

### Journal of Commerce

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MONTREAL, WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 23, 1914.

Against Municipal Control

In Saturday's issue of the Journal of Commerce appeared a very interesting letter from Mr. William Johnson, of this city, in which he suggests that municipal ownership of the Tramways service is the best solution of the present difficulties. Mr. Johnson, in his letter, takes exception to the statements which have been made that this city is incapable of managing its affairs honestly and efficiently. He thinks it is a reflection upon the honesty and morality of the city to state that we cannot be trusted to administer our affairs as economically and honestly as do the citizens of Cleveland, Ohio and Glasgow, Scotland, and concludes that if this be true, then something should be done to raise our civic morality.

We cannot agree with Mr. Johnson that the best solution of our present difficulties will be the Tramways Company would be solved by municipal ownership. About four or five years ago we held an investigation into the affairs of the city. Mr. Justice Cannon, who conducted that investigation, unmercifully scored the lack of honesty displayed by our City Council and civic employees, and characterized Montreal as being the worst governed city on the continent. Since that time, we have substituted government by Board of Control and Council for our former unwieldy Council. Doubtless there has been some improvement in the conduct of the city's affairs, but we are still so far removed from the high civic morality of a city like Glasgow as to render the municipalization of our Tramways Company out of the question.

We do not propose to enumerate the many evidences of inefficiency and mismanagement which are continually cropping up at the City Hall. We will, however, instance one or two. In a week's time we will be writing 1915 on our letter heads, yet the Engineering Department, which has charge of streets, sewers, sidewalks, etc., etc., have not yet reported on their operations for 1912. Last year, and again a week ago, our City Council rejected favorable loans only to complete negotiations later on under less advantageous terms. In the one case, the delay cost the city \$600,000, in the other case \$188,000. A few weeks ago, graft charges in connection with a new sewer in Notre Dame de Grace, were made at the City Hall. But why enumerate? If there is less graft than there was four or five years ago, and we are glad to admit there is, there is still the same inefficiency and incompetence. We are decidedly not in favor of municipal control of tramways. We admit that it is feasible in some centres, and in principle we lean somewhat in that direction. We do agree, however, with Mr. Johnson's statement that something should be done to elevate the civic sense of the people of Montreal, and would be glad to co-operate with him and other leading citizens in an effort to educate our people to a higher sense of their civic responsibilities. Apart from that, we are distinctly of the impression that municipal control of our Tramways would make the present unsatisfactory situation infinitely worse.

Seasonal Unemployment

One cardinal and permanent factor in the problem of unemployment in Canada is the winter. Very many of our people work eight months and idle four. The frost and snow lend the tools from our hands. Every winter our cities fill up with idle men. Many of these have come to the city because they are idle. Their jobs in the country have broken down. There is no use complaining of their coming to the cities. There is more hope, both of work and of charity in the city than in the country. Besides, misery loves company.

The man who invents winter employment is a national benefactor. We owe much to our lumber camps, for they ease the strain of unemployment among the casual laborers. Can nothing else of the same kind be done?

An investigation has just been made into a similar state of affairs in Oregon. It was done by a commission under the direction of Frank O'Hara, Professor of Economics in the Catholic University of Washington, D.C.

The report notes that the phenomenon of men out of work is not due to overpopulation. On the contrary there are millions of rich uncultivated acres and hundreds of thousands of horsepower yet to be developed from waterfalls. There is still room for millions of men. If this is true of Oregon, it is tenfold true of Canada.

Then the suggestion is made that the uneven demand for labor would be better regulated by shifting the enormous amount of public work to dull seasons, and by the production of winter industries.

The report gives data showing the present irregular demand for labor on public works, and points out how a considerable amount, particularly on public buildings, could be performed in the dull winter months. The clearing of cut-over forest areas is suggested as an industry especially suitable for winter, and one which will ultimately bring in dividends for the state and its citizens.

The work of leading the way in subduing the land, the report advocates, could very well be carried on through a union of the efforts of state, counties and cities. "The state would be in a position to lend its credit to finance such an endeavor, knowing that the investment would be perfectly safe inasmuch as the money expended could be protected by a mortgage on the improved land."

