

A MOST CRUEL BLOW DEALT HALIFAX CITY

North End a Mass of Ruins--Human Bodies Crushed to Pulp or Charred And Blackened By Fire--War Caused the Catastrophe.

(Canadian Press Despatch.) Halifax, Dec. 7.—The war has touched Halifax. Sorrow and anguish are left in its trail. Where only a few hours ago the most prosperous city in Canada stood secure in her own defences, unafraid and almost apathetic, there are now heaps of ruins. No one can yet estimate the loss of life and property, and words fail to describe the mental anguish of those who have lost their home and dear ones by one cruel stroke.

Although the collision of the two ships is believed to have been purely accidental, the war created it. The crash came as suddenly and unexpectedly as Zeppelin bombs have fallen upon undefended English towns and the effect has been the same.

Washington To Voluntarily Help.

(Canadian Press Despatch.) Washington, Dec. 7.—American Red Cross officials here to-day awaited details of the catastrophe, prepared to send additional relief to that despatched by special trains from Boston and New York last night, without a formal call for assistance from Canada.

Dead Number 2,000.

(Canadian Press Despatch.) Halifax, Dec. 7.—Up to noon to-day there was no change in the police estimate of the number of casualties in yesterday's disaster. There are about two thousand dead and the same number of injured, two-thirds of the latter suffering from injuries from flying glass.

Belgian Relief Boat Beached.

(Canadian Press Despatch.) New York, Dec. 7.—The boilers of the Imo, the Belgian relief ship which collided with the Mont Blanc, did not explode, according to word received at the offices of the agents here to-day. The thirty-four members of her crew were picked up by a British battleship, this message stated. After the collision the Imo succeeded in backing away and beaching before the explosion occurred.

United States Cities Aid.

(Canadian Press Despatch.) New York, Dec. 7.—Washington, Boston and New York and other United States centres continue to rush trainloads of medical aids of all kinds to Halifax. The mayor of Halifax has been notified that sister cities all over the States stand ready to help in all ways possible.

Kitchener Gives \$10,000.

(Canadian Press Despatch.) Kitchener, Dec. 7.—The City Council at a special meeting this morning voted ten thousand dollars for the Halifax sufferers.

Hunting For Their Dead.

(Canadian Press Despatch.) Halifax, Dec. 7.—Those who cannot find their loved ones in any of the hospitals are holding to hopes that their families may be among those who were put aboard trains and carried to towns along the line, some going even as far as Truro. It has been impossible to get all the names of the missing. Families have been scattered, and because of the lack of communication there is no immediate means of bringing scattered families together. There are nineteen known dead at Dartmouth, opposite Halifax. Several are missing and presumed dead.

It was in Richmond opposite the scene of the explosion, that the havoc was greatest. Whole blocks of dwellings, mostly of frame construction, were leveled. Street after street is in ruins and the structures which were left standing by the explosion were destroyed by fires which broke out simultaneously in a score of places and which it was impossible to check until they had burned themselves out.

It is believed scores of persons who had been injured by the collapse of their homes perished in the flames from which they were helpless to flee. The fires in this district still are smouldering to-night.

Terror Scenes in Streets. Five minutes after the explosion the streets in all parts of Halifax were filled with frenzied, panic-stricken throngs striving to reach the outskirts in an effort to escape what they believed was a raid by a German fleet. Hundreds of them had been cut by the shower of glass which followed the explosion.

In the Richmond section the scenes enacted defied description. Seriously injured men and women crawled from the wreckage of their homes and lay in the streets until they were removed in ambulances and automobiles to hospitals. Those less seriously hurt aided those more gravely injured.

In scores of cases occupants of houses who had escaped without injury or who were only slightly hurt were baffled by the flames in their search for members of their families and were forced to stand by impotent while what once had been their homes became funeral pyres for loved ones.

Finds Family Killed. A government employee named McDermid, who made all speed to reach his home after the explosion found that his wife and four children had perished. His two-year-old daughter had been killed while playing in the yard of her home.

Scores of those who lost their lives were children in the public schools in the north end. Many others suffered broken limbs and were rescued with difficulty from the ruined buildings. The teachers who escaped injury worked heroically to save the lives of the children under their charge.

