

London's Silent Tribute on Anniversary of The Armistice

Deeply Impressive Scene as The Clocks Pealed Eleven

Grim Scenes on The Battlefields—Col. John Ward Makes Deep Impression in Commons—Joker Ties up Traffic in The Strand—Rush to Buy Automobiles

(From Our Own Correspondent.) London, Nov. 19.—London has been the great arena of many thrilling occasions these last few years. And especially has it witnessed the swelling ritual of triumph, the pride, pomp and circumstance of glorious victory, within the last ten months. But nothing has so impressed London as a whole as the silent tribute on the anniversary of the armistice. It was the king's idea entirely, and it was an idea truly royal. And loyally the metropolis carried it through. As the clocks indicated 11 on Tuesday morning—the precise instant, famous forever in history, when the guns of Armageddon ceased fire—only one short year ago, London stood to attention like an old guardsman. The traffic stopped dead with the repercussion of the first maroon signal. And the crowds in the public streets, in the shops and warehouses, everywhere that humanity was busy an instant before, became frozen into static prayer. It was perfectly dramatic and yet entirely untheatrical. As a spontaneous popular tribute to the gallant dead, whose memories are embalmed forever in an empire's heart, it was unique, splendid, unforgettable. The merchant and the roving sweeper, the rich dame and the poor charwomen, shared openly and side by side in the homage. It was typical of the common service that the heroes themselves gave on the battleground of the greatest war in memory. Since the spell bound the fairy princess' palace in sleep, and the prince's kiss revived the picture, there has been nothing like this sudden cessation, slow pause of utter

ramparts forever of humanity's free-breathing love.

British Ladies on Battlefields. A party of British agriculturalists and representatives of other industries have just returned from the battle areas in France, which they have visited at the invitation of the British committee of the Red Cross. This organization has undertaken to provide for the refugees in 500 villages in France, and the most interesting feature of the tour was the visit paid to the depots situated in the region of the battle of Arras, near Arras.

There the dreary waste of battlefields stretches as far as the eye can reach. It is a dead land. Every tree and every scrap of life has been obliterated. Many of the trenches still remain open. Barbed wire trips one up, unexploded shells and bombs lie about, and one can still explore the German dugouts. Here, in this abomination of desolation, a party of fourteen ladies are living under wild west conditions. A long wooden hut has been built, and the remainder serves as a kitchen for the staff and as a dispensary.

Fighting Destitute. Destitute peasants are beginning to trickle back to their homes. As their houses have all been destroyed, they have to find what shelter they can. Sometimes they use a cellar which may have escaped destruction. In one case a family was found in the opening of a disused drain. A Canadian girl who showed the party round said that the motor wagons (driven by girls) served a radius of thirty or forty miles.

When the local French authority learns that refugees have returned he sends word to these Red Cross depots, and the ladies there promptly supply whatever they can, to enable these wretched people to face the winter. The greatest tragedy of the war is the condition of the children—half starved, racked by rickets and unable to understand the nourishment, and ill clothed. Splendid work is done in the dispensary in ministering to the needs of these little victims. The British committee has undertaken to look after 500 villages in the war-stricken areas.

Springing to Life Again. The party visited the battlefields of Ypres, Lens, Vimy, Ridge, Arras and Albert, as well as Arras. Even now, twelve months after the armistice, these awful wastes fill the mind with nothing but horror by their desolation. Destruction has been wrought which obviously cannot be repaired in fifty years. One is staggered by the magnitude of the task which France, and in a lesser degree Belgium, have to face in getting back six million acres of arable land into cultivation, and finding homes for two million people who were cleared out. Towns like Ypres, Lens and Albert, which are nothing but gigantic piles of debris, nevertheless already have a small population. Wooden shanties have been hastily put up to serve as "estaminets," and Ypres even has a considerable restaurant. A few brick buildings are beginning to show themselves, but they are more like dolls' houses than places fit for a family.

