

Public Opinion

REVENGE OF THE SPUD.

(Southern Lumberman).

A recent press dispatch from Denver is to the effect that potatoes rival oranges and apples in price in that city's markets. This reminds us that it was in Colorado that potatoes were first given the contemptuous nickname of "spuds." And now a judgment has come upon the people!

WORTH THE COST PRICE.

(Boston News Bureau).

It is not often that Wall Street misses the most important news of the world, but where is the quotation in which can be reflected the greatest movement for the world's peace that could possibly take place? There is actually under consideration at Rome a proposal for an understanding between the English, the Russian and the Roman Catholic Church. Indeed, the proposal goes so far as to invite an inquiry into the continuity of the ordinations in the Anglican Church from the original church of Rome.

Every student of history grappling with the peace problem has found the causes of war to have their base in nationality and religion. The modern proposal is to measurably obliterate nationality by a league of nations. Nobody had dreamed of the possibility of the great churches of the world recognizing their fundamental fellowship.

If from this war could come a fundamental recognition of the brotherhood of man through every religious faith in the world and the inauguration of a higher nationalism embracing all the nations of the globe maintaining the peace and promoting the trade relations of the world, and the interchange of man's products, even this greatest of world wars would in its cost and sacrifice fade away in comparison with two such results.

THE FADING AWAY OF TURKEY.

(Southern Lumberman).

As everybody knows, the Turks, in the fourteenth century swarmed over from Asia and took possession of a large portion of Europe; but perhaps not every one realizes the rapid decrease of Turkish power which has taken place in comparatively recent years.

From an historical standpoint a century is but a short period. It has been less than a century since Turkey controlled all the territory lately held by all the Balkan states — Serbia, Montenegro, Roumania, Greece, Bosnia, Bulgaria and Albania. In addition to this territory, Turkey had great possessions in Asia and also held dominion over Egypt and nearly all of northern Africa, including Tripoli. At that time Turkey was a power in Europe. She had a navy, too. The Turkish navy was shattered at the battle of Navarino, in 1827, by the united fleets of England, France and Russia. The Balkan states fought Turkey, off and on, for 500 years. Greece was finally severed from Turkish rule in 1832; Roumania in 1861; Serbia in 1867; Montenegro in 1878; Bulgaria in 1879; Bosnia in 1908; Albania in 1913. In 1913 also Turkey lost Macedonia. In 1912 Italy took Tripoli. Britain established her sway in Egypt in 1885.

No other nation ever had so much happen to it in one century! And now the same powers which once crushed Turkish power on the water are seeking to complete the destruction of Turkish power on land; they are striving to push the empire over the line into Asia.

During the past century a great deal was written and printed about the wickedness and depravity of the Turk. Frightful stories of Turkish atrocities appeared from time to time in newspapers and magazines. Doubtless some of these tales were true, but it is just as well for the earnest student of history, or of current events, to ask — when reading awful accounts of depravity — "Does this frightful creature own large areas of rich territory?" Human nature is human nature. And covetousness is not confined to individuals but afflicts nations as well. A hundred years ago the Turk held much of the richest territory on three continents. And to this day, he sits at the entrance to the greatest waterway in the world. It is generally understood that in case of an Allied victory, Constantinople — commanding the Dardanelles — will be given to Russia.

A REVOLUTION IN AGRICULTURE.

(Southern Lumberman).

The war in Europe is bringing about great changes in American agriculture. For one thing, sugar-beet growing has been boomed by the shutting out of beet sugar from Europe. Textile mills can no longer get flax from Russia and, as a consequence, the mills have brought about flax-growing in Oregon. Medicinal plants are in great demand and the people of our country are growing some of these, while others — such as peppermint and foxglove — are gathered wild.

"TENACIOUS" HAIG.

(Christian Science Monitor).

A story about the family of Haig, Washington Irving, and Sir Walter Scott, is told apropos of the British commander-in-chief and the latest ally. When Washington Irving visited Scott, at Abbotsford, in August, 1816, he was shown, near Dryburgh Abbey, the tower of Bemerside, the baronial hall of the de Hagas, the Haigs, one of the oldest of the Border families. Scott took the opportunity of reciting the couplet of Thomas the Rhymer:

"Betide, betide, whate'er betide,
Haig shall be Haig of Bemerside."

Irving states that Scott fully believed the prophecy, and gave him evidence to prove that "through all the feuds and forays, and sackings and burnings, which had reduced most of the castles to ruins, and the proud families that once possessed them to poverty, the tower of Bemerside had remained unscathed, and was still the stronghold of the ancient family of Haig." "Tenacious" is one of the adjectives describing the de Hagas, which their descendant in Flanders today is fully justifying.

EXALTED FALSEHOOD AND PROFANITY.

(New York Journal of Commerce).

Lying and profanity are bad habits in a great nation as well as in a small man. In the peace resolution adopted by the German Reichstag a familiar statement is repeated that "Germany took up arms in defense of its liberty and independence and for the integrity of its territories." The rest of the world at least knows that this is not true. The rulers of the German Empire must know that it is false because it is in direct contradiction of their purposes as distinctly avowed in the early stages of the war. It is contradicted by the policy openly advocated for years by political and military leaders and prepared for by the Government. The falsehood that Germany was driven into the war for self-defence is a falsehood so stale that it is getting to be sickening. No doubt a large part of the people believe it, but it is to be hoped that they will learn better one of these days.

