

EDITORIAL

SIR GEORGE FOSTER says that three years of a world war has made it impossible for Governments to regulate prices; that no critic sitting on a nail keg can teach political economy to the people—anyway to the Department of Trade and Commerce. We admit that the nail-keg economists are about as plentiful now as war experts were a few months ago. We all know how to keep the world from going to blue ruin, as we used to know how to win the war. But the war isn't won yet and the world is not going to economic ruin.

On the other hand, Col. Cantley, President of the Canadian Manufacturers' Association, tells the C. M. A. that the Canadian manufacturer has been sadly reviled by the press. He says manufacturers are not profiteers and that some will have been put into a very bad way by the munition industry when we revert to normal conditions. Here, again, we admit that it has been the fashion to abuse many manufacturers for the probable sins of a few. But Col. Cantley does not speak in the spirit of a true sporting Canadian if he asks the C. M. A. to shed crocodile tears over the desperate plight of our industries. We can only suppose that he was not talking for the sake of the whole truth, or to impress the Government, so much as to get a whack at the newspapers.

We have not complained as yet that we are importing British gold to pay for the munitions we export. No, we prefer to continue doing so. Therefore, no matter what profits the Government fails to keep down by taxation, we can't, as a people, decline to export our foodstuffs as heavily as possible. For profit? Yes, to those who produce them. But what of the rest of us? We don't all make munitions nor grow crops. Those of us who are non-producers must keep our incomes fixed and our cost of living going up. Food costs about as much here as in London, after all the cost of haulage, insurance and risk of submarines. A people of less than eight millions, we produce more foodstuffs than 40,000,000 in England, where the margin between supply and demand almost vanishes in a time of war like the present. Yet we pay as much to live. Why? Because the price at home is determined economically by the demand and the price abroad.

Any nail-keg critic knows that. He also knows that a Government could, if it wanted to, conscript enough of every crop to feed Canada for a year at less than famine prices. Unless the Department of Trade and Commerce advises such action it will not likely be taken. That Department, we take it, does not approve of a food controller. Canada, the most bountiful producer of all the nations, according to home demand, is not to have her production and distribution of food regulated as it is in England and the United States.

We don't quite see Sir George Foster's daylight. If Canada is to go on putting an increased weight into the war on all sides, it is absolutely essential that we take advantage of our own resource to keep the cost of food at least a margin lower than it is in England or France or Germany.

WE have the same problem in the form of coal. It seems that the United States coal dealers desire to save their own people by putting an embargo on coal exports. The Government prefers to keep coal cars from travelling our way because they may be better needed at home. Less than two months ago, when the United States went to war, Sir George Foster said in Washington that North America is now an economic unit; that the crop would be harvested from north to south by labour travelling north as the birds migrate. Parallel 49 economically vanishes. That is for the sake of crops. But what of the coal? The Government declares free wheat and flour. Economics, independent

ON a basis of mere argument the situation at Ottawa can be argued till doomsday. There is more important business than argument. And it is not passion either. If the business of acting as a united nation in this war can't be adjusted as a controversy, neither can it be settled by the appeal to so-called emotion. Neither is it party politics.

All we need is mutual common sense. The two races are here to live together. They are united by the St. Lawrence and divided by the Ottawa. Each has its own historic right. Each is Canadian. British, if you like, but suppose we take that part for granted the same as the air we breathe and the language we speak. We in Canada are not so much British after all, not so much French—as Canadian. So we shall remain. The country cannot be subdivided or rent in twain. It will not be. There is sense enough in both races to settle our differences, so long as we each work for the good of the country. We are into a war the magnitude of which no man, no nation dreamed when we began it.

Let us admit all this. The great war has gone beyond the thought of all nations. It is not for one people nor any part of one people to say where, when or how it shall stop. It can stop only by common consent of the world. The best part of the world is fighting the worst. Quebec knows it. Mr. Bourassa knows it. The best part of the world, the free nations of the world, must win or the world goes down. Mr. Bourassa cannot argue us out of that. Quebec belongs to the best part of the world. Quebec is not a feudal system, but a democracy. Let us recognize her place in the world, her destiny in Canada as the home of Canadians who in the fervent words of Sir Wilfrid Laurier a few weeks ago say, "God Bless England," and in deeper tones say to each other, realizing what stupid fools we are if we don't,

GOD BLESS CANADA!

