

# Journal of Commerce

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MONTREAL, MONDAY, MAY 3, 1915.

## Conscript vs. Volunteer.

One of the great controversial subjects which has divided Great Britain into two camps for the past few years was conscription or no conscription. A few days ago one of the Ministers made the statement in the British House of Commons that the voluntary system had stood the test and that the results were satisfactory to the War Office and to the Government. For years before his death, Lord Roberts was an advocate of some form of conscription. In this he was supported by the larger proportion of the Tory school.

In this connection it is interesting to look back to the predictions made two years ago. In the National Review of June, 1913, Earl Percy, writing on "The Voluntary System in History," tries to make out that it had ignominiously failed. His article is also of interest in that it shows the losses sustained by Great Britain in the many wars in which she waged in the past. Before the present struggle commenced, losses in previous wars were regarded as tremendously great; today, they would hardly be commented upon. In the long series of conflicts commencing with 1659 and ending with the defeat of Napoleon at Waterloo in 1815, Earl Percy endeavors to show that Great Britain was represented by armies not at all in keeping with her wealth and population. The army which William III. took to Flanders in 1692 consisted of 23,000 men "composed of the lowest classes."

"It has been pointed out that until the closing years of the seventeenth century our immunity from any serious participation in Continental affairs enabled us to establish settlements in America, Asia and Africa, and lay the foundations of our trade both in the Old and New Worlds. The more the Continent was engaged in war the better for us. Our Army did not afford much help in establishing our colonies. Cromwell sent an abortive expedition to San Domingo, and after fearful loss from yellow fever, Jamaica became an English possession. The fighting, however, was insignificant. The disgraceful failure of the expedition to St. Domingo was due to the fact that the 6,000 men employed "consisted partly of drafts selected by Colonels and probably containing the men of whom they were most anxious to be rid, and partly of recruits drawn from the most restless and worthless of the nation." So much for the voluntary system in the time of Cromwell.

Continuing, Earl Percy says:—"At Ramillies the loss of the Allies was from four to five thousand killed and wounded which fell almost entirely on the Dutch and Danes, the British . . . being but little engaged until the close of the day."

"At Oudenarde the total loss was 3,000, of which only 230 were British."

"At Malplaquet the total loss was 20,000, of which only 1,900 were British."

"These figures are remarkable. They are no reflection on the British Army; on the contrary that army was the backbone of the Alliance. It showed itself capable of enduring a loss at one action, the Schellenberg, of over 30 per cent, and the same regiments suffered the heaviest punishment only a few weeks later at Blenheim. But whatever their fighting and marching capacity was, it is undeniable that at Blenheim they only numbered about one-sixth of the Allied Army and that in subsequent engagements the proportion was very much less. It is most important to recognize how very small was the task demanded of our military system. And in spite of this trifling sacrifice we read that after Malplaquet the nation clamoured for peace, because they were so horrified at the appalling loss of life, though it had only cost us 1,900 men!"

"It is true that this was not the only theatre of war. We maintained a force in Spain which at one period rose to 26,000 men. The campaign was disastrous though not inglorious. They were completely defeated at Almanza in 1707, and at Brihuega in 1710. The greatest number of troops we ever had on the Continent during this war was 50,000, but the number was generally less."

"In 1741 began the War of the Austrian Succession. Early in 1743 we landed a force of 16,000 men on the Continent, the total Allied force being about 56,000. The extent of the fighting may be judged from the casualties. At Dettingen the British lost 830 out of a total casualty list of about 2,500; at Fontenoy, which, though a defeat, was one of the finest exploits of infantry in history, 4,000 out of 6,000. These losses represented 6 and 24 per cent, respectively of the numbers of British engaged. After 1745 our forces were still further reduced and in the two other battles of the war, Roucoux and Lauffeldt, we lost 350 out of a total allied loss of 5,000 and 2,000 out of 6,000 respectively."

"The manner in which the voluntary system worked at this period is interesting. The ranks were filled in great measure by professional criminals who passed from regiment to regiment spreading everywhere the infection of discontent, debauchery and insubordination."

