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LONDON GOSSIP.

LONDON, August 24th, 1915.
REVIVED INTEREST IN WAR NEWS.

Those who have been complaining that the public of late have shown a lessening interest in war news should now be reassured when there are unmistakable signs all round of a re-awakened concern in what is passing in every department of the war area. This is accounted for not only by the substantial items of intelligence concerning events on land, sea, and air, but by a very general feeling that these may lead very speedily to greater results. The entry of Italy into the Eastern field of action by declaring war against Turkey, though long expected, is regarded as of great significance, not merely in its possible bearing on the Dardanelles operations, but of its influence on the Balkan position, and the growing tension between Germany and the neutral countries—the arch-enemy having within a single week succeeded in offering striking affronts to Norway and Denmark, as well as the United States—being observed with keenest regard. An access of interest in every detail that affects the general situation is, therefore, to be observed all round here.

PLAY AND SONG AT RULHIEN.

I have just seen some more letters from the great internment camp at Rulhien, and a good deal is said in them about the musical and dramatic societies which have been formed among the prisoners. The letters betray an undertone of irksomeness which no arrangements for giving pleasure within a confined space can altogether remove, but the men enter with zest into the programmes of the theatre and the concert hall. The dramatic society's productions have included Stanley Houghton's "The Dear Departed," Shaw's "Androcles and the Lion," and "Captain Brassbound's Conversion," and Galsworthy's "Strife." Shakespeare has not been forgotten, and a rather startling account is just to hand as to some scenic effects employed in producing "As You Like It." A group of Irish players is also at work, and several of the better-known items of the new Irish theatre, like "Spreading the News," have been presented with skill. These further particulars of life at Rulhien emphasize the need of gifts of plays and song-books.

AN ETYMOLOGICAL WAR PUZZLE.

The French word "Boche," applied as a term of opprobrium to the Germans by our Allies across the Channel, has gained wide currency during the war. The Germans, who are mostly concerned in the matter, though they fully appreciate that as applied to them, the word has a meaning the reverse of polite, are as puzzled

as anyone to determine its exact etymological import. A young Alsatian girl who lives in Metz, and who has been guilty of using the term, has, through the German military authorities, been made the means of raising a test action on the matter. But apparently the case was not so simple as it may have appeared at first sight to the German Government, for their first of all charged the girl with espionage, reducing it later to a simple charge of using the word "Boche." The accused and her advocate contended that the use of the word in itself constituted no offence, and further asserted that it was legitimate to use it "to describe every person who speaks German, including the Swiss and the Luxemburgers." The knotty point was considered with great gravity by the learned judges who formed the court, the President suggesting that in his opinion the word meant an abscess, but by a majority it was decided that the term was a flattering one, and the court dismissed the complaint. The sequel is the best joke of all, for the learned professors of the University of Strausburg have been instructed to nominate a philological expert capable of reporting to the authorities what it actually does mean when a German is called "Un Boche."

FUNERALS IN WAR TIME.

Years ago the popular time for funerals in working-class London was Sunday afternoon. The undertakers and cemetery authorities combined to abolish Sunday funerals, and they are now starting a movement to do away with funerals on Saturday afternoon. The reason given for this attack on the customs of the poor—the Saturday afternoon holiday is naturally the time chosen in every working household for the funeral—is that the undertakers must have a half-holiday in the week. At the cemeteries there are complaints of "an unseemly rush" on Saturday afternoons—in fact, the proposal originated with the cemeteries. It is thought that working people would be willing to lose half a day in the funeral. There is another painful argument to the effect that it is highly desirable, on sanitary grounds, that that funerals take place more quickly after death. As it is, interment is often postponed for more than a week in order that it may happen on a Saturday afternoon. Since the Shop Hours Act came into force there has been a tendency to choose Thursday afternoon. As there is always fortune for someone in national misfortunes, one would have thought that the war would have benefited the undertakers. But soldiers' funerals from hospitals are usually paid for at contract prices by

the army authorities. And, although all the materials of the trade have gone up sharply in price, people will not pay more for funerals than before. There is also a shortage of labor. The undertakers' roll of honor is a long one. The best black horses have been commandeered for the army, and as they came from Belgium no more can be got. The average London family has a funeral once in ten years, and it is said that the tendency is to spend much less than previously. Cases of absurd extravagance over funerals, a favorite theme with county court judges, are now rare. There is still a good deal of drinking on the way back from the cemetery, but the lavish "hospitality" in the home is a thing of the past. A sad thing about London funerals in war-time, is the great increase in stillborn children of soldiers' wives. The undertakers' theory is that these still-births are due to anxiety and shock.

GERMAN FILMS.