Lebanon Coleman, manager of the Canadian Express Company, was killed when the roof of the north station collapsed.

Start Rescue Promptly. In less than half an hour after the disaster 5,000 persons had gathered on the Common and thousands of others had sought refuge in fields outside the city. Hundreds were reported missing by their relatives and it was not known whether they were alive or dead.

The work of rescue and relief was promptly organized. The Academy of Music and many other public buildings were thrown open to house the homeless. Five hundred tents have been erected on the Common and these will be occupied by the troops who have surrendered their barracks to the women and children.

Caused by Confusion of Whistles. Halifax, Dec. 7.—Pilot Frank Mackle of the Mont Blanc declared that the collision resulted from a confusion of whistles sounded by the Ioma.

He believes the fire which caused the explosion was due to the fact that the munitions ship carried a deck load of benzine.

Kingston People in Halifax. Mrs. Charles F. Kirkpatrick has not received any word from her father, Archbishop Worrell of Halifax, but she thinks he is safe or she would have been advised before this. The archbishop lives on Lucknow street.

Rev. J. de P. Wright, brother of Rev. J. de P. Wright, Kingston, is priest vicar of All Saint's cathedral in Halifax. No word has yet been received from him.

THE GERMAN FAIL.

In Two Attacks East of Meuse in Verdun Region.

(Canadian Press Despatch.) Paris, Dec. 7.—Two attempts were made by the Germans to attack the French lines east of the Meuse in the Verdun region last night after a heavy bombardment. The attacking forces, the War Office announced to-day, were driven off by French fire.

PREDICTED OTTAWA FIRE.

Was Due to German Plot—Reported Plot to Navy Secretary. Concord, N. C., Dec. 7.—Testifying in his own defence yesterday at his trial for the murder of Mrs. Maude A. King, Gaston B. Means told the story of his activities as a "German agent," and declared that it was he who had discovered and reported to the U. S. Government the German plot to burn the "Capitol" at Ottawa, restore Huerta to a dictatorship in Mexico, bring on war between Mexico and the United States, and at the same time start a peace propaganda.

LOOKS BETTER FOR UNIONISTS.

Outside of Quebec Government Should Have Majorities. Ottawa, Dec. 7.—From reports received at Ottawa the elections are expected to divide about as follows: P. E. I. 3 1 Nova Scotia 10 6 New Brunswick 7 4 Ontario 70 12 Quebec 10 55 Manitoba 11 4 Saskatchewan 12 4 Alberta 8 4 B. C. 10 3 Yukon 1 0 Government majority—49.

NOE SUCH A FOOL.

Stupid-Looking Butcher Boy Was German Spy. New York, Dec. 7.—Although he was a German subject, Eric Hoekker, a butcher boy, possessed an air of such profound stupidity that he was permitted to call daily at Port Totten in his rounds. Yesterday he was interned on Ellis Island after army intelligence officers discovered, after a search of his quarters, that he had important papers among his effects, and that he was an expert telegrapher and map maker.

U.S. DECLARES WAR ON AUSTRIA-HUNGARY

(Canadian Press Despatch.) Washington, D.C., Dec. 7.—With less than an hour's debate the Senate passed the resolution declaring war on Austria-Hungary.

HAS LOST HIS LEFT HAND

STANLEY FISHER OF NAPANEÉ WOUNDED IN FRANCE.

James Henderson Sentenced to Five Years in Penitentiary for Stealing an Automobile.

(From Our Own Correspondent.) Napaneé, Dec. 6.—Irvine Vanaalstine, one of Napaneé's most respected residents, is very ill of pneumonia and grave fears are entertained for his recovery. His son, Dr. Elliott Vanaalstine, of Chicago, arrived home to-day to be at his father's bedside.

Mrs. George Mancour, an old and much respected resident of Odessa, passed peacefully away on Saturday evening at the home of her daughter, Mrs. G. B. Joy, Dundas street. Although in failing health for some months, she was able to come to Napaneé about two weeks ago.

Deceased was eighty-one years of age and lived in Odessa over six years. She leaves three children, Mrs. G. B. Joy, Napaneé; Mrs. Clark, of Los Angeles, Cal.; and John Mancour of Odessa. The funeral took place on Tuesday to Catawaga cemetery.

