

Editorial

Overlords or Servants

NOW that the post-office strike is over, it is possible to say, without heat some things regarding public servants and Public Servants. By public servants we mean the letter carriers and others who made up the body of strikers. By Public Servants we mean the officials at Ottawa; and in so far as they had anything to do with it, the members of the government.

It is a matter of common observation that many of our Public Servants object to the term. In their hearts they are overlords and not servants. They possess all the kaiser-like qualities of the overlord—pride, self-assurance, swagger, boasting, bumptiousness, haughtiness and the like. The true Servant is humble, courteous, generous, affable, ready to listen and anxious to assist. We have a strong feeling that somewhere at Ottawa will be found some who have not by nature nor by cultivation the qualities of Servants. They dilly-dally, or, which is the same thing, pigeon-hole important papers. We are not at this distance able to say whether it is laziness or incapacity which accounts for the inaction and persistent procrastination. What we desire in a government are men who act quickly in response to the call of duty, rather than tardily after they have felt the pressure of public opinion. There is no reason in the world why, if the government had been "on its job," the late strike should ever have taken place.

There is, however, another side to the matter. Just so soon as it was apparent that the government had really awaked and had promised remedial action or at least thorough investigation the men should have returned to work. There are always a few who do not know when they have won their case. They, like the Public Servants, swell with importance when they are the heroes in a public movement, and lose all sense of judgment. Fortunately the great body of workers had reason. They did well to get definite assurance that there would be speedy solution of the problem, and they are to be congratulated upon the fact that they made those in charge of public affairs get busy. There is something more important than that the posties get the increase in pay that was promised. It is that public affairs be carried on in a business-like way, and without unnecessary formality and provoking delay.

Some of the newspapers have been putting forward a theory that public servants have no right under any circumstances to strike. This position can hardly be defended in all cases. Those who represent the people—that is, the government—may be unfair in their treatment of civil servants, and indeed may not as in this case, reflect public opinion. They may become overbearing in their attitude and even arrogant and heartless. The only thing left for employees is to resign or strike. The strike is more effective, and when men are in the right, it is fairer. A civil servant who is able and conscientious in discharge of duty has no more reason to resign than a government.

It is said that there should be no strike during war times. Better say there should be no occasion for strikes during war times. Some of the strikes held in the Empire during the last four years were due to inaction of the government, some the unyielding attitude of employees, but the most of them, perhaps, due to the unwarranted demands of men who thought they had a whip-hand over employers, government and all else. In such cases the Lloyd George policy is the only right one. "Either get busy or go to the front."

In all this matter of strikes, the third party or the general public is usually overlooked. Why should the people of Western Canada suffer because a government and the postal servants are at variance? Why should the general public suffer because of any strike? The only way out is to make immediate arbitration compulsory and striking previous to arbitration a crime.

Stand Firm

IT took forty years for Germany to prepare for this war. It took the world four years to bring her to bay. It will take only one year or less to bring her to her knees. All that the Allies need is continued faith in God and in the righteousness of their cause, and continued determination till the war is won. Never did things look more hopeful than just now, and now is the time to exert every ounce of energy. The great writer Hall Caine has well expressed it in these forceful words:

"This is the hour of Destiny. Be strong, be brave, be stout of heart whatever happens. If you hear of losses, reflect that to hold our own is Victory.

"Remember that for every British soldier taken prisoner to-day, ten German soldiers are being left dead on the battlefields. The Kaiser is fighting for his life and dynasty.

"If he fails now his own subjects will sweep him away.

"But if he succeeds, what will it mean to the peoples

of the Free Nations—to the people of martyred Belgium and slaughtered Serbia; to the people of France, who have been in the forefront of almost every battle for Freedom that has yet been fought; to the people of Italy, who have so lately emerged from their age-long struggle for Unity after so much bloodshed and so many tears; to the people of America, who, leaving behind them the enmities of the old world, have built up on the far shores of the new one a Commonwealth dedicated to the high principle of equal rights for every man, malice against none, and charity towards all?"

"And what will it mean to us, sons and daughters of this dear country, the Motherland of Liberty, the cradle of a line of mighty soldiers for Freedom, stretching back through 500 stern and hard but glorious years?"

"We must be free or die who speak the tongue That Shakespeare spake, the faith and morals hold That Milton held.

"Therefore, as free men, as brothers in blood, and as joint heirs to the great inheritance that has come down to us from our great forefathers, let us meet this hour of Destiny with an unflinching face."

Our leader Lloyd George has also given us a like message:

"The message which I send to the people of the British Empire on the fourth anniversary of their entry into the war is 'Hold fast.'

"We are in this war for no selfish ends. We are in it to recover freedom for the nations which have been brutally attacked and despoiled and to prove that no people, however powerful, can surrender itself to the lawless ambitions of militarism without retribution, certain and disastrous, at the hands of the free nations of the world. To stop short of victory for this cause would be to compromise the future of mankind.

"I say, 'Hold fast.'"

Approaching the End

WE talk of hardship in Canada, but we scarcely know what the word means. Those who come to us from the Motherland can open our minds a little, those who hail from France can add something more, and those who have had experience in unfortunate Belgium can complete the story. Yet the hardship in any of these lands is little compared with that in Bulgaria, Hungary, Turkey and some parts of Russia. This hardship, which means an endless struggle to secure the three great necessities of existence—food, clothing and shelter—is growing more and more keen as the days go by. One of these fine days there will be a great break and the arch-fiends of Potsdam who have been responsible for it all will pay the price. It is a great race this between the Allies and an autocracy-ridden people. Which will get the Kaiser first? In 1914 we predicted that the war would end because of a power within Germany—that is it would come by way of revolution. Possibly it will be so, but the revolution will have been brought about by the great work of the Allied armies, and the greater power of the Grand Fleet, which has its home somewhere near the Orkney Islands. Who cares after all whether the Allies win directly or indirectly provided the "world is made safe for democracy?" And that is the one aim of the war, and the aim will surely be achieved.

