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METHODISTS AND WAR SERVICE

—◆—
IRRESISTIBLE CLAIM ON
CONSCIENCE

A MILITANT ADDRESS

Reference was made to the military ballot by the Rev. A. C. Lawry, the retiring president of the Methodist Conference, in his valedictory address. Mr. Lawry said: "Before declining to appeal for the exemption of our young men on whom the ballot may fall, I submitted the line that in my judgment seemed right to the leading men of our church, and they all practically agreed with me. The conference itself will now decide up to what point this policy of sacrifice can be maintained. The interesting question of the seemliness of ministers enlisting I would gladly discuss at some length now, but the time at my disposal will not suffice, nor have I a right to anticipate the resolutions that the conference will pass in this regard. Of this I am certain that if a vile wretch were attacking an unprotected home or running amok down a street, our men would not refuse to protect the helpless from brutal violence, nor would they shrink from upholding law and order at some risk on the plea that they are Methodist ministers. I think that this should be as true on the international scale as on the domestic or parochial. If those who have adopted pacifist views had sufficient imagination to visualise a ten-thousandth part of the horrors that would have been inflicted upon the people of the Allied nations but for armed protection, they might understand that even Jesus Christ could lead a bayonet charge to deliver the helpless from the brutal in this war between heaven and hell. Always, Jesus stood for the women and children and the poor, and He antagonised the covetous and cruel, the Scribes and Pharisees, Sadducees and hypocrites. That is the attitude of our heroes at the front to-day. Indeed, I am sure that there is so much latent manhood of the sturdy sort even in each truly conscientious objector that if he were among the scenes of outrage and butchery and cruelty that are now defiling three continents he would do as the Quaker did in Uncle Tom's Cabin. You will remember that Phineas stood between the trembling women and the slave hunter. He gave him a gentle word and a strong push, and saying 'Friend, thee isn't wanted here,' and sent him back.

... men broken and cursing, but helpless, to the bottom of the cliff. But for those who feel the argument of the history of the Ancient Church stronger than the appeal of the tragic history of very modern Europe, there is the opportunity of ambulance and other Christian work at the front. This will not be denied them by the Government, and should have an irresistible claim upon the consciences of those who (heedless of danger) will prove their allegiance to crush the enemy. Regarding the young preachers who go to the front, I can imagine no grander opening for them, than their position among thousands of men, and I am convinced that those who return will have a unique fitness for their work and will speak with a rare authority.

"In the meantime we must hear throughout the whole Church a fresh call to sacrifice. Our people must attend the churches to worship God, not to hear a favourite preacher, and must not forsake the wonted place of prayer because Conference cannot send them the one minister that they desire. Our supernumeraries and local preachers and other Christian workers are at one with the remaining ministers to undertake more and work harder. I appeal to our people as a whole to show the same spirit of self-sacrifice in each department of church life that our heroes in the war zone are manifesting."

Methodists in the Ranks.

Mr. Lawry combatted the suggestion that the Methodists had not sent a large percentage of their members to the front. From the Methodist congregations in New Zealand 6200 men had enlisted, and of these 620 had made the supreme sacrifice. "We find," remarked the speaker, "that the Defence Department had not kept a strict and up-to-date record of the denominational standing of the members of the New Zealand Expeditionary Force. We also hear disquieting rumours from abroad. These have been repeated by unfriendly clerics in the Dominion and by other critics until the percentage of Methodists among New Zealand's patriots has been put absurdly low: I am therefore urged by an experienced chaplain to make known several incidents in which men at the front, although of

the Methodist faith, were recorded as belonging to other creeds. "I have secured," said the speaker, "from nearly every minister and home missionary in the New Zealand Church a return of enlisted men. I am proud to say that there can be no doubt that of the eligible young men in the Methodist congregations from 90 to 95 per cent. have gone to the war. In many cases every eligible young man has gone. There is not a young man left. The figures stand thus: 8½ per cent. of the Expeditionary Force and 92 per cent. of our eligible young men."

