BRITAIN A HUGE ADVERTISEMENT FOR VOLUNTEERS

Charles Edward Russell Tells of the Remarkable Campaign to Enthuse English Patriotism—Volunteerism Tested and a Failure—Conscription Evidently Only Plan to Raise Army

(By Charles Edward Russell.)
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LONDON, April 30.—Staff Special.—Talk about advertising! The government of Great Britain, in the last nine months has become incomparably the greatest advertiser the world has ever known. In extent, variety, ingenuity, boldness, attractiveness and cost it has set a new and truly wonderful record.

What has the government been advertising for?

Men. That's all.

In spite of many and grave warnings, Great Britain was caught by the war absolutely unprepared, like an unconned ship struck down by a squall.

Here is the final and unanswerable proof that whatever may be pretended elsewhere, this country never desired, expected nor considered such a war. Except for her traditional navy, she was almost weaponless, and even if she had been provided with tools she had no trained men to handle them.

The staggering problem was to create an army from a population unschooled in war.

England's Problem May be Ours

Here is something in itself far more interesting than any battle. Besides, we may some day face the same kind of problem.

Now, to criticise the manner in which the British government attempted this stupendous task is not my job. Any administration composed of unwarlike men slung in a moment into such a mess would blunder. Also, for my own part, I am satisfied from independent investigation before the war that the cause of the allies is just and true. Therefore, I am not much moved to pick needless flaws in what they do, but only to set down here, for the benefit of my countrymen exactly what happened.

On August 4, 1914, Great Britain had an army of 170,000 men; Germany had 7,000,000 under arms and 2,000,000 in reserve; Austria had 3,500,000 under arms and 2,000,000 in reserve. One hundred and seventy thousand against 14,500,000—it didn't amount to a patch on the landscape.

For years many sage counsellors had urged Great Britain to adopt the system of compulsory military service that Bismarck riveted upon continental Europe. In 1905 the conservative government was all ready to do this and had a bill for it drawn, but before it could be introduced the liberals carried the country. The liberal policy has always been against conscription and in favor of volunteer enlistment for the nation's defense.

How System Was Tested

Volunteer enlistment as against conscription was now put into the crucible and fiercely tested.

The moment the council declared war the recruiting offices were opened and the men of Britain called upon to come in and enlist.

They didn't come!

This made an alarming situation—Germany with her vast army complete and Great Britain with next to nothing. So the government took to advertising. It bought full pages in the London and other journals and filled them with the biggest type ever seen in a British newspaper, eloquently appealing for recruits.

You could not imagine a more complete and conclusive indorsement of the value of newspaper advertising. The government in its greatest emergency had recourse to printer's ink.

Appealed in Letters Six Feet High

It also resorted to other expedients not so wise. It covered the billboards with letters six feet high. It pasted appeals on the glass shield of every taxicab and the side of every omnibus. It filled store windows and dead wall space with an endless variety of posters constantly renewed. It held public meetings and engaged speakers.

It appealed through church, commercial, social, political and philanthropic organizations.

The newspapers most generously gave every conceivable help. I believe there never was a press so patriotic.

Clergymen preached and statesmen argued. Young women patrolled the streets and pinned white feathers on every able-bodied young man who had not enlisted.

"Wait until the first battle," said the wise men; "then you'll see them rush to the colors."

The first battle passed.

"Wait until the first death lists are printed," said the wise men; "that will stir them up."

The first death lists passed.

Even Lowered Physical Standard

The physical standards were lowered and sometimes conveniently overlooked. In some parts of the country it was posted that men 5 feet 1 inch in height would be accepted; the chest measure limit was reduced to 34 inches everywhere.

Under these provisions a view of some of the detachments strongly suggested cradle robbing.

The government declared "separation allowances" to be paid to the wives and dependents of men that volunteered. Many persons said that the trouble was these allowances were too small; no poor man would be eager to enlist so long as his wife would receive in his absence only $1.87 a week, with 4 cents a day for each child.

So the government increased the allowance to the basis of $3.12 a week for wife and $1.25 a week for each child.

"Men and more men, and still more men," continued to be the urgent demand. Since the country's last great war all war conditions had been transformed. What was a great army then is but a beggarly handful now. Recruits gathered slowly, and every recruit must be trained at least six months before he could be worth anything in modern warfare.

