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Semi-Weekly Telegraph
and The News

ST. JOHN, N.B., SEPTEMBER 26, 1914

WAR COMMENT.

Even a few weeks ago one could think of battles in the world's history with which to compare the conflict then going on in France and Belgium, but during the last two weeks the war of to-day has become the example of history. The Persian border, which threatened Greece, was set down until this year as the greatest army of recorded time, but it is now over-matched even in numbers, and in effective striking power it was not to be compared in any way with the might of France, of Russia, of Germany on land, or of Britain on land and sea. While the world is waiting for decisive news of the present battle, by far the greatest in the world's history, it may be well to remember that the very fact that Germany is now fighting a prolonged engagement so far from Paris even or eight weeks after the beginning of hostilities spells Germany's failure and a severe dislocation of Germany's plans. No matter how stubbornly Germany contests the line of the Aisne, time lost there, even if it is employed to inflict terrific losses upon the French and British who are in action, means so many days gained by the Allies in consolidating and bringing to bear the great forces which they have not yet had time to put in the field. The longer the Germans fight, and particularly the longer they fight without smashing any of the armies opposed to them, the more hopeless the outlook for them must be, and the more clearly stand out the vast odds opposed to them.

The terrific loss of life now going on is a sacrifice to Prussian militarism. That is a spirit that must be put down. It is an inheritance from Frederick the Great. It is both the Kaiser and the German people, not either alone, that must take the responsibility for the horrors of the war of 1914. And it is the German people more than the Kaiser who must pay the bill. A people who would permit a war lord to use them as pawns in a terrific gamble of this kind, or a people who would assent to, or approve of, or actually glorify the idea that Germany in arms and in trade can conquer the world, is a people who are impossible neighbors until their claws have been cut. The Prussian war spirit and the Prussian idea that victory for the Germans is at all a possible scheme must be and will be crushed and uprooted.

Meanwhile while victory hangs in the balance along the Aisne, the final outcome of the great struggle cannot properly be said to be in doubt. Even if the present battle were lost the Allies would merely recognize the fact that they had not at first placed men enough in the field, and they would bring greater armies to bear. Those who believe that it to be impossible must fall back upon their arithmetic and compare the populations and the wealth of the British Empire, of France and Russia, of Belgium and of Serbia with the populations and wealth of Germany and Austria. It is a staggering sum, and to-day no man can reckon with certainty the period of time that may be occupied in working it out. But that Germany will be crushed and the Prussian war spirit broken and reformed there can be no doubt.

THE FIGHTING IN FRANCE.

Since September 14, the official reports from the battle front in France have been meagre and lacking in detail. The terse bulletins received indicate that the Allies are slowly but steadily pressing forward, especially on the

German right wing. All along the line to Argonne the Germans have been forced to give ground, but the advantage gained is not enough to warrant the assumption that the tide, so far as this great battle is concerned, has actually turned against them. It would seem that the enemy's right, under Von Kluck, has been forced to retreat seven or eight miles in order to avoid being enveloped by the British and French. If the Allied armies succeed in driving the Germans from their present strongly entrenched position, there would be nothing for the enemy to do but retreat across the border. From that time on Germany would be playing a defensive game, brought about by the disarrangement of her entire plan of campaign.

Germany must win this fight or lose both prestige and the second phase of the war. There is good reason for believing that the right wing of the enemy, which stretches across North eastern France, is gradually yielding. Should Von Kluck's army be forced to retreat, then the battle of the Aisne would follow the course of the battle of the Marne, for there it was the German right wing that fell back across the river. London bases the chief hope of the Allies in a possible envelopment of the enemy's right wing, and the renewed activity of the British cavalry and certain movements of the Allied troops to the North and West of the German line of communication, gives expression to this hope.

It may yet be days before the results of the present fighting are learned. The British government has explained that secrecy is necessary and must overshadow all other considerations. Enough has come through to make it clear that the greatest battle of all time is being fought. While the suspense is great, it is comforting to reflect that in the end victory will rest with the Allied armies.

