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Meeting of Patriotic Association.

A meeting of the Patriotic Association was held at the Board of Trade Rooms last night. His Excellency the Governor presiding. In opening the meeting His Excellency read the following list of casualties up to Dec. 15th, which includes many cases of temporary ailments particularly those caused as miscellaneous:—

Wounded	9
Dead	12
Dead of disease	14
Wounded	35
Seriously wounded	53
Discharged	70
Discharged	29
Miscellaneous	58
Seriously ill	15

A total of 265. His Excellency then read the accompanying letter:—

Caldecote,
St. John's, Nfld.,
December 15, 1915.
Sir W. E. Davidson, K.C.M.G.,
Hon. Colonel 1st Nfld. Regiment,
Your Excellency:—

I wish to give a Christmas present to the Boys of Newfoundland who, on land or sea, are, or will be fighting the battles of the Empire.

I am enclosing a cheque for one thousand dollars, and I wish five hundred dollars to be given to the first Newfoundlanders in the Army and five hundred dollars to be given to the first Newfoundlanders in the Navy who, having joined, or is about to join our forces, wins the Victoria Cross and who is alive when peace is declared.

In the event of no Victoria Cross being awarded to any one of our soldiers or sailors then the said amount shall be given to the one in the Army and to the one in the Navy who shall have received the highest award for bravery, and who is alive when peace is declared.

The sole decision of Your Excellency or your successor in office shall be final.

Yours sincerely,
(Sgd.) GEO. W. B. AYRE,
Rt. Hon. Sir E. P. Morris in moving that Mr. Ayre be made a member of the Association, paid a worthy tribute to the latter's father, who was a true patriot and a Crimean-veteran, and suggested that Mr. Ayre's example in offering rewards to our volunteers might well be followed by others who are unable to go to the front. The motion was seconded by Mr. J. M. Devine, K. C., who also made reference to Mr. Ayre's commendable action. It was unanimously adopted. His Excellency then spoke as follows:—

In connection with Mr. George Ayre's Christmas Gift to the Soldiers and Sailors the Association might be interested in a brief description of the decorations which are awarded to all troops with distinction of the British Empire as the special awards for personal courage.

The highest award by universal consent is the Victoria Cross—a little bronze medal in the shape of a Maltese cross with the Royal Crest in the centre, and the words "For Valour" on a scroll beneath. The ribbon is crimson for the Army and dark blue for the Navy. This award for "conspicuous bravery" was instituted in January 1856 during the Crimean war.

In the Army the award of D. S. O. for Officers and of the D. C. M. for other ranks were instituted in 1886. The medals for these Orders consist of a Cross containing in the centre, the Imperial Crown, enclosed within a wreath of laurels, and the ribbon is red with a blue edge. I have known one man—the late Sir George Farrer—who was recently killed by an accident when serving (at the age of 56) with the Union Forces against the Germans in S. W. Africa. Sir George was then serving under General Buller, against whose forces a few years before he had won the D. C. M. when a trooper in the Imperial Light Horse for skill in scouting at Tabaancher with O. R. C. and the I. S. O. in the Transvaal, when he subsequently accepted a Commission. I do not know of any other case in which a civilian has won both these military badges for courage. It is the more remarkable as Sir George Farrer was a millitarian as well as a born leader.

The third decoration in the army is the Military Cross—a silver cross bearing the Imperial Crown in the centre, and the monogram of the King beneath, "G. R. I." The ribbon is white, with a purple stripe. The holder of the Military Cross is not entitled to have placed behind his name the initials to signify that he has obtained this prize; but when medals are worn on the breast, the place of honour, above all, goes to the Victoria Cross, and the second place to the Military Cross. These rank in precedence above all the badges of the order of Knighthood and service and all War Medals.

In the Navy, the equivalent to the D. S. O. and D. C. M. is the Conspicuous Service Cross, C.S.C. And the equivalent to the Military Cross is the Conspicuous Gallantry Medal—C.G.M.—which I understand has been won by a Newfoundland Reservist, Mr. Leander Green.

Mr. Ayre's gifts will go in the first instance—to winners of the Victoria Cross. Failing this, the merits of the

holders of these other distinctions for conspicuous bravery will have to be weighed by the unfortunate Governor with whom rests the ultimate selection. I trust that the competition will be close and equal, and that many mementos of Newfoundland's share in the war will remain to all generations as heirlooms in the families of those gallant men who may win these honors, to their own credit and to the glory of the Colony.