Language Rummaged for Words of Appeal

The weeks and months went by; the government redoubled all its efforts. Nine months have passed since the beginning of the recruiting campaign. Today London is one huge advertising gallery, the like of which has never been seen. There is hardly a square foot where a poster could be stuck that does not scream the appeal to enlist. On one bill board I counted thirty-six different varieties of posters. The language has been rummaged and strained to find new phrases that may awaken the patriot to a sense of the nation's danger. A "whirlwind speaking campaign" for enlistments covers every region of the great city with more than seventy meetings a day.

Here, from my notebook, are a few specimens of the billboard style of appeal one sees everywhere:

"To arms for the king and empire! Join today!"

"Line up, boys! Enlist today!"

"Men, to delay is dangerous when your country needs you—enlist now."

"Rally round the flag! We must have more men!"

"Think! Are you content for him to fight for you?" (Him being the picture of a gallant young warrior....

"Remember Scarborough! Enlist now!" (With a picture.)

Nine months of prodigious effort have gathered a large army of recruits but the dullest observer must know the army is not nearly large enough and a vastly greater army of available men walks the streets every day, apparently unconcerned.

There had been enlisted what in former times would have been regarded as a huge army. Probably it was the largest volunteer army ever created. And yet the totals fell so far short of the totals attained in continental countries that the disproportion struck one as hopeless.

Only Two Million in Nine Months

In nine months the government had spent $125,000,000 in securing recruits and had collected, including the responses from Canada, Australia and New Zealand, what optimists declared to be a little more than 2,000,000 men—some trained, some untrained and some as raw as a March day.

Two millions! On December 15, 1914, Germany had under arms 9,542,000 trained men.

At the outbreak of the war Germany had a population of about 65,000,000; Great Britain a population of 45,000,000.

Taking the outside figures, Great Britain in nine months had secured one-fourth as many men as Germany had put into the field in forty-eight hours.

If Great Britain had been as well able as Germany to produce an army she would have had about 7,000,000 men in the field.

Counting the populations of the overseas dominions she would have had about 9,000,000.

Apparently the system of volunteer enlistment, having been put to the test, had crumpled up.

Human ingenuity could have done no more with it and these were the results.

THE NINETY-MILE-AN-HOUR FACE

This picture shows how an automobile race driver looks when traveling 90 miles an hour. It is the first of the kind ever made. The face is that of Eddie Rickenbacher, speed demon. C. Latta, a mechanician, was strapped to the hood of the machine, as indicated in the sketch below, to take the snapshot when going at this terrific speed.

O.W.R.&N. ALLOWED TO OWN VESSELS UPON COLUMBIA

WASHINGTON, May 12.—Application of the Oregon-Washington Railroad & Navigation company, under the Panama canal act, to retain ownership and continue operation of boat lines on the Willamette and Columbia rivers, Lake Coeur d'Alene and the Snake river, was approved today by the interstate commerce commission.

PORTLAND, Or., May 12.—Applications of the Oregon-Washington Railroad & Navigation company to retain ownership of its inland steamer lines was made a year ago on the ground that, while water and rail lines ran parallel at certain points, there was no real competition between the two.

Shippers in Washington, Oregon and Idaho petitioned that the railroad be allowed to retain ownership. Idaho farmers, on the south bank of the Snake, between Lewiston and Riparia, cited as an instance that they would have to ferry their crops across the river in order to reach the railroad.

The Spokane, Portland & Seattle railway system, which made application at the same time as the Oregon-Washington lines, was recently ordered to dispose of its inland water lines because actual competition existed.

YALE STANDS BY WILSON: GERMANS REGRET DISASTER

NEW HAVEN, Conn., May 12.—Nearly a thousand Yale students signed resolutions, which were sent to President Wilson today, approving his attitude in the "unfortunate events incidental to the European war."

LIBERTY BELL TO STOP IN MEDFORD

The Liberty Bell, the most cherished relic of American history, will pass through Medford next July, date yet unknown. It is planned to have the bell make the trip across the country on a special train, thus allowing for ample stops at all points on the schedule. Besides Medford, the bell will stop in Portland, Eugene, Grants Pass and Ashland in western Oregon. It will leave Philadelphia July 3. The story of the Liberty Bell is known to every man, woman and school child. Recently the city of Philadelphia city council ordered that the heavy clapper be removed for the trip across country, as a precautionary measure against damage.