James Henderson, who stole J. H. Fitzpatrick's auto last October and was arrested in the United States about three weeks ago, was tried yesterday and sentenced to five years in Portsmouth penitentiary.

Dr. and Mrs. Fisher, whose son, Stanley Fisher, was wounded in France on the 6th of October, received a letter from him this week, stating that he had lost his left hand and had other wounds in the arm and shoulder, but saying that he was progressing splendidly. He was brought to England and is now in hospital.

Mrs. John Milling was in Belleville this week to be with her sister, Mrs. Card, who underwent a serious operation in the Belleville hospital.

"REMEMBER THE KIDDIES!"

The Whig's Fund For Christmas Presents to Soldiers' Children.

- W. F. Nickle \$100.00
Senator Richardson 50.00
W. J. Fair 50.00
Steeley's Limited 50.00
Mayor Hughes 25.00
Royal Military College Cadets 25.00
British Whig 25.00
H. C. Nickle 50.00
Standard Publishing Co. 25.00
Ald. H. W. Newlin 10.00
Mr. and Mrs. J. L. Whiting 10.00
A. B. Cunningham 10.00
Dr. and Mrs. J. C. Connell 10.00
Major G. I. Campbell 5.00
Col. and Mrs. Percera 5.00
F. Atkinson Wray 5.00
Mr. and Mrs. L. Hitchen 5.00
Lieut.-Col. and Mrs. W. H. Macnee 5.00
Lieut.-Col. and Mrs. J. N. Leslie 5.00
Mrs. Margaret Dever 5.00
Lend-a-Hand Circle, King's Daughters' Mite Box, Post Office 4.00

HALIFAX DEAD NUMBER 2,000

As the Result of the Frightful Explosion on Thursday Morning.

PUPILS KILLED IN SCHOOLS

FIRE ENGINE EXPLODED KILLING CHIEF AND DEPUTY.

Crews of Both Vessels Escaped—Thousands Are Injured—A Searching Investigation Into the Catastrophe Is Ordered.

(Canadian Press Despatch.) Halifax, N.S., Dec. 7.—The estimated dead by the police is two thousand. Thousands have been injured. The crews of both vessels, which collided and caused the catastrophe, escaped and have been detained awaiting the investigation into the cause of the accident.

Twenty-five teams loaded with bodies arrived at the morgues last night.

Forty were killed on one ship alone. A fire engine exploded, killing the fire chief and his deputy. Many children were killed in the schools. No soldiers were killed or injured. All returned soldiers had left the city. The property damage is enormous.

Explosion Spreads Devastation. For a mile and a half along the waterfront from Richmond down below Hollis street the destructive blast caused by the explosion of a munition ship in Bedford Basin swept. In that area most of the buildings have been destroyed or badly damaged, including the wharves, elevators, warehouses, Imperial dock yards, and even the dwellings on the hill above facing the harbor.

All through this area fatalities are reported wholesale. The force of the explosion may be judged by the fact that telegraph operators were killed at their work over four miles from the scene of the action.

The whole city north of the Queen's Hotel is a mass of wreckage, and fires broke out in a dozen parts of the city. The area affected is several miles.

The Canadian Government depot, also used by the C.P.R., is described as utterly crushed, while the repairing plant at Willow Park is wrecked.

Tried to Sink Steamer. The explosion was caused when the cargo of a French munition ship exploded after the vessel had been rammed by a Norwegian boat carrying foodstuffs.

The explosion occurred about 9 o'clock. The ammunition ship was backing from her pier preparatory to sailing. The force of the collision started a fire. The crew was quickly called to quarters and an attempt made to extinguish the flames. This failed and as the fire approached the holds where the explosives were stored, the captain ordered the sea cocks opened. Before, however, this vessel had sunk, she drifted towards one of the piers and a few moments later an explosion occurred, tearing the vessel to pieces.

When the decision was made to sink the ship the crew was ordered into their small boats.

The explosion rocked the business buildings and broke much glass, but the casualties in this section were small.

The fires all over the north end of the city were caused by stoves overturning.

Fire Under Control. The fire was brought under control yesterday afternoon. Richmond is destroyed.

Not a house in the city escaped. Pieces of iron and shrapnel have been found three miles from the waterfront.

