

The St. John Standard

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 TO THE PEOPLE OF THE EMPIRE—Every fighting unit we can send to the front means one step nearer peace.

ST. JOHN, N. B., SATURDAY, JULY 27, 1918.

"We are fighting for a worthy purpose, and we shall not lay down our arms until that purpose has been fully achieved."—H. M. The King.
 TO THE PEOPLE OF THE EMPIRE—Every fighting unit we can send to the front means one step nearer peace.

PRICE FIXING.

The voice of the people is beginning to be again heard in the land upon the subject of the high cost of living, and now as formerly the Government is called upon to fix prices as a figure within the reach of moderate incomes. It would be a delightful consummation for most people to usher in an Utopia in which consumers bought at low and producers sold at high prices, or to employ the catch phrase of the Cobden school, a land whose people bought in the cheapest and sold in the dearest market. A despatch from Washington states that a growing demand for price fixing on practically all essentials is showing itself in Congress. Senators and representatives who are staying in Washington through the mid-summer Congressional recess are getting scores of letters demanding action against the profiteer. Other Congressmen who have made flying trips home to look over the political field declare the letter writers represent the overpowering sentiment of the ordinary man and woman that Congress should act to stop the upward flight of the price of necessities. The Western and Middle Western farmer is particularly insistent that Congress limit the price of shoes, clothing, farm machinery and other articles that the farmer must buy.

Ignorance of economic laws makes demagogues. A basic principle of political economy is that prices are governed by the law of supply and demand, and in the last analysis the law will probably be found immutable. Equally true is it that the dominant factor governing supply is labor. When labor is abundant the cost of labor is cheap, and therefore the price of the product of labor is low; just as, conversely, when labor is scarce and dear, all the products of labor are high in price. Labor lies at the root of the matter. Gold quartz when in the rock has neither value nor utility; only when labor mines, refines, and mints the metal does it become valuable as a commodity. The soil does not yield its harvest except by labor, nor the tree, nor the forest. Whatever be the commodity, it will be found upon analysis that the price of the article is largely fixed by the cost of the labor of production through various stages, as from the cocoon to my lady's silk robe.

This being the case, it is at once obvious that to reduce prices, the cost of labor must be reduced, and there's the rub. Not workmen alone, but all classes desire lower prices for what they buy while seeking higher prices for what they sell, an absolute impossible condition of things to bring about. Foodstuffs are probably more expensive than at any previous known period, because of the conjunction of large demand, lessened supply, and dear labor. Foodstuffs being dear, wage-earners everywhere insist on higher pay to enable them to purchase food. They find that it takes two or two and a half dollars now to buy the food that a few years ago could be obtained for one dollar, and so from the base up throughout the whole range of commodities there is insistent call for higher wages in order to preserve the equilibrium between income and outgo.

Price fixing will not remedy the high cost of living unless the prices of all commodities are fixed, including the price of labor, and adequate production is maintained, a thing exceeding the power of any democratic government. What, however, government may do is to regulate profits. The somewhat widespread notion, that the profiteer has been abroad in the land for three years past we believe to arise from a greatly exaggerated view of the facts, but that by one device or another excessive profits have been sought and sometimes derived cannot be gainsaid. The Government has taken a goodly share of these abnormal gains by means of the excess business profits tax, but this procedure does not operate to the reduction of prices. There is a marked difference between the fixing of prices and the limitation of profits. In respect of the latter the profiteer is chiefly concerned, the wholesaler, the distributor, the speculator, and the user of cold storage. Governments may regulate profits, as, indeed, the Government of Canada sometime since set out to do, but the regulation of prices of commodities generally is a Herculean task for any agency other than the inviolable law of economics; and that is the crux of the whole matter.

STANDARD CLOTHES.