After His Excellency's remarks, Rt. Hon. Sir E. P. Morris moved a vote of thanks to Capt. McKay and McNeil for their work in connection with the training of the regiment which was heartily accorded. The reports of the Reserve Force, Finance and General Committees were presented by Mr. J. A. Clift, K.C., Hon. M. P. Cashin and J. S. Munn, Esq.

The report of the Reserve Force Committee contained the following complimentary reference to our men by the Secretary of the War Office to the Under Secretary of State forwarded on Nov. 9th:—

"I am commanded by the Army Council to request that a communication may be addressed to the Governor of Newfoundland, stating that the most favourable accounts have been received as to the efficiency, discipline and physical standards of the personnel of the 1st Newfoundland Battalion (now in the Dardanelles), and of the Depot of the Contingent stationed at Ayr, Scotland. As an example, the following extract from a report furnished recently by the G. O. C. in C. Scottish Command, may be of interest:—

"These men possess a splendid physique and an excellent fighting spirit. The general discipline leaves nothing to be desired, and they would follow their officers anywhere."

The Council are anxious that these favourable reports, and their own appreciation of the efforts already made by the Colony, should be conveyed to its Government."

His Excellency expressed his gratitude to Major Whittaker for reports concerning the regiment and hoped that greater details would be given in future.

Mr. C. R. Steer, Hon. Secretary of the Aeroplane Committee, forwarded a letter from the Overseas Club which contained the following paragraph:—

"Newfoundland No. 1 has been frequently used on photographic reconnaissance and has been hit several times. On one occasion the observer was hit by a splinter from the anti-aircraft gun; but it did not penetrate his leather clothing."

From this it is quite evident that at least one of the Newfoundland Aeroplanes is on active service. On motion of Mr. J. A. Clift, Dr. Burden was elected a member of the Association after which the meeting adjourned.

Meeting of Patriotic Association.

All About Wilhelm's Ancestors, Who Were Obscure Little Landowners.

The Hohenzollerns have been dubbed, not inaptly, the "royal upstarts" of Europe; for, compared with some of the great reigning houses, they are the veriest parvenus, wielding a sceptre little more than two centuries old.

The Kaiser, who epitomises the arrogance of his line, has no wreath of the purple at the head of his family-tree, but an obscure Count Thassilo, who founded a castle on the Zollern Hill in the Swabian Alb when our King Egbert was wearing his crown, eleven centuries ago. The territory of which in process of time his descendants became overlords was a district of bleak mountains, no larger than Hertfordshire; and his subjects were a few patry thousands.

For centuries these early Hohenzollerns led their small lives in their petty Countdom, content to live and die in obscurity, and leaving no solitary mark on the history of Europe, until, in 1415, the year of Agincourt, an ambitious and enterprising cadet of the younger line, won the favour of the Emperor Sigismund, and through it, blossomed into Elector of Brandenburg, thus adding considerably to the family importance.

Gradually Grew in Power.

Brandenburg, it is true, was a province little more than twice the size of Yorkshire, with a population at the time no larger than that of Leeds today; but it was in the heart of Prussia and admirably placed, in those turbulent days, for expansion. None knew this better than Frederick I. the new Hohenzollern Elector, who, before he died, had wrested good slices of territory from his Prussian and Polish neighbours.

Thus the Hohenzollerns grew in power, gradually enlarging their boundaries, but still scarcely recognized among the reigning families of Europe, until 1699 they secured their first important alliance, when Elector John Sigismund won for wife Anne, daughter of Albert Frederick, "the Insane," Duke of Prussia; and with her, Countships and Duchies (including the Duchy of Prussia) sufficient to double his territory.

The Hohenzollerns were now people to reckon with. When the great Elector died in 1708, his dominion was more than four square miles in extent, and he left him a well equipped army of 100,000 men. And it was his son, Frederick, who, after adding still more territory by purchase and conquest, assumed the dignity of King of Prussia in 1701.

Thus it was that the descendants of a Count who was lord of fewer acres than some of our own nobles, reached, at last the rank of royalty, and began the ruthless march towards world-dominion which seems likely before long to bring their edifice of pride and power to the dust.

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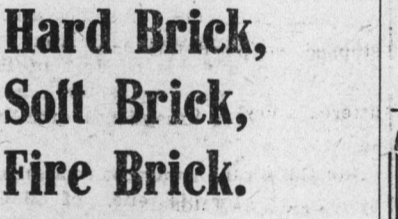
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