Talk of civil war and a prolonged race feud in Canada is the talk of enemies of the country on either side. We must stand together. We have a common cause. It is—Canada; not merely of the present, nor all of the past. It is the Canada for which brave men of both races fought in the days of old, and the Canada that will be here when the feuds and animosities and misunderstandings of 1917 are forgotten.

of politics, justifies the step. Are we to let our wheat and flour slide across the border and get no coal in return? What becomes of the economic unity?

Perhaps Mr. C. A. Magrath, our fuel dictator, will see to this. He has a large problem and a short while to work it out. He has had experience in the Trade and Commerce Department. Perhaps he does not agree with Sir George Foster.

BUT the problem is complicated again. It seems to be considerably a matter of rolling-stock and locomotives on our own railways. Our big railway systems and locomotive and car works are sadly undermined and undermanned by the scarcity of labour. Munition-making has robbed them along with the war. They find it impossible to keep our hauling machinery in a state of renewal and repair. Even with little or no new lines being built we are unable to keep the lines we have in a state of vitality. Last winter we had a fair sample of this. Miles of coal cars were frozen in at the border because our railways couldn't move them. The coal got as far as the border. It stopped there. The United States lost the use of its cars. That made us unpopular as consumers. We say it shall never happen again. But we have no assurance that we will do any better this summer with the best of weather to get enough coal hauled up for our winter use. We are not making engines and locomotives fast enough.

But suppose the railway people should get together on this question. Suppose they take the advice so often handed out to the politicians and sink their differences for the good of the country. There is so much haulage to be done by land and water before the close of navigation. How much of it is likely to be unprofitable? Can any of it be reduced? What of pleasure and vacation traffic? Suppose that were all cut out or reduced to a minimum for this summer, even though the people through the Government should reimburse the companies for what they lose? The long-haul transcontinental trains—can they be curtailed? Suppose that in the matter of a large percentage of passenger traffic many of

our main-line towns were to be put on the side line again, as they used to be not so long ago in the infancy of some of our settlements; would that be a hardship too grievous? Every engine counts. It is important to get as large a reserve stock of engines and rolling stock in good repair as possible before winter, and to put as much of it as possible at the service of freight haulage.

We offer these suggestions without knowing anything about railways and steamship lines. Perhaps the public could do something by travelling for pleasure and fancied business less. Every little helps. In a critical time we all get closer together whether we want to or not. This is a critical time.

AGAIN the question comes at us in the form of paper. Seventy-five per cent. of the paper made in this country is exported to the United States, the greatest consumer of paper per capita in the world. There is a tremendous shortage of paper over there. Also here. In trying to overcome their shortage we are increasing our own. Canada in this respect is a good-natured neighbour, always lending his tools and never having them when he wants them. One of the New York Sundays contains as much paper as half a dozen of our periodicals put together. We furnish the raw paper and we buy back the finished product. That's good business for the American producer. Every copy of those overfed U. S. publications that comes into Canada is a double charge on our pockets and our patriotism. We have no desire to see any of Uncle Sam's newspapers and magazines put out of business. But at least we have a pardonable interest in seeing that we don't jeopardize our own by helping to keep them up. One American periodical comes over here to the tune of about 60 tons of costly coated paper every week, or 30,000 tons a year. Suppose that paper should say to some Canadian periodical, "Here, while the war is on, you can look after our business with a paper less than half the size of ours. Take over our list. It won't cost you anything. When the war is over hand it back."

But of course the publication post office of that paper is not Utopia, and the time is not the millennium.

MEANWHILE we are glad to note that the Nova Scotia Assembly has voted to subsidize shipbuilding in Nova Scotia to the tune of \$2,000,000 a year. We have been peculiarly interested in this problem for some time. We revived our interest when we published an article, nearly a year ago, showing what British Columbia was then doing under the terms of the Act passed by the late Conservative Government in that Province to build ships for the carrying trade of British Columbia. The problem is even more insistent in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick. The subsidy of the Provincial Legislature, aided by a Federal grant for the same purpose, should do a great deal to put this industry where it belongs on our Atlantic seaboard. Along with that we sincerely hope the Government will nationalize the Port of Vancouver. Fifty years ago British Columbia consented to enter the Federation of Provinces if a transcontinental railway were built to put that province on the map of Canada. It would be a fine nation-making act if, fifty years after fifty years ago, the Government of Canada should put a physical finish on Confederation by nationalizing our great port on the Pacific, which is the terminus of two transcontinentals, instead of one, as well as one of the termini of the system created by the Panama Canal. With Vancouver Port a national harbour and both Provincial and Dominion Governments at work on aids to shipbuilding, we may yet take our place as a great maritime nation.