PROFITABLE FOR THE FARMERS.
The price of beef has gone up so rapidly in the last few years that farmers have found it necessary to raise more and more cattle in order to get the most out of their labor. Generally speaking, they were slow to profit by the increasing demand for cattle, sheep and hogs, but experience during the last two or three years has taught them the wisdom of specializing in this paying branch of their business. Now that the war is on, those farmers who are quick enough to take advantage of the situation will make money faster than they have been able to make it for some time, for while the war is having a bad effect on many interests, it is favorably affecting agricultural interests all over America, particularly where special attention is given to cattle and sheep raising.

Discussing the beef problem in Canada the Toronto Globe says:

"Germany and Austria are both food importing countries under normal conditions. This war broke out at a time when the withdrawal of millions of men from industrial pursuits led to a non-producing engine of destruction. It must have had a bad effect on the present year's harvest and also on the live stock industry. These countries have been depleted of their supplies of both cereals and meats to furnish their armies with food, and each of them has lost hundreds of thousands of men who have disappeared permanently from the ranks of industrial workers. Already part of Austria has been devastated by war, and probably the whole of both Austria and Russia will be overrun by hostile armies before Christmas. It is quite evident that, as the result of all these conditions, the cost of living will run very high in all food-producing countries, especially in Prussia, Austria, Great Britain, France, and Belgium."

"The price of beef determines to a great extent the price of other kinds of meat, and it also does the price of live cattle. The latter would have been high this year if the war had never happened; it will certainly be still higher just because of the war, and the increase will be maintained indefinitely. The Crimean war, comparatively small as was the area of disturbance and destruction, had precisely this effect: the price of wheat went up in Canada to two dollars a bushel, and the prices of other agricultural products accordingly."

The farmers will have themselves to blame if they fail to profit by the situation that has arisen. Last year Maritime Province dealers paid more for a pair of two-year-old steers for Christmas beef than was paid fifteen years ago for a pair of large oxen weighing more than twice as much and in far better condition for market. Such lambs as sold in New Brunswick for four dollars each this Spring, could have been bought for less than half that price ten years ago. Even these high prices have begun to soar since the war started, and the full effect in this direction has not yet been felt.

The Canadian farmers should grasp the opportunity now offering. It will be a sad lack of enterprise on their part if they fail to do so.

THE WAR AS A WHOLE.

About three weeks ago when the German drive had forced the left of the allied line back almost upon the outer defenses of Paris, and when the investment of the French capital seemed an immediate probability, Lord Kitchener, in making up the report of Sir John French, and in commenting upon it, reminded the people of the British Empire that it was wise and necessary to look at the whole field of war in order to retain the proper sense of proportion and perspective. He pointed out that although the allied forces had retreated a long way before heavy odds they had succeeded in retiring in good order, that their retile had well endured every test of war and that no considerable force of French or British troops had been isolated or broken even though the enemy had brought his full striking power to bear. Lord Kitchener said then that if the allied forces continued to hold the principal and most powerful German army "at close grips" time would be fighting strongly in favor of Germany.

One cannot expect to get good news every day. Yesterday the destruction of three large British cruisers by the enemy was reported. That is a serious loss, but the superiority in numbers of the British naval vessels makes it possible for Great

Britain to lose many ships before the strength of her fleet is reduced to anything like that of the German navy. The German commerce destroyers have so far been rather lucky in playing the game of hide and seek, but it will not be very long before their activities are cut short. They are doomed either to destruction or to take shelter in a neutral port, if they can find one. The account to date, so far as commerce destroying is concerned, is heavily in favor of the British, whose cruisers have captured nearly 200 merchant vessels, of which 230 were under the German flag. The Austrian merchant marine, which gave much promise, has suffered severely.

We must take the bitter with the sweet. We must be prepared to hear of other great disasters on sea and land before the war is over. It will take time to beat Germany, and the sacrifices will be great. But Germany will be beaten in the end.

NORWAY AND SWEDEN.
The feelings of good will and interdependence between Norway and Sweden have never been so strong as at the present time. Since the war began there has been an exchange of views between the two countries which has placed both in a position far more secure than formerly.

A writer in the Manchester Guardian points out that Norway has long suspected that in the event of war between Germany and England Germany would seize one of the harbors on the Norwegian coast and convert it into a base, whence sailies might be made upon the North Sea. He is inclined to believe that Germany might have done this very thing had it not been that Russia was involved as well as England. The Kaiser, no doubt, realized that if he violated Norwegian neutrality Norway would be thrown into the arms of the allies and would consent to the transit of Russian troops through one of her northern harbors. The writer, referring to events of last summer, says that while the Kaiser was spending his usual holiday in the Florida, the German navy was manœuvring up and down the coast of Norway. The distant booming of German guns, heard suspiciously near the coast, created a great sense of uneasiness among the Norwegian people which found definite expression in the press of that country.