"Week after week deserters were brought out into Hyde Park, tied up to the hairpins or simply to a tree, and flogged with hundreds of lashes. Every variety of scouring was employed, as well as more refined forms of torture such as running the gauntlet and "picketing." With regard to our Colonial possessions they were garrisoned by militia raised by themselves, but in the case of the West Indies the ranks of the militia were kept full by continual exportation of white "servants" from England,

that is to say of men, women and children, saved from the gall or the gallows . . . trepanned by scoundrelly crimps, or kidnapped bodily in the streets and spirited, as the phrase went, across the Atlantic."

"We now come to the Seven Years War which lasted from 1756 to 1763. This war is most instructive. It represents the minimum of sacrifice with the maximum of benefit. The Continental war was of comparatively little importance to us as there was no serious threat to the balance of power. We therefore economized in this quarter, only despatching some 7,000 men, afterwards raised to 10,000, to the aid of Frederick the Great, merely to encourage him to keep the French busy while we raided their colonies. This we did unsuccessfully at first, but afterwards with great effect. So far our Colonial possessions had been gained almost exclusively by individual effort on the part of the Colonials."

"It is now necessary to follow this wonderful voluntary system through the most illuminating instance of its working, the great French War from 1793 to 1815."

"When France declared war we had only 15,000 men in these islands. In order to raise a force for service in Holland recourse was had to enormous bounties, but even so the vast majority were weakly boys and old men. In 1794 our forces in Flanders amounted to 30,000 men, one of the worst armies we had ever put in the field. Practically any one who could produce a certain number of recruits was given a commission. "Rich speculators bought the required recruits for their sons from the crimps at so much a head. The men so procured were infamous, and the officers not much better."

"Let it be remembered that the whole of this fighting against Napoleon, lasting with but very short intervals for twenty-four years, was of a character compared to which our hardest fights were affairs of outposts. There have been a few battles such as Minden, Talavera, Albuera, Waterloo, and Inkerman, in which we have lost 30 per cent, or over. These have all been fought with very small highly-trained forces never exceeding 24,000 men, and where all those men were engaged."

"The French soldier under Napoleon would have looked upon these as skirmishes. For to him a battle was an affair in which you placed from 100,000 to 200,000 men in the field, and lost from 40 to 50 per cent. of the number actually engaged, these losses not being incurred by seasoned and professional troops, but by hosts of conscripts, driven into the ranks massed in huge columns and led up to the muzzles of guns discharging grape, canister and round shot into the closely packed ranks."

"There is no need to dwell on the history of the voluntary system after 1815. In the Crimea we only sent 20,000 to the seat of war. Until the outbreak of the South African War all our campaigns were against natives. The South African War cost us a great effort. At the very outset our military system broke down altogether under the strain, and we had to make up the balance with untrained troops. The result was a host of "regrettable incidents" and a deplorable loss of prestige. The story is one of the improvisation of armies after war broke out, an operation only possible against an enemy possessing no regular army, this being done only at enormous expense. The decision was postponed owing to the disinclination to lose losses which is an inevitable feature of a system which does not depend upon a manhood trained to arms."

"In spite of all the disadvantages from which it suffered due to the voluntary system and its neglect by Government and people, both officers and men have shown throughout remarkable qualities of enterprise, resource, endurance, and above all an indefinable quality which may be termed power of muddling through any situation however bad. Its salvation at certain periods when the voluntary system had reduced it to the last stage of degradation was due to the example set by a few regiments whose high standard of discipline no adversities could shake. One great factor has been that our officers were mainly gentlemen."

"It will be said, 'If this is an accurate picture, how do you account for the existence of the British Empire?' Now the British Empire is due far more than we realize to that 'legion that never was listed' of pioneers, adventurers, settlers and merchants. But, speaking generally, we owe the existence of our Empire, first, to the fact that for two hundred years the Continental nations were fighting desperately with one another and left us comparatively free to indulge in our policy of grabbing possessions all over the world, secondly, to the fact that at such times as we were compelled to intervene on the Continent owing to the threat to the balance of power, we did so by paying other people to fight our battles."

