

EDITORIAL

Ephraim and His Idols.

EPHRAIM is joined to his idols, let him alone. New York prefers Tammany. Canadians who visit New York so regularly don't, as a rule, care for the politics of New York civic elections. It makes no difference to our pockets that Graft takes the middle of the road and both sidewalks down to Manhattan. Graft is not a product of Tammany, anyhow. Neither did real Democracy produce Tammany. The thing that has menaced New York for the last half century merely made the biggest city in America a hand-out to grafters for the sake of boosting the sewer-gang element in the party. President Wilson was given the nomination at Baltimore in spite of Tammany. He knows that Mayor Mitchel is as real an American as he is himself, and that his return to the City Hall on Manhattan might have meant a new Presidential figure in the Republican party. We doubt very much if party politics had much to do with dragging Hylan from obscurity to eminence. What really happened was that enough political votes were cast for Bennett, the straight Republican, to split Mitchel's vote. But the sum total of Mitchel's and Bennett's votes did not equal Hylan's, who split again with Hillquit, the Socialist. It was the combination of mongrel socialism, machine politics and Tammany in three men that proved too much for real Americanism as embodied in the most progressive, able and conscientious Mayor the Babylon of America has ever had—in our time at least. We suspect that the average New Yorker as represented by a civic election, does not answer to the description given by a recent magazine writer who alleged that it is the 200,000 daily and nightly tourists who want the Biggest Show on earth to be wide open till three a.m. while the citizen is snoring at home. All very well. The citizens don't spend the money that keeps up the show. America does that. But the citizens are in a fair way to spend some tax money for a while now to maintain Hylan and his group—we can't call them a gang till we find out—at the City Hall. New York, it seems, must be a Babylon. Broadway prefers to be the gangway of prodigal sons who never go home to their fathers. The clean-up, straight-American idea looks well in illustrated magazines. At 2 a.m., even in wartime, Broadway and its wooden sidewalks, will continue to be a Midway of debauch. The bulk of modern New York was built on the Babylonian plan. And it takes more organized force than straight Americanism in the person of one man to make it anything else.

Is Spug Superfluous Here?

SPUG has been resurrected somewhere in the vicinity of New York. Spug was born a few years ago when Santa Claus began to be a timid sideshow to papa and mamma and all the rest; when even a four-year-old gasped with incredulity at the idea that even if the old man were built like a rubber doll he couldn't have got a wagonload of presents down that chimney. And of course when all these prosperous and experienced grown-ups got each a tree-load of gifts, the whole idea of Santa Claus as the exclusive monopoly of children was given away. Swapping presents became the substitute for the wise giving of the old saint who never gave a hint of how much anything cost and never bankrupted anybody to make a fat Christmas. Hence the Society for the Prevention of Useless Giving, which did a little good a few years ago, and then Spug retired with Santa Claus to the wings, while family, friend and relations took the centre. War prosperity swept Spug off the stage altogether. Now, with the beginning of war over there, he is coming back. We don't imagine he will be much needed over here. If there is any Canadian on earth who doesn't realize that it would be a crime to make anybody a superfluous present this year, that Canadian should apply for membership in Spug right away. Heaven forbid that we should ever again recognize the Spirit of Christmas in the form of DEBAUCH.

That Passeth All Understanding.

TWO years ago now Henry Ford's peace ship was on its way to Europe. The Ford idea of peace was scoffed at in 1915, and there may have been a reason. But in 1917, after two years more of war, responsible opinion in various parts of the world is concentrating itself more and more on peace—and peace, when victory is achieved, as soon as possible. There never has been so much peace talk as of late. There never was such a desire for peace. And peace never was so difficult. What most of us are trying to do is to square two apparently irreconcilable notions. We want to quit war; and we want to finish the job to which we put our hand when we went to war. We want slaughter to stop and at the same time we want to bolster up all the phrases about drawing and sheathing the sword. In the first place, there was too much high talk about the sword. When the whole world goes to war getting the sword back into its scabbard is not so easy. If the firehall burns down, fire-fighting is under a handicap. Warring nations can't, as a rule, make peace. Neutrals only can do that. But the neutrals, though numerous, are negligible now, unless they could be combined into one Desire for Peace. We may as well conclude, also, that this war will not bring the millennium. It will not obliterate Germany as a nation, neither as a war state. Those people were conceived and born in a state of war. And after this war is over it will be the biggest united task the world ever had to keep Germany from breaking the international laws that are supposed to prevent wars. Germany still believes that the club is a moral instrument. And it will take much more than any peace likely to be outlined in 1917 to make her think anything else.

WHAT HAPPENED TO HOAG



HENRY MARKHAM, head of Markhams Ltd., Iron and Steel and Wholesale Hardware, believed in the Darwinian law that the fittest survive, and that weaklings are meant to be obliterated for the good of the race. Business to him was a sort of jungle. He himself was one of its successful beasts. Martin Hoag to him was one of the weaklings who should not be encouraged by sentiment. What Hoag needed was a good bucking up from the system practised by Henry Markham.

Markham was haunted by the belief that he was a business creator. He always wanted the newspapermen to understand that he was not one of the second-ups who jump on the band-wagon of opportunity to arrive with a select crowd, but that he was one of the rare few who make opportunities for other people. He was obsessed by the principle—quite a few men seem to have it—that he could so project his own remarkable personality into his business that the business would expand and annex or evolve something else as naturally as a magnet picks up iron filings. He began where his father left off. His father, not born in Canada, started the importing hardware business as Markham and Co. before he handed the management over to his son and went where all good Markhams are supposed to go, he had begun to manufacture hardware. It was this factory which Henry M. regarded as his father's sole contribution—outside of himself, Henry—to the betterment of the world. But Henry M. could have personalized a string of factories and he had built a few since his father quit; but that was too obvious—and easy. Buying his raw materials, adding to it power and labor and management and turning out the goods into box cars at a steady and competitive profit was a good enough business, but only the prime business of a second-rater. Canada had hundreds of men in that class, and just as many or more of the kind that play stocks and margins. Henry Markham considered himself neither a mere manufacturer nor a mere financier. He was bigger than both. He was a business creator. The Markham personality required—raw materials at their source, railways, steamship lines, water-powers, smelters, factories, markets—and as much juggling with finance as he could profitably work, along with a certain amount of energy and money spent on social affairs, operas, charities and pictures. All the big fellows he knew seemed to dabble in these things. Very few could co-ordinate to create wealth.

Consequently one Martin Hoag to Henry Markham was about as significant as one hair on a dog. Hairs always come out. The dog gets more. He had inherited Hoag from his father. But Hoag belonged to the counting-house stage of the business. His mind was bounded north, south, east and west by ledgers, day-books and cost sheets. Hoags could be made. Markhams were born. There the matter would end some day. He would never kick Hoag out. The new Markhams Ltd., with all its co-ordinated creations would just squeeze him out like a seed from a lemon. Meanwhile Markham had Hoag; and that was where his troubles began.

(Continued on page 18.)