This is a pertinent and timely in Canada. Perhaps it is too much to expect individual initiative to solve such an immense national problem. Yet, if every employer took thought of the winter, with the idleness and scarcity it brings to laborers, something might be accomplished. Rather, however, we look to statecraft. That legislator who finds a way to keep Canada busy in winter will deserve a statue in every market place.

Von Tirpitz's Vapourings

Admiral Von Tirpitz, head of the German Navy, condescended to grant an evasive and astonishing interview to an American press representative. We say "astonishing," for, according to the Admiral, the German Navy is simply "spolling" for a fight, only the British are too cowardly to give battle. In view of the fact that the British Navy have, for the past four months, been cruising off the German Naval bases, and have, during that time, employed every possible means to lure the Teutons out from the mine protected harbours and anchorages, the Admiral's statement is amazing, to say the least. Probably he imagines that the British, with their usual foolhardiness (?), should come right into Kiel, Bremerhaven and Wilhelmshaven, and pull them out into open water for the stand-up scrap.

Von Tirpitz, as the organizer of Germany's naval power, naturally feels chagrined at its uselessness. On the minute war was declared the British Navy had it bottled up, and the vast German commerce it was supposed to protect has vanished utterly from the Seven Seas. The German commerce destroyers have been sunk and rendered futile—having done less commerce destroying than the old Confederate privateer Albatross, during the Civil War, considering the age and modern circumstances. Practically all of Germany's imports and exports are cut off, and Von Tirpitz and his navy have failed to do anything but bring an incalculable stigma upon their country for despicable acts in naval warfare.

The Kaiser and the "Clown" Prince have brought malodorous fame to the German Army, and Tirpitz, as head of the Navy, is running his illegitimate worldly second in the naval acts which he has countenanced. The reckless sowing of floating and drifting mines in the open seas by vessels flying Red Cross and neutral flags; the torpedoing of relief and refugee ships; and the crowning crime of bombarding defenceless coast towns have placed a blot upon German naval honour which they will never live down.

Not content with the dirty work already sanctioned by him, Tirp. (excuse our familiarity) intends to starve England out by torpedoing our commercial craft. After giving us the hint, Great Britain will thank Tirpitz for the tip and take steps accordingly. If the worthy Admiral, who must be in his dotage, thought that his threat could be carried into execution, he would have tried it long ago! Alas! we can condemn him for the villainess of his theory, but we are afraid we will never be able to anathematize him for the practice.

Boston has forwarded 8,400 tons of food to the Belgians. The despatches do not state of what the food consisted, but a safe bet would be "baked beans." Boston "culture" is being sent to save the victims of German "kultur" from starvation.

To show the extent to which the craze for armament has spread even among a peace-loving nation like the United States, it is only necessary to point out that out of every dollar appropriated by Congress seventy cents have gone for wars past or future, and only thirty cents to the cost of running the country, to the building of great public works, education and all the arts of peace.

The drafting of men from the peaceful industries to serve in the army and navy in Britain will take the women of the country an opportunity to give a more prominent part in the industries of the nation. At the last census there were 3,185 women in England employed in the coal mining industry, 2,963 in the building trade, 7,170 on the railways, and 7,284 in the engineering, machine making, iron founding and boiler making trades.

The American people are using double the amount of mutton to-day that they did at the commencement of the century. In 1909, 7,000,000 sheep were killed in the United States, while last year over 14,000,000 were killed. This is largely explained because of the increase in the price of beef, and the turning of mutton as a substitute. Another reason is that American farmers are gradually going out of sheep, as they find it unprofitable to keep them on account of the decreased price of wool. Between the years 1905 and 1909 the price of certain grades of wool varied between 23 cents and 30 cents a pound, while now it is from 20 cents to 24 cents a pound. Three years ago there were 52,448,000 sheep in the country, while now there are but 49,719,000.

Reports from Germany show that the price of rubber in Hamburg at the present time is over six shillings a pound, with prospects of its going much higher. In other words, this looks as if Germany were running short of rubber, and will shortly be handicapped in the manufacture of rubber clothing, rubber boots, tires for her bicycles, motor trucks, etc. This is one of the many raw products which is becoming scarce in Germany.