"Some people talk of the splendid patriotism of our people which has always risen to every emergency. Where do they see this patriotism? We may believe that it exists. There is evidence to show that the spirit of the nation is not dead. But when have our Ministers, the leaders of the people, ever called upon it or ventured to direct it? When, on the contrary, acting on the pretext that voluntary effort alone was worthy of a free country, have they not stifled that spirit and diverted it into channels which were essentially selfish and anti-national, till we have lost sight of our national duty in the struggle for our individual rights? Never once in our history has the manhood of our nation undergone any collective sacrifice for the country. On the threat of an invasion one hundred and ten years ago a large proportion came out, did a little gentle drilling, and then returned to their homes. That was the extent of their sacrifice. They filled the churches day after day praying that the Corsican Ogre might never land on these shores, but they never thought of crossing the Channel and fighting him. They left the gaol-birds to do that; it was the scum of the earth who formed 'the thin red line.'"

"The fatal effect of the voluntary system on our national policy can be seen all through our history. Our Ministers are carrying out the same policy to-day. In the next war we proclaim openly that we shall take no risks. Instead of discussing how we can save Europe, Ministers are conducting an enquiry into the subject of invasion with the sole view of concealing the true issues from the public and providing an excuse for the shortage in the Territorials. We shall send out a fraction of the Expeditionary Force if we find ourselves in a position to do so. If not, France and Russia can fend for themselves. Also if we can keep Germany occupied we may grab a few German Colonial possessions. We know of course that our salvation depends on the French being victorious against enormous odds, but we are deliberately gambling on

the heroism and self-sacrifice of the French people, just as we have gambled on the heroism and self-sacrifice of all those nations of the Continent whose blood has cemented our Empire."

"These pages have not been written in the hope that our politicians will discontinue their efforts to mislead the public on these subjects. The demagogue cannot change his skin. But if those who wish to know the truth, and are not deceived by empty phrases, will believe and recognize how hollow a sham is our military system, it is hoped that they will in future strive for the only "bedrock principle" that has ever carried a nation safely through adversity, namely, that self-sacrifice and devotion which are represented by a nation-in-arm. For never has the strength of a great Empire rested upon so rotten a foundation as that idle mockery of true service, that excuse for national selfishness, ignorance and sloth which goes by the lying name of 'the voluntary system.'"

It must be remembered that Earl Percy was and is a violent partisan, and that he was striving to bring about conscription. In some cases he makes out a poor case for the British volunteer who fought the battles of the nation for the past two hundred years, but the ordinary reader knows enough of history to discount some of the sweeping statements made by Earl Percy. It remains, however, an interesting contribution to the literature on this much debated question of volunteer vs. conscript.

We wonder how many American ships the Germans will be forced to sink before the United States takes action? The blowing up of the Maine was sufficient to plunge the country into war with Spain.

Will the Hon. Robert Rogers who is determined to have an election, kindly communicate with the families of those six thousand Canadian soldiers who suffered in the recent fighting around Ypres, and ask them what they think of precipitating a party fight under present conditions?

The fuller details received regarding the fighting around Ypres all go to show that the Canadian officers and men who fought there acted like veterans. The bravery of men like Major Norworthy, who, although wounded, led his men into the charge only to be bayoneted, that of Major McCusg, refusing to leave the trenches and securing extra revolvers in order that he might sell his life early, or that of Lieutenant Guy Drummond, who led a charge of disorganized French soldiers when their own officers were killed, are deeds which Canada might well be proud of.

While the desperate fighting in France and Flanders attracts the major portion of the world's attention, there are heroic deeds being performed in many outlying parts of the British Empire. Recently Commander Henry P. Ritchie, of the Royal Navy, was awarded the Victoria Cross for conspicuous bravery in leading a party against Dares Salaam in East Africa. Commander Ritchie was wounded eight times in the course of twenty-five minutes' fighting, but directed his men until the eighth bullet dropped him unconscious. "England's far and honor's name," but the Englishman far from home plays the game like a man.

**WHAT ENGLAND'S FLEET HAS DONE.**  
Some persons have affected to find humor in the spectacle of the great British battleship fleet hiding, as they said, northwest of the British Isles, instead of charging down upon the sheltered German fleet on the German coast, and smashing it to splinters in one grand attack like that of Dewey at Manila Bay. And the question has been asked, What would Farragut do if he were in command of that great array of the world's finest fighting ships? Would he be content to remain passive while there was still a German battleship afloat? The answer is that in all likelihood Farragut, endowed with common sense as well as courage, would do just that. Certainly he would not attempt to charge into the mine and submarine-infested waters of the German coast.

