

IT IS A REAL WAR

By THE MONOCLE MAN

WE all know what is the matter with the British peoples to-day. We did not need Mr. Lloyd George—or anybody else—to tell us. It can be put in a short sentence. We have not discovered yet that we are at war. When we do make that great discovery we will become, perhaps, the most formidable fighting organization in the world. But it may be too late. The Germans may not wait for us to wake up. They woke up about fifty years ago; and they do not quite see why they should not take full advantage of their early awakening. We slumbered peacefully on, doped with pacifist soothing syrup, while the Germans got deliberately and mightily ready to make war on mankind and bring to their feet the entire civilized world. It was a big job they had in mind. But there were big rewards to be won by putting it through. So they went at it, with characteristic Teuton patience and thoroughness, and prepared in cold blood for "war, murder and sudden death," while many of the rest of us organized peace congresses and insisted that war was obsolete.

AND the dangerous feature of our sad case is that we still think that real, brutal war of the old sort is obsolete, in spite of the fact that one has been going on for over a year, in spite of Belgium and Poland, in spite of the perfectly plain intention of the Germans to take the winnings of war if they can. As Mr. Lloyd George—who is thoroughly awake and an example to all his fellow-Britons—so shrewdly says, the reason for the settled somnolence of the British Islanders is their beautiful faith in their navy. They say, in effect: "Yes, war is a frightful thing, and we feel so sorry for the poor Belgians, and we will go over as soon as we can and help the threatened French, and we have perfect faith in the power of the Russians to 'come back.' But—don't you know—those Berlin beggars can't get at us. Our sea-dogs are on guard." So even our Britons at home sleep on. Their magnificent pugnacity has brought more volunteer fighters to the army than the War Office can quite handle, but, as for taking this war seriously and Prussianizing the nation and compelling greedy capitalists to do with war-time profits and organizing industry, the free-born Britons will not stand for all that.

WE in Canada are in a far deeper sleep. We began by permitting our English, Irish and Scotch youths to leave us and go home to fight for the old grey mother. With them went a number of our own bravest and most adventurous spirits. These latter were awake. They knew that war had come again. Since then we have been sending from time to time the ever-increasing number of our young men who wake up. Our industries have been making shells and other things; but, of organized national effort, bringing us all in—"even you and I"—there has been little or nothing. Stop the first ten men you meet on the street, and get into frank conversation with them, and I venture the surmise that not more than one will have a realizing sense that Canada is fighting for her life—that, if we do not win this war, what we have always known as Canadian individual liberty will soon be a dream of the past. To put it another way—there is practically no danger of conscription in Canada to-day. But, if we lose the war, there will be conscription here—either British conscription for defence, or German conscription as a part of the German Empire—within ten years. That is, Canadian lads of ten years and under will be "conscripted" if we do not fight hard enough now to win.

THE whole German nation is at war. The whole German nation got ready to go to war before they precipitated the conflict. The whole French nation is at war. They were not so ready at the beginning, but they had the machinery and the willingness to get ready. And now they are all at war. The Russian nation was too huge to be wholly organized for war. If it had been, Germany would never have dared to challenge it. But it did put immense armies into the field; it did sacrifice them to the common cause with magnificent loyalty; it is now making more armies ready as rapidly as it can. Pretty well the whole Italian nation is at war. But the British nations are still making war as war was made in the period before nations-at-arms were born. They are sending out expeditionary forces—as we sent Wellington to the Peninsula and Marlborough to the Continent. We act as if it were a case of "heads, we win; tails, the Germans lose." We do not believe for a minute that not only is our splendid Empire at stake, but our individual happiness and freedom.

WE need make no mistake on the point, however. If the Germans win this war, they will recoup themselves handsomely for their enormous losses in men and means. We ought to know by

now that war is the same old brutal and thievish business it always was, and not at all the romantic and rose-water version which has been painted for us during this generation. We are too prone to think of war as a gigantic game of Rugby, played according to fastidious rules and in the true sporting spirit, and not to be soiled by such sordid and bestial crimes as plain stealing, intentional murder and systematic rape. But we know now that this pleasing theory is as false as the h-l that war really imitates. We have seen German officers steal, right and left. We have seen them murder in

THE FALL OF VILNA

VILNA has joined the list of fallen cities which since the great Russian retreat in Poland has included the other industrial centres, Warsaw and Lodz, besides a number of fortified positions. The supreme German effort during the past week has been against the Russian lines defending the three great northern centres of Riga, Dvinsk and Vilna. With an army of 400,000 to 500,000 men, Hindenburg a week ago last Friday began his drive. From the region east of Vilkomir he launched three separate main attacks. The first had its objective at the Dvina, just north of Dvinsk; the second, the bridge-heads at Dvinsk, and the third, the Vilna-Petrograd railway at a point about midway between Vilna and Dvinsk.

For a week previous to the main attacks, trains were rolling into Kovno almost incessantly, all loaded with new trains of siege and field artillery with abundant supplies of ammunition for them. From Kovno the guns were distributed to the three armies designated to bear the burden of the advance. From the general vicinity of Vilkomir the three thrusts began simultaneously. North of Dvinsk the German front was extended up the Dvina to a point half way between Jacobstadt and Dvinsk, but at no place did it succeed in forcing a crossing of the river. The second army pressed to the western outskirts of Dvinsk, where it is still heavily engaged and apparently has taken by storm some of the Russian points of support. The only pronounced success fell to the third army, which had the railway for its objective.