The world's supply of rubber is divided roughly in the following divisions: Brazil, 35,000 tons; British Malaya, 45,000 tons; Dutch Malaya, 10,000 tons; African and other wild rubber, 10,000 tons. As all this rubber must come from overseas and one half of it from British territory, the Germans do not stand a very good opportunity of securing supplies.

Germany has achieved strained relations with Norway and Sweden, the only neutral countries in Europe which seemed to have any considerable German sympathies. This change has been accomplished by seizing a number of lumber laden Scandinavian ships. Lumber is one stable commodity which is not likely to be extensively used for war purposes, and is much required in the arts of peace. While these seizures are bad for Norway they assist the Canadian trade, and will not deprive Great Britain of her necessary lumber supply.—Vancouver News-Advertiser.

**THE DANGERS OF EDEN.**  
According to some authorities, it was the Garden of Eden that was captured by British Indian troops yesterday. Whatever loot the victors may find we trust that for their own good they will leave those apples alone. If we were there we would advise them, also, to look out for the serpent.—Victoria Times.

**REFLEX ACTION.**  
"Our Stock Exchange situation," the London Economist writes of its own market, "is more hopeful, and a better investment demand is reported. Some encouragement has come from Wall Street, where there is a marked financial recovery."

**MAY BE A RUBBER FAMINE.**  
Almost the whole rubber output is produced within the British Empire. None of this supply is by any means reaching Germany. The Germans will soon be without motor tires and rubber for boots and shoes. London Free Press.

**BY BEER BARRELS.**  
It is expected that the Germans intend to take Canada by waiting till the ice forms, and then rolling over on beer barrels.—Kingston Standard.

THE DAY OF THE "BANTAM."

Great Britain now has a bantam battalion. Men below the standard of height inherited by all armies from the days of the halberd and the battle axe have been accepted by the recruiting officers and will take their places in the lines of the allies on the continent.

Other things being equal, do not modern war methods offer an advantage to the smaller warrior over his larger brother? He can shoot just as straight, his shots carry just as far, the experience of France and Japan shows he can cover ground just as quickly, and he is not so good a target for the enemy. In the Jaegers' charges in Northern France and in Belgium the physically smaller French soldiers have proved more effective than the larger Germans.

Britain's bantam battalion may prove itself as efficient as the battalion of Britain's "bantam" ally of the Far East. There is no reason why it should not.—New York Herald.

"BOTTOMLESS CONDEMNATION."

Those who fawn on Frederick William represent him as a young man of intelligence and imagination. Even so, he will never understand the bottomless condemnation in which he and his are held in this country, because he will never see or admit the infernal wrongs committed by his fellow countrymen. The wolf always acquits himself.—Collier's Weekly.

A CREDITABLE SHOWING.

It is highly to the credit of the Bank of Montreal that 162 members of its staff are already on active service, that as many more are anxious for the front, and that hundreds more are drilling.—Belleville Intelligencer.

"A LITTLE NONSENSE NOW AND THEN"

Chicago doctor who tested starvation should not forget that doing a thing because one wants to, and because one must, have a valid and even psychological difference.—Wall Street Journal.

What has become of the old-fashioned woman who thought there was more credit to her in weaving a rag carpet at home than in waving a banner at the head of a procession?—Dallas News.

Mrs. Mills—Do you think the motor car has an ennobling influence?  
Mrs. Gill—Well, speaking from personal experience, we have been fined and fined.—Exchange.

"We are all dead broke out of our way this fall."  
"How do you live, then?"  
"Oh, we lend each other a little."—Boston Transcript.

Sunday School Teacher—Did Pharaoh overcome the children of Israel at the Red Sea?  
Small Boy—No, ma'am. It was a walkover for the Israelites.

Casey—O! don't see what th' Powers do want to be scapping' for, anyway.  
"O'Brien—Yez don't, eh. Then, begorra, ye're a domp spicimian av an Irishman."

