

EDITORIAL

FIFTY-SEVEN-CENT butter and fifty-cent eggs in April, 1918, cause most of those who don't produce butter and eggs to rise up and ask more of the monumental questions—Why? The popular fallacy is still abroad that a Food Control Board was organized for the express and only business of keeping down prices. Well, so far as preventing anybody from exploiting people by profiteer methods so it was. The efficiency of this country can't be increased by prohibitive prices for the necessities of life. If there are food profiteers their names should be known to the Food Board and publishable by the Government with penalties more than equal to their profits. In times like these a food profiteer should be as easily discovered as a bat in a parlor. We are all hunting for the profiteer. We are all agreed upon his extermination.

But that is not the main question. One of the trenchant sayings of Mr. Hanna, ex-Food Controller, was that people may yet be faced with the option of taking what's left or going without. Export first, save afterwards, is a slogan first made into a heading in this paper several weeks ago. It ought to be rather uncomfortable in working out. Do we believe in it? Then we shall forget that beating down prices is the first function of the Food Board and realize that there are two others which we shall yet have to face before we are done with a world scarcity of food.

First, we shall have to get rid of the idea that in times like these food is a thing to tickle the palate. From now on, and it should have been from long ago, the function of food on any table is to stay the stomach and to provide energy for work. The old formula for education was the three Rs. The old formula for food was bread and butter. But—why butter? Why meat? Why pastry? On the verge of world famine, why anything for a healthy adult stomach but the plainest rudiments of nourishment? Our bush-laboring ancestors got along sometimes with johnny-cake and pork gravy supplemented by corn-meal mush and sometimes thick milk. They conquered the bush on it.

The second idea we shall have to discard with great violence, and now is the time to do it just as we are entering upon another phase of food-production—is that the ability of any people to get food is the energy of the people devoted to producing it. There are no stores of food in the world, except those which are unavailable under the circumstances. There is no manna from heaven; no Moses. But there is—the land. Of all peoples in the world Canada has most productive land compared to population. If the whole available energy of population in Canada were turned upon our own land we should accomplish wonders in production. It happens, however, that much more than half our population are living away from the land. Until we send the town back to the country we might as well stop our diatribes at the Food Board.

The Food Controller has no empire of food under him. We are the food-producers. And until we live up to the necessity of that fact we may as well paint oil portraits of the members of the Food Board and ask the portraits to do the work.

ONTARIO farmers, laborites and socialists are trying to organize a new party. This is by far the most ingenious method ever devised of getting town and country together. Simple. Just unite and go into politics. In an age of union governments and coalitions anything political seems possible. But this is not practical politics. It is a dream. Between socialism and labor unions there is some bond of connection, though even in Canada they have differences enough. We have even met farmers who talked socialism. But we have never met a farmer who believed in labor unions. There are good reasons. In the first place, this combination of three elements is against something. What? We suppose the alleged big interests, or whatever stands for industrial organization represented by

capital. And the farmer is himself the biggest of all big interests in Canada. As a mere matter of census the farm organization in Canada is estimated at \$36,000,000 more capital investment than all the factory industries.

Farming is impossible without invested capital. The farmer should be the biggest employer of labor. That he is not is no fault of his. He wants to be. The capitalistic farmers of Canada are crying aloud for more help. They must have it. They never wanted it so badly. The farms are man-starved. Production hinges not so much upon land as upon labor. We are producing less in bushels and tons than we did in 1915. There is but one reason: shortage of labor. Figures began to tell the story seven years ago. In 1910 there were 50,000 fewer rural population in Ontario than there were in 1900; in the same year 400,000 more urbanites. The town has robbed the country of labor. There are a score of reasons; the chief of which is wages. Even in 1917 the rural depopulation went on and the munition factories got the benefit. Wages were higher in munition factories than they can ever be on the farm. If the labor which has exodus from the land to the towns could be unionized, labor unions would stand for an organized inroad upon the farmer's best friend—his son or his hired man. Not only does the exodus decrease production and make drudgery of farming. It also reduces rents. Farms in Ontario can be rented now for three and a half per cent. of their value.

Will this new pact between farmers and townsmen return labor to the land? If so, more power to the pact. But we fear there will be no such result. The issue has been footballed into politics, which makes a lot of strange bedfellows. And the biggest sufferer from such an absurd alliance will be Canada's biggest of all big interests—the Canadian farmer.

