

Public Opinion

GOOD ROADS ARE VITAL.

(Fredericton Gleaner).

Every mile of new roads enables the farmer to extend his operations and to make greater profits. A certain amount of road-building should therefore come before farm work itself. The prices of materials have risen and the labor situation presents difficult problems, but instead of the construction of good roads being suspended, it should be pursued consistently throughout the period of adjustment to war conditions.

SUNFLOWERS USEFUL.

(Buffalo Commercial).

Russia averages in normal times a yearly export of nearly 150,000 tons of linseed, 30,000 tons of rapeseed, and 30,000 tons of hemp, poppy, sunflower, and other seeds. The oil obtained from sunflower seeds is suitable for margarine manufacture, and the cake is a good food for live stock. The unrefined oil would compete with nut oil and cotton oil, and the refined product would make a good substitute for olive oil. Sunflower seed is largely produced and crushed for its oil in Russia.

THE WELDING POWER.

(Southern Lumberman).

In the United States of late years there has been a rapid decline in the number of foreign language newspapers. These papers flourished at the time of our greatest immigration of foreign-speaking peoples, but they diminished in number when the second and third generations began to replace the first. Even where both parents were of the same Old World stock, the children became Americans because they spoke the English language. This is a fact well known to Americans, but probably not entirely realized in Europe, if what we have heard of plots and plans is true.

THE BOY FROM HOME.

(Schenectady Union-Star).

A navy officer, commenting on the rigid censorship that covers all correspondence to and from the Navy remarked, truthfully: "I wish we could censor the 'sob stuff.' A boy gets a letter from home filled with 'our dear empty chair is at the table,' or 'Mother cries herself to sleep every night, wishing for her boy,' and the result is a homesick sailor made doubly so. Cut out the sob stuff. Write the boys cheerful letters, and stop feeling sorry for them." All of which is sound sense. The average boy away from home is full of home longing. Letters that are filled with what the officer termed "sob stuff" only add to the disease. Don't sympathize with the boys. Congratulate them.

WOOL SHORTAGE.

(From the American Sheep Breeder).

To slaughter for meat at this time a breeding ewe or ewe lamb is high treason, and we believe our great interests are sufficiently patriotic and unselfish to devise some measure to save our precious breeding stock. If this isn't done, Lord save our sheep industry!

Millions of western ewes and ewe lambs were lost by storm and insufficient feed. Our wool clip this year will fall short many millions of pounds. The western lamb crop is the lowest in years. In some states it will run not over 40 per cent; in some sections not over from 10 to 15 per cent were saved. Something heroic must be done—something besides talk and prayer are needed to save the wool industry of the United States.

A RUSSIAN OFFICER'S PATRIOTISM.

(The Wall Street Journal).

Some months ago a New York business man was entertaining at lunch a Russian military officer who was here in connection with equipment purchases. The American was no slacker when it came to doing his bit in selecting from the back of the menu card, while the Russian too, had been accustomed to appetizers before meals, and good wines to accompany the food should he so desire. As soon as seated at table the American suggested a cocktail, to which the Russian replied with dignified earnestness: "My government has forbidden the use of liquor in Russia during the war and I cannot allow myself an indulgence here which my associates at home are not allowed to have."

THE DOMINATING INFLUENCE.

(Southern Lumberman).

We have forgotten who said it, but we are sure it is not far wrong, "The nation that impresses its language upon the world is the one that ultimately is destined to exert the dominating influence."

COLLECTING SHIP NEWS.

(The Wall Street Journal).

In peace times, Lloyd's Association, with its agents and signal stations in every part of the world, is the chief distributor of news of ship movements, but various exchanges and private concerns collect their own news. When there is no military purpose to serve, port authorities freely impart news of arrivals and departures of vessels.

To ship chandlers and some merchants this news is vital, but with the United States' declaration of war, ship news was practically suppressed. To supply the necessary information, huts and bungalows along the coast have been turned into private observatories, and as soon as a ship is sighted, it is reported to the head offices and it can be met on arrival.

CANADA AND THE UNITED STATES.

(Chicago Record-Herald).

The closer organization of the British Empire has removed for all time, so far as we can see, even from academic discussion, the question of annexation. Canada is and will be not a colony but a free nation. And, moreover, she is our ally. Frictional feeling is gone; mutual confidence is engendered. We must seize the opportunity to unite our feelings more closely. In all Pan-American Congresses we must see that Canada is recognized. Our educational institutions must study Canada as they study Latin America. We must cultivate personal international friendship with her. For Canada and we have common problems, of immigration, of water, railroad transportation, of labor and capital. We shall solve them with far more success if we approach them in a spirit of cooperation.

RED TAPE.

(The Wall Street Journal).

Red Tape is synonymous with technicalities which hinder completion of governmental contracts or action. We read of important matters held up while official Washington hemmed and hawed because papers had to be revised by this man or that department, each jealous of the other; all to the detriment and delay of the matter on hand.

That a thing can be done without preliminaries is proved by an incident in the Civil War. An old engineer was told one day a bridge must be built over a certain stream. "The major will furnish you plans in the morning," said his superior.

