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The Condition of Britain and Productive Industry

ARNOLD BENNETT takes the position in the Daily News and Leader (London) that Britain must concern herself more with increasing and maintaining productive industry. This is a war of endurance, and the economic burden for the allies is mainly on Britain. He says:

"Prices are still rising. They went up as a whole about another farthing in the shilling during October. They rise because the demand is greater than the supply, though the demand has certainly decreased. In order to understand the danger of the economic situation people should dismiss from their minds the idea of money—that is, of coin or its substitutes in engraved paper—and think only of the essentials of existence—goods and services. Coins and notes are simply a convenience of exchange. However much coin and notes there may be, you cannot use them to keep yourself alive. Gold will not nourish you, and notes will not keep you warm. The conception of money leads many thinkers astray. Thus, it is said by some that the war is not costing us as much as it seems to cost, because all our war-workers are being paid, and that hence to a large extent we are simply taking money out of one pocket to drop it into another. But the only thing that ultimately matters is that the services of war-workers are being put to a destructive use instead of a constructive use, and that material employed in war is being put to a destructive use instead of a constructive use. That is to say, both services and material are, from an economic standpoint, thrown away. A baker bakes bread. He eats part of the bread himself; the rest goes to nourish the community. When he joins the army or enters a munitions factory he ceases to make bread, ceases, indeed, all economically useful activity. Instead of feeding others he has to be fed. Copper is employed to make kettles or telegraph wires. War breaks out, and copper, instead of serving for kettles or telegraph wires, is transformed into parts of shells, which have no economical use and are purely destructive."

The Dominion customs tariff tax, increased by 5 per cent. against British trade since the outbreak of war, plainly does not help the Motherland in the economic burdens it has to bear, and the excessive prices charged for shells made in Canada would seem to be a positive undermining of the Motherland's power of endurance.

WASHINGTON, Nov. 30.—President Wilson will take no part in the campaign to bring about a peace conference now being carried out in this and other neutral countries. While he will interpose no objection to the unofficial movement, he has heard nothing from Europe, which leads him to believe that the time is opportune for him to take any steps.

Henry Ford's peace ship will not carry any representatives of the American government, and unless the situation changes in the meantime the government will not take any part in the meeting proposed.

The whole burden of supporting the armies, and of paying for munitions made abroad, and of extending credit to the Allies and to the overseas Dominions, must finally be born by labor, by productive industry. Arnold Bennett says:

"I do not know how many soldiers and war-workers of all kinds there are in Britain, but I have been told by a very competent authority that there are eight millions. These eight millions before the war were for the most part devoted to economically useful work. That is to say, they helped to feed, clothe, house, and enrich the community. Instead of helping to feed, clothe, house, and enrich the community they have now to be fed, clothed, and housed by others, and they impoverish the community, because they need for their activities a vast amount of expensive material. You can see at once that the economic disturbance ought to be terrific. It is. This economic disturbance is at the bottom of the trouble, because its effect is obviously to decrease the supply of economically useful products and to increase the demand for expensive but economically useful material. We are, in one word, short."

The more men withdrawn from productive industry in Britain and drafted into military service, the fewer producers there are left to bear the economic burden. One source of increased supply, says Arnold Bennett, is the employment of women:

"The employment of women will increase our supply. If my cook stops cooking for me and goes to help to make earthenware which is exported to America, I may suffer from indigestion through bad cooking, but our American exports will be increased and the financial tension thereby eased. Or she may work in the field, thus decreasing our need of importing corn. Or she may do fifty other things. This remedy is being practised more and more, but at best it will not go very far."

When Lord Derby's recruiting campaign is concluded, the British nation will be very nearly on its most effective war basis—excepting for the handicap of private profiteering.

Conscription of men for military service might increase the size of the army, but it would not maintain the source of supply—where the "silver bullets" are to come from. As Arnold Bennett puts it:

"The number of 'slackers' and useless persons in the country is ex-

remely small, and it is lessening. That is to say, practically the whole available population is either in the Army, working for the Army, or producing supplies which directly or indirectly help our national credit. In taking men for the Army the Government, therefore, instead of increasing the supply and decreasing the demand, decreases the supply and increases the demand.

