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AN IMPENDING SWEEP.

FURTHER than to intimate that there will be a gradual reduction in the staffs of the deputy registrars for the M. S. A., Ottawa has done little in the way of reducing the number of public servants who were directly engaged for war work or on some minister's whim which he imagined was war work.

How many appointments have left the service of the under secretarieships and commissions that are now without good reason for existence? The demobilization of these forces, if it ever goes into effect, will crowd a few trains outward bound from Ottawa. Many have given good service, while others have held down more or less lucrative positions without breaking down their constitutions.

Pensions, separation allowance and other military branches must, of course, be continued for some time. The demobilization effort will demand a large staff, but apart from the problems actually concerning the soldiers the time approaches when a great sweeping out of officeholders must occur at Ottawa. Regulation and restriction must quickly pass, food boards and fuel boards and all the multitudinous offices must pass into history that have been specially catered for members, ministers and the friends and relatives of ministers. Even those whose duty it has been to preach of Canada's glorious opportunities may be able themselves to embrace some of these golden chances. The future is as rosy for those who have basked in Government favor as for all others, but the country needs the money and those who have not been doing a real job will "have to get out and dig."

A COMMON CURRENCY.

THE PROPOSAL that a great "universal" loan should be floated amongst the Allied nations in order to stabilize the finance of the world brings several questions to mind. Might it not lead to a world-wide metric system in currency—a sort of numismatic league of nations? Canada and the United States would feel closer to Britain and to France could all write in simple terms of dollars and cents. A gigantic book-keeping transformation would have to occur, but the late James Gordon Bennett, a newspaper Don Quixote if ever there was one, saw hope for this revolution. On his editorial knees he begged the United States and the world to adopt the metric system in all things measurable, but as with many enthusiasts, when his iron became white hot, he dropped it, just as he dropped Canada from special correspondence treatment because of the 1911 reciprocity blunder.

Some proposal may come for a general harmony in finance. The western world would not desert its easy count by tens for pounds, shilling and pence, but the old world is in a mood to learn from as well as to teach the new. Translating our currency to a common standard has perhaps more to commend it than any thought of a universal language.

EBERT A TYPICAL HUN.

THE ALLIED ministries quite as much as Germany, are anxious to see a stable, sane government established at Berlin, but they will have little regret should the report that the Ebert cabinet is out be confirmed. Socialist Ebert appears to be like the rest of the Hun leaders, unrepentant, still dominated by the ideas of militarism. He welcomes the Prussian Guard to Berlin with "no enemy has overcome you." Here we have an appeal to the Prussian motto that night is right. The Prussian Guard has been at the forefront of every great German destroying and devastating operation on the western front. Ebert claims to be representative of the German masses. Does Germany approve of the record of the ex-kaiser's pet fighters? A few weeks ago Prince Max loudly and tearfully announced that defeat and disgrace had taught Germany that night was wrong. He called on the nation to get together for a new fatherland based on unselfishness and honesty. Now Ebert, by his eulogy of the army, rallies the masses to the old standards of militarism, which means ruthlessness, robbery and deceit. This is dangerous stuff that the Allies had better cope with at once. If Ebert represents the masses of Germany, as he claims, then German masses do not consider their armies have been whipped and routed by Foch, Haig and Pershing. Perhaps it would be well to extend the object lessons given the Rhine cities right up to Berlin. A battalion of Allied troops quartered in the ex-imperial palaces would be wonderfully impressive to the German people. It would be humiliating to Germans, and might exasperate Lord Milner, but it would definitely establish in the German mind the fact of the Allies' complete military triumph.

MISPLACED PITY.

LET US NOT wax foolishly sentimental over the down and out Hun. Sympathy for the German is misplaced, and any surplus kindly feeling can be used to much better advantage, and with more justice if distributed amongst the Belgians and French, who have suffered so atrociously at Germany's hands. The German himself does not appear to be worrying over his "sad lot." Correspondents write from Berlin that the Hun capital is given over to wholesale carousal. Dancing and drinking is the rule. Berlin has taken up its pre-war ways that won for it the reputation of being the most dissolute of the European capitals. For a "starving, despairing nation" Germany appears remarkably spritely and full of "pep." Somehow it is difficult to picture folk who are

supposed to be on their last legs two-stepping it all night.

And this is not the case in Berlin alone. As the Allied troops occupy the Rhine fortresses they report Treves, Coblenz, Cologne and many smaller places gay and apparently contented, bands playing, restaurants going full blast, theatres open, lights, music, entertainment and frivolity. Contrast this with ruined Rheims, Soissons, Cambrai, Peronne, Bapaume, Ypres, and a score of other places, most of them lightless, ruins with only skeleton walls left of once splendid edifices. Still more appealing to our sympathies are the countless hamlets and villages hardly yet cool from the torch of the passing Hun. If the essence of misery and unhappiness that this war has produced is to be found anywhere it is surely in those thousands of razed homes of Flanders and Northern France. Darkness and desolation for the victims of a brutal, bloody invader who escapes the fullest physical chastisement by an abject submission and then proceeds to make merry. Let us keep that contrast in mind. It will prevent our being lured into any silly and unnecessary consideration for the Teuton beasts.

