

## The Weekly Ontario

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## STRENGTH AND WEAKNESS.

There is a Conservative premier at the head of the government at Toronto and a Conservative premier at the head of the government at Ottawa.

When Hon. W. H. Hearst was selected by his party as the successor to Sir James Whitney shortly after that statesman's death, it was generally supposed that he was a sort of makeshift leader who was chosen because of a deadlock among the followers of the two real leaders of the party, Hon. W. J. Hanna and Sir Adam Beck. It was everywhere asserted that the new head of the government was a man of amiable temperament, and of considerable ability as a speaker but quite destitute of that decision and force of character that must always be associated with a true leader of men.

It is only fair to state that these predictions have not been realised, and the early estimates have been shown to be erroneous. Hon. W. H. Hearst has on nearly every occasion shown a courage that is statesmanlike and has not stooped to the weak devices of the opportunist or the political trimmer.

Whether he realises it or not, he has taken the course that ensures public respect and esteem.

The most outstanding evidence of his courage is the manner in which he has dealt with the prohibition issue. He had abundance of excuses for sidestepping—the question was “settled in June 1914,” the soldiers were away fighting for “liberty” and it was cowardly to deprive them in their absence of the very thing they were fighting for in Europe, it was a Grit dodge to get the innocent Tory party in wrong. All these and dozens of other quibbles he heard and brushed aside as soon as he clearly realised that a majority of the electors of the province demanded a war-time measure of prohibition for the sake of economy and the conserving of our resources.

Then he had to face the desperate resistance in caucus of a large and influential section of his supporters in the house. But he plainly informed the booze element of the inner circle that if they continued their opposition he would throw his hat in the ring and appeal to the electors of the province through the medium of a general election. That statement resulted in a precipitate retreat of the lovers of “personal liberty.”

The premier won his final triumph in the legislature when his magnificently earnest and patriotic speech quelled all opposition and enabled the bill to pass its second reading without opposition. His eloquent message and plea on that occasion will not soon be forgotten. He brought his speech to a close with this splendid peroration.

“Some men have said that by this measure I have sealed the political doom of my government and signed my death warrant as a public man. But I would rather ten thousand times go down to political oblivion and disappear from view as a public man than to fail in what I believe to be my duty at the present time. The man who chooses the path of political expediency as against the path of duty is not worthy of the support of the splendid body of men that sit to the right of the Speaker of this House or of the great body of citizens who belong to the grand old Conservative party, and, above all, is not worthy to stand in the shoes of the great Whitney, who was ever bold enough to be honest and honest enough to be bold.

“In this day of national peril, in this day when the future of the British Empire, the freedom of the world and the blessings of democratic government hang in the balance, if I should fail to listen to what I believe to be the call of duty, if I should neglect to take every action that in my judgment will help to conserve the strength, power and manhood of this Province for this great struggle in which we are engaged I would be a traitor to my country, a traitor to my conscience and unworthy of the brave sons of Canada who are fighting, bleeding and dying for freedom and for us.

“Since I have been honored with the leadership of this House and of the great Conservative party in this Province I have earnestly struggled to keep an undimmed eye on the goal of what was best for this Province and its people, and I trust that so long as I may be honored with such leadership I may be able to keep a clear and unclouded eye for that goal and to follow the path of duty as I see it with feeble, perhaps, but with unfaltering steps, and with unwavering determination.

“Personally, it matters little to me whether my career as Prime Minister of this Province is long or short, but it does matter that I discharged my duty to the best of my ability while I retained that position. It matters much to this Province, while I retain

that position. It matters much to this Province that its Prime Minister whoever he may be, should be guided, and guided solely, by a sense of duty. And I am not unconscious that many of my best and warmest personal and political friends feel that I have made a mistake, even some may feel that they cannot continue further to give their allegiance to the party while I am its leader.

“Is this the time to talk of personal liberty, to think of our pleasures, our appetites, our enjoyments, when the civilization of the world is hanging in the balance and the very foundations of liberty are tottering and dependent upon the strength of Great Britain and her allies in the field and on the high seas?

“Are we who are staying at home comfortable and safe around our firesides going to cavil about our rights, our privileges, and our pleasures while the stream of our richest and best life blood continues to flow unobstructed for the cause of liberty?

“I may be wrong in the judgment I have formed. The act before the House may not accomplish what I hope for it, but I would a thousand times sooner be guilty of an error of judgment in taking an action of this kind with the object of conserving our strength and mobilizing our resources to the utmost, so that this war may be brought to an end, and the life of our young manhood saved, as far as possible, and the grief and suffering and woe minimized to the greatest extent we can, than to sit with folded arms free from criticism and censure.”

