

Public Opinion

A GOOD RULE.

(Wall Street Journal.)

"It will be the finest day of my life when I can conclude peace," said Emperor Charles. Good rule not to start what you can't finish.

A NEW WORD.

(Boston News Bureau.)

A new word has been put into the English language. It is "mug" (verb transitive). When an American soldier has been kissed by a Frenchman now he says he has been "mugged." As the Frenchman who plants a kiss on the cheeks of the private is usually of the hirsute variety, he is tactfully avoided if possible. A soldier warns another, "An old guy down in the next block mugged me." It is the signal for a detour.

HAIG'S HAMMER.

(London Daily News.)

Haig's hammer will probably never have the fame of Drake's drum, but it is a shrewd weapon, and the rapidity as well as the vigor of its strokes is surprising people at home almost as much as the enemy. Sir Douglas Haig was reported some time ago to have stated his conviction that the present year would witness Germany's final discomfiture in the field. "There is no doubt," he said in February last, "that the German western front will be broken by the Franco-British armies. This year will be decisive in the sense that it will see the war decided on the battlefield—that is to say, an event after which Germany will appear defeated militarily." Important and unexpected things have occurred since which may have affected his estimate, and the season is already late in a country traditionally unfavorable to the operations of armies. But with every such blow as those of the last three weeks the day of which the commander-in-chief spoke is brought nearer.

AMERICA'S TROTSKY.

(New York Mail.)

Leon Trotsky emerges big in the news from Russia. Trotsky is the man who says that Russia must be socialized on the destructive Trotsky model even if the country is to be deprived of "its last loaf of bread, its last piece of leather, and its last plate of steel" in the process. That is Trotsky's ultimatum to every factory owner, every land proprietor, every man with a few rubles in his pocket, in all Russia. And Trotsky is the man who is running Russia just now.

A few months ago Trotsky was preaching the same doctrine of destruction in New York. He was presenting the same ultimatum to every factory manager, every landowner, every man with a bank account, in New York and in America. He never got into the news until he returned to Russia.

How many Trotskys are there in New York and America, formulating the same ultimatum without getting into the news? And what kind of news will it be when they do get into it?

THE ADVERTISING AGE.

(From Leslie's.)

Publicity! That this has rightly been called the advertising age is shown in the fact that many great concerns which formerly felt no need to advertise are now seeking the public ear. The General Chemical Co., the American Telephone & Telegraph Co., and the Pullman are among the large corporations that have in recent years adopted an advertising policy. It might be thought absurd for a company with 20,000 employees, operating 7,500 cars on 137 railroads and selling 25,000,000 reservations annually, to advertise. The Pullman company did not inaugurate its advertising to secure new business, but, in the words of Vice-President Runkles in Printer's Ink, "to correct some outstanding misconceptions of Pullman service." This it has accomplished, and by taking the public into its confidence the company has removed the attitude of suspicion which many entertain toward great corporations. The public is reached by this sort of publicity. When the Pullman advertised that unused Pullman tickets would be redeemed, hundreds of offices were literally swamped with applications from people who wanted their money back and didn't know that they could get it. At last the great corporations are learning that the heart of the people may be reached through publications the people read, publications which go into every home and which mold public opinion.

THINGS YOU NEVER HEAR ABOUT.

(Life.)

A way of living as cheaply as in the good old days, Bulgarian artillery hitting anything, Any good being accomplished by suffragettes picketing the White House.

Theodore Roosevelt becoming depressed.

A defaulting bank cashier buying stocks at the bottom and selling at the top.

Anybody offering a position of trust and responsibility to a member of the I. W. W.

The Kaiser's plans for dining in Paris.

"BEWARE OF VIDDERS."

(The Nation.)

"Beware of vidders," the Pension Bureau echoes the elder Weller. That it has reason to do so is shown by the fact that though not a soldier of the War of 1812 survives, there are 19 pensioned widows of such soldiers. There are only 384 survivors of the Mexican War, but there are 3,442 widows of the veterans. The explanation is less for experts in longevity than the sociologists, who may tell us just why old veterans (with pensions valid after death) are so often attractive to comparatively young women. The pensioned widows of Civil War veterans practically equal the number of survivors.

PRACTICAL EDUCATION.

(Omaha World-Herald.)

The demand for vocational schools is appearing in the great financial and trade papers in the cities of the East. Before the war there was in every part of the United States, a demand made for more practical schools, but lately not much has been heard on that subject, as the main interest of fathers, mothers and teachers has been concentrated on the war, yet lately some of the teachers are saying that when the reconstruction period arrives there will be greater need than ever for a practical education. The calling of so many away from their usual occupations to army service, and the difficulty of filling their places, has brought this question to the fore in all the great trade centres. There is one thing to which all agree. Whatever sacrifices must be made to carry the war to successful conclusion, education of the youth must not be interfered with in the slightest degree.

NO PARTY DISSENSION THERE.

(London Telegraph.)

