

THE WEEKLY ONTARIO.

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THURSDAY, JANUARY 11, 1917.

SPARRING FOR TIME.

Is Germany sparring for time? Is her situation really as bad as has been represented by some correspondents or is she merely seeking to close the war before she is completely exhausted?

What does it mean? It means if Germany's wishes are carried out that the enormous privations, which the British empire as well as the Allies have suffered and the sacrifices in human life and treasures, which they have paid will be in vain, that we who are left will make a treaty with Germany, which does not settle the war but simply postpones its settlement.

There is only one peace, which can be honorably agreed upon by the British Empire and the Allies and which Germany can understand. It is a peace dictated with a foot upon the crushed form of the German nation and a sword at its throat. It cries for peace and mercy today, but it was a ravenous wolf when it had Belgium at its feet.

This is a war in which there can be no peace unless peace comes with a decisive victory. Germany wants peace today because it suits Germany's purposes to have peace. If Germany had the victorious army in Christmas 1916 that she had in Christmas 1914, Germany would not be asking for a peace conference. She and she alone would then dictate the terms of peace without the mediation of the President of the United States.

A military expert writing in The New York Times describes the situation thus:— To turn to the situation on the various fronts, we find, in general, that Germany is checked everywhere. On the western front the initiative belongs entirely to the Entente.

have gained considerably more ground against the German defense, have taken three times the number of prisoners, and have undoubtedly caused the Germans a much greater loss in killed and wounded than the French suffered during the several months preceding July 1.

The Allies have demonstrated their superiority on the western front in two important arms—aviation and artillery. The gains of the Allies on the Somme and before Verdun can be ascribed almost in their entirety to the superiority of their artillery preparation. The best German critics do not place the allied loss at more than 600,000 men, and the German loss was but little less. The spring will bring a renewal of the western offensive, and every manufacturing resource which the Allies possess will be and is rapidly being turned to the production of shell.

The lessons of the Somme have been many and extremely valuable. The British Army, which, on July 1, was raw, inexperienced, and unused to gunfire, is now a veteran army which knows how to fight and knows what fighting means. The British artillery has also acquired knowledge, and the co-ordination between infantry and artillery which has characterized the French operations will, to a large extent, characterize the British work.

AN ARISTOCRATIC FAMILY.

It is improbable that the Christmas tree's valuable fruit is really half so interesting as the tree itself.

The balsam fir, the species commonly sold in mid-winter markets, is one of 250 members of that famous tree family known as the pines. This whole evergreen tribe is of aristocratic lineage; its ancestors lived in the ancient forests which made the earth's coal measures, and its most distinguished modern representative is the gigantic sequoia, or California redwood. The white pine which has made millions of dollars for lumber kings is a cousin of the little Christmas tree, while the tiny club mosses and common cat tails belong to the same ancient stock.

The use of the pine family for providing the special kind of living green required for festival decorations antedates the birth of the Christ child. In Isaiah LX: 13 it is written: "The glory of Lebanon shall come unto thee the fir tree, the pine tree, and the box together, to beautify the place of my sanctuary."

Although we treat our Christmas tree as an honored guest, we are, all unwittingly, its enemy. It belongs to a dying race, and we are hastening its destruction. It can not be grown from the roots nor from cuttings. It must spring from the seed which is weak in vitality and when borne by the wind is often flung on sterile soil. Lovers of pine trees who can afford it buy potted Christmas trees and set them in their gardens in the spring. It is a pretty custom, part of man's new and great joy in conserving all earth's beauties, of which the evergreen trees are among the choicest.

REGARDING APPLAUSE.

The address by Dr. Scott, pastor of Bridge Street church at the Y.M.C.A. last night was far and away the best, the strongest and the most logical presentation of the case for equal suffrage that we have heard. We have always considered the general argument for woman franchise as unanswerable, but Dr. Scott presented many new arguments as well as many old arguments in a new way; so that the cumulative effect was to sweep away all doubt and leave the case not merely unanswerable, but also a stimulus to action. The historical and constitutional aspects of the subject in less capable hands would have been dull and dry, but Dr. Scott contrived to invest them with living interest and make them a moving and vital part of his message.

Needless to say with such a speaker and such a message there was the compliment of strict and deeply interested attention. But, strangely enough, there were but the faintest and most restrained expressions of the enthusiasm that each listener must have felt. Had it not been for the presence of a dozen or so of the more demonstrative masculines we fear that Dr. Scott would have missed almost entirely the applause, the outward and distinguishable evidence of interest, so essential in causing a speaker to rise to his best.

We have noticed on several other occasions where ladies greatly predominated in Belleville audiences this same lack of audible appreciation. The speaker's words, as John B. Gough used to remark, "fell like brickbats on a bed of clay."

When it comes to intellectual appreciation, no public speaker could ask for a better qualified audience than one composed of Belleville ladies. They are afterwards able to discuss the merits of a given address with intelligent discrimination. But they lamentably fail to let the speech-maker know that he is making an impression.

