

THE WEEKLY ONTARIO.

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 24, 1914.

GERMAN NEWSPAPER OPINION

Although most of the newspaper comments in Germany respecting the situation in Great Britain and the Allied countries are a mere travesty of the truth, and intended to hoodwink the masses of the people into believing that a German victory is probable, yet nevertheless a reasonably sane expression of opinion appears in one or two journals. The following, which appeared in a German newspaper, is an extract from an article called "Wrong Roads," and written by a German writer named Kohler. He makes the following interesting comments:

We assuredly must reckon with the reaction which will follow on the hard blows suffered by such a capable and determined nation as the British. Only dreamers think of an England "lying on the ground." If the further development of the war really brings England to the decision "thus far and no farther," she will devote her whole strength to reconstruction, and she will not shrink from strong measures, showing the energy and toughness of which she has given an example in her indisputably complete success of her system of conscription.

If we are just, we cannot hide the fact that we seriously underestimated England. If we really thought at the beginning of the war in August, 1914, that we should have finished the war by Christmas, such a view depended absolutely on the assumption that England would appear in the Continental theater of the war only with a tiny army. It was generally thought that such an army could be estimated at about 60,000 men. People wiped out of their memories the great experience of war which England had acquired in her numerous colonial wars, and they made the mistake of leaving history out of account. The general public cannot, of course, know to what extent our authorities were clear about English armaments and the transport problem, but it was only gradually that we arrived at the certainty that we were in any case opposed by an enemy who, militarily, was extremely capable.

It is extremely interesting to contrast the above, with an absurd travesty, which editorially appears in the Volkszeitung, published in the great city of Cologne, Germany. It tells of the alleged deplorable condition existing in Great Britain, where her harbors are actually described as deserted and her ports closed from Newcastle to Plymouth, and starvation ravaging the land. As the extravagance of the statement shows upon what an absurd basis German hopes are placed, it is interesting to reproduce the same so that British and Canadian readers may, in the article's very extravagance, draw the inspiration of a well-founded belief that things are going well in Great Britain because the reality is so radically different from that described by the German sheet quoted.

British mercantile shipping is rapidly nearing the end of its existence. Port after port is being closed under the overmastering terror of German mines and U-boats, and the fishermen who in the terrible scarcity of wheat and other ingredients might always as a last resource be expected to supply Albion with food, no longer dare pass beyond a mile of the more or less secure home harbors.

In the meantime, in Newcastle, England's most famous shipyard, desolation prevails because no foreign nation now orders its ships to be built in a port considered by "mighty" Britain so unsafe in view of the German mine activities as to need closing along with all the other shipping centres from Scotland down to Plymouth.

More English ports will be closed and more English ships will be sunk with an unwavering hand of iron we are cutting. The English vital nerve, and the spectre of famine which is knocking with ruthless bony fingers on the English door makes it more evident still that the end of the English shipping industry has approached, and that Germany's day is dawning on the waters as it is on the land.

THURLOW TO THE FORE.

Some time ago The Ontario published an editorial commenting upon the action of a public meeting in the township of Huntingdon, recommending the council of the municipality to levy a tax of two mills for patriotic purposes. That action the township council will in all probability take.

We are now pleased to learn that the council of the township of Thurlow has gone Huntingdon one better in the competition of good works. At the last meeting of the Thurlow council it was decided to impose a tax of THREE MILLS for patriotic purposes.

In taking this highly commendable action we believe Thurlow leads all rural municipali-

ties in Ontario.

We should couple with this announcement the fact that the people of Thurlow have stood at the very forefront all along in Red Cross endeavor. Some of the reports we have published from time to time give a slight but inadequate conception of the patriotic efforts of the Thurlow ladies along Red Cross lines.

We now trust the other municipalities in the district will try to reach or surpass the Thurlow standard.

In the meantime we take off our hats to Thurlow.

AN OMISSION

There is one most important amendment that has so far been omitted by the government in its Wartime Franchise Bill. The amendment we would suggest is to confer upon all deputy returning officers the power to reject all ballots not marked in favor of government candidates. An otherwise complete and admirable measure is marred by this oversight.