On the great issue of the war the country is still perfectly sound. The Unionist, the Liberal, and the Labor parties present an unbroken front. Mr. Asquith's recent speeches at Leeds and Liverpool would not have required the alteration of a single word if he had been a member of the government instead of leader of a patriotic opposition, and it is a national blessing that the late prime minister and the present prime minister are found speaking on the supreme subject of peace and war in the same voice and the same key. That is the feature of the political situation which really matters, and who will compute what it means to the country that, while Germany is trying to get the allies to enter the conference chamber, and resorting to every intrigue to sow discord between them, the leader of the opposition rejects them all with the same emphasis as the head of the British government? A divided public opinion here would be worth to Germany at this moment many of Hindenburg's much trumpeted victories.

PEERS.

(Wall Street Journal.)

A raw and inquisitive humorist, who is a firm believer in the dollar, once asked Sir George Bury how much he paid for his knighthood. Like a shot the answer came back, "One-half billion dollars." British shipments to Russia of at least that value were held up under Bury's advice on his return from that country after outbreak of the revolution. The answer was suited to the mental visibility of the questioner, with the dollar mark well above the horizon.

In this instance personal service could not be measured in money or in title. Titles themselves no longer distinguish service. An Italian general after an heroic stand of his command in retreat was asked for an honor list. He said he would have to ask for decorations for the whole army. Were personal sacrifice rewarded by titles of nobility, America's peerage from civilian ranks alone would muster a half-dozen army divisions, regrettably and sorrowfully beyond military age for the most part.

SHOULDER TO SHOULDER.

(Brooklyn Eagle.)

Stating the terms upon which the British government would be willing to consider peace, Mr. Lloyd George makes it clear that England demands no material compensation for her great sacrifices. In taking this stand he ranges his country shoulder to shoulder with the United States, which seeks in the prosecution of the war and the negotiation of peace no profit of peculiar benefit to itself.

AN AMUSING MISTAKE.

(Christian Science Monitor.)

There was a rather amusing mistake in a recent Paris telegram which purported to describe the fighting in Passchendaele. It was, in fact, a translation from the Petit Parisien's Western Front news, and it said: "The Canadians were forced to shell the Presbyterian school and the Town Hall." It was hard to believe one's eyes. A Presbyterian school in Belgium? Then the meaning dawned; it was "le presbytere" that was meant, and "le presbytere" is, of course, the Roman Catholic priest's house.

OTHER TIMES, OTHER MEASURES.

(Wall Street Journal.)

A visitor to a minor officer of a leading railroad noticed that his friend was using a scratch pad composed of old envelopes salvaged after removal of the mail; also using quite an ordinary lead pencil. His curiosity became aroused.

"Has the Save-Everything Administration taken charge here, too?" he inquired. "When I was here last you had a pad of fine linen paper, and a Koh-i-noor pencil."

"We have learned," explained the official, "that our men give efficient work on such scrap and with such pencils, just as they formerly did with gold printed pencils and bond paper. We are keeping step with the times."

THE BRIGHT SIDE.

(New York Sun.)

A splendid tonic is in the words of Major Donald Guthrie of the Canadian overseas forces: "There's lots of fun over there. There are no more cheerful and contented men on the face of the earth." He was talking, of course, about the soldiers in the trenches, who some would have us believe are pitiful, weeping, gray haired wrecks after a tour of duty.

There are societies and committees for nearly everything nowadays. Not the least useful among them would be a committee for printing the Canadian major's words, bracketed with Brig. Gen. Hoyle's hearty classic, "A soldier's life is a bully one," to be given to every man of draft age.

It would serve as an antidote for much depressing drivel.

INTERNATIONAL PROHIBITION.

(Christian Science Monitor.)

The Eastern wiseman declared of old, "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might." There never, surely, was a time in the history of the world when it was more necessary to act upon the advice of the wiseman than to-day. The world is engaged in a tremendous struggle. And as the earthshaker makes the ground quiver with the shock of the conflict, the looker-on, who is capable of understanding the movement, sees the weak things falling from the tree of Principle. Everywhere those who are endeavoring to guide the struggle are calling for self-sacrifice. And nearly everywhere this self-sacrifice is being given without stint. One tremendous blot, however, defaces the scutcheon of Principle, and that is the blot of drink. The drinker is as naked as Noah, if he only knew it, in the esteem of all those who know what self-sacrifice for Principle means. When he wakes up to the consequences of his selfishness, as sooner or later he must, he will understand what it has meant, but that will be too late to prevent the consequences to himself.

It is, however, always the difficult thing that is worth doing. It is, unquestionably, what the world calls the impossible which is worth attempting. That is to say, of course, when the attempt is a worthy attempt. Therefore, if any statesman in the world to-day should rise to the height of attempting the solution of a really international problem which will do more almost than anything to destroy the material causes of human suffering, he will lead a crusade for the destruction of drink. And this for the reason that the mere animal appetite for drink is itself only an expression of those tendencies to human license which find expression in every form of sorrow, and sickness, and sin from which humanity is suffering.