

land will be let to the occupiers on a perpetual lease; they will not be required to pay the usual deposit; all that will be asked from them is a small rent. They will, in fact, be partners with the company, who will bear all expenses until the men are well settled in and able to run their farms on their own.

In changing the fabric of Empire, then, political federation in some form or other must follow as a matter of course. The suggestion that we should have a Parliament sitting at Westminster to include representatives from India and the selfgoverning Dominions is not, in my opinion, a practical suggestion. The only form of political, or, as some call it, Imperial, federation is by way of a Council of Empire. Nor would the institution of such a body be a difficult matter. All that is necessary is to change the composition of the Imperial Conference and make it a lasting and permanent institution.

ALBERT'S HEROES

An Account of the Last Stand of the Brave Men of Belgium

THE position of the Belgian army is sometimes in danger of being overlooked. In the Contemporary Review, Demetrius C. Boulger not only describes that position, but recites the events leading up to this gallant "last stand" of King Albert and his men in the last remaining corner of their country.

The fate of Antwerp was sealed, he says, and King Albert, wisely placing no reliance on the illusory promise of succour from England, set about the task of extricating his Army while there was still time. The bulk of the force had been transferred to the left bank of the Scheldt by October 7th, and two days later it began to concentrate afresh between Bruges and Ostend. No long stay was possible here; the retreat was resumed southwards along the coast, but when the whole



THESE PIPING TIMES OF PEACE.
The Experts.

—Rogers, in New York Herald.

Army had got behind the Yser on October 13th, then King Albert called a halt and issued his memorable order that his troops must hold this last corner of Belgium to the end and die where they stood. He could count on 70,000 men all told, of whom 48,000 were infantry.

Only three days were accorded them to prepare in some partial measure a new place of final stand before the German shot and shell were playing on it in anticipation of the attack in mass. The Belgians had sufficient time, however, to form strong têtes de

pont at Nieuport and Dixmude, and to provide more or less efficiently for the defence of the intermediate crossings of the Yser at St. Georges, Schoorbeke, and Tervaete. They also occupied eight advanced posts on the right bank of the river; but the chief weakness of the Belgian Army lay in its artillery, which contained nothing heavier than the three-inch gun. Still, they were better off than the co-operating division of French Marines, under Admiral R'onarch, which had no artillery at all.

The first cannonade on the Yser began on October 16th. The enemy were testing the strength of the position and the stubbornness of the defence. It continued with little intermission till the 18th, when all the advanced posts were seriously attacked. One in front of St. Georges and another in front of Tervaete were captured, and thus the Germans had got near to two of the river crossings. During the night, however, the Belgians took the offensive and drove the Germans out of the latter post. The Belgians thus retained their hold on the right bank, with the exception of the one point lost and firmly occupied by the enemy. The next day (October 19th) the Germans attacked in force at two different points. The more serious effort was made against Nieuport, where three violent assaults were repulsed with heavy loss, and the Germans could make no progress. But the second attack to the south fared better, at least for a time. Beerst, the post in front of Dixmude, was captured, and Keyem, north of it, became isolated. Orders were given to a Belgian division to join hands with the French Marines and recover what had been lost. This attack proved completely successful. The old positions were recovered, and a very hopeful view prevailed as to the possibility of turning the success to greater account the next day, when news arrived that large German forces were approaching from a new quarter threatening the Belgian flank. It became necessary to retire on Dixmude, abandoning all the outposts beyond the river in front of that town.

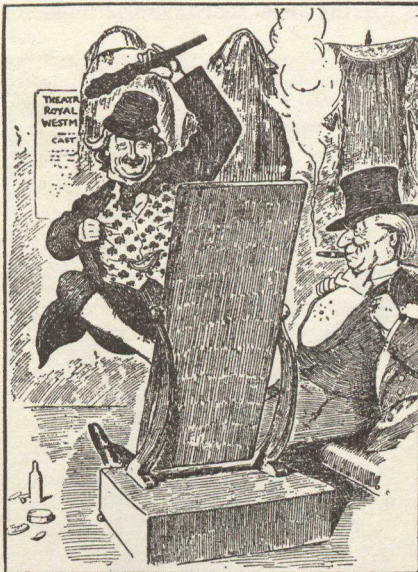
Yet the foe counted on an easy triumph, and Dixmude was to be their first prize. Some hours later on the same day as the attack on Nieuport, that on Dixmude commenced. It had been partially reduced to ruins; and it was amid the flames of burning houses that the German troops came on in serried masses, singing songs of triumph, but the Belgians and the French Marines did not yield a foot.

The German failure was not less complete at Nieuport than at Dixmude. No progress was made at either point, but both towns, practically speaking, were burnt to the ground. The Germans then resolved to try their fortune at the intermediate crossing places over the Yser. On October 22nd they came down in immense force on Tervaete and broke through. If they succeeded in making good their position on the left bank the whole Belgian position would have been compromised. It became necessary for the Belgians to quit the defensive attitude for the offensive, and so the Grenadier and Carabinier regiments charged to expel them. Before darkness fell those of the Germans who survived were driven back to the right bank of the Yser, but during the night they again resumed the assault in much increased force, and in the morning of the 23rd the Germans again held Tervaete, and this time firmly. It was their one success.

Everywhere else they had been repulsed; but none the less the position had become critical, and that notwithstanding the arrival during the same day of French territorial troops. Space forbids to follow the details of

the struggle that continued during the following days. The Germans did not score any material success, their assaults were repulsed, but the Belgian troops, with one-fourth of their numbers gone, and cartridges, beside shot and shell, falling short, had reached the point of exhaustion. Then it seemed as if the Yser position must fall, and that the last strip of Belgium would follow the rest.

Under this supreme necessity it was decided to find safety by cutting the dykes of the Yser and flooding the sur-



THE WEARIN' OF THE GREEN.

Actor-Manager Asquith (to Lloyd George): "You know, dear boy, I had thought of playing the part myself, but we all have to make sacrifices—ahem—in these days, and in this knock-about business you ab-ser-lootly fill the bill."

E. T. Reed, in The Passing Show, London.

rounding country. The first step was taken on October 28th, but the water rose very slowly, and for some time the Germans did not realize what had happened. When they did they beat a hasty retreat, their chief care being not to cross the Yser, but to get away from it. Many hundreds were cut off on temporary islets formed by the moving waters, much of their artillery had to be abandoned; but the bitterest pill of all was to see the prize, almost grasped, slip away after the lives of at least fifty thousand of the best German soldiers had been sacrificed to gain it. And thus the final episode in the three months' effort of the Belgian Army, generally single-handed, to save their country was marked by no inconsiderable triumph.

The little corner of Flanders which the Belgian Army defended so valiantly in the autumn of 1914 is still held intact by the national forces in this summer of 1916. But, except in spirit, it is a new army. Commandant Breton calls it in one passage a marvellous resurrection, and when it is remembered that it has been created without a country the phrase is very appropriate. The existing Belgian Army, which is to be found exclusively in the triangle of the kingdom behind the Yser, has been formed under King Albert's personal direction. It has not merely been re-clothed in a khaki uniform and re-armed, but it has been provided with a fresh and up-to-date organization, evolved from the experiences of the war, in which every man has his number and his assigned place. The artillery still possesses its old 75 mm. pieces, and many more of them, but it is also equipped with the heavy artillery which in 1914 was wholly lacking.

Daring.—A man in Wisconsin got married in order to win a \$50 bet. Which goes to show how far some chaps will go to get a little money.

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