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METHODISTS AND WAR SERVICE

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PATRIOTIC SERVICE

IN MEMORY OF THE FALLEN

—

EMPIRE'S CALL TO BATTLE

A patriotic service in memory of New Zealand's fallen soldiers was held in Wesley Church, Taranaki Street, yesterday afternoon. The service was conducted by the president of the Methodist Conference (Rev. F. W. Sinclair), assisted by chaplains of the Forces. The address was given by the Rev. P. W. Fairclough. About 1000 persons were present.

Mr. Fairclough said that war must be recognised to be a grim fact in human nature. "Wherever you open history, or dig in the ruins of Empires, or study the blend of races, or trace frontiers on a map," he said, "you come against the great grim cold fact of war. Not a rood of ground but the ultimate title deed is writ with the sword; not a throne stands, not a law runs, not a liberty is secure but for force somewhere. We had almost forgotten it. I recall debates in this conference on military training in which it was evident that not a few thought we were unfaithful to some great ideal, and pandering to jingoism in making the most elementary preparations against attack. This tragic war has rudely shaken us out of our dreams, and awakened us the stern and awful veracities of this universe. 'Because thou art virtuous,' says one in Shakespeare, 'shall there be no more cakes and ale?' Because we have enough and to spare shall there be no more division? Because you have read the Sermon on the Mount and misapplied it is there to be no more war? Is the great stream of human history and tendency to reverse its flow because we wished it? You might as well expect the gum tree to cease to shed its bark, or the poplar to cast its leaves because you have breathed some irrelevant perfumes into the air.

Look at the Facts!

"Let us look at the facts. No nation holds so much of the spoil of war as we do. India, Canada, South Africa, Egypt, Gibraltar, Malta we took with the sword, and Australia and New Zealand we leisurely occupied because battle had made us masters of the sea. Now our Empire, like all the empires of the warrior kings of old, whether of Egypt, Babylon; whether of Alexander, Caesar, Charlemagn, or Napoleon, is held as you hold a challenge shield, a belt, or a trophy in sports. You hold it while you can defend it, or till someone finds out that you cannot defend it. All the other empires have gone that way. Have we not in our own day watched the empires of Spain, Turkey, and China being challenged, and the spoil carried off? The enemy thought that our time had come, and that our Empire would crumble when touched with Ithuriel's spear. Happily, he was wrong, but there is no doubt that he challenged the shield and our position in the world. Personally, I regard the British Empire as containing the promise and potency of the Kingdom of God in a greater degree than any other political organisation that ever existed. I consider that it is the greatest trust ever reposed in man, and that not to defend it would be treason to God and the human race: treason to the past and treason to the future—and we very narrowly escaped it.

"I do not come here to confess other people's sins, least of all the sins of the grossly bad. They have no relation to the war. Let us confess here the sins of good men, for it was they that nearly committed the great treason. They let their wishes be father to their thoughts. They stoned Roberts and put their trust in Haldane. The prediction of the astronomer in the almanac was not based on better evidence than the prediction which warned our nation of its danger; but multitudes of good men, reformers and philanthropists and friends of the people, but especially religious men, refused to hear and they brought us to the very verge, beyond which repentance is vain. If you confess sin to-day confess that

We held a mighty trust for mankind, and through unpractical counsels it almost slipped from us; and though we have escaped that, yet the scourge of this war is on the world, which I am convinced would have been averted had we been able to utter our peace sentiments from behind a million bayonets; I say, confess this and repent, and let us order our conduct and our policies hereafter, not as before our own ideals, but as before the God of the things as they are.

Most gladly would we have averted this world calamity, but seeing that we had to do or die we do not regret the decision that was taken. Indeed, I passed some days in an agony of suspense lest we should not do our duty to the world. But even our most pacific Government, that rose to power on the protest against the Boer War, could do no other than they did, and we entered on the red way of sorrows. It has proved longer and redder than we thought possible, but we do not regret.

No Regrets.

"The other day I stood before the manument to Captain Scott in Christchurch. I gazed on the strong, quiet face sculptured by his wife, and then I read the noble and pathetic words taken from his diary: 'I do not regret this journey, which shows that Englishmen can endure hardship, help one another, and meet death with as great fortitude as ever in the past.' I believe that these simple and noble words express the feelings of the British nation in this tremendous crisis. We do not regret.

