, Central Belgian Relief Committee, 59 St. Peter street, Montreal.



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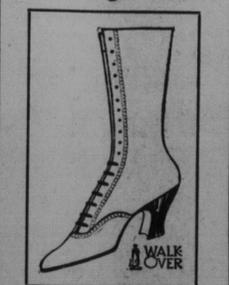
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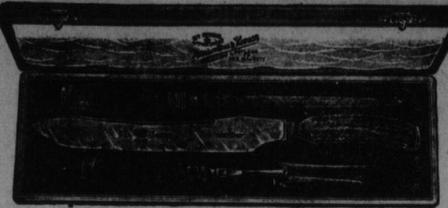
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