ALL Fools' Day was aptly chosen as the day when the United States begins to save one hour of daylight in twenty-four hours and Canada does not. On that day a man could leave Buffalo at seven in the a.m. and arrive in Niagara Falls at somewhere around half-past six. About three days later than the date line on this issue, however, Canada will also be saving daylight. For twenty years civilization has wrangled over this

THE SPIRIT OF ENGLAND ON THE SOMME

WHAT of the "contemptible little army" now? After weeks of grueling on and around the Somme, how is Tommy Atkins coming out? Beaten? Not yet. Not soon. Not even ultimately. You do not judge the British army in France by the surveyor's chain; so many kilometres of front pushed back, so many kilometres in an offensive. By the acreage estimate Tommy never would have been there at all. The British army was sent to France, not because of any war-map, but because the spirit of England demanded that the honor of England should be expressed. The spirit of England is with her troops. We hear a lot about the spirit of Germany; about the wonderful spell which the Fatherland exerts over the men at the front. Admit it. Fritz is one of the best hypnotic subjects in the world. Under proper conditions he would have been a real patriot. Just at present he is being forced to see red and the spirit of his Fatherland is that of a crazy-house. The spirit of England we know. It was known before Germany emerged from the barbaric twilight of Hun-land. While the red-faced hordes described by Tacitus, the old Latin historian, were coming down from the top of the world to smite the civilization of the Mediterranean, the spirit of England was being nurtured upon those mystic islands at the right shoulder of Europe. We know but half enough of what that spirit is in its

device. Acres of articles and speeches have been made for and against it. We are now about to accept the inevitable without a struggle, just as we did banishment of the bar and votes for women. We are convinced that sunlight is cheaper than electricity, and we don't deny that an hour in the morning is worth two in the evening for getting work done. A lot of men who never saw a milkman except when they were coming home, or heard a robin at his first song since they left the farm, will now become personally acquainted with both milkmen and robins. There will be a few hitches for a while. Children will be more surprised than anybody else. Little Bobbie, aged two, will suddenly discover that it is no longer his privilege to be the alarm clock for the household at six a.m. And instead of being night-hawks we shall all be sons of the morning.

WE do not regard the ancient City of Quebec as an outlaw city. A small minority by treasonable anger over what they consider unfair methods on the part of those enforcing the Military Service Act have brought on outlaw conditions. The country at large turns its eyes to Quebec, the old and new capital, official residence of the Lieutenant-Governor and the Premier, the seat of law and therefore of order, the historic and picturesque pride of a great country to which it is the inner gate. Many wise men live in Quebec; men who take a deep and a broad interest in the co-unity of the two great races in this country and who as much regret the recent outbreak as anybody in the Capital of Ontario. We hope these men will take such action that the presence of outside troops and the practise of martial law will soon be suspended. The Government is within its power and right in sending such troops to act under Gen. Lessard as may be deemed necessary to preserve order. And the Government will be well advised to remove them when the City of Quebec reasserts itself as the seat of law and of order for the Province of Quebec.

If it could be imagined that a mob of English rioters had attacked the Ontario Legislative buildings, nobody could reasonably object to a French-Canadian battalion marching to the scene to maintain order if there were no other troops available. The troops objected to by some French-Canadians are there to vindicate citizenship in this country under a native French-Canadian general as military governor of Quebec City. We believe that the Provincial Government of Sir Lomer Gouin and the ecclesiastical government embodied in Cardinal Begin who came out on the side of law and order during the riot, will regard these troops as necessary for that purpose and as in no way interfering with the government of the province by the representatives of the people.

genesis and evolution. Only now and then are we brought face up with what that dear old Blighty stands for in the way of immortal inspiration to her troops. And the Somme has seen a lot of it. That army around the Somme is the invincible army that is fed upon the spirit of the oldest free land in Europe, the mother of nations and of men, the dear old poetized island of bards and cloudcapped castles and dirty slums, and of Kitchener's Mob that picked itself up of its own free will to dam back the slaughter-house barbarism of Mittel-Europa. And no matter what the three-to-one concentration of the Huns, no matter what the guns, or the drive or the objective, that army of England inspired by the spirit of England is there to keep Hun might from the Channel. The German stranglehold on the west front must be loosed. German expansion belongs to the other side of Europe. The way is open over there. Let them go that way. And when the movement of Germany Russia-ward really starts, now that the gates are down, the armies of England, along with the armies of France and America, will accelerate the pace. The west of Europe has nothing to do with the spirit of Germany. It has all to do with the spirit of England that rises to the top of the gauge in the troops of England. And those troops with that spirit are unconquerable.