SPIRIT ADVICE

Wonderful things come from the spiritual world. Over in Hamilton a man dismissed his housekeeper on the advice of spirits whom he consulted. Let us hope that the spirits in this instance gave more reliable counsel than "the weird sisters" who put King Macbeth wrong. Spirits are apt to be too cryptic, even when literally right. If we may believe all the old nursery tales, interpreting their advice is as hard as riddling the law or reading the weather signs.

A preacher recently amused us with a declaration that it needed a first-class medium to put us in proper touch with the sober realities of life. What revelations we could obtain, and we could use them to such good purpose. All our troubles and trials we would take to the spirits. A medium might be installed in the Houses of Parliament for handy reference. Real promise would be quickly separated from deception. Everyone could learn whom to vote for and whether cold storage robs or blesses us. Graft could not go on existing and flourishing like a green bay tree.

The war would be rapidly conducted to a triumphant conclusion, provided the Germans did not out-spirit us. Perhaps the contest would soon be no longer between man and man, machine and machine, but like the old battles in Homer, between partisan gods on both sides, the more up-to-date spirit equipment winning the day. In Africa, whichever side has the stronger "ju-ju" wins the stricken field. So when spirit is embattled against spirit, it will be a victory for the stronger control. How civilization, as it grows more and more refined, tends to meet the opposite extreme of barbarism! It is a crowning paradox of life.

But in this dream of spiritual achievement let us humbly bear in mind that the spirit oracles have to be riddled. Have we yet the intellect to fathom the simple-seeming mysteries? It is a risky business, like airplaneing in its first beginnings. A fall may be disastrous. But the bold man in Hamilton who took the serious step of dismissing a housekeeper on spirit advice, as he understood it, and is now being sued for \$5,000 damages, may comfort himself with the reflection that "tis better to have flown and fallen than never to have flown at all. The excitement alone of trafficking with real spirits is as bracing as any game we know of.

WILL SAVE FOOD

Everything the food controller's office is able to do to bring about a smaller wastage of food is to be commended. The waste of the present time is tremendous. A few ounces saved each week by a Canadian family will have a stimulating effect upon the efforts of those who are devoted to seeing the allies win in the battle of food supplies. The conservation of food by means of saving is the wisest kind of conservation. It will be interesting and instructive to peruse the war menus provided by the office of the food controllers. Housewives will find much valuable economy in these recipes, although many will at once agree that the present bill-of-fare at the family table is no more extravagant than that sent out by the food controller.

USEFULNESS OVER.

Why should the present Ontario license commission be maintained? To give a few favored politicians positions? The liquor situation is well in hand. The provincial secretary's department is quite capable of handling the machinery necessary to enforcement of the act. The standard hotels will not present a serious problem at any time. Under the new system every policeman and every county constable is an agent to enforce the act. And the act is being enforced.

The province pays a large sum of money for the present commission, and the commission's heaviest work appears to be the giving out of an occasional newspaper interview. The use-

fulness of Messrs. Flavelle, Dingman, et al. would appear to be at an end. There are plenty of senatorships vacant, too.

N.B.—The money devoted to this commission might now be applied to the creation of a municipal department at Toronto. It is sorely needed.

WARTIME PROFITS

It has not been the policy of the Wm. Davies Company to avoid making money out of the war and the nation's agony. This must be admitted as the mildest possible way of stating the case.

The net profits in 1914, the year the war started, reached \$337,350; for 1915 they amounted to \$1,535,472; and for 1917, \$1,379,904, the last quoted figures presumably referring to the portion of the year which has elapsed. The only deduction from these totals is the war tax. In addition to this, as G. F. Henderson, K. C., chairman of the commission, pointed out, the deposit to reserve funds increased by about 800 per cent.

This may all have been legitimate profit, so far as the inquiry has shown as yet, but it certainly does not tend to show that any effort was made to reduce the high cost of living by taking smaller profits, because of the huge bulk of business.

It has not been explained by the premier whether it was because of his control of this firm that Sir Joseph Flavelle was knighted. If it was it cannot be merit which brings the reward.