What a contrast these noble words and this splendid attitude present to the weakness, the vacillation, the toadying and the miserable quibbling at Ottawa!

Premier Borden, like George the Third, ascended a glorious throne. He had swept the country by a tremendous popular majority. He had at his back nearly fifty more followers than had the leader of the opposition. He had come to the helm at a time of boundless national prosperity, with revenues beyond the dreams of avarice. He was everywhere hailed as the deliverer from a treasonable attempt to hand the Dominion over to the United States commercially, and to Rome religiously. No statesman ever faced an opportunity where all the circumstances and environment so favored success such as came to Robert Borden on September the twenty-first, 1911.

Never has a statesman made so melancholy a failure. At the very outset, when his cabinet was being organized, he allowed Bourassa to dictate who should be the representatives from Quebec. A party of financial “patriots” went down from Toronto and insisted that honest, straightforward, capable George E. Foster be forced aside and garrulous inexperienced, complaisant, amenable, “useful” Tom White be given the important post of finance. To Robert Rogers, the man who could win elections, and destroy telegrams with equal facility, he assigned the highly influential department of public works.

Then when the country, following its deliverance from annexation to the United States, began to reap the inevitable consequences of political and commercial inflation, at the beginning of 1914, and when we were approaching the brink of a financial panic, the war came along just at the opportune moment to take the blame for all the business troubles of our own making.

The war not only staved off a financial panic, but it brought Sir Robert another piece of good fortune in the shape of the “Emergency” which he had been freely predicting for two years or more, but to encounter which he did not take the slightest trouble to provide his soldiers with either rifles or uniforms. But it did enable him to say with scornful emphasis to the thoroughly intimidated Grits, “Didn’t I tell you so?”

The greatest crop in Canada's history last year also served notice to Sir Robert that the gods were still kind.

What a dismal failure it has all been from 1911 to the hour of going to press! All these opportunities, and yet not a single great act of legislation or statesmanship to which any admiring follower can point. Everywhere there is graft, speculation, conspicuous waste, favoritism, politics, and public plunder but nowhere can there be found anything that might be termed business efficiency, fairness, or reasonable consideration of the national interests.

Everybody seems to be looking out for the main chance in the great game of grab.

Had Robert Borden measured up to the magnificence of his opportunity his name would have gone down in history as one who rose to an imperial height at a time of grave national crisis. As it is he seems likely to be remembered as a man who faced duty with indecision, or, opportunity with timid excuses, the call for statesmanship with pettifogging quibbles, the demand for honest administration of the war with truckling and evasion.

Even at this late date he could redeem many of the costly errors of his aimless drifting were he so disposed, but instead he hesitates and wanders and shifts.

And so it will remain to the end of the chapter.

## WATCH AND WORK.

There seems to be only one thing reasonably certain about the war, at its present stage—the Germans must and will be ultimately beaten. The time for mere unenlightened optimism has passed. We know more, now, about the strength and resources of our opponents. We know more about the terrible difficulties and costliness of direct attacks upon well-constructed and well-defended trenches. Verdun has afforded us an object lesson which he who runs may read.

The lesson of Verdun is that modern trenches can only be carried at a cost from which all but desperation must shrink. The first lesson of the war was that the old system of fortification was useless against new artillery. Leige, and what followed it, taught us that. Verdun, instead of defending the French armies, has had to be defended by them. Its fortifications, once regarded as impregnable, would have crumbled in a few hours under German gun-fire had not a line of army entrenchments been drawn around it at a sufficient distance to shelter it from the cannon of the enemy. Instead of the walls of Verdun protecting French soldiers, it was a wall of French soldiers which protected the walls of Verdun from the assaults of German artillery.

We have had clearly demonstrated to us the terrible cost of piercing such human walls, planted deep and well in the ground. For weeks the Kaiser's forces have been hurling themselves against the living French wall, only to be shattered and flung back, or to advance over mangled heaps of their own slain. They have paid with a soldier's life for almost every square foot of their progress. So far, they have won nothing of real importance. But they are dauntlessly pressing on. And they are steadily gaining, however slowly. These facts cannot be ignored. The Germans have not won the battle of Verdun; but, so far, they appear to be winning it. The importance which they attach to the position is manifested by the sacrifices which they have shown their willingness to make for the purpose of gaining it. If it is so important to them, it cannot be much less important to the Allies. What will the outcome be? At present no one can say.

Whatever the outcome, the magnitude of the task before the Allies, when they in turn set themselves to penetrate the German lines, will have been strikingly suggested. We have been wont to speak glibly of “drives” and “steam rollers” and that sort of thing. Let us disabuse our minds henceforth of all such notions. It is reasonable to assume that German entrenchments are as well-devised, as well-constructed, as well-defended as those of the Allies. If they are, what is to be expected when we come to try to break through them? What does the light shed by Verdun indicate?