It need not be supposed that the British fleet has not accomplished anything because it hasn't smashed the German fleet. It has accomplished all that its builders expected it would have to accomplish. If the Allies win the war it will be owing very largely to the British fleet. If the Germans send their great sea force out into the open and offer battle the British fleet will be on the fighting ground in short order. The very fact that the Germans remain under the protection of mines and shore batteries shows the effectiveness of their enemy's sea power.—Savannah News.

**ROYAL SLOGANS.**  
King George's old slogan: "Wake up, England!" seems to have been changed to "Sober up, England!" —Pittsburg Dispatch.

## The Day's Best Editorial

### A GHOST THAT WILL NOT DOWN.

Now that the official spokesman and apologist for the Kaiser has himself admitted that Germany overran Belgium because the latter, country happened to be the "vestibule to the outer world," the natural foreland of the empire," as Dr. Dehnburg calls it—the real purpose of Germany's going to war at last comes to the surface like a released cork, held down since Von Bethman-Hollweg gave the case away at the outset.

If that sort of reasoning is to stand as the key to Germany's international policy—the policy of conquering because the conqueror wants it—then Germany's triumph in the pending war can only mean one thing for the United States. This country must begin laying down keels of warships and transports, must have a merchant marine constructed on naval adjunct lines, and must start without delay the up-building of an land force of such size as to serve at home and abroad at the same time. For, if Belgium, why not Holland? And if Holland, what will it mean when Germany, with her historic purpose of conquest as the last link in commercial expansion, begins fortifying Curacao, the Dutch island near the mouth of the Panama Canal off the Venezuelan coast? If Germany "guarantees" Holland's integrity on condition that Curacao be conceded as a base for the German navy, what of the Monroe Doctrine?

Dr. Dehnburg in an earlier plea for Germany made lament of the many naval bases of England throughout the world, and of Germany's need of them. Will Germany stop to get outposts like Curacao, any more readily than she has to get the "foreland of the empire" in Belgium? Hardly. And if not, is there not some serious thinking coming to the powers on this side of the ocean? At first Belgium was wanted only to march through; now it is for keeps. The Yankee can see as far through a brick wall as the next man. —Wall Street Journal.

## WHY NEUTRAL SYMPATHIES ARE AGAINST GERMANY.

The origin and history of the republic of the United States and the character which its political institutions have begotten and fostered have made it impossible for true Americans to sympathize with the purposes of Germany in bringing on this war or the objects to be accomplished by its success. They do not believe it to be necessary to the maintenance of her position as a great civilizing power or her success and prosperity as a nation or a people. They are decidedly averse to the effect upon nations and upon civilization which they believe it to be calculated to produce. They are averse to the methods by which it was brought on and has been prosecuted. They hope and pray for the defeat of its object, for the sake of the nations and their peoples. They hope that the Germans of Germany and the Germans as well as of other nations as a result of defeat will awake from their delusion, shake off their obsession and take their proper place among peaceful and progressive nations, to the great advancement of human civilization.—New York Journal of Commerce.

## "A LITTLE NONSENSE NOW AND THEN"

The difference between stock exchanges and traction lines is striking. In the one you have to have a seat before you can hand over your cash.—Cincinnati Tribune.

With Admiral Peary as president of the Canal-to-Pole Republic, what chance would Doc Cook have in a Congressional inquiry? It's a frame-up, Doc!—Kanesburg Illuminator.

A negro mammy had a family of boys so well behaved that one day her mistress asked:

"Sally, how did you raise your boys so well?"

"Ah! tell you, missus," answered Sally, "Ah raise 'em boys with a barrel stove, an' Ah raise 'em frequent."—Everybody's.

A small, henpecked little man was about to take an examination for life insurance. "You don't displease, do you?" asked the physician as he made ready for tests. "Not a fast liver, or anything of that sort?" The little man hesitated a moment, looked a bit frightened, then replied in a small, piping voice: "I sometimes chew a little gum."

"John," demanded the wife of her intoxicated spouse, according to Everybody's, "how did you get that rash on your forehead?"

"Guess I must 'a' bit myself."

"Bit yourself!"—scornfully. "How could you bite yourself 'way up there?"

"Guess I must 'a' stood on a chair."

One day Luther Burbank was walking in his garden, says the Ladies' Home Journal, when he was accosted by an officious acquaintance who said: "Well, what are you working on now?" "Trying to cross an eggplant and milkweed," said Mr. Burbank. "And what under heaven do you expect to get from that?" Mr. Burbank calmly resumed his walk. "Custard pie," he said.

