

# HELPING YOU to KEEP POSTED

OH YES, WE HAVE ALL HAD THE EXPERIENCE

**F**OOD prices have jumped, says John Bruce Mitchell, writing on War Hogs, in the December Forum. There's no denying it. It is difficult to quote prices because they vary a few cents here and there, depending somewhat upon locality, but mostly upon the proportion of "hog" that is in the retailer. When the war broke out bacon was 25 cents, now it is around 50 cents. Butter was 30, now it is 55 and 60. Sliced ham was 30, now it is 60 and in some places 80. Sugar was 15 cents for 3-1-2 pounds. To-day the Government hopes retailers will sell 3-1-2 pounds for 33 cents, but from 45 to 63 cents is being charged in many places.

And so the list goes. The biggest increase came during the summer, just as soon as it was learned the Government was going to be the biggest customer of all in order to feed the boys who have gone across to help make this country a safe place for pursuing the calling of a merchant.

"Potatoes wouldn't be so high, Ma'am," said one dealer, "if it wasn't for the car shortage. It's almost impossible to get freight cars."

The woman sighed and bought and went out, and the shopkeeper never cracked a smile, although these particular potatoes were delivered from the farm in a motor truck.

In New York the shopkeeper will let you have brown eggs at from 5 to 8 cents less than the white ones. And he will say, "The white eggs are so much better, you know."

In Boston the shopkeeper will let you have the white eggs at from 5 to 8 cents less than the brown ones. And he will say, "The brown eggs are so much better, you know."

And the New Yorker will say that he knows the white eggs are

best, and the Bostonian will say that he knows the brown eggs are best, and neither of them knows anything about it. They are losing money through their ignorance. There isn't one iota of difference, either as a flavor or nutriment, between the white and brown eggs. It is only a fad and a delusion and the shopkeeper grins and pockets the money, while egg men pick out brown eggs to send up in New England and white ones for the Middle Atlantic states.

Around the first of November eggs that sold at retail for 55 cents cost at wholesale 30. Poultry wholesaled at 16 and sold at 36. The market man could have sold that poultry at 20 cents and made a good profit, counting in overhead expense and all else. About every five fowls he sold would then net him a dollar. But he was a war-hog, and he grabbed 20 cents profit on each fowl, or a dollar out of the poor man's pocket in excess of what the poor man should be called upon to pay for every five-pound fowl. About the same time whole steers were bringing around 18 cents a pound. There is considerable waste. But about the cheapest cut of meat at the retailer's was 26 cents the pound and from that up to 35. It isn't as much waste as you think. Every bit of fat your market man trims off—after he weighs it—he tosses in a special box or barrel and gets a high price for it, and it has already been paid for at the rate of from 26 to 35 cents a pound! The bones he weighs and charges you for, then trims out, he sells. Practically everything that seems to be waste—and that is paid for—he sells, so that striking an average of 30-1-2 cents per pound for meat that he buys for 18 or 19 cents a pound, it is too much profit. Add to this his sales from the waste you pay for, and he is cleaning up—stealing is a good word—about 5 cents a pound from you.

## Is Bernard Shaw Sincere?

**B**ECAUSE he thinks brilliantly we are almost convinced that he is, says a writer in The Theatre. Until we feel the sting of his idea ourselves, and then we are in pardonable doubt about him. The healthiest actors have found cause to question his sincerity because he is a vegetarian. Mrs. Patrick Campbell was the first to point this fact out. He had been unusually irritable at a rehearsal of "Pygmalion" in London, which was practically written for her. The crisis came to a very difficult situation when Mrs. Campbell walked to the footlights and said:

"You may be right, Mr. Shaw, but if anyone gives you meat, God help the women of England!"

Hilda Spong, who has appeared in many of the Shaw plays, remembers him with gratitude for many successful seasons in his plays.

"Shaw's workmanship is sincere," she says, "because he never forgets himself in it. His philosophy stands the test of research in truth. As a teacher, a preacher, he is far too sincere. It is in these degrees of his genius that he reveals his amazing understanding of human nature, that he presents himself as one of the most puzzling anomalies of the world of letters. He drives his lesson home in a spirit of cynicism—never with a lump in the throat. He shows the skeleton in the closet, makes his audience gasp in recognition of the human hideousness of their friends or their own households."

but during all that time I've never felt a Shawian audience thrill with feeling, I have never sensed that any heart in the audience has been touched, never felt that the sinner out in front has acquired an emotional determination to be better for anything Shaw has said to them from the stage."

Of the author of "Getting Married" William Faversham has this to say:—"Shaw means everything he says, I recall that he once wrote me on this point: 'There is absolutely nothing subtle in my plays. Unless I know exactly what I mean I don't say it; and when I do know, I give it straight in the face.'"

As to the sincerity of his writings, says George C. Tyler, speaking of G. B. S. from the point of view of the producer. I think that



The Man Who Slew His God.

—Norman Lindsay, in Sydney Bulletin.

whenever he scores a point for genuine social reform, for the relief of distress and for the abolition of the curse of poverty he is superlatively sincere. Many of the other ideas that he gives expression to, many of the surprisingly novel sidelights on all sorts of things that he puts into his plays are, I am certain, not intended to be taken seriously by intelligent people. The English are the most ultra-conservative people in the world and Shaw takes a positively devilish delight in shocking them, just for the fun of the thing. He likes to jar them out

of their complacent attitude toward life and the rest of the world and so long as he accomplishes that he doesn't mind whether people are going to consider him sincere or not.

## Our Climate is After All---a Tonic

**I**F there is anything in climatology, the old-fashioned winter must have been unhealthy, says an editorial writer in Munsey's. For the climatologists tell us that the vigor and energy of the races of the temperate zones is due to the sudden and sharp changes of weather and temperature to which they are subjected. One winter day is warm, the next is twenty degrees colder; the sun shines gloriously for a few hours until driven to cover by clouds which heap the earth with drifted whiteness. Now all these incalculable fluctuations, says science, are just what we need. They set us to reacting, and one reaction follows another—or sometimes a cold in the head follows a cold on the chest, a drawback that the scientists overlook. We need just such rapid oscillations of the mercury in the bulb, just such tingles and thaws, to keep brain and nerves keen, the investigators declare. We also need two overcoats, a mackintosh, galoshes, suits of clothes of different weights, and penitential underwear, to survive the ordeal.

These are the winters all are used to; but who ever heard of an old-fashioned winter like them? The old-fashioned winter was of one of two types; either it grew bitter cold and stayed that way for weeks and months on end, or so much snow fell that there was sleighing on Memorial Day. That is why we know the old-fashioned winter to have been utterly injurious to health. There were none of those capricious changes which have made the races of the temperate zones so hardy that they are moving to the dry zones as rapidly as possible.

When we think of an old-fashioned winter, do we think of the biting cold or of the wide-mouthed fireplace? Isn't it possible that the measurement taken was not of the depth of the snow, but of the circumference of a first-rate mince pie? The things that gave joy were the glass of cider and the delectable yarns spun in comfortable leisure; and the storm raging