They stood at a dingy street corner and anger was in their countenances.  
"Vot das you called me, Morry?" indignantly asked one.  
"You know," said his friend doggedly.  
"You accuse me of stealing your dollar?"  
"No, I haf not accused you of stealin' it, Solly."  
"Vell, my boy, vat is it? I haf told you I haf not got the money and you don't believe me," and he spread his hands despairingly.  
"Oh, no, no; not at all," said his friend. "Vat I did say, Solly, was that if you had not 'elped me to look for my dollar I should haf found it."—Exchange.

**THE FIRST CHRISTMAS.**  
(From Milton's "Hymn on the Morning of Christ's Nativity.")  
No war or battle's sound  
Was heard the world around;  
The idle spear and shield were high unhung;  
The hooked chariot stood  
Unstained with hostile blood;  
The trumpet spake not to the armed throng  
And kings sat still with awful eye  
As if they surely knew their sovran lord was by.

The stars, with deep amazement  
Stand fixed in steadfast gaze,  
Bending one way their precious influence,  
And will not take their flight  
For all the morning light  
Or Lucifer that often warned them thence;  
But in their glittering orbs did glow  
Until our Lord Himself bespake and bid them go

The shepherds on the lawn  
Or ere the point of dawn  
Sat simply chatting in a rustic row:  
Full little thought they than  
That the mighty Pan  
Was kindly come to live with them below;  
Perhaps their loves, or else their sheep  
Was all that did their silly thoughts so busy keep.

When such music sweet  
Their hearts and ears did greet  
As never was by mortal finger strook—  
Divinely warbled voice  
Answering the stringed noise,  
As all their souls in blissful rapture took;  
The air, such pleasure loth to lose,  
With thousand echoes still prolongs each heavenly close.

At last surrounds their sight  
A globe of circular light  
That with long beams the shamed night arrayed:  
The helmed cherubim  
And sworded seraphim  
Are seen in glittering ranks with wings displayed,  
Harping in loud and solemn choir,  
With unexpressive notes, to Heaven's new-born Heir!

DOGS IN THE ARMY.

A number of fine sentry-dogs have left Major Richardson's kennels at Harrow, England, for service with the English army. This must be the first time that the War Office has formally adopted the use of dogs for military work. Perhaps the experience of the South African war converted them.

These dogs are not to be used for finding the wounded, but for scouting and sentry work. They will accompany isolated outposts, pickets and solitary sentries. Their scent is often quicker than sight, and their hearing is sharper than that of the human sentry.

In scouting the dogs are taken on a long lead. They must be taught to growl, not to bark. If necessary, they must be fitted with a muzzle to prevent them from barking. On sentry duty the dog may be allowed to bark so as to warn the sentry and the camp at the same time.

In the South African war the English army had no watch-dogs of its own, but it often picked up and adopted Boer dogs. Captain Haldone, who escaped from Pretoria, said that the greatest danger of recapture was not from the Boers but from the Boers' dogs.

Major Richardson makes a good point when he says that in the extreme exhaustion of long battles and marches human senses become blunted. A dog's scenting and hearing powers will always be on the alert when the man may be nearly dropping with fatigue.

The German army led the way in the systematic training of military dogs. Both the Russians and the Japanese used them in the last war. The whole Austrian frontier of Bosnia and Herzegovina was guarded by sentry-dogs for years. The Bulgarians in the last war had an organized service of military dogs. The Italian army also has a service of dogs. Major Richardson recommends collies and retrievers as particularly good breeds for this sort of work.—Our Dumb Animals.

AN ANGRY GERMAN.

The New York Sun publishes the following pleasing letter from a German correspondent:  
"Sir,—For the opinion of the large majority in this country we can only express contempt, since it is composed of the veritable offspring of Europe. Let me remind you of the celebrated dictum of Professor Garnath, of Dresden: 'The population of America comprises some eighty-five millions, many of whom are human.'"

"We Germans thoroughly indorse him, and I feel confident that America will have cause to regret her inexcusable attitude toward our glorious Fatherland. The German memory is a long one, 'Deutschland ueber Alles.'"