"We do not regret because we have played our part with honour, and have not besmirched scutcheon by treachery, barbarity, or unsoldierly deeds, but have borne ourselves with a patient chivalry that wins the approval of mankind. We do not regret because we have borne great sorrows and misfortunes with fortitude and courage worthy of our fathers. Losses and costs beyond all common arithmetic have been calmly faced, and faster than our heroes fell have fresh relays offered their breasts to the stroke. We have been able to suffer and be strong. We do not regret because this war has unified our Empire as nothing else could have done. We do not regret on the score of religion and justice, for we have confidence that though the devil be unchained and rage his hour, right will prevail, and the law of nations be stiffened with fresh sanctions.

"Finally, we do not regret even on account of our heroic dead—though God knows our hearts have ached. A stricken father, with tears in voice and eye, said to me, 'It is the noblest of deaths; and I would not ask him back.' Not many, perhaps, can be so brave at the first touch; but there is much quiet heroism. I saw a widow who had just lost her son meet a father who had just lost his, at my church door. They looked at each other, clasped hands, and turned away without a word. Oh, the pathos of it! But kindly time shall breathe on all things. The grass shall grow on the blasted hill. The peaceful plough shall turn up the rusted bayonet. The roots of the apple tree shall clutch the broken shard, and the bird shall build in the mouth of the reeking

tube. So shall the heart heave—the
 tears of evening shall be the dew of
 the morning, and the sorrows of to-day
 become the proud and happy memories
 of to-morrow. Are some afraid for the
 immortal spirits of those who fall in
 battle for the right? Is not the core
 of our religion self-sacrifice? If I un-
~~derstand~~ ~~what~~ self-sacrifice is, these
 men show it to the full. If I under-
 stand what it is to deny one's self and
 to take up the bitter cross, then these
 our brethren have done it. If I un-
 derstand the meaning of the Redeemer
 of men when He spoke of that greatest
 love which leads a man to lay down
 his life for his friends, then I hear
 up before him my friends who have
 up before Him my friends who have
 died for you. I have read of a dying
 hero who, in his last moments, seemed
 to hear the sentinel's challenge, 'Who
 goes there?' for he raised himself and
 cried, 'An Englishman who has done
 his duty.' I do heartily believe that
 when he answered the like challenge
 at the gate beyond, the reply would be,
 'Pass, Englishman, who has done his
 duty.' "

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PATRIOTIC SERVICE

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AFTER FOUR YEARS

THE WAR ANNIVERSARY

INTERCESSORY SERVICE IN
WELLINGTON

A united service of intercession, arranged by the Council of Churches, was held in the Wellington Town Hall yesterday afternoon. The hall was filled, and the proceedings were earnest and impressive. The Governor-General (Lord Liverpool) and Lady Liverpool were present, and were accompanied by Mrs. W. F. Massey and the Mayor of Wellington (Mr. J. P. Luke, M.P., C.M.G.) The Rev. Dr. Gibb presided, and was supported on the platform by the Hon. Sir William Fraser (Minister of Public Works), the Hon. D. Guthrie (Minister of Agriculture), and many representatives of the Churches.

Appropriate prayers were said, and lessons were read by members of the Council of Churches. Several hymns were sung, and the gathering stood while the City Organist (Mr. Bernard Page) played the Dead March from "Saul" in commemoration of fallen sons of New Zealand.

An address was delivered by the Rev. J. G. Chapman, who referred first to the Scriptural account of the calling of the people of Judea to prayer by Jehosaphat in the gaze of an almost triumphant enemy. Prayer on that occasion had brought victory, and prayer would bring victory again to the people who could humble themselves before God and repent wholeheartedly of their national and individual sins. His Majesty the King, said Mr. Chapman, had called the nation to prayer on the fourth anniversary of the commencement of the great war. The Germans were engaged in a like exercise. They were praying for victory with equal earnestness and perhaps with equal confidence in the result. Could God grant the petition of one nation without denying the petition of the other? The answer to that question was that He could. The people of the British nation must realise that their God was not a national God. He was the God of Humanity. He was on the side of man, and the question with Him was what amount of chastisement the world needed. God had been gazing deeply into the heart of civilisation, and had presented to the nations in all its hideous nakedness their manner of living—the brutality of their economic system, their orgy of sport and splendour, drunkenness and lust. God had shown the peoples of the world that they could not build their social order on unrighteousness without disaster.

