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PERTINENT PARAGRAPHS

Sidelights on What Some People Think the World is Doing

JUST now, in a broad empire of wheat 800 miles east to west and 300 miles north to south there is, if some superman in an airship could hear it, a strange, vast music. Poets have sung of the music of the spheres. This is the wordless song of a people. Beginning early in September, just when the wild ducks on the sloughs are clouding up for the southward flight in October, it goes on week by week, barring Sundays, through the days of the early frost, on down to the time when the poplar bluffs are heavy with hoar in the morning, when the little lakes become needled with young ice, on into the days of the snow. No poet has ever written the words to that crescendoing song of a busy people. No music-writer has ever made a score that crystallizes its melody. Borne upon the long, low winds, it rises and falls on bluff and coulee, on the broad, flat plain and the hill-sides dotted with homes, on the traveler's camp and the long, black trail in the grass where the low-bush cranberries are ripe. And if that music could be gathered up into one grand melody for the ears of all men to listen, it would contain more joy than all the music of the spheres, because it is the joy of men over the harvest time of the earth. It is the song of the threshing-machine.

ON other fields, thousands of miles eastward, where men are herded as never before in the history of the world, there is music also. Day by day, as the air-craft hover over the lines, the sound of that other and far different music breaks over the world. On still days or with a low wind from the continent that voice of man sweeps across the English Channel and is heard in England. But there is no joy in the booming and crackling of that incessant man-made voice. It is the hell-born song of the artillery thrashing out the lives and the souls of men.

IN the town of Red Deer, Alberta, or perhaps in some threshing-field near it, these fine fall days, there is a sandy-bearded, red-faced citizen of Canada who, as he read the despatches in some of last week's dailies, became very thoughtful. Dr. Michael Clark, M.P., is a universal free trader. He is the only man in the Parliament of Canada who has never ceased to set forth the doctrines of the Manchester school as applied to the trade of the world. To him the world was free to all mankind. Trade routes were more important than tariffs. Revenues he would raise by direct taxation, leaving the food and the clothing and other necessities of the people free from the tariff tax that raises the cost of living. While the government of Canada, whether Liberal or Conservative, became and remained a protectionist government for purposes of national revenue, the man from Red Deer stood out for free trade—as they had it in England. But last week's despatches brought to a climax a movement which for years has been more or less under way in spite of the school of Cobden and Manchester. The government under stress of war, announced through the Chancellor of the Exchequer that part of the cost of the war must be paid by taxes, imposed or increased on sugar, coffee, chicory, tea, tobacco, dried fruits, patent medicines, motor-cars, picture-

films, bicycles, clocks, watches, musical instruments, plate-glass and hats. Free trade as they had it in England is gone. Will it return after the war? That is the question put to himself by Dr. Michael Clark, the member from Red Deer.

MARY ANN is coy again. No particular Mary A.—but the genus domestique symbolized by that title. Thrifty living a year ago caused many people to cut down kitchen and household expenses; factories running then on part time bade

cally so important. That kind of underground ally should have been bagged when the bagging was good.

MR. SIMEON STRUNSKY has been exposing the wiles of newspaper war writers. In the September Atlantic he shows how our old friend, Mr. Clothes Line Cable, has been creating war stories to thrill the credulous multitudes that must have news, no matter what or how. Will Mr. Strunsky turn his eager eye upon the antics of a few of our Canadian heading writers who try to get even with the censor? Will he notice that last week a well-known daily came out with the sensational scare-head, "70,000 Germans taken Prisoners." That headline sold papers. The people who bought them looked in vain to find anything in the news columns about the head-line. On the bulletin-board of a rival daily they found the explanation of this marvelous Russian victory. 70,000 Germans had been taken prisoners by the Russians since the beginning of the grand retreat.

GIVE THE DEVIL HIS DUE



Reading one of the many congratulatory messages of the Kaiser, in which he refers to "the road along which the Almighty by His Grace has led us hitherto."

"Well, I'm blown if that's fair! It has been my job right through from the start."
—From the Westminster Gazette.

adieu to some of the girls, and for every advertisement asking for domestic help from Mary Ann there were at least twenty applicants, some of them before the mistress was out of bed in the morning. But there seems to have come another shifting mood to Mary Ann. She is marrying a soldier, and till that is over she cannot come.

BULGARIA will not bulge. Ferdinand, "le grand monarque" of Machiavelian hue, conceals his intentions. He is used to that. Radoslavoff, the Premier, denies that there is any secret pact with Germany over the right to transport munitions and troops to Turkey. He is used to denials. Bulgaria no longer has an honest and patriotic brigand like Stambuloff to tell monarch and premier their faults. She has learned by experience how to sell blind horses; how to bamboozle the Balkan League; how to play "Watch Your Step" with Turkey, her recent foe; how to put up for auction among the powers what she has to sell—which is everything to anybody with the highest price and the best security. Bargaining Bulgaria is no ally to lose sleep over. But at present she is the key-log in the jam and she knows it. We can only regret that so cold-blooded a bargainer should occupy a position strategi-

went crazy over his invention.

PUTTING out fire with kerosene oil is the latest scientific achievement. This did not happen in Germany, either, but in Calexico, Cal. The cotton yards there got on fire. Water could not extinguish it, because water runs off a cotton bale as it does off a duck's back, and fire penetrates into a cotton bale where it smoulders at low temperature, but does not blaze. Kerosene penetrates the cotton and puts out the fire, because coal-oil will not ignite except from a blaze. Germany should make note of this. She has plenty of kerosene, but from all accounts she has no great overplus of cotton.

GERMAN scientists claiming that their new process of metallurgy, applied since the war, has multiplied their output of iron and steel, and German-American editors trying to block the big loan to the Allies, belong curiously to the same root idea. If German metal is so abundant and substitutes for cotton can be found for German explosives, why should Germans in America worry about the loan to the Allies? The fact of the matter seems to be that Germany wants to grab a slice of the loan herself and fears there will be none left for old Mother Hubbard.