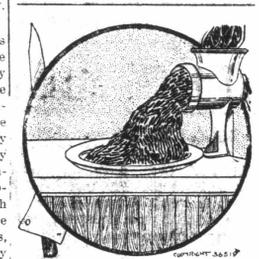
Evidently the safeguarding of the British treasury and the maintenance of British industry may count as much for final victory as any possible conscription of men for military service. Britain must not be impoverished by having to pay excessive prices for munitions; and to impede British trade is apparently another sure way to reduce Britain's power of endurance. Arnold Bennett concludes:

"We positively can dictate the terms of peace if we hold out, and do not ruin ourselves in the meantime. Germany cannot win, and the mouthings of her Kaiser and her capitalists are merely silly. But she might make a draw only slightly less disadvantageous to herself than to us. That would be exceedingly humiliating to us. To avoid it the national determination must be strengthened, not impaired. Financial exhaustion will at the very best seriously impair the national determination."

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The Rigid Censorship However Allows no Recognition of Gallant Deeds to be Published—Regiments are Facing Fearful Odds, But Censor Gives No Praise.

LONDON, Dec. 1 (correspondence of the Associated Press)—The bitter cry against the censorship heard from the front is that neither regiment nor individuals are allowed to gain any recognition or publicity for unusual exploits. This is one of the handicaps a democracy meets in trying to conduct a modern war on the most modern lines of secrecy. The Japanese army in the war against Russia was the pioneer in this policy. The Japanese carried their attempts to keep the enemy in the dark so far that none of the soldiers wore any regimental marks on their uniforms. Very few officers or enlisted men have been made popular heroes through this war, and no regiments stand out conspicuously in the public eye, although officers say that several of them have achievements to their credit equaling the charge of the Light Brigade at Balaclava. So far as the regiments of the old army, "The Little Contemptibles," are concerned, more than a majority of their members have figured in the casualty lists months ago.

John Redmond, the Nationalist leader, cited one of the grievances of Ireland in the debate which followed Premier Asquith's speech on Nov. 2. He said—"How could it bring help to the enemy let the people of Ireland, of Scotland, of England and of Wales know what their own regiments are doing?" He said that the landing at Sedul Bahr in April, which was the most difficult operation in that battle, was carried out by the Dublin Fusiliers and the Munster Fusiliers, but that Ireland had no knowledge of their work except in letters from the few surviving officers. He continued—"That kind of thing is doing us untold mischief in Ireland. One of the Dublin Fusiliers was known as the 'Pais.' It was made up of well-educated young men from the universities, public schools and the professions. They were all practically annihilated. I know scores of families in Dublin who are in terrible anguish over the death of their children. I have seen numbers of letters from survivors who speak in the highest terms of the gallantry of those lads." Referring to the landing at Suvla Bay, Mr. Redmond said—"I have received communications relating to the 10th (Irish) Division, not from men in the ranks or subalterns, but from officers of high position, which I dare not read to the house. I have felt it my duty to send them to the War Office and the Prime Minister. Sir Ian Hamilton is back here now, and some day these things will have to be inquired into and when they are known I think it will be found that never in your military history have troops been subjected to such horrible sufferings, or have shown such gallantry as the Tenth Division commanded by Sir Brwan Mahon. Yet not one word of recognition has been written about them."

Mr. Redmond dealt particularly with the War Office censorship over official reports in this speech. In the earlier months of the war the government had an official "Eyewitness" in the field to fill the void, caused by the prohibition of war correspondents, and to attempt to satisfy the public demand for descriptions of the work of the British army. His messages, however, were robbed of nine-tenths of their possible interest by the absence of the names of organizations and individuals. Such a limited number of British correspondents have been permitted at army headquarters during the past season the official "eye-witness" has been withdrawn, but the newspaper men are under the same restrictions of writing mostly in generalities.

ROOSEVELT WILL NOT FIGHT FOR ENTENTE
 New York, Nov. 30.—Theodore Roosevelt yesterday in characteristic manner set at rest all rumors that he would be called to England to help direct Great Britain's end of the war. "There is absolutely no truth whatever in the report that I have considered helping the Allies in any material way," he said. "I have not the slightest idea of going to Canada, England or France."

"The report belongs to the same category as that which started two years ago to the effect that I was to be King of Albania. It also reminds me of information that came to my ears some time ago that I was to be the dictator of Mexico. At another time, I was told, I had been selected as the ruling head of China."

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