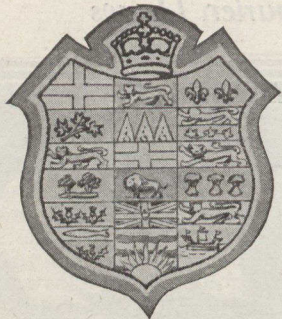


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Optimism

A CITIZEN of the United States, resident in Toronto, has written a book entitled "The War Thoughts of An Optimist." It ought to have a large sale right in Mr. Gould's own city, which, at the present moment is so full of pessimists that the City Hall tower is almost obscured by the blue mist. If the Allies do not make haste and get through the Dardanelles, some of Toronto's most prominent financiers will die of apathy.

At Last

CANADA'S other national weekly, the "Saturday Evening Post," of Philadelphia, has at last expressed an opinion on the war. For over a year it has sturdily kept silence. Nothing could tempt it away from general observations. But last week it ventured to say:

"There will be no embargo on shipment of war munitions from this country. The activities of our pro-German friends to that end are so much lost labour. . . . To put an embargo on war shipments would, in the circumstances, be tantamount to a declaration of opinion that the Allies ought to be beaten."

This is not very violent, of course, but then it must not be forgotten that it appeared on the editorial page of the "Saturday Evening Post."

Beer and Alcohol

SOME one in New Jersey has got out a poster to show that beer is less dangerous to humanity than certain patent medicines. This document quotes Dr. Gregor, of Bellevue Hospital, New York, as saying that "The American people spend \$500,000,000 annually on patent medicines." It then states that American beer contains from 3 to 5 per cent. of alcohol, while certain patent medicines contain from 16 per cent. in Buchu Juniper compound to 65 per cent. in Hamlin's Wizard Oil. Peruna is given as 18 per cent. alcohol, Lydia Pinkham's the same, and Paine's Celery Compound as 19.85. If these figures are correct, then beer is a harmless beverage in comparison.

Conscription

BRITAIN is likely to have conscription, not in name, but in reality. The Government is making a list of all the men in the country, and it will then be able to send recruiting officers directly to every unmarried man between 21 and 35 and ask him why he has not enlisted.

This is a scheme which might with advantage be adopted in Canada. There are too many married men being taken. These men are needed at home to look after the wives and the children. Besides, a married soldier costs the Government nearly twice as much as an unmarried soldier, when you consider separation allowances and family pensions.

The Gift of a Hospital

A DESPATCH from London tells about Canada's splendid gift of a hospital to France. The writer describes in glowing terms the magnificent contribution and the tremendous pleasure with which it has been received in France.

Now what are the facts. Since the Allies ceased to fight in France and Flanders, the hospitals have little to do. Three weeks ago there were 30,000 idle

hospital beds in France. Moreover, Canada has sent more hospitals than the British want or need, and even the Toronto University Hospital has not yet found a place to lay its wandering head. So many doctors wanted to be colonels that the Government is overloaded with hospital staffs.

What Sir Robert Borden has done, apparently, is to sanction the transfer of a largely idle Canadian hospital from England to France, where, later on, it may be more useful. The Ontario Government might follow Sir Robert's example and present its hospital to Belgium. Apparently all the other countries are well supplied.

Wilson's First

RESIDENT WILSON has had his first real compliment on his attitude towards Germany's submarine warfare—the Germans are apologetic concerning the Arabic. If Dr. Wilson's notes had been as mild as some people thought them to be, Germany would not be so anxious to appease United States wrath. Apparently private advices from Washington to Berlin were to "Go Slow."

The Political Issue

CANADA'S present political issue is: "If the Conservatives agree not to hold an election until after the war is ended, will the Liberals agree to give the Government a further two years in which to hold an election?"

The Conservatives say: "If you do not agree to



LIEUT.-COL. C. W. BELTON.

Recently appointed a member of the new Pensions Board, which will decide all questions of pensions for soldiers. Dr. Belton is a graduate of Trinity College, and became a medical officer of the Royal Canadian Regiment (regulars) in 1907. After qualifying at Aldershot he became principal medical officer at London. Since war broke out he has acted as Director of Medical Services at Winnipeg and at Sewell Camp. His present home is in Kingston.

this proposition, we will go to the country now."

The Liberals answer: "Shoot. Your gun has only blank cartridge."

That is the conversation epitomized to date; other remarks will follow.