"Flicker Alley" is never long without excitement. To the Charlie Chaplin craze has succeeded the great German film scare, which is being fiercely pursued in the columns of a halfpenny evening paper. There are serious warnings that German films are being foisted on unsuspecting English picture palaces by hyphenated American films. Inquiries in the "Alley" to-day suggest that the whole this is—well, a film that has not taken. Trade opinion is that there are no films taken in Germany on view here. However willing Americans might be to disguise them with fresh trade marks and so on, the films would inevitably give away their German origin. For one thing, the girls in romantic German films are usually about fifty years old and unmistakably American. We should all, of course, be quite pleased to see German films if they were available—always assuming that by so doing we did not put money into German pockets—which they are not, as relieving the eternal monotony of American cowboys and the twyness of Charlie Chaplin's big boots. There have been stories recently of an attempt of a Danish firm, now amalgamated with a Berlin concern, to circulate the official German war films in neutral countries as propaganda. Here again one would be only too pleased to have a chance of seeing them. The complaint against the control of the British film market by American producers has more in it. If the average film in our picture palaces could talk, it would talk unmitigated American. The reason is simply that in America the film-producing business is much bigger and better organized than with us. The money put into the business in America and the enterprise shown are far greater than in British film production, though that is fast making progress. I am told that some of the best-known English firms are controlled by Americans. As to war films, I hear that the War Office has at last agreed to sending out two British operators to record the doings of our army—in belated imitation of the French and Russian Governments.

THE "HUN" LIFE.

Seven of the German steamers which have been taken over by the Admiralty for the service of our Government are listed in the new edition of Lloyd's Register under sound British names every one of which begins with "Hun." Thus the Lauterfels is now the Hungerford, and the Arrived is the Hunsdon. This is one of the best jokes of the war, and has a sort of grim justice about it which is very satisfactory. The Germans will be more indignant than ever at our British levity. The joke would be underlined if a submarine sent one of the "Hun" boats to the bottom.

EIGHTY-EIGHT NEW V.C.'S.

In view of the comparatively few opportunities which members of the senior service receive for the display of personal bravery, the ten Victoria Crosses which the Navy has received during the present war—the six just announced for heroism during the landing on the Gallipoli Peninsula bringing the total to this figure—form a highly creditable proportion of the eighty-eight conferred upon all members of the forces since last August. The percentage is considerably higher than that shown in previous records of the decoration. In all, 610 V.C.'s have now been conferred, and of this number 51 have been secured by sailors of all ranks, besides four granted to marines. The present war's "awards for valor," by the way, already exceed by ten those given during the South African campaign.

AUTUMN PUBLISHING SEASON.

London publishers are sadly troubled just now as to what to do about the autumn. If they bring out new books will they sell? The general desire is to make something of an autumn publishing season, but the difficulties are great. The fact is that most new books published in recent months have lost money. There has been no elasticity in the book market, no real disposition on the part

of the public to buy, and it is feared that this state of things may continue during the autumn. Only two beacon lights are visible. Light novels are in demand and good war books sell moderately well.

MEN'S GARMENTS.

Although the summer is not yet over, those responsible for the clothing of the men who are unable or unwilling to follow the prevailing fashion of khaki have made all their preparations for the coming autumn. From a sartorial point of view, the season will undoubtedly be a gray one, for owing to the shortage of dye stuffs it is impossible to secure any great quantity of cloth dyed to any other color. Gray will be a matter not of choice but of necessity. Of course there will be some browns and blues, but they will be comparatively few in number, especially blue serges, the cheaper qualities of which have nearly doubled in price since the war. No change of style worth noting will characterize the average man's suit or overcoat, for the manufacturers have been too busy on khaki work to give much attention to such matters and they are finding no difficulty whatever in selling what goods they are able to make up. In fact, the supply is considerably less than the demand, so that although it would be rash to say that there will not be sufficient new suits and overcoats to go round, it is certain that there will not be a great surplus, and the public will have a much reduced selection to choose from. The stocks of garments made up for last autumn and left unsold owing to the war and the resultant rush of men to the colors, would in the ordinary course have been available now, but the Government bought up most of the surplus overcoats and also such old stock for the new armies last winter, while as regards suits the extensive contracts recently placed for discharged soldiers' suits have absorbed the bulk of those which were left over. A number of clothing manufacturers announce that they are already sold out of suits and overcoats at popular prices.

VOGUE OF THE OVERALL.

One of the most flourishing branches of the dress-trade at the present somewhat critical juncture in the world of fashion is that devoted to overalls. In the days before the war there was a steady demand for overalls on the part of the housewife, who took to these enveloping cotton garments when doing her own housework as a convenient method of protecting her dress without donning the white starched raiment of the domestic servant. Lately, however, the overall has entered upon a new phase. It has been given a department to itself at the large stores, and expert designers have put such ingenuity into its fashioning that it has become the garment par excellence of the war service woman. There are special overalls, for instance, for munition workers made of good stout drill and other fabrics, warranted to wear, smartly cut, and belted with black patent leather. Navy blue is the favorite color of the munition worker, green for the woman gardener or other worker on the land, white for the woman doctor and the grocery girl. Designs and colors vary, however, like those of more conventional garments of fashion, but generally speaking the prevailing mode in overalls fastens down the front from neck to hem, and is accompanied by a hat to match made very much on the lines of the chef's cap. The great vogue of the overall is giving employment to many workroom hands who would otherwise have been out of employment as a result of the decline in the wearing of evening gowns.