Norway, it may be added, has long been kept in a state of anxiety by the fear that one or more of her harbors on the coast might be seized by Russia. A glance at the map shows how narrow the strip of land is dividing the western boundary of Finland from an ice free harbor in Norway. However, now that the Kaiser has the prospect of acquiring an ice free harbor on the Baltic, Norway feels less afraid of a permanent occupation of any of her territory by Russia.

The present war has done much to cement a strong feeling of friendship between Norway and Sweden that will have an important and permanent effect on both countries.

THE STRUGGLE CONTINUES.
The French War Office announces that no change has taken place in the situation on the battlefield during the last twenty-four hours. The great battle on the Aisne is still in progress, and apparently both the British and French governments are going to live up to their policy of giving out no detailed statements until they are in a position to announce either victory or defeat. In this case, military observers who are in sympathy with the Allies, look upon news as good news for they know that time is on the side of the British and French, who, no doubt, are receiving strong reinforcements. Enough has come through to lead one to believe that the allied armies are making at least a small modification of progress.

It is officially pointed out that the nature of the defenses necessary along the battle front makes progress slow, and the operations are said to be similar to those in Manchuria. Special reference is also made to the exceptional power of the heavy artillery used by both sides. It would seem that the allied center is slowly but surely driving back the enemy, who is now thought to be cleared from the Argonne region, the Allies having entered the very territory, eighteen miles northwest of Verdun, which was the headquarters of the Crown Prince's late as Friday last. On the Crown Prince's side are the armies led by the Duke of Württemberg and General Von Bismarck, and it would not be surprising if they are being forced back also.

The grand result should be arrived at before many more days have passed. If the German center is forced out of the tremendous entrenchments from Croisne Meuse, near the Argonne forest, there will be nothing left for the enemy but to return where it came. The same will be the result if Von Kluck loses much more ground, or if a general advance of the French right becomes possible northwest of Verdun.

It is of vital importance to the Germans to hold their ground north of Rheims, for a day's march of the Allies, extending from Rethel to the fortress of Mezieres, twenty miles north, would cut the German line of communication through Belgium, northwest of Verdun, leaving them as a sole line of retreat the territory south of Verdun, which is densely wooded and difficult, particularly in bad weather. Military critics say that this territory is not impossible, but they do not see how a considerable force could traverse it in retreat without suffering enormous losses. In the East Russian successes continue. A Petrograd statement says the retreating Austrians are being hotly pursued. It is possible that the Austrian forces may be cut off before they reach Croisne, for which they are desperately hurrying. Austria admits that her armies in the Przemysl-Croisne region have retreated—adding that it was for

strategic reasons. Upon the German front the Russian troops are in close contact with the enemy, but no decisive battle has yet taken place. On the whole the situation in the Eastern war theatre appears to be greatly to the advantage of Russia. If she succeeds in taking Przemysl she will virtually occupy all of Galicia, and in Prussia the Russians are making enough headway, taken with their advance in Galicia, to drive the Germans out of Poland. The Province of Galicia stretches nearly 225 miles westward from the Russian border and more than two-thirds of it is now in possession of the Czar's troops.

THE ABUSE OF FORCE.
The Hague and other conventions are not directed against war but against the abuse of force during war. They mark the limitations as to what belligerents may do. In very definite language the Hague Convention laid down the rights, laws and duties of nations engaged in warfare and in those cases not included in the regulations adopted by them, populations and belligerents remain under the protection and the rule of the principles of the law of nations, "as they result from the usages, established between civilized nations, from the laws of humanity and the requirements of the public conscience."

One article of this Convention says: "All seizure of, and destruction of, intentional damage done to such (public) institutions, historical monuments, works of art or science, is forbidden." And another: "No general penalty pecuniary or otherwise, can be inflicted on the population on account of the acts of individuals for which it cannot be regarded as collectively responsible."