**THE RESOURCES OF FINANCIAL ENGLAND.**  
Estimating Great Britain's foreign and colonial investments at \$2,750,000,000, the London Spectator remarks that "if urgent need should arise, a considerable portion of this could doubtless be called up, though of course at a heavy loss. There is, however, no reason whatever to anticipate any such necessity. So far from the present war seriously trenching on our economic resources, it is in many directions largely adding to them."

The Day's Best Editorial

**UNEMPLOYED.**  
Two million men and women—the estimate is very rough, of course—are out of work in the United States. Two million men and women ask for a foothold on the edge of bare existence. They ask in this "land of opportunity," this new world of illimitable hopes and possibilities, for just the primal right of man, to labor and to live.

Here is a tremendous fact which challenges the conscience of the American people. It is not, unhappily, a new fact, but it looms larger than ever before, and casts its shadow on a mood more serious than we in optimistic America usually are to be found in. To-day we are facing more self-consciously than for many years problems that are old and dark and of common concern to us all: war, peace, trade, progress, decay, the fate of men and the destiny of nations. Is it not possible for us to confront this great domestic problem of unemployment in a new spirit, with a determination to deal with it in a larger way? Throughout the country communities are unusually active this winter in charitable work and in dealing each with their local problems of unemployment. In the aggregate this effort is immense, but there is too much waste. We are scattered bands attacking a common enemy. Co-ordination and co-operation are needed and a permanent system based on the proper division of labor.

Unemployment is a nation-wide evil. It calls for national action. It is also regional and therefore it calls for state and local action. But all these agencies should work upon harmonious lines supplementing one another's service.

The United States is continental in extent, including a north temperate region and a subtropic. The sharp seasonal changes are permanent factors in the problem of unemployment. No matter what business conditions are, in good times or bad times, they create violent readjustment. Other factors are almost as constant. Is it not possible for the American genius for organization to meet the recurrent difficulties they present?

The problem is tremendous. But is not the best brain of America a match for it? We have now an unusual opportunity to put ourselves to the test. The flood of immigration is checked. Business has begun the swing up to normal. We have the example of nations united in the mighty organization of destruction. Why not put our hands to the mobilization of labor and the security of employment?—Chicago Tribune.

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LIVERPOOL COTTON.

Liverpool, December 22.—Cotton futures quiet, and steady, up 6 points.

Close. Dec. 22. Close. Dec. 21.

May-June . . . . . 4.28 4.34  
July-Aug. . . . . 4.35 4.41 1/2  
Oct.-Nov. . . . . 4.47 4.52  
Jan.-Feb. . . . . 4.52 4.57 1/2

At 12.30 p.m. spot market quiet, prices in middlings at 4.58.

Sales, 6,000 bales; receipts 38,000 bales, 23,000 American.

Spot prices at 12.30 p.m. American middling 544; good middlings, 4.82; middlings, 4.41; middlings, 4.11; good ordinary 3.84; ordinary Liverpool, December 22.—2 p.m.—Futures 7 1/2 to 8 points. Sales 6,000 bales, including 5,000 American. Jan.-Feb., 4.60 1/2.

Liverpool, December 22.—Cotton futures barely steady 3 1/2 and 4 1/2 points net advance June 4.31 1/2; July-Aug. 4.39; Oct.-Nov. Jan.-Feb. 4.56 1/2.

### VIRTUE OF A HOBBY.

Much has been said in favor of a hobby. As we understand it a hobby is something a man engages in practices and enjoys entirely outside his business. Some men raise chickens, others dispense charity, others build peace palaces and libraries and many others either run automobiles or putter around on a fifty-foot lot encouraging the symmetrical and thick growth of grass.

The possession of a hobby has its virtues. The man comes to all men, prudent or imprudent, when they must retire from what the sociologists call "fruitful occupations." Lacking a hobby a vigorous, hale and hearty old man suddenly plunged into ease and sloth rapidly loses hold on himself and dies before his allotted time. With a hobby to keep him busy he keeps his health, lives on the sunny side of easy street, laughs and falls to brood. A hobby is not a luxury, it is a prescription.