We have neither desire nor intention to discourage our readers—quite the opposite. We do not believe that looking difficulties directly in the face will have any such tendency. On the contrary, we have sufficient faith in British pluck to be firmly of the opinion that a full recognition of the magnitude of the task before us will inspire us to fresh effort as no preaching of smooth things and ways could do. We are of the opinion that Britons are much more likely to be disheartened by raising in their minds false hopes, not destined to be realized. Therefore, we venture to warn them that much, very much, remains to be done before we can hope for a successful ending of the war. It has never been more imperatively urgent than now that not only the British brotherhood of nations, one and all, but every individual Briton, man and woman, young and old, should do their utmost for and contribute their utmost to the common cause which is far from being won.

## FEELING THE STRAIN.

In a brochure published in Berlin, the Reichstag Deputy Herr Gothein calculates that if the war were to end in May or June the German Empire would have to pay interest on £2,000,000,000. That will mean a burden of £110,000,000 per annum to be added to £150,000,000 of pensions to dependents of killed soldiers and crippled men. That means that Germany will have to produce £260,000,000 in excess of her pre-war resources. An enormous increase will be needed in taxation, and under the most favorable conditions, and supposing the war ends in the summer, the Imperial Budget will have to be trebled. The fifteen years following the end of war, he calculates, will be very hard for Germany, and he discusses the possibility of procuring the necessary sums by a series of monopolies.

The demand for a declaration of the aims of the war seems to be growing steadily in Germany. A letter from Berlin to the Journal de Geneve, says that the authorities do not seem to realize the disquieting effects of this preoccupation of the public mind. For nineteen months the nation has been shedding blood and does not yet know why. If Germany has been attacked, she is defending herself, and the people cannot see the necessity of so much talk, and so much liberty restricted by prohibitions, in order to explain so simple a matter.

If the war has any other end in view but defence for Germany, then let it be published and let the neutrals know it, say the people. But

they cannot hide their astonishment at the incertitude and equivocation which prevail. The heroism of the soldiers is not at all diminished by the fact that they do not know what they are dying for; rather the contrary, for no sacrifice is greater than for one's country, without knowing the why and wherefore. But it does diminish the confidence inspired by the future of Germany, for a fatal day will come when the nation will be tired of fighting in vain for glory's sake.

The London official designation of the German official reports of the last Zeppelin raids as “examples of imaginative inexactitude” is the British way of saying that the Huns are liars. Even when dealing with the pirates of the air, the Britisher runs to form.

The Montreal Star's sensational story of the impending resignation of the Borden Government appears to be unfounded. But the readiness with which the public accepted the rumor suggests that public opinion expects such a development. All the signs are that the days of the present Government at Ottawa are numbered.

One of the most remarkable things about the great scandal at Ottawa is the readiness, nay, the eagerness, of the Government organs and certain members of the Government party to throw Major-General Sir Sam Hughes overboard. So long as things were going well they were willing to bask in the reflected glory of the greatest military genius of all time, but, once trouble arises there is a rush to get rid of Sir Sam.

Lt.-Col. Adams and his excellent staff of recruiting officers, deserve to be complimented upon the effective manner in which the 155th battalion has been recruited almost to full strength in the short space of three months. The real work of organizing the battalion and campaigning for candidates for admission to the khaki circle did not begin until after the first of the year, although the announcement of the formation of the battalion was given out about December the tenth. It should also be noted that during this same period there was also an active canvass for men to complete the muster of the 80th, to join the Artillery branch of the service and to align themselves with the Foresters. The result is not only a strong tribute to the zeal of the officers in charge, but to the patriotic spirit of the counties of Hastings and Prince Edward.

There is but one sound plainly audible from a flying bullet, says Outing, and this is audible only when the bullet travels at high speed, at the rate of 1,500 feet per second, or more.

Missiles from all army rifles of modern times, which vary in velocity from 2,000 to 3,000 feet per second, create a vacuum immediately behind the bullet. The result is a sharp crash as the bullet passes, caused by the air closing rapidly in behind the bullet base.

At considerable range two distinct reports are audible to the person by whom the bullet is passing. At 700 yards the sound may be described phonetically as “pack-punk.” The first sound comes about three-quarters a second ahead of the latter in the case of the United States army rifle, the new Springfield. The velocity of this rifle is 2,700 feet per second at the muzzle.

The first sound is that of the bullet passing through the air. It is like nothing so much as a long and very violently cracked blacksnake whip. The second sound comes about three-quarters of a second later. It is dead, heavy, and is more like a thud than the “crack” of a rifle.