The next day he was called before the commandant, who asked: "Have you received the plans for that bridge?"

"The bridge is done, sir; I don't know if the picture is finished or not," was the reply.

COHENOPOLIS.

(Chicago Tribune).

In New York's new city directory the Cohens have forty-nine and one-half columns and the Smiths only forty-six and one-half. Sic transit gloria. Rapid transit at that. Barely ten years ago one might have overheard, "Come on, Ike! Let's go up in the Christian quarter," but to-day there is hardly a Christian sixteenth. New York has a million Jews. They own Manhattan. They control the real estate business, the clothing business, the theatrical business. They are fast winning places in the fire department and on "the force."

Happily, the Jews are doing much to perpetuate Gentile names. We suspect that perhaps three columns of Smiths were anciently Cohens, and when east side Jews weary of being Diamondsteins, Pinkussohns, Rosenblums, and Silvermans they adopt the names of the streets where they live. As these were christened for the old Dutch settlers of Manhattan, the results are indeed wonderful. Among Jews occupying high seats in the synagogue behold Messrs. Van Rensselaer and Schuyler!

Well, why not? It will bother the genealogists, of course. They will be hard put to it, by and by, to tell whether this or that nabob is descended from a Dutch oven or a pushcart. But who cares? If the most of us could meet our remote ancestors we should yell for the police.

ANOTHER FALLACY SHATTERED.

(June Atlantic).

Contact with young people is supposed to be rejuvenating! Indeed, this contact is the only good thing many see in that absorbing and in every other way desirable profession of teaching. Was ever so false an idea? How could so obvious a fallacy get the popular ear? Think how little aware of passing years we should be, were it not for the young! Their very presence proclaims our greater years. They themselves seem to have conspired together to help us to a suitable awareness. Every possible aid is offered, and offered in the kindest spirit of courtesy. One is helped into wraps, relieved of carrying loads or opening doors, guided up and down steps, deposited in easy chairs, and generally treated as fragile. It is all delightful; but the force of suggestion as exerted by so many vigorous young minds will sooner or later have its effect. We may resist for a time; ultimately, however, we shall take ourselves at the rating of the community in which we live. I have seen my friends capitulate one by one, accept the verdict of the majority, and settle down into the accepted properties of middle-age.

IMPERIAL PREFERENCE.

(London, G. R. Economist).

Canadian comment on the inopportune and ill-advised raising of this controversial problem is much to the point. The subjoined extracts are from an article, entitled, "Untimely Preferential Questions," in the Montreal Journal of Commerce, of May 1st, dealing with the answers to questions on the subject given by Mr. Bonar Law in the House of Commons on April 27th, and summarized in the Economist of May 5th:—

"The first thought that must come from the reading of these references to the question is: If no present action is contemplated, if nothing is to be done, during the war, if the great Commonwealth of Australia has had no voice in the matter, if it is necessary to have 'due regard for the interests of our Allies,' why should any resolutions be passed now, why should any announcement be made, necessarily of a vague and inconclusive character?"

Essentially important is the last sentence of Mr. Bonar Law's statement that the policy to be adopted 'does not involve taxation of food.' That is equivalent to saying: 'We intend to have a policy of preference, but we shall have no preferential tariff on the few things of importance that Canada has to send to England.' A preferential tariff on foodstuffs, either in the form of lower duties on Colonial than on the foreign articles, or of full exemption while the foreign article is taxed, has been the very root of the preferential tariff question as viewed in Canada. To talk of giving Canada a preference in Great Britain on manufactured goods would be arrant nonsense. . .

"Tariffs, it is true, may not be the only form of preference. There is a sentimental preference that may be of much value. . . . But the preferential question, so much discussed for many years, has been a question of Customs tariffs. Therefore the abandonment of preferential tariffs as respects the chief articles of Canada's exports is a virtual abandonment of the whole project so far as it relates to this Dominion."

"That there have been great difficulties in Great Britain in the way of the establishing of a preferential tariff that would include the chief articles of Canadian export, most of the Canadian people have fully recognized. They would willingly have the benefit of such tariff preference if it could be cheerfully granted by the mother country, but they have never manifested a desire to unduly press such a policy on the Government or people of Great Britain. They have no such desire now. If anybody is asking the Imperial Conference or the Imperial Government to adopt a preferential policy on the ground that it is demanded by the people of the Overseas Dominions he is speaking without any authority so far as the people of Canada are concerned. Canadians who give most careful thought to the question will, we believe, regret that this very difficult and very contentious subject has been introduced into Imperial politics at a time when all such matters of controversy should be laid aside."

These statements, made by a prominent Canadian paper, are a happy endorsement of the view that we expressed in the Economist of February 24, 1917, in commenting on Lord Balfour's Committee's premature and contradictory resolutions; we then observed that "the magnificent response made by the Empire, in men and money, to the appeals of the cause of progress and liberty shows that the unity of the Empire is already more than secure, and needs no fiscal glue to make it stick."