If taking the name of the Deity "in vain" constitutes what we call profanity, there has been a good deal of that evil practice among those rulers of Germany in connection with pretty serious matters. Even the Kaiser is not altogether free from the habit. In fact, he has been rather addicted to setting a bad example. The worst form of profanity is using the sacred name in the asseveration of falsehood. Declaring trust in the Deity for support in a bad cause has a suspicious aspect of taking the name in vain in a most unseemly fashion. Among the rather bold statements of the new Chancellor of the empire in the Reichstag that have been allowed to get abroad, is one in which he says "Trusting in God and German might" he ventured to shoulder a great weight "in a most grave time." Suppose that support should fall him, where would the blame be put? At least he would have taken that name in vain, which is a wicked thing to do, though there may be worse.

Chancellor Michaelis's address, as reported by way of Copenhagen, is made up largely of misrepresentation of facts, conscious or unconscious. He says the concentration of the Russian army "compelled Germany to seize the sword." That concentration was for defense against threatened attack and Germany, seizing the sword, was to carry out its menace and not to defend itself. He also denies that the submarine warfare is contrary to international law and violates the rights of humanity, and says that "England forced this weapon into our hands through an illegal blockade." If the blockade was illegal, it did not make indiscriminate slaughter of neutrals on the sea legal. All this is so characteristic that it will only aggravate the situation instead of mitigating it.

ASQUITH'S CLAIMS TO DISTINCTION.

(Christian Science Monitor).

The claims of Mr. Asquith, the great British statesman, to distinction are many, and not the least of them is his remarkable mastery of the English language. He has, in a preeminent degree, what Walter Bagehot once called "the gift of effective expression." Could the inwardness, for instance, of the popular saying, "It is easy to be wise after the event," be more utterly expressed than in the following sentence: "It is easy to make war after the event, when all the doubts and uncertainties and possible contingencies of an undeveloped future have been translated into the rigid ligaments of accomplished facts."

THE RISE OF THE PEANUT.

(Southern Lumberman).

Excerpts from various publications, gathered and published by the Literary Digest, tell of the inroads the peanut is making in the cotton states. It appears that the boll weevil has driven the South to diversify its farming. Then, too, new uses for cottonseed oil were increasing the price of cottonseed. The attention of men who crush cottonseed was then drawn to the imports of peanuts and peanut oil before the war. The mill men discovered that by slight readjustment their machinery could be adapted to crushing peanuts and that peanut oil was worth two cents a gallon more than cottonseed oil. The results of all this are astonishing. According to the figures, Texas last year had 200,000 acres of peanuts—an increase of 1,000 per cent over 1915—and three large mills at Houston have taken up the manufacture of oil and cake. Great areas in Georgia, Alabama, Louisiana and other cotton states, where the weevil has been at work, have been given over to the "goober." The peanut crop of 1916 is estimated at \$56,000,000, as compared with \$12,000,000 in 1908.

"THIRTEEN"

(Wall Street Journal).

Those who refuse to believe the 13th of the month does affect speculation ought to listen to some of the chatter around brokerage houses and even among brokers. As for Friday the 13th, it is a safe guess there are hundreds of traders who refuse to make a trade on the day.

"I am not going to get in or out of stocks today," said a leading customer of a big brokerage house, just before the opening, April 13. "I know many will regard me as a superstitious fool, but I was once badly stung on a certain Friday the 13th, and don't intend to take chances with the Fates."

Brokerage house managers speak of dozens of small clients who refuse to trade on the fateful day, and then they have clients who always sell short on the 13th.

Wall Street is quite superstitious and some of the omens and portents among the peasantry of Europe are no more peculiar than those among us in the financial district.

CHILDREN'S MINDS.

(London Spectator).

This is a region into which the "grown-up" has no right of entry and no key to turn the lock. Only now and then a flash may disclose the inner recesses, and throw a sudden light on an entirely surprising line of thought. A child frequently cherishes a theory of its own, which appears quite reasonable, for the enchanted precincts within, where the supernatural obtains as ready an acceptance as the commonplace. A little thoughtful boy of my acquaintance was asked the usual question, what he was going to be. He answered with great decision: "Oh! a land-angel of course, like daddy." And I think "daddy" and the land agency profession scored a compliment. Time does not exist for children who worry over no human limitations. A little girl saying her hymn, "There is a green hill far away," was thrilled to hear that her mother knew the lady who wrote it. Then she repeated her psalm, and added gravely: "And did you know David, too?" The train of thought is rather charming which led a little boy, when told not to mention a guest's amputated foot, to say: "No, and when I get to Heaven I won't say anything to John the Baptist about his head." Surely politeness could go no further. Often an entirely different mental image is conjured up in the child's mind from that suggested by the grown-up storyteller. One mother, recounting at great length the details of the illness of a little dog to her small girl, several times mentioned "the dog doctor." She was surprised, at the very end, by the question: "What sort of dog was the dog doctor?"