THE BEST SERVICE TO HIM.

PERHAPS, after all, the best kind of reconstruction in which Canada may engage all her strength is that which will insure ample employment and abundant opportunity for her men and women. If the chances of securing good wages, of maintaining or establishing a home, of being given credit for a certain amount of initiative are offered to the returned man, as well as a fair "grub-stake" with which to live while he readjusts himself, goes prospecting for opportunity, and gets his bearings, he will accept it with better grace than any sort of near-charity that is flung his way, his thinking done by well-intentioned theorists.

Canada, a land of great, if not exactly "boundless" resources, has only some eight millions of people to sustain. An increase of more than 50,000 in the population of Manitoba since July indicates that more people are coming into the country, and as was proven all through the years of Liberal administration, population spells prosperity and development for this land.

The returned men are not going to be loafers. They have as big a stake in the nation as anyone; they will pay taxes, vote, be elected to office and in all respects assume a full citizenship. But they will not go on farms in great numbers, if their own word may be taken for it. Nor will they accept a paternal government's schemes with that full enthusiasm heads of pondering commissions may expect. If the country prospers as it should prosper the returned men will be out to get a fair share of the winnings.

As has been said, what the returned man will find of greatest service is a slight increase in his \$1.10 a day, made retroactive, and paid in full. And if we come in for a slice of the German fine, who deserves the big portion of the Christmas pudding?

EDITORIAL NOTES.

That South American tiff stopped short of a blif.

Amongst wars serious casualties we note William Randolph Hearst.

W. Hohenzollern may find in his sock on Christmas morning a nice new one-way ticket to somewhere else.

Germany is to issue a White Book telling of the war's origin. Black or red would seem to be more suitable shades.

The melancholy days are near when you will find that all the best things have gone to the folks who are doing their Christmas shopping early.

Chile and Peru have settled their dispute without resorting to arms. But if this becomes a widespread habit what will our best little fictionists do for plots.

A noted war critic writes a column speculating as to what caused the "mysterious" German defeat at the first battle of the Marne, and then gives it up. The rest of us in our artless, silly way will continue to think it was Joffre and his poilus.

THE FREEDOM OF THE SEA.

[S. Morgan-Powell.]

When Vikings swept from out the North

To do, Old England scathe,

What ships and seamen sailed forth

And bent them on the waves?

'Twas English ships and English men,

And so shall ever be;

Britain shall ever keep, as then,

The Freedom of the Sea.

When Spanish Philip in his pride

His great Armada bade

Crush England's power far and wide,

Who faced it, unafraid, the waves?

'Twas English ships and English men,

And so shall ever be;

Britain shall ever keep, as then,

The Freedom of the Sea.

When off Trafalgar's wind-swept height

The peerless Nelson flew

His famous signal, by what might

Did victory accrue?

By might of English ships and men;

So shall it ever be;

Britain shall ever keep, as then,

The Freedom of the Sea.

When, mad with lust of power, the Hun

Challenged democracy,

Who swiftly struck and swiftly won

Ocean supremacy—

Who safeguard ocean ways today,—

The British Fleet—at Sea!

Pray God the Fleet may keep away

The Freedom of the Sea!

So shall the Great Deep ever be

For all the nations free.

FEEDING THE GERMANS.

[London Spectator.]

In this connection we must say a word about the re-educating of Germany during the next few weeks. We cannot fathom the meaning of those who pretend that this is no part of the Allies' business. To look at it from the most material point of view, it is surely plain that unless Germany is helped back to such a state of bodily health that she can work hard and again make money rapidly, she will not be able to pay the enormous debt that she owes to the world. The debt of reparation must be paid to the uttermost penny, and to refuse Germany the means of doing this is to defeat our own policy, and to invent a new version of killing the goose that laid the golden eggs. But if the argument that the Allies have not the wherewithal to help the German population, or have not the duty to do so, is sound, it is equally sound to say that the argument of Dr. Boff that the Allies are behaving inhumanely to Germany in seizing so much of her means of transport. Nothing is more certain than that this transport will be used to better purpose by the Allies than it could be by the Germans in their disordered condition.

The Advertiser's

Daily Short Story

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UNCLE JOSIAH'S CHRISTMAS.

[By Graham Lingfield.]

The street cars were crowded and the little man standing on the sidewalk hitched the collar of his coat a bit higher and allowed the women and children, with arms laden with parcels, to clamber aboard ahead of him. It was Christmas Eve, and the holiday spirit was all about him. Not that Josiah Miggs had been Christmas shopping. Oh, no. He was just on his way home from business.