Therefore, let's have more applause, ladies. It will help the orator of the evening, and will not in any way retard the arrival of equal suffrage.

MUNITIONS' WORKERS—MORE SPEED IS NEEDED.

Making munitions is no common task. Neither should it be governed by the common laws of labor. Nothing short of 100 per cent. efficiency is accepted in the finished product. Consequently 100 per cent. efficiency is required of the worker. This 100 per cent. efficiency implies more than physical obligation to do so much work for so much money. It means doing all that one is capable of doing in the period of time one is at work. It is not sufficient to be satisfied to do a little work and get a little pay for it. The space occupied and machinery used by the slow or easy-going worker would better be given up to a speedy worker, so that the speedy worker might do more and earn more. The obligation upon the munitions' worker is to turn out the greatest possible amount of work within the time allotted. The worker owes a duty to the soldier that is beyond all money consideration.

What would one think of a soldier who, after killing one of the enemy in battle, stopped his efforts and offered as his explanation the excuse that he had destroyed one enemy—his work was done, and he wanted to go home?

A FORTUNE AT YOUR FINGER TIPS.

Do you ever envy your more fortunate fellow-men who have been to colleges and universities, who have travelled widely, whose acquaintance with the wise and powerful gives them an insight into world affairs that you feel you lack?

You can overcome this handicap if you will but try! By diligent effort you can make yourself the equal in wisdom of practically any of those whose opportunities you never have had.

The key is within your reach. It is the Corby public library!

It is the business of the library, not only to keep on its shelves the books you should read to make yourself familiar with your chosen field, but to aid you in finding those books. Do you see a chance to better yourself by enlisting in some different industry? The chances are you can find in the library most of the information about this particular field, lack of which holds you back!

Many careers have been planned and founded on a library table. And don't forget that the library is supported by taxes, which means that you pay your share to keep it going.

Are you getting returns on your investment?

USING PRESIDENT WILSON.

Germany is apparently as thoroughly organizing the neutral powers to force peace on her terms upon the Entente Allies as she organized at the beginning of the war, but the neutral powers will wisely avoid participation in an attempt to enforce Germany's terms of peace. The attitude of the United States of America through President Wilson's note is most disturbing. It will be well for the American people not to understand the temper of the people of Canada. As a Dominion we have made too many sacrifices in this war to maintain the liberties of the world, to allow even the American people to coerce us into accepting terms of peace which mean no peace. It would be far better for President Wilson to ally himself with the German military autocracy openly than to be a catspaw to extract the chestnuts from the conflagration in Europe and tender them to the military autocrats.

President Wilson's own letter came as a shock to the people of this country. Hitherto we regarded our neighbors with feelings of extreme friendliness and sought honestly with them to solve the common problems of this

North American continent but even, despite our natural desire to maintain their friendship, the American republic must not impose upon that feeling and imagine that there is no limit to patience. After the exhibition, which the United States made of its inability to enforce its will upon the factions in Mexico, it is very unlikely that the people of Canada would submit passively to any threats implied or otherwise used by the people of the adjoining republic. In the event of trouble arising between the Entente Allies and the United States as seems to be desired by a considerable number of the people in the adjoining republic, the latter should remember that in facing Canada, they are not facing Mexico. We cherish on this side of the line some memories of having in the war of 1812-15 maintained the integrity of Canadian soil and the freedom of the Canadian people from invaders.

President Wilson proposes in connection with his negotiations to seek as an ultimate goal the establishment of "a league of peace." But how does he propose to enforce the dictates of that league? We had what was virtually a league of peace applied to a limited area in the international guarantee of the integrity of Belgium. The United States subsequently became a party to that treaty, but was unwilling to enforce the guarantee, when Germany willfully and defiantly invaded Belgium. The United States was by non-interference a party to Germany's act in tearing up the treaty as a scrap of paper. It now however, asks the Entente Allies to enter into a new treaty with a country which refused to be bound by its old treaties and regarded them as mere scraps of paper. President Wilson asks the Entente Allies to enter these negotiations with the United States as a sponsor. This request virtually means that the United States which is afraid to enforce a guarantee which it made in common with others in connection with Belgium, seeks to cajole the Entente Allies into signing a new treaty of international peace. With whom? With Germany, which regards treaties as worthless and itself as a power afraid to enforce them. The belligerent countries are asked to cease war and accept terms at the hands of the treaty destroying aggressors. It is unlikely that the Entente Powers will walk into the parlor so craftily furnished by the German spider, even though Uncle Sam assures that everything is satisfactory.

President Wilson in his spineless letter to the belligerent countries inquires what are we fighting about. He wants to know what the terms of peace are. There are fundamental terms upon which only a peace can be negotiated and President Wilson should know well these terms. Premier Asquith stated them on Nov. 9th, 1914 as follows:

"We shall never sheathe the sword, which we have not lightly drawn, until Belgium recovers in full measure all and more than all that she has sacrificed, until France is adequately secured against the menace of aggression, until the rights of the smaller nationalities of Europe are placed upon an unassailable foundation, and until the military domination of Prussia is wholly and finally destroyed."