Most of the people are living amid the ruins in conditions which are pitiable beyond description. Arras is one of the few big towns in the battle area of which only about half has been destroyed. Many of the houses are standing, however, show great rents and falling ceilings. The story of the miseries of war is completed when the natives tell of the outrages which they suffered at the hands of the German. Admiral Sir Percy Scott's Book. "Fifty Years in the Royal Navy" is something more than a fascinating account of a romantic and strenuous career afloat and ashore. In this book Admiral Sir Percy Scott gives us the moral from the national standpoint of his impressions during over half a century in the service. Extracts have already been quoted from the book, showing how difficult so enterprising and imaginative a sailor as Sir Percy found it to bring the admiralty official regime round to a practical and lively realization of facts. He was a lone hand for long enough in his endeavors to make the navy capable of shops at the West End will insist on trying to make their lift girls into lift boys' hitherto anything but animated. "Spit and polish" was the watchword. Fighting efficiency was a side-show. We have also seen from these extracts how miserably he was supported in the big task of organizing London's aerial defences during the war. But in his preface, which has not been quoted before, Sir Percy tells us in a few words what he thinks is wrong with the navy. He gives credit to Lord Fisher and again to Lord Jellicoe for their efforts to galvanize the admiralty into vitality. But he declares bluntly that our naval administration is based on wrong principles. Whitehall plays only for "safety." Side-stepping responsibility is the cachet for advancement. And the machine that governs the fleets is slow, old-fashioned and dead. Will Earl Beatty succeed in making it wake up?

Col. John Ward. The debate in the House of Commons on our tangled Russian adventures was interesting and fairly animated, but the indomitable secretary for war had all his guns in position. Mr. Churchill took second place in the debate, however, the hero of the occasion being Col. John Ward, to whom the House of Commons accorded a hearty welcome on his first appearance since his return from the land of sledges and tumbrils. Colonel Ward's speech was enthralling, earnest, simple, direct, vivid and full of rugged eloquence. He charmed a crowded attendance of members into mesmeric attention, and he painted revolution as it is. Sooner than have anything else, he said the gallant colonel, if he believed Colonel Wedgwood meant to launch such an epoch, would kill him at once. It was the same John Ward, "the navy's man," still stalwart and bluff but older, whiter in the hair, his face tanned brick-red with winter and rough weather, his figure more military in colonel's khaki, but his moustache still waxed smartly and defiantly. Holding up the Traffic. One day last week some practical joker placed a dummy dog, with a tail attached by wire that enabled it to wag right in the middle of the roaring Strand. For five minutes or so the Strand traffic was swerving hideously to avoid that dog. And the language used by each motor driver, carter, bus conductor and taximan as he passed that entirely irre-

sponsive "dog" almost upset some strong men who had seen—and heard—service in the Tank Corps. Finally someone became too exasperated to stand it any longer, and took a running rick at the "dog," which went sailing away in the air like a football, its tail parting company en route.

Practical jokes of this kind are very dangerous in London streets, and the police discourage them. On Saturday I saw a horse—not a dummy, but a real live dray horse of the highest registered tonnage—lie down in Oxford street for a nap. The whole traffic was held up while a small regiment of persons directly or indirectly interested endeavored to wake him up. The horse slept until they absolutely undressed him and stood him up. It was as funny as anything Mr. Harry Tate does on the stage. But the great traffic hoax was perpetrated years ago, when a few famous sporting men got the police to hold up the Strand traffic for goodness knows how long while they fooled about officiously with a chain measure and spirit levels.

The Popular Motor. The rush for motor cars as experienced at the Olympia Show has staggered the most optimistic. If the firms could deliver at once, the roads would be in danger of becoming impassable, through the number of vehicles that would be on the roads.

The most unlikely people appear to have £200 or £300 to spend on a motor, possibly as a result of their arduous war work. But unfortunately for the patient beings, a wait of at least six months and in some cases of eighteen months is necessary before orders can be executed. In addition to those who want to buy cars, there is a great multitude which likes to promenade the Motor Show, and gaze at the various types of cars exhibited, much as a small boy glues his nose to a pastry-cook's window.

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London's Waxen Beauties. Anyone who strolls down Oxford street at the present moment will remark how strongly nationality betrays itself in those languorously beautiful waxen ladies whose splendid fate in life it is always to be robed in the most expensive and fashionable attire throughout, and to posture in the shop windows of the great West End emporiums for all the feminine world to gaze at and envy and admire. These lay figures have immensely improved during my recollection. Originally they are frightfully wooden and gawky, but gradually, with the beautiful ideal of the hairdressers' wonderful coiffures, always before them, our London costumiers evolved a type—a somewhat florid and unhygienic type perhaps, as though these ladies took unfortunately too little exercise and found the shop window air somewhat hot-house—and today, as I say, nationality even is there.