The Grand Fleet

IN an interview after reaching home Premier Norris has this to say about the Grand Fleet. It makes mighty good reading.

"Away up in the Orkney Islands, north of Great Britain, lies the headquarters of the British Grand Fleet, the very existence of which has won for the allies this war.

"I say won, because nobody overseas ever thinks of anything else. They hardly ever discuss the end of the war any more. It has resolved itself, the people there believe, into a question of time. The might of the allied nations is sufficient to crush Germany into the dust. Everybody believes that. I never heard a faint heart all the time I was there or ever saw any indications of the presence of such an individual.

"With its headquarters located right up north there at a point from which all European coasts can easily be reached, the Grand Fleet maintains its constant vigil. For four years that fleet had rendered the vaunted naval strength of Germany impotent. Because they know of the strength of our fleet, the Germans have been afraid to try conclusions on the open seas. In this way the navy has made possible a continuance of the war.

"Canada could never have sent the men she has, nor United States the men it has, had it not been for that wonderful war machine which guards the seas.

"And the men of that navy are wonderful indeed. In season and out of season, in fine weather and calm they have ridden the North Sea for four years tempting the enemy to try them out. 'We have been here four years,' they told me, 'and are prepared to stay eight years more if need be.' That's the spirit of the

British navy, and it is that spirit which renders it invincible just as much as modern battleship improvements do.

"I am glad to be able to say that one of the things I saw while with the Grand Fleet was five huge fighting ships flying the Stars and Stripes. I was told that these five American battleships form the 6th squadron of the British Grand Fleet. They act as a part of the whole, under the supreme command of Admiral Lord Beatty."

Losses and Gains

AT the end of four years of war it is interesting to quote a few figures to show how matters stand. On the side of the Central Powers are Germany, Austria-Hungary, Turkey, Bulgaria with population in millions represented by the numbers 67, 49, 21, 5, or a total of 148. On the side of the Allies are Great Britain and Overseas Dominions, France, Italy, United States, Belgium, Serbia, Portugal, Japan, China, Greece, Liberia, Panama, Cuba, Siam, Montenegro, Hayti, with population in millions of 348, 36, 40, 110, 7, 4, 7, 70, 400, 5, 2, 1/2, 2, 8, 1/2, 2, or a total of 942. Of course some of these countries are in the war only in a half-hearted way. Among nations that have severed diplomatic relations with Germany are Bolivia, Brazil, Costa Rico, Ecuador, Egypt, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Peru, Uruguay, with a total population of 50 millions.

The five main Allies, before the war had national wealth estimated at 406 billions, and the wealth of the Central Powers was 105 billions.

The cost of the war up to date is about one-third of the national wealth of all the belligerents. The average cost per day is a little over one hundred millions.

The national debts have increased six-fold and amounts to the following figures in billions, United States 4, Great Britain 20, France 24, Italy 7, Russia 24, Germany 35, Austria-Hungary 15.

The loss of buildings in Belgium is over a billion dollars and in France about the same. The destruction of raw materials, stock, merchandise, has been quite as much, and this says nothing of roads, bridges, etc. Germany in property abroad has lost over 3 billions. The loss in Balkans represents another billion, and in other devastated states more than another billion. These figures are typical.

The greatest loss of all, that in men is difficult to estimate, but a recognized authority has given the following figures. Killed of the Allies 4 millions and permanently wounded 3 millions; killed of the Central Powers 3 million, and permanently wounded 2 millions.

There are other losses which are suggested—potential population, decline of morality and vitality. Then there is lack of parental control, the breaking of home life, the suffering, the sorrow, the disease—and to these a hundred other items might be added.

There are gains which must not be forgotten. First many nations have found themselves. Canada is one of these. The United States is another. The labor party has been elevated, political life has improved; religion has a new content; men have learned to think of their fellows; the whole round world is linked together in friendship and in a determination that men shall be free. The gains socially, industrially and scientifically it would take too long to describe. Mr. Whittlessey of New York, has well put it in a few brief sentences:

"In the laboratories of the scientists many an important invention has been made of which as yet we know nothing, the secret being carefully guarded for obvious reasons, but from which, when peace is once more with us, inestimable benefits will accrue to all of humanity. Some old inventions have been perfected and have taken their permanent place in modern life, such as the aeroplane as a means of transportation and the application of the internal combustion engine to agricultural and other production.

"But perhaps the most important are the big strides made in the field of medicine and surgery. The great destructiveness of life incidental to modern warfare has been all but neutralized by the wonderful discoveries made in medicine and surgery, in curative as well as preventive treatment, and in the restoration of human limbs (which is certainly one of the greatest achievements of the human mind).

"The generous aid of the Allies in the way of relief to ravaged Belgium, to the civilian population made bare and homeless in the zones of war, to the ill and wounded, was prompted by a humanitarianism which is unparalleled in history and which is brought into light only by the grim contrast of the bestial atrocities practised by a merciless foe upon these very peoples to whom we hastened our unflinching aid.

"No less significant are the moral gains.

"If the war should mean the liberating of the Russian people from the evils of bureaucracy and the releasing of oppressed peoples of Austria-Hungary and Turkey, extending to them the privilege of individual initiative and the development of their economic resources, the war, in so far as it has hastened this development, may have been worth while."