German militarism has disregarded the civilized laws of humanity and the public conscience, and the Hague Convention could make the only provision it possibly could against this abuse of force. It says: "A belligerent party which violates the provisions of the said regulations shall, if the case demands, be liable to make compensation. It shall be responsible for all acts committed by persons forming part of its armed forces."

It is one of fate's little ironies that this provision was introduced by a German delegate. This delegate, Baron Marschall von Bieberstein, not content with the enactments of the Convention, stated that there were other factors that would even more strongly tend to prevent an abuse of force. These factors were: "Conscience, good sense and sentiment of duty imposed by the principles of humanity . . . will constitute the most effective guarantee against abuses."

Then he used the extraordinary words: "As to the sentiments of humanity and civilization, I cannot admit that there is any government or country superior in these sentiments to that which I have the honor to represent."

By many blinding agreements the Germans were stopped from setting foot on Belgium, but they subjected that country not only to the horrors of an invasion, but to spoliation, devastation, outrage and destruction. Even Attila spared Milan, but the modern Attila has made his irruption into Belgium a veritable day of wrath to the people. Louvain, the most celebrated seat of learning in the Low Countries, is a mass of ruins. A city having a population about the same as St. John has ceased to exist. Some of the men were shot, the rest were made prisoners, the women and children were flung into trains and carried off to an unknown destination, and the city was razed to the ground. The infamous crime of this destruction is without a parallel even in the Dark Ages.

A little over a decade ago the Emperor advised his soldiers who were going to China, to get a reputation like the Huns under Attila. They have achieved that reputation three over. In the destruction of Louvain the Kaiser has committed a crime, which, added to his wanton invasion of Belgium, is one of the direst that ever stained the pages of history.

To the Hague Convention, seeking to prevent the abuse of force, Germany was a signatory. The vandalism at Louvain is only typical of her abuse of power. She has sown the sea with treacherous mines, which floating at the will of wind and waves, are a menace not only to belligerents but to all that sail the seas. Neutrals have a right to demand that the great international highways of all nations should be safe for their use after a battle is over and after the belligerents have departed. There would be no safety for neutrals had not Britain so carefully swept the seas for the mines which Germany has so industriously sown. The atrocities committed in Belgium and the many other like acts of the Kaiser's soldiers, are not an indication of a sudden lapse into primitive savagery; they are the characteristic fruit of that militarism which dominates the councils of the Kaiser and the German imperialist bureaucracy. There is no future for brigandage, no matter what its force. It must be wiped out like a terrible plague, if civilization is to survive.

NOTE AND COMMENT.
The issue of the war, says Sir J. M. Barrie, is as to "whether soldiers or citizens shall rule in Europe." That is the case in a nut shell.

The man who fails to give his fair share to the fund being raised for the needy families of those who have gone to the front is unworthy of citizenship and its benefits.

Destroying the enemy's ships by submarine attacks is a game that two can play. England is very likely to furnish additional proof of that in the near future.

The value of the aeroplane for scouting purposes is now incalculable. When the war began it was thought that Great Britain was not nearly so well equipped as France or Germany so far as her

aviation corps was concerned, but the results attained along the battle line prove that the British aviators have done the best work. The Zeppelins which the Kaiser evidently believed would destroy many British, French and Russian battleships have so far been of no practical use to the enemy.

The action of the government of France in taking the duty off cattle, sheep, hogs, horses, flour and cereals, gives Canada another opportunity to greatly increase her export trade.

The Cathedral at historic Noyon, around which so much of the fighting is now going on in the western war theatre, is one of the most beautiful specimens in France of the transition period of the eleventh and twelfth centuries.

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Lord Kitchener has assured the Mayor of Birmingham that the battalion will form a valuable addition to his force.

A Washington despatch says: "A warning to American aviators not to fly over the Canadian border was issued by the State Department to-day." Is not little Canada, so far from the seat of war, unnecessarily nervous and suspicious?—New York Sun.

Canada is at war—and Canadian military men, like French and Joffre in France, are taking no chances.

Awful as wars, there are things that are worse. We all love peace and hate war, but as Dean Henson says in the London Nation, there are things we love better than peace and hate worse than war. The average Belgian loves peace but he will accept death quickly rather than have his country struck out of the roll of free nations. Englishmen love peace but they will fight rather than become partners to the betrayal of France and Belgium. The love of peace is contingent upon certain sacred interest being unprejudiced.