Observe the waxen show ladies of Selfridge's. Typically American each of them, very charming, slightly spoiled, pampered, but tres chic. Then across the road look at the mannequins in the windows of the Maison Louvre. Entirely French every one of these wax ladies, somewhat gay, very Latin, almost likely fin-de-siècle, perhaps a trifle "deco, but in no way to any British firm, and at once you greet your countrywomen in wax. Not so chic as the Americans, not so volatile as the French but with a certain charm of their own. They are a little plumper, their bloom is less artificial, and they look much more self-conscious in their "undies."

Guards Self-Conscious. The great controversy about life in the Guards, evoked by the critics of the one or two literary gentlemen who happened to serve in the Guards during the war, is having an amazing effect. It is making the Guards quite unconformably self-conscious. Normally the Guards are as cool and correct and debonair in carriage and comportment as old actors. The hard discipline of the parade ground, and the perfect familiarity with all sorts of public occasions, rendered all Guardsmen invulnerable to publicity and limelight. They never used to be the least bit self-conscious. But now they no longer hear themselves "in proud contempt of consequence." They appear to think people are not looking at them—which is part of the every-day routine of a Guardsman—but talking about them. And the notion makes them shy even in public. Unless one is much mistaken, the ordinary infantryman has seized the occasion to "rub it in" a bit. The infantry of the line always had a little friendly grudge to pay off against the Guards on account of "swaggers." And fate has played into their hands now through the instrumentality of one or two literary Guardsmen. I am also told that quite an air of constraint has come over the drill ground evolutions. The Guards' instructors feel cramped and nervous nowadays. They are roasting like any sucking doves, and reacting into the evening papers almost edition by edition!

Lady Lift "Boys." I wonder why so many of the smart What is the exquisite reason for this queer fable? The very last places where one would normally expect to find feminine attire discarded in favor of masculine apparel are the big epporiums where they sell principally everything that women wear. Yet in the West End it is quite the rule apparently for the lift attendant to be a rather comely maid dressed in a boy's uniform, with the traditional "buttons" and breaks usually done up with puttees. How anyone can see anything artistic in puttees passes my comprehension. Recently I visited one famous shop in Oxford street where the lift girls were all boys. I was with a lady of old-fashioned views who was anxious to match some wool. We failed in our quest at that shop, and tried another almost next door. Here we mounted to our floor in the lift. And it was quite pleasant to see the lift girl really a girl this time, and neatly attired in girl's clothes. My companion said, "Ah! That's better! We shall get what I want here!" And, curiously enough, she was right.

Applauding the Hun. A film is now being shown in some London cinemas which is issued with Admiralty sanction. The same film was exhibited in Germany during the war as part of the U-boat propaganda. It was taken specially for this purpose by the German government, and shows the activities of a German submarine in the Mediterranean. A more remarkable film does not exist. I took advantage of an early opportunity to see it, and found it very tragic. No actual personal brutalities are witnessed, needless to say, and no firing on the boats, but the

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film is damning enough in British eyes without these things. The spectator in the stalls sees the U-boat put out to sea from Trieste amid the cheers of the crowds. He sees it prowling the sea. He sees it overhauling different Allied merchant ships, the names and records of which are given, torpedoing them at close range, shelling them after the crews have pulled out in their frail boats, firing bombs inside them, and making the captains come aboard the U-boat. The slow sinking below the waters of the doomed ships, and especially of one full-rigged sailing vessel with all her canvas spread, is really tragic. Yet at one performance a gentleman in the audience had to be removed because he insisted on vigorously and emphatically applauding every time it happened. There are some queer people about still. Bolshevism in Britain. Dr. C. Hasbiger Wright makes some very definite revelations about Bolshevist activities in this country. The movement started with a national conference in Leeds about midsummer, 1918, when the social revolution was supposed to be at hand, and branch Soviets were appointed all over the country, description of one full-rigged sailing vessel with all her canvas spread, is really tragic. Yet at one performance a gentleman in the audience had to be removed because he insisted on vigorously and emphatically applauding every time it happened. There are some queer people about still. Bolshevism in Britain. Dr. C. Hasbiger Wright makes some very definite revelations about Bolshevist activities in this country. The movement started with a national conference in Leeds about midsummer, 1918, when the social revolution was supposed to be at hand, and branch Soviets were appointed all over the country, complete democracy, and organization against war, with a pound a day for general election swept away were premier workers, was the general programme. at one time in it.

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