The portion of the city affected was the older part, many of the buildings being almost as old as

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FACTS VS. PLATITUDES

In his letter to the Whig, published on Wednesday, Dr. Richardson, Kingston Laurier candidate, made this appeal to the people affected by the increased cost of living:

"If the working men, clerks and merchants are satisfied with the high cost of living, let them vote for Borden."

Just what he means by "voting for Borden" no one seems to know. Apparently he doesn't know himself, inasmuch as he neglects to explain it. In this election no one is voting "for Borden." Some misguided ones, as well as all the disloyal and alien element, will undoubtedly vote "for Laurier"; but the rest of Canada is voting for a principle greater than any leader, higher than any party. No one is voting "for Borden"; but many a one will vote for the Union Government, which is pledged to abolish patronage, to reform the civil service, to curb the profits of men like Flavelle, to enforce the Military Service Act, to exempt men required on the farms and in specialized occupations where they are necessary to the state, to keep faith with the Canadians at the front by sending them the reinforcements they ask for, to prosecute the war with vigor—in a word, they will vote for a Government which is British and fights, as against a man who is French-Canadian and quits.

As to food prices. Is the Union Government responsible for the high cost of living? The doctor does not—because he cannot—attach the blame to this Government or any Government. He knows full well that the war, and it alone, is responsible for the increased cost of living. You cannot withdraw thirty or forty million men from productive activity without seriously curtailing the supply of food. Added to this is the wastage entailed by war, the difficulty or impossibility of transportation of foodstuffs from the place where they are plentiful to the place where they are urgently required, and the diversion of capital from agricultural and industrial pursuits to warlike uses. In every great war the food problem becomes acute. Many times famine stalks in its train. To blame such conditions on a Government bending all its efforts towards achieving ultimate victory and saving the nation it serves, is something akin to blaming the physician for the disease his prescription seeks to cure—and sometimes kills.

That any Government, old or new, is responsible for the high cost of living in Canada has thus been disproved. But we can assure the working men, clerks and merchants

of Kingston that the food prices paid in Canada to-day are CONSIDERABLY LOWER than in any other country. Europe, where there is rationing or starvation prevails, would afford too unfair a comparison. We will be more generous to Dr. Richardson and confine the comparison to this continent. We will accord him still another advantage, and confine it to North America. Nor shall Canadian Government statistics be quoted, because he might say these were distorted or misquoted for the purpose of bolstering up the Union Government. An independent source will be sought to prove him wrong—decidedly, irrefutably wrong.

The United States Food Commission has made a comparison of Canadian and United States retail food prices for October last. Consider their finding:

"The United States price for round steak is 105 per cent. of the Canadian price. Pork chops and bacon are cheaper in Canada. The American price of good quality fresh fish is 127 per cent. of the Canadian price. Milk is 110 per cent. Canadian butter are practically the same price on the average for the two countries, but the Canadian consumer is paying less for cheese. Bread is very much cheaper in Canada, the United States price being 1.47 times as much as in the Dominion. In rolled oats, too, the Canadian purchaser buys much more cheaply. Other food commodities on which the average Canadian retail price is lower than the average American retail price are: rice, canned tomatoes, canned peas, dry beans, prunes, tea, and potatoes. In buying potatoes the United States consumer gets no more for \$1.57 than does the Canadian consumer for an expenditure of \$1. The American consumer has an advantage in new laid eggs, canned corn, and granulated sugar, but the only food commodity in the list which he buys very much more cheaply is coffee, of which the United States price is 77 per cent. of the Canadian."

Herein are facts as against empty platitudes. The "working man, clerk or merchant" can reason out things for himself. He is not to be led astray by reckless charges. And suppose the cost of living is higher—suppose it is much higher—was the artisan or the merchant ever in a better position to meet it? Is work not plentiful and the remuneration greater than ever before? Was he ever better off financially than he is to-day? The people of this day and generation are too intelligent and too enlightened to accept empty generalities and meaningless platitudes. They look for facts, and on these base their own conclusions. Which is as it should be.

MASS MEETING IN CITY HALL

In the Interests of W. F. Nickle, the Union Candidate.

THE HALL WAS CROWDED

TO HEAR THE STIRRING ADDRESSES THAT WERE GIVEN.