A new Territorial, who had not quite learned his business, was on sentry duty one night when a friend brought a cake from the canteen. As he sat on the grass eating the cake the major sauntered up in undress uniform. The sentry, not recognizing him, did not salute, and the major stopped and said: "What's that you have there?" "Cake," said the sentry, good-naturedly. "Do you know who I am?" he asked. "No," said the sentry, "unless you're the major's groom." The major shook his head. "Guess again," he growled. "Maybe"—here the sentry laughed—"maybe you're the major himself?"

"That's right. I am the major," was the stern reply.

The sentry scrambled to his feet. "Good gracious!" he exclaimed. "Hold the cake, will you, while I salute?"—Argonaut.

## TO OUR FALLEN.

(R. E. Verne, in London Times.)  
Ye soldiers, who will sing you?  
We can but give our tears—  
Ye dead men, who shall bring you  
Fame in the coming years?  
Brave souls . . . but who remembers  
The flame that fired your embers?  
Deep, deep the sleep that holds you  
Who one time had no peers.

Yes maybe Fame's but seeming  
And praise you'd set aside,  
Content to go on dreaming,  
Yes, happy to have died  
If of all things you prayed for—  
All things your valor paid for—  
On prayer is not forgotten,  
One purchase not denied.

But God grants your dear England  
A strength that shall not cease  
Till she have won for all the Earth  
From ruthless men release,  
And made supreme upon her  
Mercy and Truth and Honour—  
Is this the thing you died for?  
Oh, Brothers, sleep in peace!

## WIVES' VOICES.

Rain came down drearily, but we unblenchingly  
Trudged on beside them through mire and through  
mire,  
They sleeping steadily—only too readily!—  
Scarce as if stepping brought parting time nigher.

Great guns were gleaming there—living things seem-  
ing there—  
Cloaked in their tar-cloth, unopposed to the night;  
Wheels wet and yellow from axle to fellow,  
Throats blank of sound, but prophetic to sight.

Lamplight all drowsily blinking and blearily  
Lit our pale faces outwardstretched for one kiss,  
While we stood prest to them, with a last quest to  
them  
Not to count perils that honor could miss.

Some one said, "Never more will they come! Ever  
more  
Are they now lost to us!" Oh, it was wrong!  
However hard their ways, some hand will guard  
their ways,  
Bear them through safely—in brief time or long.

Yet—voices haunting us, daunting us, taunting us,  
Hint in the night-time, when life-beats are low,  
Other and graver things, . . . Hold me to brav-  
ery things—  
Wait me—in trust—what Time's fulness shall show.

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## MR. PUNCH REMAINS GOOD NATURED.

Mr. Punch of London occasionally prints a cartoon which would add bitterness to the bitter, but its general tone is one which merits an admiring comment. The low class English periodicals are marvels of inept rancor, but Punch is unflinching. The British, not the foreign, foible remains, in spite of war, the target for its cartoonists. The drawing reproduced on this page is one of the many which show that humor has not closed shop for the war.

Cartooning in Europe is frequently an instrument, directed or undirected, for the forming and maintenance of public policy. At present public policy demands that hatred of the enemy shall be alive and uncompromising. Nations in tremendous struggle must be kept in great exaltation. Ordinary moods will not do for extraordinary events. Hatred of the enemy and devotion to the native land will transform the placid citizen into the unhesitating soldier.

Punch performs this service with its occasional embittered cartoon but predominant is the note of railery, and most conspicuous is the satiric touch which reaches the weakness of the Englishman himself. If there be any profit in keeping a nation good natured even in war, Mr. Punch is helping to perform the service. He does not permit the Englishman to forget his glass houses.—Chicago Tribune.

## SCARCITY OF MEAT.

When the war closes the demand for meat will be world-wide. Whence can it be filled? Increase of South American sources and development of new supplying countries will take time. Millions of men hitherto unused to meat diet will have acquired the meat habit. Population grows. The future of meat supplies will be one of the greatest problems after the war.—Wall Street Journal.