Mr. Carnegie, engrossed with all the energy and acumen which rendered him wealthy, is engrossed and cheerful in the work of promoting peace and spreading the circulation of reading matter. Mr. Rockefeller plays golf and constructively nurses his digestion. Then, on occasion he turns his great abilities to the work of relieving the misery in Belgium in the large way which gave him prominence in the preparation and vending of petroleum in its various manifestations. Both Mr. Carnegie and Mr. Rockefeller are living long.

It is not given to all of us to have great wealth. It is the portion of some to suffer deprivation but every one can nurture a hobby into an antidote for worry and thus strengthen optimism and so relax overstrained tissues that he can return to the business trenches with his mind refreshed and invigorated. Moral: If you have not yet acquired one, go forth search and take unto yourself a hobby.—New York Commercial.

### WEST AFRICA.

Liabon, December 22.—The Portuguese Military Colonies announced that the German forces invaded Angola, Portuguese West Africa, a second making an attack on the military post at Nco.

**SUGAR FUTURES.**  
New York, December 22.—The sugar market Coffee Exchange opened quiet, 2 to 10 points higher on opening call 100 tons, two lots of 100 were selling at 3.25c. Opening bid and asked were:  
February . . . . . Bid  
March . . . . . 2.85  
April . . . . . 2.85  
May . . . . . 2.90  
June . . . . . 2.95  
July . . . . . 3.10  
August . . . . . 3.10  
September . . . . . 3.20  
October . . . . . 3.27

### WILL NOT RECEIVE BONUS THIS YEAR

New York, December 22.—For the first time the organization of the United States Steel, the officers and heads of the departments of the corporation will receive no extra compensation on bonus year. Last year when earnings were \$137,200,000 were distributed. Earnings this year are expected to be around \$75,000,000. The elimination of the bonus payment this year does not affect earnings but only the income of the highest paid officials and heads of departments.

**TIME MONEY.**  
New York, December 22.—Time money easier, institutions are offering loans at 4 per cent, on industrial collateral. Bids generally go no lower than 3 1/2.

### MANY WEAK SPOTS IN NEW YORK MARKET

Tended to Make Traders Nervous in Their Bearings Views

**STEEL AT LOW POINT**

Several other issues were inclined to interest—Mainly in Industrial Views

New York, December 22.—At the opening of the market was dull without important change. The attendance was slight and traders little would be done during the holiday week on account of the holiday on Friday. Best Sugar was strong feature, opening 23 1/2 and gaining another 3/4 on next day. The rise was said to be based on traders as reflected in the report to the effect that of the company are in present running on a deficit of 7 per cent on common stock. Announcement that United States Steel Management would not make general wages at present produced little effect of which was fairly active at unchanged prices.

New York, December 22.—Little was done in the first half hour and of the small amount of transactions handled industrial specialties and American Best Sugar contributed more proper share. Best Sugar sold up to 32 with 3/4 at the close on Tuesday, but Bethlehem which had been the active specialty in market became dull and somewhat reactioner grain ice opened unchanged at 20 1/2.

Disappointment was felt over the market to respond to the Steel Corporation's announcement regarding wages as adherents to present indications of hopefulness for the future, able indication, however, appeared to be the probability of a bad showing of earnings quarter now drawing to a close.

New York, December 22.—In the second week of a number of weak spots in the market among ones. This tended to make traders nervous in their bearish views and the dictions of a raid before the close to caterers supposed to exist a little under the prices.

Washington 4's were a weak feature at 28 with 30 on Tuesday and Bethlehem Steel 4 1/2 compared with high of 45 1/2 Tuesday. Southern Pacific was inclined to weakness to 2 1/2, a loss of 1/4. Selling was said to sign account. It was not so much, however, there was heavy pressure as that supported stock was poor.

New York, December 22.—In the afternoon market became quiet. Steel selling was minimum price and many other active issues pretty close to it.

Copper issues were among weakest feature affected by trade conditions.

The street had big estimates of amount due on the Louisiana some traders making as high as \$25,000,000. That figure was probably above the mark and it is likely that studies leaked from the steamer have already been in the market.

In conservative quarters the view was that the market would be entirely influenced by affairs and amount of foreign liquidation for the present, favorable developments would produce little or no effect.