The difference in the time of the two sounds is because the bullet travels much faster than sound. Noise progresses at the rate of about 1,100 feet per second.

## THE SONG OF THE UNION JACK.

This is the song of the Union Jack,  
The red, the white, the blue;  
White for purity, red for pluck,  
And blue for the heart that is true.  
St. George's cross, St. Andrew's cross,  
The cross that St. Patrick gave;  
The flag that knows how the tempests toss,  
The flag that can dance on the wave.

St. George was brave and St. George was pure,  
His cross is red on white;  
Faith in God's justice, firm and sure,  
Led him in every fight.  
St. Andrew's cross is white on blue,  
His Lord's first follower he;  
And Scotland's sons, the pure and true,  
Among the first will be.

St. Patrick came to the Sister Isle,  
To do, to dare, to teach;  
We see him still in the Irish smile,  
In the genial Irish speech.  
Then cheer our flag; all ye British youth,  
Till our cheers came echoing back;  
Our flag of purity, courage, truth,  
Our dear old Union Jack.  
—William Platt, (of the Home School, Grindelford.

## Other Editors' Opinions

## BUY AT HOME.

A business transaction which took place in a local store one day recently proved the deception practiced by the city mail order houses who are constantly endeavoring to impress the public that goods can be purchased from them at a lower figure than elsewhere. The deal in question was for a piece of goods to match a piece previously bought at a well known departmental store in Toronto. The goods produced by the local merchant was a perfect match in color and quality and was more satisfactory, but the consternation of the customer can better be imagined than described when it was learned that the goods were being sold in Tweed for 25c per yard less than they could be purchased in Toronto. When it comes to a “show down” the purchasing public will find that the local dealers are to be relied on. We make no charge for this information simply pass it along with a bit of advice.—Robert Tweed, Buy at home—Tweed Advocate.

## THE GOOD OLD DAYS.

“Our grandmothers,” says the Port Rowan News, “milked the cows, fed the calves, churned the cream and washed and dressed ten children every morning. No competent woman of this generation need complain about the performance of the ordinary duties of her household.” A few items the News has left out. Our grandmothers spun the yarn, dyed it, knitted the family socks and stockings, made and mended clothes, cleaned tripe, made sausage meat, leached lye and made soap, put down pickles, sauces and preserves, pared, cut, corred and dried apples, made candles, looked after the hens, ducks, geese and turkeys, made and tended the vegetable and flower gardens, and helped out the old man when he got behind with his work. Add to all this, and more, the fact that this busy housewife found no difficulty in tending herself, putting on her best duds, and running over to a neighbor's a mile or two distant, occasionally to spend the afternoon.—Orillia Packet.

## PROHIBITION IN KANSAS.

Nine years ago Wichita had a hundred saloons and several hundred gamblers; she had every side issue of devility that travels in hand with the saloon business and she had only 37,000 population. Today her public gambling institutions are extinct and the liquor traffic, such as remains of it, is carried on in its fugitive way. A few druggists' clerks carry a bottle in their pockets from which they serve whiskey clandestinely at soda fountains. A few ragged bootleggers supply their trade and a number of good-sized joints, sometimes they number more, sometimes less, but protected on the sly by dishonorable police officers, work out a precarious existence, but it is a fugitive traffic that skulks and grows constantly less as the sentiment against it grows constantly stronger.

The most gloomy thing about the situation from the standpoint of the liquor men in Illinois, Ohio and other states where the fight is now centering is that Kansas, which has had theoretical prohibition for nearly thirty years and for twenty-five years of that time actual prohibition in nine-tenths of the counties of the state and actual prohibition for ten years in all of the counties of the state, does not offer a single crumb of comfort to the liquor states. As obedience to the law has increased the championship of the law has grown constantly stronger. A new generation has come in Kansas since the saloon was closed and the day finds that new generation almost unanimously opposed to the saloons. Nine years ago Wichita did away with the saloon-governed community by a majority of 2,500. Today it would be difficult to find 2,500 people in Wichita who would vote to have the saloons come back.—Wichita Beacon.

## A PAIR OF GREAT ONES.

Ontario Legislature heard J. W. Johnson, M.P.P., pronounce Sir Sam Hughes, K.C.B., to be the greatest Canadian in history, and failed to see where Sir Sam has anything on Hon. James S. Duff.—Toronto Telegram (Con.)

Like a Grip at the Throat. For a disease that is not classed as fatal there is probably none which causes more terrible suffering than asthma. Sleep is impossible, the sufferer becomes exhausted and finally, though the attack passes, is left in unceasing dread of its return. Dr. J. D. Kellogg's Asthma Remedy is a wonderful curative agent. It immediately relieves the restricted air passages as thousands can testify. It is sold by dealers everywhere.

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