J. M. Godfrey and Miss Constance Boulton, Toronto, Major W. L. Grant, T. J. Rigney and Mr. Nickle Spoke.

Stirring addresses on behalf of W. F. Nickle and Union Government, were given at a mass meeting held in the City Hall, on Thursday night. The audience filled the hall to overflowing. Robert Meek was chairman, and every available seat on the platform was occupied. There was a very large turnout of ladies at the meeting. W. F. Nickle was given a rousing reception.

Addresses were given by J. M. Godfrey, president of the Ontario Win-The-War League, Major W. L. Grant, Miss Constance Boulton, of Toronto, T. J. Rigney, and Mr. Nickle.

Major Grant, fresh from the war zone, told the audience about the urgent need for reinforcements. He asked the electors to forget partyism and vote as Canadians.

Miss Boulton declared that the best men of the country were lined up for Union Government, and were ready to lead the women. She made a touching appeal to the women to vote for Union Government, and to give the boys at the front the needed help.

Mr. Godfrey, a life-long Liberal, declared that Sir Wilfrid Laurier had lost the opportunity of uniting Canada as she had never been united before.

Mr. Rigney called upon the electors to drop politics and rally to the support of Sir Robert Borden in the winning of the war.

Major Grant's Appeal. Major Grant was the first speaker. He said that partyism should be set aside, and that the electors should vote as Canadians.

He said the question should not be one of Grit and Tory, but as regards securing reinforcements at the front to win the war. He pointed out the urgent need for men at the front, and paid a glowing tribute to the work of the Canadians on the field of battle.

"And are you going to send over more men to help them in their work, or are you not?" asked the speaker.

There was great need for the two old political parties to get together, and help win the war. Canada had a duty to perform, and the speaker refused to believe that Canada would refuse to send reinforcements overseas.

The speaker said that one did not know hardly what name to give those in the opposition. You could not call them Liberals, as they did not represent all the members of this old party, as a large number of the best men in the Liberal ranks were now lined up strong for Union.

The opposition must be referred to as Laurierites.

Referring to the call for men, Major Grant said that the voluntary system had brought good results, but that this system had completed its work. The need for more recruits at the present time was very urgent, and the only fair way of getting these recruits was through the enforcement of the Military Service Act.

"The men in the trenches must be supported," said the speaker amidst loud applause, "and the only way they can be supported is in sending over more men. Otherwise, we will be false to Canada, false to our brothers in France, and most of all, false to those who will never see earth again, but whose memory will live forever in our minds. I refuse to believe that in Kingston we will be false to our living and to our dead."

Mr. Godfrey remarked in opening his address that he had been a (Continued on Page 3.)

War Tidings. The German War Office claims a total of 9,000 prisoners and 164 guns taken from the British in the Cambrai region.

Fresh Austro-German divisions from the French and Russian fronts are continually arriving on the Italian line.

The Italian high command, despatches say, is confident of its position. Airplanes are being destroyed and Italian patrols are in constant touch with the enemy.

Eleven thousand Italians have been captured by the Austro-Germans in their new offensive on the mountainous front of northern Italy. It is officially announced by the German War Office.

German auxiliary cruiser, the guardship Botnia, was blown up after a collision with a German mine field off the Danish coast.

An important conference was held at Ottawa between coal mining officials of the Commission of Conservation with a view to stopping waste in mining of coal in the West.

Canadian troops now in London have received a half month's pay in advance to enable them to make their Christmas purchases.

WHIG CONTENTS.

- 1-Cruel Blow at Halifax; Halifax Disaster Appalling; Unionist Meeting.
2-Church Events; Incidents of the Day.
3-Unionist Meeting Continued.
4-Editorials; Ripping Rhymes; Press Opinions; Things That Never Happen.
5-Unionist Meeting Continued; Christmas Tree Fund.
6-Eastern Ontario News; The Forum.
7-Amusements; Announcements; The Forum.
8-Military Matters; Theatrical News.
9-Music in the Home.
10-Frontier Dispatches; Food Controller's Figures.
11-Attitude to New Champs; Drummer Morrison Writes.
12-Seven Court Cases; Letters to Editor.
13-News from the Countryside.
14-In the World of Sport.