The Price of Wheat

FOR months the Courier has been pointing out that the test of the Government's efficiency would come when Canada's record wheat crop was ready for the market. There was a danger that Canada would lack customers and ocean shipping facilities, and that as a consequence the crop could not be marketed. The time to meet those possible dangers was last spring, as the Courier pointed out again and again.

The customary answers were given. Inspired articles appeared saying that Canadians would get a big price for their wheat. Political hack writers did fancy figuring at prices ranging from \$1.20 to \$1.50 a bushel. They printed stories about the number of ships that would arrive from somewhere when the crop was ready. They hinted that Sir George Foster, Minister of Trade and Commerce, could be safely trusted to look after the export arrangements.

They declared again and again that the Premier was taking up this matter with the British Government and that all would be well.

Yet what has happened. The farmer in Western Canada is being offered 90 cents for his wheat, with a prospect of the price falling to 80 cents. It is disappointing, to say the least.

It may be that the Government has done its best. It may be that the circumstances were beyond its control. Nevertheless, it seems unfortunate that the farmer has been misled by the "Patriotism and Production" campaign to produce an article which he cannot sell advantageously. Had the Government been able to establish a minimum of even one dollar a bushel, the situation would have been saved. Lord Selborne's committee is trying to establish a minimum of \$1.40 in Britain, and it will be interesting to see if that can be done there.

Canada was asked to produce wheat because the Empire would need it. Will the Empire now decide that it would just as soon buy wheat from the United States and the Argentine? If so, there is an end of appeals based upon imperial considerations.

National Organization

M. R. A. G. GARDINER, in his revised analysis of the Kaiser, in a new book entitled "The War Lords," makes this remark:

"The completeness of the preparations will remain a monument of German efficiency and organization. And their failure will remain a monument of the truth that force is not the absolute master of the destiny of men even on the field of battle."

This was written before the German machine began its recent drive into Russia, but the events which have occurred since the writing have but emphasized the first half of the remark. "Efficiency and organization" is the summary of the German war machine.

In contrast there is the inefficiency and the lack of organization in Britain and in Russia. The failure to drive the Germans out of France and the failure to hold the Huns at the Vistula line in Russia are due entirely to lack of organization in the industrial systems of the British and Russian empires.

Some have answered that the Allies were organized for Peace, not for War. This is a doubtful answer. If there had been the proper kind of organization for peace, there would have been greater efficiency when war came.

The lesson for Canada is the need for a business rather than a political government. In the past, the business inefficiency of governments in this country has been excused by saying that nothing better can be expected of politicians. The answer condones the offences, instead of pointing a remedy. Canada has been supporting political efficiency rather than business efficiency—at Ottawa especially. The cabinet minister who was a political manipulator received higher honours than he who was a business organizer. For example, Sir William Mulock, who tried to conduct the post-office department on business lines, without regard to political exigencies, was forced out of office.

Nor need the criticism be confined to cabinet ministers. There was and is a lack of organization and efficiency in the civil service. The various departments of government are not conducted in such a way as to produce business results. It takes two dollars of government money to do the work done by one dollar in private business.

This weakness is not more manifest here than it is in England, and possibly in the United States. Nevertheless, Canadians have vaunted themselves upon their initiative, their disregard for official red tape and their ability to perform public services quickly and intelligently. The vaunting was something of a joke. Even after twelve months of war what have we? An army without a satisfactory rifle; an army without machine guns, which are now being ordered at prices fifty per cent. higher than they could have been obtained in time of peace; an army until recently inadequately clothed and booted; an army without adequate transports; an army without trained generals and qualified drill-sergeants; an army which overcame all physical disabilities only with superior intelligence, magnificent spirit and unconquerable courage!

True, we are overcoming these disabilities at a rapid rate. Mr. Kemp's purchasing commission is doing splendid work. Mr. S. R. Wickett has straightened out the boot situation. The Patriotic Fund Association seems to be working well. A strong Pension Board and a Dominion Hospital Board have been appointed. And Senator Lougheed is establishing a Disability Fund. This is excellent, but there is still more to be done.

It is quite true that the test has been severe. It is quite true that in some respects the results in Canada have surpassed those obtained in Britain. Nevertheless, we would be wise to learn the lesson of the times—a nation which lacks efficiency and organization must in the end succumb. If Canada is to take its place as one of the great nations of the world, it cannot depend upon bushels of wheat nor even upon numbers of people. Canada's success will be based on her ability to organize her people and her resources in every possible contingency of peace or war. Let us not exalt force, but let us seek sincerely after national efficiency and national organization.