“The behaviour of the people of the world is such that they can only be saved by a great and sudden chastisement.”

It denotes us to-day to humble ourselves before God on account of our national and our individual sins," said Mr. Chapman. "We must learn to recognise and obey the laws of God. It is only with chastened and disciplined souls that we shall be ready for the blessings of a just and permanent peace. . . . We must take to heart the lessons of this war. Unfathomed resources of the soul have been revealed to us. Surpassing strength, courage, and endurance have been revealed in souls torn from their old careless security by the stress of war. Men and women are to-day enduring and sacrificing with almost incredible courage. These qualities belong not to the British, the French, the Germans, or the Americans alone, but to all men. They are divinely human. We owe it to the men who have died and to the generations to come that the suffering and the endurance shall not have been in vain. The fruit must be a better world and a nobler race of men. Already there is a movement in this direction. We see a League of Nations coming into being—a league based upon peace and justice and not upon mere might. The nations are learning that they must organise for peace as they have organised for war, and that international law must displace international jealousy and rivalry. We see the rosy flush of a new dawn.

"We owe it to our boys that this world shall be a better world when the war is done. Thousands of our boys left these shores to face the ordeal of wounds and death. They esteemed honour and humanity more than life. They have sacrificed, dared, and endured to the utmost. Rolls of honour and public monuments, pensions and speeches, are poor recognition of the price that our boys have paid. What honour can we pay our heroes but to live for the greatness of the future as they have suffered and died for it? In no other way can we match the moral grandeur that has purchased national safety for us at such awful cost."

SERMON AT ST. JOSEPH'S

In the course of a sermon delivered by Archbishop O'Shea in St. Joseph's Church yesterday, His Grace said: "To-day is the fourth anniversary of the breaking out of the great war. It is gratifying to find that the Government has acted up to make it a day of prayer

...us here to make it a day of prayer
for God's blessing upon ourselves and our
Allies. Catholics from the very begin-
ning realised the need of prayer for vic-
tory, and every day, week day as well
as Sunday, we have been praying in the
Mass for God's blessing upon our arms.
We are taught to look on all these events
from a supernatural point of view, and
there is no doubt in our minds but that
this war is a punishment on the nations
for having turned aside from God. They
had been relying too much upon their
extraordinary material prosperity and
upon the wonderful results brought about
by the discoveries of science and by the
triumphs of invention over the physical
world. They relied so much upon all
these things that they forgot their own
souls; they forgot God, and believed they
could do without Him. They worshipped
instead the idols of material prosperity
and of material comfort and pleasure.

"But God cannot be ignored with im-
punity. Men had deluded themselves with
the false belief that they were so civil-
ised and so highly cultured that war—a
relie of barbarism—was no longer possi-
ble. And when it came like a thunder-
clap in a clear summer sky the very
knowledge and science and invention they
used to boast about made it the most
frightful war that this old world of ours
has ever witnessed.' And precisely be-
cause man is not the mere animal that
materialistic philosophers wanted us to
believe, all sane men now desire an end
of war—not a temporary peace that would
be followed sooner or later by another
struggle, but the complete destruction of
war as far as is humanly possible. After
four years we have learned many things,
and chief amongst them is this; that
because man is not an animal, and even
in the material things of war, must use
the things of the spirit, therefore war
has become intolerable to him. As an
able writer said recently, 'Because now
all men share in war, all men desire an
end of it.' Another lesson we have learn-
ed is that the issue is in the hands of
the God of Battles, and in His name
alone shall we conquer. And if our coun-
try is to obtain the blessing so essential
to victory, we must not only pray for it;
but we must also thoroughly purify our
own conduct, and, above all, our war
aims, which are so liable to be lost sight
of under schemes of territorial expansion
and commercial gain. We must purify
our national soul, which is still so de-

void of the spirit of prayer and so full of the spirit of greed and lust.