Austro-Hungarians insult Prussian officers. Is it possible?

Argentina has had trouble with Germany and strikes break out. It is not hard to trace the connection.

In these times of common valor in the trenches, a Victorian Cross speaks of transcendent sacrifice.

Kerensky seems to have reached the conclusion that half measures are sometimes best. His experiments will be watched with deep interest.

The labor delegate who considered it a waste of time to listen to Hon. W. T. Crothers may not have been polite, but he showed judgment.

Manufacturers are asked to notify the authorities if their employees fail to report for compulsory service. Is that a fair position in which to put the former?

It is fitting that Leader N. W. Rowell should send forth a message on the anniversary of the closing of the bars. It was primarily his effort that stopped the sale.

Canada's fuel controller enjoys a salary of \$25,000 a year from various sources. The man who is wondering where he can locate a ton of coal will be pleased to know this, as the controller will not have to worry much about his own supply of coal, whatever price it may be.

It is plain from Laurburg's message that Germany does pursue a definite policy of sinking not only merchant ships but the men with

them. This is not the work of isolated captains. Laurburg would not say to his Government, "I advise the sinking without trace," if such a procedure were not part of a usual policy.

It is not to be expected that amateur sock-knitters in the States will become adepts in the art all at once. Canadian ladies spoiled much good yarn before they became proficient in turning out socks that a soldier could wear. It is not surprising therefore to learn that one of Uncle Sam's soldier boys wrote home that he had just received a pair of donated socks, and was using one of them for a mitt and the other for a hammock. There have been some notes of that character, received by Canadian knitters, although the compliments frequently received show that Canadian women have done well in this art.

THE FARM WHERE FATHER WAS A BOY.

When father lived here on the farm—
Oh, it was long ago!
Could he have had the fun I have,
And known the things I know?

Why I have seen a fox to-day,
Out on the pasture hill,
And caught three minnows in the brook,
That flows below the mill.

And I know where wild cherries grow,
And where the wood grapes are,
And where the fern root is more sweet
Than sugar is, by far.

And then I caught a firefly once,
And found what makes the light;
And once I hear an owl "Who! Who!"
Beside the road at night.

I almost caught a turtle, too,
Down by the lily pond;
And, anyway, I saw a hawk
Fly from the woods beyond.

When father lived here on the farm,
So very long ago,
I wonder if he had such fun
And knew the things I know.

In haying time I helped a lot!
I helped to rake the hay,
And high among the rafters climbed
To tread the load away.

Then once we thought a cow was lost,
But Scotty found her track,
And how he ran! but it was dark
Before he brought her back.

And once—it frightened me a bit—
I found a cave one day.
I'm sure that pirates lived in it,
Or redskins hid away!

Oh, every day brings something new
For Scotty and for me—
A thousand wondrous things to do,
A thousand things to see!

Still, father only smiles and says
That very long ago
He had the selfsame fun I have
And knew the things I know.

Opinions From Our Contemporaries

CONTROLLING APPETITES.
HIGH PRICES

Now that the food substitution campaign has got fairly under way, and people have pledged themselves not to eat meat or bacon on Tuesdays or Fridays, and to refrain from eating wheat products to the extent of a reduction of one-fourth of their usual consumption, eating instead some of the other grains, oats, barley, rye, rice, or whatever appeals to them as a palatable substitute, it will not be out of place to ask once more when the sky rocket tendency of prices for ordinary necessities of diet is to be curbed. We are unable to deliver the goods. It has been demonstrated to us, in spite of all the laws of supply and demand, that prices can be fixed, over, but a government carrying out a policy of rationing has no business to take upon itself to fix prices. Everything has to be prepared for a time when the war will be ended, and when we will be able to carry on our own business, as the United States is doing, for three years more of it. We have already expressed our view that the regulation of prices should place in Russia and weaken us. We have been taken up long ago, two such an extent that prolonged fight-interlocking effects of one commod-

ing will result. The general sense of this is that if prices had been fixed two years ago, when they were quite high enough, there would today be no such extraordinary inflation as we have to contend with. Two years from today it would be very unpleasant to have to remind the food controller that had he fixed the prices in September of 1917, it would not be necessary to suppress a revolution on account of the famine prices prevailing and the profiteering rampant in September, 1919.