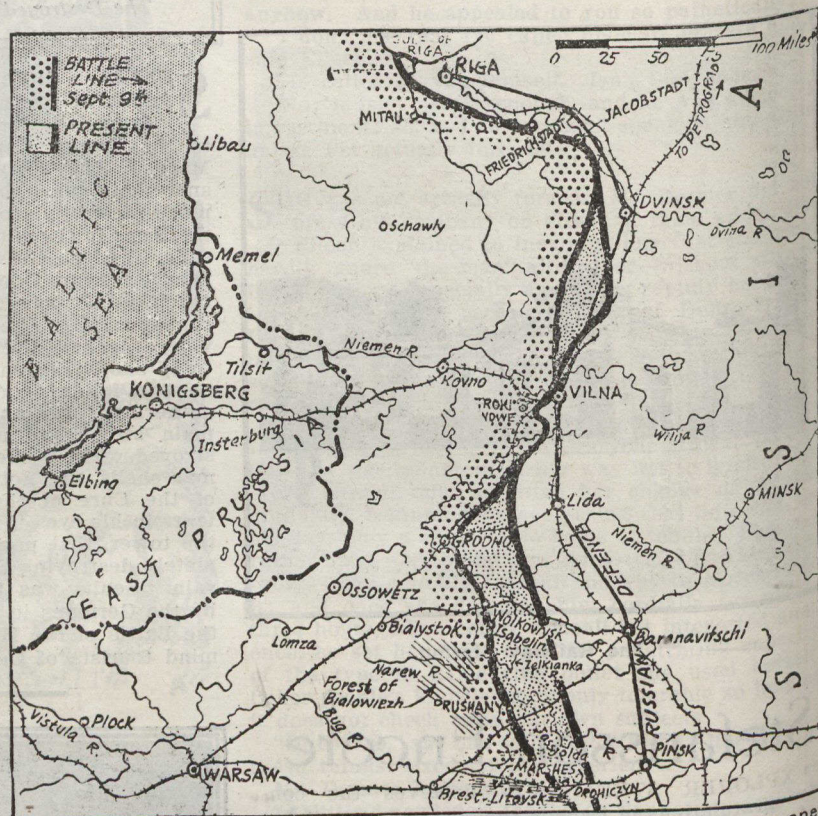
The failure of the Russians to hold the railway was followed by a rapid retreat. Utilizing his large numbers of cavalry, an arm which has played an important part in all the operations in the Courland theatre, von Hindenburg proceeded to tighten his coil around Dvinsk and extend his sweep to envelop Vilna. In less than two days the cavalry had penetrated to Vidzy and Komai, twenty and twenty-six miles respectively beyond the railway and due south of Dvinsk. Moving eastward they opened a path for the infantry, which extended the wedge laterally. While the operations against Dvinsk were proceeding, the Germans sent towards Vilna were beginning to compass a great victory which, according to experts, will probably be their last in the drive over Russian territory in that direction. The Russian army on the front of Vilna, cut off from retirement along the Petrograd road, still had one line of railway retreat open, the line running south-east from Vilna in the direction from which the Bavarians and von Mackensen are advancing. The evacuation of Vilna began long ago. All the war material was taken out. It is now a matter of retiring the armies which in the Vilna triangle probably numbers not less than 400,000 men. It is the object of the Germans to bag this army; an object which they have been trying to achieve ever since the beginning of the retreat through Poland.

In the retirement from Vilna there is a grave danger that the Russian armies may be cut off—until they reach some point far enough east to escape the jaws of the German tongs made by those two-fold manipulators, Hindenburg and Mackensen. Other successful escapes from similar tongs and traps were made by the arch-countermanoeuvring of

sheer wantonness. The abuse of women makes many a sickening page in the official and sworn reports on their atrocities.

AND we may be very sure that, if they win and are in a position to impose their will on their enemies, they will stop short of nothing to reward their soldiery and entrench their future national position. For instance, if they want Canada, they will take it; and they will govern it; and they will shoot, jail or exile any who dare stand in their way. The only limit to German "right"—if they win—will be German might. They will not hesitate to take territory, hold conquered and unwilling peoples and levy crushing indemnities. The collection of trophies of the Government and by individuals will be quite in the mediaeval manner. This is war—it is neither a chivalrous duel or the sort of thing we waged in South Africa.

THE MONOCLE MAN.



Recent despatches state that the Czar's armies may successfully escape the trap set by Hindenburg and Mackensen in the area of war indicated by this map.

tongs, split by a wedge and generally demoralized by swift, offensive tactics, backed up by enormously overwhelming artillery.

Turn About

AS Sandy holed out on the first green, his friend from over the border asked, "And how many strokes did you take?"

"Eight," replied the Scot.

"Ah!" said the Englishman. "I took seven; so that's my hole."

The Scotsman ventured no reply; but when, on the second green, the Englishman repeated his former question, the latter shook his head and, with an expression of infinite wisdom on his face, gently murmured:

"Na, na, my mannie; this time it's my turn to ask first."

Our Premier's Message

AT the close of his address to the Canadian Club of Ottawa on Thursday of last week, Sir Robert Borden concluded with this inspiring message:

"And so I come back to you from the men at the front, from the French people, from the British people, with that message—with a message not only of determination, but of confidence as well. One cannot tell what may in the final result come from this war. The events through which we are moving are so wonderful, so tremendous, so world-compelling, that we can hardly realize their significance. One of my colleagues said to me a year