## A FRIEND OF ENGLAND.

Dr. Charles W. Eliot, the distinguished ex-president of Harvard, defends England against German efficiency. The unequalled achievements of English efficiency, which include adventure, trading, the charting of the seas, colonization, and, perhaps greatest of all, the spread of free institutions, are the product of individual liberty. It is not improbable that the war will discredit German efficiency in the English-speaking countries.—Pittsburg Review.

## GERMANS WORSE THAN TURKS.

Even the Unspeakable Turk is teaching his German ally a lesson in humanity and chivalry. According to the Berlin report of the loss of a British submarine in the Dardanelles, 21 of the crew were rescued by the Turks. Up to date not a single British sailor has been rescued by the Germans.—Belleville Ontario.

## THE FIGHTING SPIRIT.

The European prohibition belt has been extended to the territory under control of the French army of the Vosges, by order of its commanding general, with the consent of General Joffre, commander-in-chief. And formerly it was believed that this spirit of John Barleycorn was the true fighting one.—Pittsburg Chronicle Telegraph.

## THE BENEFITS OF TRAINING.

Expert Canadian lacrosse players are to be used as bomb-throwers, and if the Germans wish to reciprocate they can learn how easy it is by eating peas with a Chinese chop-stick.—Wall Street Journal.

# BEARS RAIDED YORK STOCK

Outside of Small Declines  
Little Damage and  
Little Stock

WAR ISSUES CONTINUED TO SHOW STEEL FIRM AT 60%—THIS IS A WHOLE MARKET.

(Exclusive Leased Wire to the Journal)

New York, May 3.—While at the opening of the steel market today was subjected to heavy selling pressure, the destruction of an American ship of life of three American citizens in a marine attack, the market met with a small decline and acted better than was expected under the circumstances. The papers said the incident had no alarm at Washington. The Street calmer view of the matter than had a section of the press.

Westinghouse was weak, declining having opened unchanged at 103 3/4 point on first sale and soon added by dropping to 41 1/2.

Steel was firm, the initial loss strong close being only 1/4, making it at 59 1/2. Union Pacific opened 3/4 of initial loss was 1/2. Canadian Pacific down at 164, when New York Central at 88 1/2. There was considerable speculation by commission houses.

New York, May 3.—After a brief proportions in some of the specialties, house, Pressed Steel Car and National, comparatively small extent in standard market developed a rallying tendency. Trading was active with prices up to the low. Although traders predicted many, large interests did not seem to welcome the situation, although probably over the check to speculative activities.

Westinghouse sold down to 98 1/2 but recovery of about 4 points from the low, the extent of the advance in that a few weeks the reaction of 9 points from hardly more than might have been seemed to be a good demand for the steel.

Pressed Steel Car declined 3/4 to 53 1/2, regarding the order for equipment for Russian Government varied widely. It was inclined to think the amount is a with no very wide margin of profit.

U. S. Steel maintained a good tone. Central showed positive strength, gaining up to 89, while prices elsewhere were today's closing figures.

New York, May 3.—Development of strength in U. S. Steel helped the whole at 11 a.m. the tone was good but subsided from the low. Some traders who had opened seemed to be trying to get the U. S. Steel sold at 60%, a net advance. Reports that the company has received war order were persistently reiterated, regarded as reasonable in view of the possible exception of Bethlehem.

U. S. Steel for the handling of that kind of business. Anaconda was relatively much stronger, holding firmly when the latter fell to 73 1/2 and afterwards gaining 1/2 to 63 1/2. Practical equalization of the strengthened the belief in an early Amalgamated Copper and retirements by exchange of 2 shares of Anaconda for

New York, May 3.—The bears renewed on the market in the second hour and getting prices off again although they out much stock. There was no organic but stocks were wanted on declines and issues the undertone seemed to be very

As part of the bear attack upon the market while it was asserted that Steel had into contracts to do business direct for buying of the stock was of such a nature as to indicate that there had been some favorable development in the recent past. Quite an accumulation of Goodrich contracts and the basis of it was the expectation for the first half of the year would show a favorable showing. It is considered poor stock will be restored to a dividend basis.

New York, May 3.—In complete absence support the bears renewed their market in the early afternoon and driving prices off to levels lower than on the earlier reaction. The fact that levels under those at which stocks had shown good resistance tended to promote feeling and the chart readers predicted a decline would go further.

On rumors that orders for war munitions exaggerated Westinghouse sold off 6