"It seems to me a pity that none of the Governments of the European Allies have as yet given a whole-hearted official approval of the lofty American ideal, which, while so bent on victory, is yet so unselfish and so anxious to secure international justice and the destruction of the causes of war. This ideal, set forth officially by President Wilson, is practically an endorsement of the Pope's suggestions in regard to the necessity of an international law, which shall restrain the whole family of nations as strictly as the individuals in each of them are restrained by their own domestic code. So there is great need for us to pray God to give the Allied nations the grace to keep their war aims pure, and to prevent what was begun as a crusade for right and justice from turning into an instrument of racial rivalry or commercial gain. There is more reason to fear a deterioration of our war aims than many people like to admit.

"Now, to bring about more surely that each nation shall make justice and not selfish interest its chief aim, let us pray also for the destruction of that blind selfishness—that hatred and bitterness, that unfortunately exist even now amongst the different classes and sections, religious, political, and economic, of each country. Have we no faults to reprove ourselves with? Are there no fortunes being unjustly made through the war?

Is there no exploiting of the poor, no profiteering going on? Are we showing due respect to the rights of conscience of everybody in our midst? Is there no cruelty or brutality practised in our military camps? Are we honestly striving to mete out justice to all who are called away from their homes and families to serve their country, or who have already served it? Let us not dwell too much upon the sins and crimes of our enemies, while ignoring our own. Let us rather look into our souls and change what needs changing. Let us as nations and as individuals turn to God and acknowledge our sins and mistakes in the past, and since the war has commenced, and then we can with confidence ask Him to give us victory. And remember that a victory that will establish a reign of peace and justice in the world, according to the ideal set before us by the Pope and President Wilson, and as far as it can be established in this vale of tears, will alone be worth the awful sacrifices in lives and blood that the nations are making. Then may we look forward to an era when no longer will conscription or militarism be tolerated in any of the countries; to an era when the vast sums of money now spent in the upkeep of great armies and navies will be devoted to the spiritual and temporal benefit of the people, and to the promotion of their real happiness and prosperity. May God hasten the day."

AN ANNIVERSARY MESSAGE FROM MR. MASSEY

A cablegram from London states that in compliance with a special request, the Prime Minister of New Zealand (Rt. Hon. Mr. Massey) sent the following message on behalf of New Zealand to the Central Committee of the National Patriotic Organisation for delivery at the London meeting on the anniversary of the war.

"We are now entering upon the fifth year of the war, and as British citizens we are no less determined than we were four years ago to carry on until victory comes to those armies which are fighting for all that the free and honour-loving nations of the earth hold dear.

"We have had many disappointments; but we have also had much to be thankful for, and to-day we

can say confidently that the fighting forces of the Empire, both on land and water and in the air, are stronger than they have been at any time in our history. This also is true of our Allies, especially since our kinsmen of the United States of America came into the war in support of the same sacred cause as that which has brought the bravest of Britain's sons from every quarter of the globe, and for which the best blood of the Empire has been poured out.

"There is now no reason for pessimism, but on the contrary every reason for confidence. With renewed determination the Allies will press forward, facing without hesitation any difficulties or dangers which they may encounter, but never stopping or laying aside the weapons of war until a decisive victory has been won, bringing with it security and peace."

A DAY OF INTERCESSION

In connection with the war an all-day service of intercession will be held in the Taranaki Street Methodist Church on Wednesday. The sessions, which will begin at 10 a.m. and conclude at 9 p.m., have been organised under the auspices of the Wellington Council of Churches. Similar services held in Wellington and in other centres have been widely attended, and marked by the exercise of fitting and earnest devotion. Each hour of the sessions on Wednesday will be occupied by the singing of suitable hymns, prayers for the successful and early termination of the war will be offered up, and brief addresses will be given. Hymn sheets will be provided. The speakers will include the Revs. Dr. J. K. Elliott, W. Phillips, J. Reed-Glasson, W. Shirer, S. Beekingham, E. Drake, A. E. Hunt, and J. G. Chapman, the Hon. C. M. Lake, and Messrs. W. Allan and Kersley. The following organisers will also participate in the service: Mesdames R. A. Evans and Whiteman and Messrs. Temple White, T. Forsyth, W. H. Collic, C. Collins, C. W. Kerry, and Harland.

ANNIVERSARY IN EUROPE

THE NEW YEAR OF HOPE

(Rec. August 4, 5.5 p.m.)

London, August 3.