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When the war is finished Italy will have little to fear from the Kaiser. The terms of the Triple Alliance did not place Italy under any obligation to assist Germany and Austria in this fight, and Germany and Austria began the struggle. Italy's reply to the Kaiser is likely to be a very practical one.

That food is cheaper at the retail stores in New York than it was before the European war started is the substance of a report made by the Mayor's committee on food supply which was organized to study the means of solving the city's growing food problem. After investigating for a period of six weeks, the committee is convinced that there has been no general rise in food prices in New York since the war began. Alarms had predicted that the increase in prices would be startling and the report of the committee has come as a surprise. It should have a good effect on food prices elsewhere.

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"Germany," he says, "does not realize what assistance she will meet on the sea from the small but strong reorganized Russian navy."

"I do not think that in her present condition Germany proposes to try again an offensive march into Russia or a march on Moscow, as the Kaiser said to his legions. It is too late now and if such move by the war lord was intended to attract the Russian forces now operating in Galicia he will get them, because most of these Russian troops are free now, having accomplished the task of beating Austria."

"The Kaiser can rest assured that there are still enough fresh troops in Russia to escort him to Moscow."

The Straits of Dover.
(Calgary News-Telegram.)

In 1804 Napoleon said: "Let us be masters of the Straits of Dover for six hours and we shall be masters of the world." But report after report of British victories on the seas shows that there will be no mastery of the world today, just as there was none in the days when Bonaparte sought to place the continent beneath his yoke.

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"The Battle of Dorking"

John T. G. Carr, of Hartland (N. B.), writes to The Telegraph as follows:

"Sir—I have heard the remark recently that the Germans were afraid to venture into the open sea on account of seasickness. The enclosed (The Battle of Dorking) published some forty years ago in a London journal would seem to bear this out and might be of interest at the present time."

THE BATTLE OF DORKING

I served as gunner's mate When I was twenty-eight— That's fifty anno domini ago; And our ship which was the "Spanker," Were a rigging at her anchor.

One Sunday night in August you must know.

I were chewing of a quid, Which I ordinarily did, O' Sundays, for I sort o' think it right.

When the gunner—Ben's his name— Did quite suddenly exclaim: "Blow me tight."

Says he: "My jolly mates, This here Lloyd's paper states, As we're goin' to fight them German Whereupon we tars, in spite Of it, went to bed."

Well, we sailed away to meet This famous German Fleet, Consoling which there'd been no end Of law.

For in six weeks they had planned, And built, and launched and manned, The finest fleet a nation ever saw.

We had cruised about on Sunday; But about six bells on Monday, When as smooth as any mirror was The water,

Right on our horizon Rose a cloud as black as pison: 'Twas the foe a-steam'ing down upon our quarter.

'Twas all as still as death, There was not a single breath, But our Admiral bore a smile upon his cheek.

The foe was on our larboard, But right away to starboard Was a very little tiny narver streak.

A-duckin' werry lay, And a-winkin' of his eye, Our Admiral gave orders for to run; And the enemy gave chase.

For the Germans as a race, Have a preference for fighting ten to one.

At seven we felt a whiff, At eight it blowed stiff; At nine it was blowing half a gale, But at ten the waves ran higher Than St. Patrick's Cathedral spire.

And my language to describe the same do fall.

We kept a electric light A-burnin' all the night; But on Tuesday, in the morning about three,

A gunner and spoke, "Darn me if any smoke Is coming from their chimney pots," says he.

Just then we heard a shout, And our Admiral sung out, "Send a signal up to wear about and then close."

Then rose and aft we ran; To his post stood every man; And louder than the storm our cheers arose.

We seaward them, and took aim, And the word to fire came, And our volley down the line of battle sent the German's flame.

But the Germans answered not— Not a solitary shot— But her ensign fluttered down by the board.

We were speechless very nigh, As we couldn't make out why The sponge they should so quickly up-ards chuck it.

Till Bismark we espied Hanging pal'd off the side, And Moltke sitting down beside a bucket.

All their gunners, all their stokers, Lay as flat as kitchen pokers. All a-groaning from the bottom of their souls.

And thus the battle ended, And the broken peace was mended; And William, when at last he ceased to be, Died a sadder and a wiser, A more circumspect old Kaiser, And a member of the Peace Society.

The United Empire.