THE SPRINGBOKS' BADGE AND THE ROYAL WARWICKS.

The adoption of the springbok as the device to be worn on the caps of the units of the South African contingent which is now being recruited for service in Europe, is of particular interest to the Royal Warwickshire Regiment, which for the past two centuries has included the antelope among its badges. There is not likely to be any danger of confusing the wearers of the South African variety with the old "Sixth," for, doubtless, the men from the sub-continent will also display the initials "S.A." just as their comrades who have gained fame for the sample cmfwy shrd etallo shrrr the maple leaf have the word "Canada" on their shoulders. Curiously enough, the Warwickshire's antelope, according to tradition, comes from Africa, for the badge was given them after they had captured thirty standards at Sargossa, among them being one bearing an antelope taken from a Moorish regiment in the Spanish war.

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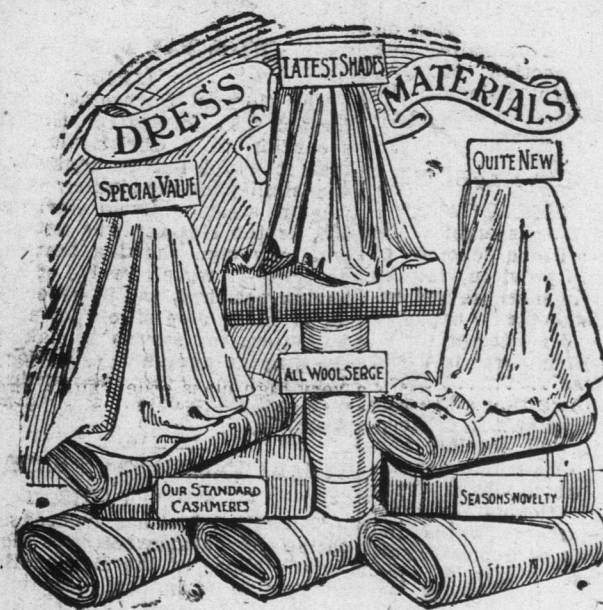
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sept11,14,16

SIR RODMOND ROBLIN APPEARED IN COURT.

Winnipeg, Sept. 8.—Remand until Monday next at 12.30 p.m. was granted the defence when the case of the four former cabinet ministers came before Magistrate P. A. McDonald again this morning. Sir Rodmond Roblin, J. H. Howden and C. R. Coldwell appeared before the magistrate at the court house.

Hon. Dr. Montague was unable to appear through illness, and is still at his summer home at Kenora.

British Export Trade Unusual Recovery.

Goods Sent Abroad Increase \$41,000,000 in August, Mostly in Manufactured Articles.

London, Sept. 7.—The Board of Trade figures for August disclosed an unusual recovery in foreign trade. Imports increased \$135,770,000. Exports increased \$41,135,000.

The principal increases in imports were \$55,000,000 in food, \$30,000,000 in raw materials and \$45,000,000 in manufactured articles.

Compared with the last corresponding month before the war—August, 1913—imports increased \$65,000,000, but exports decreased \$55,000,000.

Perry Davis Painkiller is of great value as a liniment for sore throat, rheumatism, bruises, sprains and chilblains. 25c. and 50c. bottles.

Hamburg Line is Fined \$700 for Contempt.

Refused to Answer Questions in the United States Federal Court.

New York, Sept. 11.—A fine of \$700 for contempt of court was yesterday imposed on the Hamburg-American S. S. Company by Judge Veeder of the Federal Court in Brooklyn, for refusing to answer questions in a suit for damages, brought by the commissioner of two other S. S. Companies. Two of the questions which the Hamburg-American Line declined to answer were:

"Did the Hamburg-American Line load and dispatch from this and other ports of the United States, colliers with cargoes destined for German cruisers in the Atlantic?" and "Did Capt. Boyed, naval attaché of the German Embassy, direct the supercargoes of these colliers, themselves German naval reservists, to divert the vessels from their stated course so as to meet with the German ships of war?"

WILL ENDEAVOR TO PREVENT PLACING OF BOMBS ON SHIPS.

New York, Sept. 9.—It was learned yesterday that Secretary of State Lansing had taken up with Governor Whitman the matter of the placing of bombs on British ships, sailing from

this port, and that the Governor asked the Mayor to see to it that every possible preventive measure was taken, as the name of the state was at stake.

Governor Whitman's letter to Mayor Mitchell was written on August 31. In it he said that Secretary Lansing had written him with reference to the matter and had enclosed three notes and a memo from the British Embassy, the note from the French Embassy, and a despatch from the American Consul at Havre, all dealing with specific instances of the concealing of bombs or other explosives on ships, with a "malicious purpose to destroy them and the lives of persons on board."

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