Sir Douglas Haig has issued an order to the troops as follows:—"The conclusion of the fourth year of the war marks the passing of the period of crisis. We may now look with added confidence to the future. Russia's Revolution set free large hostile forces on the Eastern front which were transferred to the West. It was the enemy's intention to use the great numbers thus created to gain a decisive victory before the arrival of the Americans should give the Allies a superiority. The enemy made an effort to obtain a decision on the Western front, and failed. The steady stream of Americans arriving has already restored the balance. The enemy's first and most powerful blows fell on the British, his superiority in men being three to one. Although pressed back in parts, the British line remained unbroken after many days of heroic fighting, the glory of which will live for all time, and the enemy was held. At the end of four years of war the magnificent fighting qualities of our troops remain of the highest order. I thank them for their devoted bravery and resolution. I know they will show like steadfastness and courage whatever the task they are called upon to perform."—Aus.-N.Z. Cable Assn.-Reuter.

(Rec. August 4, 5.5 p.m.)

Washington, August 3.

Lord Reading, British Ambassador, interviewed, said the beginning of the fifth year finds Britain stern and resolute. The spirit of the people has not been finer nor their confidence higher. The day of liberty is dawning, and a new era of peace will soon open to the world.—Aus.-N.Z. Cable Assn.

(Rec. August 4, 5.5 p.m.)

New York, August 3.

The "New York Times" states editorially:—"Four years of war shows the Germans baffled and defeated, falling back before General Foch's great strategy. The fifth year commences with the Germans on the defensive and the Crown Prince's army trying to extricate itself from a position of great peril."—Aus.-N.Z. Cable Assn.

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AFTER FOUR YEARS

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ANZAC DAY. Memorial Service.

Despite a very wet night there was a good attendance at the Service in the Town Hall on Monday evening to commemorate the landing of "Our Boys" at Anzac on April 25th, 1915.

His Worship the Mayor (Mr Macmillan), presided, and with him on the platform were the Ven. Archdeacon Tuke, the Rev. A. C. Wedderspoon, the Rev. W. Barnett and Captain Medland of the Salvation Army. The Mayor apologised for the absence of the Rev. Mr Laybourn, who has only recently arrived in Tauranga to take charge of the Methodist Church in the district.

A number of Veterans and returned soldiers were present.

The proceeding opened with the National Anthem, followed by a hymn—"Litany for Our Army and Navy" by a choir of some thirty voices, accompanied by the Tauranga Orchestra under the direction of Mr H. Crump.

After Mr Wedderspoon had given the opening prayer the Mayor said the idea of the Government in establishing the day was that the people should have an opportunity of expressing their patriotism. Here we perhaps hardly realised that it might be necessary to have meetings for that purpose, having done so much in providing men. But elsewhere the position was not the same.

The Rev. Mr Barnett read a portion of the Holy Scripture suitable to the occasion.

The Ven. Archdeacon Tuke followed with an address in which he said that he looked upon it as a privilege to take part in the meeting. New Zealand and the Mother Country had been thrilled with the doings of our men at Anzac, and it was fitting that we should meet to commemorate that great day.

Captain Medland also gave a spirited address. The rod of chastisement, she said, was still over our nation, and we had to consider like Joshua of old, what the accursed thing was in our midst for which we had to bear the correcting hand of God. She paid a tribute to the great part women were taking in the war. They were display-

ing everywhere the same spirit of love that prompted our men to face the dangers and horrors of the trenches.

The Rev. Mr Wedderspoon, in the course of his address, said he appreciated very much the decision of the Mayor and Councillors to hold a religious service. Great sacrifices had been made during the war and the call for men had been wonderfully responded to. In three years we had done more than the Germans had done in forty years. That night they met as a united people, thanking God, acknowledging our entire dependence upon him, and praying for victory and peace.

During the evening solos were sung by Mrs Christian and Mr E. Brassey, two further hymns were sung by the choir and the audience, and an anthem by the choir, a very appropriate service concluding with a prayer delivered by the Rev. Mr Barnett.

Arrangements had been made for an address by a representative of the Maori race, but owing to the weather he was, unfortunately, unable to get in.

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ANZAC DAY.

BAY OF PLENTY TIMES, VOLUME XLV, ISSUE 6852, 25 APRIL 1917

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