From that day to this they never have been changed excepting that the name of Serbia is added to that of Belgium, and possibly the name of Roumania may be added later. On April 10, 1916, Mr. Asquith further declared that

"Great Britain, and France also, entered the war not to strangle Germany, not to wipe her off the map of Europe, not to destroy or mutilate her national life, certainly not to interfere with (to use the Chancellor's expression) the free exercise of her peaceful endeavors, but to prevent Germany (which for this purpose means Prussia) from establishing a position of military menace and dominance over her neighbors. . . . As a result of the war we intend to establish the principle that international problems must be handled by free negotiation on equal terms between free peoples, and that this settlement shall no longer be hampered and swayed by the overmastering dictation of a government controlled by a military caste. This is what I mean by the destruction of the military domination of Prussia, nothing more, nothing less."

We understand now why Von Bethmann-Hollweg is so funny. He looks like Bernard Shaw.

London has received reports through Switzerland which represent the internal conditions in Austria-Hungary as so serious that the twin governments wish to negotiate direct with Great Britain and France, preferring a humiliating peace to inevitable bankruptcy and ruin. It is added that the opening of the negotiations will not take place until after the coronation of the Emperor Charles. For some time past there have been rumors current that the new emperor was not so disposed to a position of subservience to Germany as his predecessor, but despite these rumors it would be unwise at the present juncture to build too strongly hopes based upon them.

Other Editors' Opinions

THE MILK QUESTION.

AN INTERESTING contribution to the discussion of the price of milk comes from The Weekly Ontario, of Belleville, whose business manager is an old cheese maker. The price of milk in Belleville has been increased from eight to ten cents per quart, and the milkmen say it is quite as cheap as cheese or butter or anything else. To this the Weekly Ontario replies:

"Late in October cheese sold on Belleville board for more than twenty-five cents a pound. This is high beyond the wildest dreams of what dairymen thought possible at the beginning of the war. Yet bear in mind that cheese would have to sell at forty-eight cents a pound to be equal to milk at ten cents a quart."

"Similarly, the butter that we can now buy at about forty-five cents a pound would cost \$1.04 a pound if it were boosted to the same high altitude as milk."

"These figures look unreasonable but they can easily be verified by any dairyman."

"Here is another thing, however, that is still more unreasonable. It costs more to move sixty pounds of milk from any point one to three miles outside of Belleville, to the consumer in Belleville, than it does to carry on bushel of wheat from Calgary, Alberta, to London, England."

Assuming that these statements are correct, they in the first place prove that milk could be sold much cheaper and yet yield a greater profit than if converted into cheese or butter. That fact is perhaps not generally known but the Weekly Ontario says it can easily be verified by any dairyman. It is worth keeping in mind in the present controversy.

But the last statement made, of the relative cost of carrying milk 1 mile and of carrying wheat from Calgary to London, is still more impressive. The Journal from which we have quoted declares that there is "the most crazy kind of extravagant wastefulness in our present system of getting milk from the producer to the consumer." It adds that "if railroads and steamship companies were managed in the same reckless manner, the Alberta wheat would be selling in England for about five thousand dollars a bushel, and bread would cost the Londoner something like two hundred dollars a loaf."

The Weekly Ontario does not charge that the milkman is getting rich as a result of the system in vogue, but that the consumer is a victim of an indefensible system. We quote again: "The whole trouble lies in the present method of milk collection and distribution. There are a dozen men doing the work that could as well be done by a single individual. The wagons cross and recross each other's routes and there will sometimes be seen about as many milkmen as there are houses on the street. The whole system is about as foolish, wasteful and inefficient as could be imagined."

And here is the remedy the Belleville paper suggests: "There is here an opportunity for municipal enterprise. Milk-dealers will scoff at any effort along this line as an impractical dream. It may be as yet a dream, but it is not by any means impractical. If at least fifty per cent. of the present unnecessary cost and useless reduplication of service could be extinguished it would be for lack of the simplest rudiments of organization the same as must be practiced every day by the ordinary business man if he would survive. Our city council should take this matter up forthwith. The establishment of a central supply-depot where customers could obtain milk at cost prices would be a boon to many families who are being grievously pinched the present winter."

It would only be by municipal control of such a system that it could be expected to give relief. If the element of competition were removed by combining the people would practically be compelled to pay whatever price was asked. A municipal milk depot would be a radical departure from present methods, but it certainly offers an opportunity to reduce very materially the cost of distribution.

But, of course, milk is only one of a great number of articles for which the people are asked to pay prices that pinch. Municipal action alone cannot relieve the situation. Tariff reduction in many lines would help. In some cases direct government action to eliminate speculation is necessary. But no such action is anticipated.—St. John (N.B.) Evening Times-Star.

DIED

WILSON—In Belleville on Thursday, Jan. 4th, 1917, Mrs. Cynthia Jane Wilson, aged 76 years, 2 months and 2 days.

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