

lust and his teeth clicked together sharply in the stillness. Without hesitation he slipped into the water and swam eel-like out to the dark mound.

The big muskrat, having finished his nocturnal meal, had dropped down on all fours and was sniffing about among the matted rushes for any little morsels that he might have dropped, when something, perhaps the faint sound of rippling water, perhaps a mere subconscious sense of danger, warned him of the approaching doom. Whatever it was, he half-turned to glide into the water. But he was too late. The mink, clambering up onto the mound, darted upon him with the malignant swiftness of a lightning stroke. In his haste, however, the little savage missed securing his fatal throat-hold. Instead, his teeth met in the loose skin and solid muscles on the side and at the base of the muskrat's neck. The impetuosity of his attack rolled the heavier animal over on his back, where he lay kicking helplessly, at a hopeless disadvantage.

Another instant and the mink would have shifted his hold to the soft throat of his victim and drunk deep of his life's blood. But such a consummation was not to be. The fate that shapes the destinies of the wild kindreds is a whimsical fate, and now it intervened to save the muskrat's life and at the same time abruptly terminate the bloody career of the mink at the very moment of his triumph.

Above them a swift, unheralded shadow suddenly appeared, shutting off the light of the moon; two round, yellow eyes glared down upon them with a savage intensity. The big, horned owl, winnowing back toward the lake, had noted the muskrat on the top of the mound and had seen the mink as he slipped up and attacked his quarry. With a quick flirt of his great wings he swept down upon the struggling, little animals, and for the breathless fraction of a second, hung poised above them.

Well the mink knew the meaning of that sudden, ominous shade. His fierce, little heart turned to water and he flattened out against the body of the muskrat, striving to efface himself. But he was doomed. The big owl wanted a meal; of small concern was it to him whether of mink or muskrat; and the mink being uppermost was the chosen victim. There was a sudden pounce, a shrill, agonized squeak, a heavy beating of soft-feathered wings, and then the great marauder of the night went flapping noiselessly off across the misty lake with the snaky body of the mink trailing limply from his talons.

Alone on the top of the mound, the muskrat crouched for a moment, trembling, dazed by the suddenness of his deliverance. Then, as he realized that his enemy was gone and that he was free, he slipped quickly into the water and dived below its dark surface to the hidden entrance to his tunnel.

Once more the lake lay quiet under the fading moon. The air was grown faintly chill with the near approach of dawn; the hum of insect life had long since ceased and the world lay white and empty, unutterably lonely, unutterably still. Across the silvered spaces, wild and weird, and thrilling with the mystery of the night, came the far-away, mocking laughter of the loon.

Native-Born in U. S. Navy

A CORRESPONDENT writes to the editor of the *Courier* to ask if the enlistment in the United States Navy is confined to native-born Americans, and gives as his impression that this is not the case. The following answer has been forwarded to him:

In an article in the *CANADIAN COURIER* of Feb. 8th, 1913, entitled, "A Navy Slander Nailed," Mr. Waldron Fawcett, our New York correspondent, admits that there was a time when

"the enlisted strength of the United States Navy was made up largely of foreign-born sailors—professional seamen who possessed many of the shortcomings which are to be observed in their kind in the merchant marine. However, this state of affairs has long since passed, and to-day, on the contrary, more than 95 per cent. of the total enlisted force of the Yankee Navy is made up of citizens of the United States."

This paragraph would seem to bear out your contention, but there is another sentence which contradicts it. It runs as follows:

"Coincident with the increase in the proportion of Americans in the U. S. Navy—89 per cent. of the total are native-born Americans and only 7 per cent. are naturalized citizens—has come a rise in the standard of character."

This remark indicates that while the enlistment is not actually confined to native-born Americans, these are given the preference. He says farther on in his article:

"Of the comparatively limited number of foreign-

born lads who were allowed to enlist, nearly 700 came from England and Ireland, and almost as many more from Germany."

We interpret this to mean about 1,400 of the 17,743 enlisted during 1912 were foreign-born. The New York *World Almanac* for 1913 gives the following synopsis of the regulations for United States Naval Enlistment:

"The term of enlistment in the Navy is four years, except for boys under eighteen, who enlist for minority, with the consent of parents or guardian. Only American citizens of good character who may reasonably be expected to remain in the service are enlisted, and every applicant must pass the required physical examination, be able to read and write English and take the oath of allegiance. No boy under seventeen can be enlisted except by special permission from the Department."

Toronto's Municipal Survey

BY an almost unanimous vote the Toronto City Council, on Sept. 29th, decided to accept the offer of a Citizens' Committee to defray the expenses of a "Civic Survey" to be made by the experts of the New York Bureau of Municipal Research. This survey will be the first of its kind to be made in Canada, although nearly thirty United States cities have already indulged in the luxury.

A "civic survey" is merely an attempt to substitute knowledge for indignation in the minds of critics of any municipality. It is a written document prepared by a number of accountants and municipal experts after a detailed examination of the departments of the particular municipality which is to be surveyed or examined. When the document is ready it is printed and circulated among the members of the City Council, the senior and junior officers of the civic departments, the newspapers, and the various associations which are concerned with municipal reforms, civic development and the interests of the ratepayers.

The citizens' committee in Toronto, which has undertaken to provide the city with a survey, consists of about one hundred individuals and firms, each of whom has contributed from \$25 to \$200 towards the expense of the proposed detailed examination. The total cost of the survey will be in the neighbourhood of seven thousand dollars. It will require two months to make the examination, one month to write the report, and one month to print, bind and distribute the volume. Therefore, Toronto's Civic Survey will be given to the public about February first.

