

ANOTHER STRIKE AT BIG DETENTION CAMP

GEN. SIR WM. OTTER AT PETA-
WAWA TO SOLVE DIFFICUL-
TIES.

All is not running smoothly at the Petawawa detention camp at present. Within the past week two prisoners have made their escape and so far no trace of them has been secured. One of them, it is said, was quite deliberate in the manner of his leave-taking, going around among his friends that day and bidding them farewell, while he left a letter for one of the camp officials containing some advice in regard to the conduct of his department. In the night-time he folded his belongings and silently stole away. A few nights later another one followed him, and it is really a wonder that more have not succeeded in eluding the guards, for the lighting system around that section of the camp is very poor. There have been rumors of collusion among German workmen on the Petawawa road and prisoners who were engaged as laborers on the work at the bridge, but those in a position to know deny these statements.

The prisoners are again on strike, and say that they have this time quit work for good. The trouble this time is said to have arisen as a result of the efforts of the authorities to compel them to work on a religious festival which they desired to observe. They refused to work and were put on bread and water as a disciplinary measure. This had the effect of further aggravating them and they declared they would work no more. All efforts so far made to induce them to resume work have been futile. Last night Gen. Sir William Otter, who is chief commanding officer of the internment camps in Canada, arrived in Pembroke and this morning proceeded to Petawawa to look into the situation at the camp. What steps he will take to solve the difficulty are of course not known, but at this distance it looks as if the prisoners will have their way, as it is claimed there is no law or power by which they can be compelled to work.

The strike complicates the situation with regard to the fill-in at the approach to the Petawawa bridge, a work undertaken by the Provincial Government on the understanding that camp labor would be supplied by the Militia Department at 25c. per day per man. There is still much work to be done, and not sufficient money to carry it through. If the prisoners succeed in their strike the Militia Department will likely be called upon to make good in cash what it fails to supply in labor.

There is complaint also regarding the treatment of the guards at the camp and it is said that there was a strike among them last week over the quality of the food supplied them, while there is much dissatisfaction also over the clothing furnished to them. The morale of the guard in consequence is not what it should be and in the interest of the camp it is hoped there will be some improvement in this respect.