We are informed that the fixing of prices is controlled by the big partners in the alliance. What Great Britain and the United States agree upon will have to be satisfactory to Canada. This is not altogether true. Canada has a highly important contribution to make to the food supply of the nations, and she has a right to consider her own people in connection with that, as well as, and also because of her obligations to supply her allies. We cannot be efficient abroad unless we are properly nourished at home. High prices are having their effect upon the food standards of the people, and unless steps are taken to assure the people of abundant food, which largely depends upon reasonable prices, it will not be possible to carry on the work of the country, or the development of the population on the scale required to keep Canada as an efficient factor in the fighting line.

We are keeping in mind everything that has been said about the interlocking effects of one commod-

ity upon others, and also of the effect of fixed prices in driving commodities to other markets, but all that can be controlled, and at the prices which are being paid by the allies for supplies it ought to be possible for the profiteers to gather something and enough out of foreign contracts to make up for any possible loss on home trade.

We are of the opinion that the whole phenomenon of rising prices is an artificial matter brought about by the food-storing and food-distributing corporations.

Their middlemen profits, that is to say the profits which go as dividends to middlemen shareholders who are only dummy shareholders but who draw enormous wages for doing nothing in buying and storing and distributing food to the public, nevertheless, these profits are added to the legitimate profits which the corporations might expect to make on the actual cost of their investments and their operations.

When a workman practices the "cat's paw" policy, and does less than he is paid or expected to do, there is a tremendous outcry, but the corporations, which "cat's paw" and render less service than they are paid to render, are equally culpable and equally deserving of censure. They follow the old outlaw rule, that "they should take what they have the power, and those should keep who can," but an end comes to all such policies when the people, long-suffering and patient for a season, rise and abolish it.

Cold storage was hailed as a blessing at first, and we were told that the cheap rates of summer would be continued during the winter. The corporations have reversed all this and made certain that the high prices of winter would be maintained all summer. How do they do it? Here is an instance. A corporation goes into an orchard and buys the crop from the owner at so much a tree. When the apples are ripe the pickers and the packers come along and gather all the first-class fruit. The rest is left on the trees or on the ground. The owner wants to know if he can sell this second quality. The corporation says "No," those apples belong to it. No one must get them. They can be and rot. They must not come in competition with the high-priced first-class apples. The public are informed that it is a bad season for apples, and it pays more for apples than it does for oranges.

Another instance: The corporation takes the cream from the milk they buy, (and they do not buy all the farmer can give them every day either), and as there is an immense amount of skim milk, which is a highly nutritious food of great value to children and others, they dispose of that, so as to keep it out of competition with the cream and the high-priced milk, by pouring it into the sewers. It would cost too much to distribute it, is the usual plea. Some farmers get part of it to feed calves and pigs. Less cream and more milk would reduce the price of this commodity if public service and not profiteering were the end in view.

Things like these make the business of food controlling and price controlling one in which the people take a vital interest. Had the corporations been satisfied with a reasonable profit which the solid security of a staple business should have made them content to receive, there would have been no complaining. But if the corporations are determined to rack the public with such prices as the war situation has stimulated them to charge, then the public must insist upon the food controller interfering, even if it be necessary to place the cold storage and other plants under public management. Had Germany displayed such inefficient methods in her domestic economy as are to be found in Canada, the war would have been over two years ago. We are prolonging it by our ineptitude. Toronto to World (Csu.)

SEVERE ELECTRIC STORM

Hail Fell in Sections of This City Yesterday Afternoon

The storm which deluged Belleville district yesterday afternoon, was the most severe of the season. The streets in many cases were under water and in the business sections dollars were invaded by water which came in at the gratings in the walks. The weak spots in roofs were located by the watery element.

No fires were started in Belleville as a result of the electric storm, although barns in the district suffered. During the storm a regular cyclone sprang up which obscured the view. Leaves were flying in all directions. In some parts of the city large hailstones fell. Trees and branches and fences were blown down in West Belleville.

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