He took another wistful peep at the girl on the boarding opposite and resigned himself to seeing another loaded car go by without stopping. The fact of the matter was that Jos Miggs was about the loneliest little old man in Little old Manhattan, and silly as it may sound, he had adopted a girl as a boarder—an advertising girl—as his friend. Every day as he went to and from the real estate office where he worked he always glanced up at the boarding as he passed, and the girl always seemed to smile back at him in a cheery, encouraging manner. Tonight he did not feel that he could think too much about the girl on the boarding because, when one has only a very lonely Christmas to look forward to, thinking about impossibilities only makes matters worse. So Jos hummed his usual ditty to the cold wind that was blowing and waited for another car.

It was a sounding whack that fell on his shoulders as he stood there, and Jos had to stop for a moment before looking around to see what had hit him. When he did, however, all he could see was a round, grinning face ever so high up looking down into his. He stared at it in perplexity a moment, then, wheeling around exclaimed:

"Why, Tom?"

The tall young man stood and grinned while Jos looked him up and down. "When did you strike town, Tom? I haven't seen you since you were a little bit of a fellow."

"Two months ago, Uncle Jos. I got a job with Billings & Kent, the hardware people. I'm looking for you, uncle."

"Well, well, Tom, I'm glad to see you. Suppose we go along and have some dinner together, eh? How would that be?"

The big young man shook his head. "Sorry, uncle, he said, 'but it can't be done. I'm promised somewhere else.'"

Mr. Miggs gave him a shy, sidelong glance. "So that's the way the wind blows, eh?"

The young man reddened. "I promised," he stammered. Then a bright idea striking him, he grasped his uncle by the arm.

"But, I tell you what, uncle, you come along with me."

Uncle Jos shrunk back in his overcoat. What, he but in where he was not wanted? No, indeed. He dragged his arm out of Tom's grasp. "No sense, Tom," he said. But Tom held on.

"Now look here, uncle, you're the only relative I have in this city. You just have got to come along and be introduced."

And as Tom was nearly three times as big as Uncle Jos he almost dragged him bodily into the street car that happened to be waiting, and away they went.

It was with some trepidation that Mr. Miggs followed his nephew into the next little flat where Tom's father lived. He did not feel at all sure of his welcome. He was only in his business clothes, and he knew quite well that his collar was none too fresh. Well, it was Tom's fault for dragging him there. He would just say "How do you do?" and then escape—escape to his boarding house and—

He found himself ensconced in an easy chair in the cozy parlor. There was no need for introductions, no need for explanations; just friendliness and hospitality. And when presently Ethel's mother came from the kitchen, "Uncle Jos," she said, "how nice to see you. You were just like a family gathering. Of course they made him stay to supper, and afterward to help him with the decorations, and when at last he said good-by, their voices followed him down the street. 'A Merry Christmas, Uncle Jos, and mind you come early tomorrow.'"

"Ethel Westcott was a stenographer at Billings & Kent's, and Tom had fallen in love with her the very first day he had gone there. She lived alone with her mother, her father having died some years ago, and Tom and she hoped to be married very soon, just as soon as he had saved something to start on. Then suddenly Tom sprang up and said:

"Gee, uncle, I forgot to buy the cigars!" and seizing his hat from the hat-stand, fled, leaving Mr. Miggs all by himself in the parlor. For the moment Uncle Jos didn't know whether to jump up and follow Tom or to sit where he was.

But Tom was gone, and there was nothing for him to do but to sit still. What an awkward predicament to be in! To be left in a strange house where nobody knew who he was. Supposing somebody were to come in—how was he to explain himself? He was just wondering what on earth he should say, when, sure enough, footsteps sounded down the passage. They approached the door.

The footsteps ceased. Mr. Miggs dared scarcely breathe. He sat as if petrified. What would happen?

A scream, perhaps, a yell of fright! No, nothing happened. Perhaps it was only Tom standing there, after all. At last the trembling little man screwed up his courage and raised his eyes. For a moment he thought he must have fallen asleep and dreamed of the girl of the boarding house.

She was actually there and smiling down at him as usual, with her usual bright face and curling hair, the merry eyes with the friendly glint in them. Was this Tom's girl? Why he seemed to have known her all his life. He rose to his feet, and she stepped forward to his pale cheeks. "He didn't know what to say, but there was no need, for the girl stepped forward and said:

"Uncle Jos, I'm sure," she smiled, "I've heard Tom speak of you so often."

He waited while she crossed the room to him and took his hands in hers. She stood before him, speaking words of kindness and welcome. "We've been thinking of you and wondering how we could find you. Tom said that you were all alone, and we could not have enjoyed our Christmas thinking that."

She stopped and kissed his cheek. Wonderingly the little man looked at her, tears of gladness

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