A Municipal Survey, as the term is used in America, is intended to fulfil two purposes. It informs the heads of departments and other officials how their work compares in efficiency with that done in other cities. In this respect it is much like the list of batting averages in the world of baseball and the bowling and batting records in the world of cricket. Secondly, it informs the citizens of the inner workings of the municipal system, increases their interest and gives them a guarantee of its efficiency. Either of these purposes would be sufficient to justify a survey in any city in the Dominion of Canada.

PUBLIC OPINION

A Reply to Mr. Belford

Editor, Canadian Courier:

Sir,—In your issue of Sept. 20th I noticed an article by James B. Belford, in which he gives expression to his views concerning the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and the way it should be delivered from the pulpit.

His reasoning with regard to the difference between the Creed and the Gospel is sound, and he has given expression to some profound truths in stating what he believes the pulpit should proclaim. I heartily agree with Mr. Belford thus far, but there are some things in the latter part of his article which I think should not remain unchallenged. With regard to the Lord's Day Alliance, they are doing a noble work for the cause of righteousness in this country. The secularizing of the Holy Sabbath Day is one of the most potent factors in leading our young people to hold light and indifferent views with regard to sacred things. Preaching on the work of the Lord's Day Alliance is preaching in the cause of righteousness, and is helping to extend Christ's kingdom here on earth. And in what better way can the secular arm be employed than enforcing a religious idea, seeing that "righteousness exalteth a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people"?

With regard to the temperance question, Mr. Belford states that it is only a pious opinion. It certainly is a pious opinion, and it is a great deal more,

and a minister of the Gospel is entirely within his right in preaching on temperance on the Sabbath Day, when we consider that the traffic in intoxicating drink is the greatest enemy with which the church has to contend.

When Christ was asked which was the first and great commandment, He said, "Thou shalt love the Lord with all thy heart and with all thy soul, with all thy mind and with all thy strength, and the second is like unto it, thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." I hold that it is the duty of every man where he sees a wrong to do what he can to right that wrong, in the pulpit or out of it, on the Sabbath Day or any other day, and any man who is doing anything to take the stumbling block of intemperance out of his brother's way is loving his neighbour as himself. Our preachers should take the leading part in social reforms, and it is not secularizing Sunday to preach on these questions on that day.

Yours truly,

ONTARIO SUBSCRIBER.

October 6th.

Religion in Schools

Editor Canadian Courier:

Dear Sirs,—As a rule your editorials are characterized by accuracy as to facts and liberality of view in dealing with matters of current interest. In your last issue, however, you lay yourselves open to a charge of very gross inaccuracy in your editorial entitled "Religion in Schools."

The Anglican Church in Canada is not seeking the same privileges as the Roman Catholic Church enjoys, nor, unless the proceedings of the last Provincial Synod were very badly reported, could anyone get such an idea from what transpired there. All that the Anglican Church insists upon is that this is a Christian country and that there should be in the secular schools of the country some definite religious teaching. These are premises with which only a small minority of the population will quarrel. To secure the end desired it is proposed that representatives of the Anglican Church should confer with representatives of other Christian bodies with a view of reaching an agreement on a course of religious instruction which would be satisfactory to all the conferees. Representations would then be made to the Department of Education to secure the teaching of this course or rather the use of it in the schools of Ontario.

This is a very different matter from the one with which you dealt in your editorial.

Yours truly,

GEORGE A. STILES.

Cornwall, Oct. 6th.

A Remarkable Motor-Boat Ditch

Trenton, Sept. 10, 1913.

Editor Canadian Courier:

Sir,—In your issue of Sept. 6th you refer to the Trent Valley Canal as a motor boat ditch. If you are right, then Trenton can claim to be the terminus of the most wonderful ditch in the world. Its draught is equal in depth to that of the original Erie canal, both started about the same time. The latter has but recently been deepened, but has been a great factor in the regulation of railway freight rates. I agree with you that the Trent Valley canal, to fill its proper function as a national waterway, should have a greater depth on the sills than eight feet, the depth canals were dug at the time of its inception. But what Government dare propose making this a truly national highway? Nevertheless this "ditch" can handle 800 ton vessels, and there are few motor boats of that tonnage. But if it answered no better purpose, why not a motor boat waterway as well as a motor car highway?

Were there not a boat or barge using the Trent Valley canal, or as it is more correctly termed, the Trent Valley waterways, the money the Government has spent upon this project has well been worth while. Besides, scores of private-owned hydro-electric plants and numerous individual municipal electric plants, there is one company alone developing 57,000 horse-power and selling that quantity to nearly a score of towns in the Midland district of Ontario, from Pickering on the west to Belleville on the east, and all through the mining regions of Haliburton, Hastings, Frontenac and Peterboro. All this power is developed at the dams of the canal, and the possible quantity this company can develop is 125,000 horse-power. Bear in mind, that the Ontario Hydro-Electric Commission are not yet selling 40,000 horse-power.

This hydro-electric energy generated on the great system of lakes and rivers has been the means of building up flourishing industrial centres in eastern Ontario, centres that will outstrip the towns of western Ontario for the reason that the sale of electric power is under the supervision of the Dominion as well as the Ontario Government, and the rate is away beneath that of the Hydro-Electric Commission.

Trenton at least takes pride in her "ditch," and I believe all the other towns along the "ditch" are as equally proud.

Yours truly,

D. C. NIXON, Industrial Commissioner.