In England, where the war means something to everybody, they are going in for standard clothes. It is the foundation of a system already employed in the manufacture of ships, airplanes, engines, and various munitions.

of war. Standardization has been the secret of largely increased production. The principle has been applied in the promotion of conservation also. The Englishman, or Englishwoman, eats a standard meal, at least in so far as quantities are concerned, and may yet be required to subsist upon a standard allowance in food values, expressed in calories. A Government committee has been going into the question of how many calories are necessary per day to keep up steam in the human boiler. Standard clothes, therefore, are not to be regarded as a sensational innovation. It is merely applying to the outside of the citizen a principle already familiar to his interior. It promotes economy in dress and conserves textiles. It may also tend to keep people indoors, where there is comparatively little temptation to wasteful expenditure, another distinct advantage. There was an exhibition of standard attire for males in London a few days ago, when the merits, it was described, the garments, it is understood, compared not unfavorably in cut and texture with the spacioustweeds in which the Old Country tourist in times not too remote, was wont to stride about the world.

The climax of the story is reached when it is hinted that standard clothes may soon appear upon the female form as well. This is a problem of recent gravity and one which permits of only superficial study. British officials approach it with necessary caution, and are still upon its outward skirt. It imposes upon the women of Britain an extreme test of loyalty and endurance. It is well known that clothes do not make the man, some ultra-fashionable cuts having even a contrary tendency. As to whether or not clothes make the woman, nobody knows except the woman herself although some other ladies may have their suspicions. But the right of the female to adorn herself with whatever fashion decreed or her means provided, has been established by a custom which has its hereditary origin in Eden. Hence the prospect of a standard dress for women is one of the wonders of the war. Canada may not witness its results, being a long way off, and besides, the war-time thrift of Canadian women has already found ample expression in the way of dress reform. Hardly more than ninety-nine per cent. of the women in Canada now dress as richly as they did before the war, while many have reverted voluntarily to the primitive custom of wearing the furs of animals even in summer.

HERTLING AND BELGIUM.

German reports, via Holland, to the effect that Chancellor Hertling's references to Belgium have lost him the affection of junkers, should not be taken without salt. Von Hertling's statement as to the future of Belgium was like all German statements, equivocal. It was clearly intended to create an impression which the text did not justify.

Germany's various peace offensives have always failed to stand up under one test or another. Under one test they have all failed. That test is—Belgium. Pan-Germans have frankly proclaimed their purpose of retaining Belgium. Peace-feelers have either contained no reference to Belgium, or have thinly disguised the German purpose with ambiguous phrases. Never has there been a direct and unequivocal undertaking for the complete political and economic restoration of Belgium, which is the first of the war aims of the Allies. Now, however, there comes this belated reference to Belgium's future by Count von Hertling. This reference was made in the course of a speech delivered before the Reichstag recently, but it was not made public immediately.

"The present possession of Belgium is a pawn for future negotiations," the Chancellor said. "We have no intention to keep Belgium in any form whatever."

It will be observed that this statement contradicts itself because if Germany has "no intention to keep Belgium in any form whatever," then the possession of Belgium is of no value as "a pawn for future negotiations." Germany, for example, cannot demand back her colonies in return for the freedom of Belgium if there is "no intention to keep Belgium in any form whatever." The Chancellor seems to have delivered himself of what cultured conversationalists call bunkum. Nor is his sincerity established in the subsequent assertion that:

"We are waging the war as a war of defence, as we have done from the very beginning and every imperialistic tendency and every tendency to world

domination has been remote from our minds." The manner in which Germany has been defended in the treaty of Brest-Litovsk, which despoiled Russia, and in the treaty of Versailles, which reduced Rumania to vassalage, illuminates the professions of von Hertling.

HOW HUN HIGH COMMAND HELD UP RETREAT ON AISNE AND MARNE

Continued from Page Three.
 decision was reached on the showing the Americans had made in previous smaller actions, the commander deemed it unwise to attack troops of such "extremely elevated combative value, extraordinary tenacity." The officer added that fellow officers who have participated in raids on sectors held by the Americans concluded that if the entire American army were of the same calibre as the troops the commander, Germany's cause was lost. He added that this sentiment today is Germany's greatest defeat on the battlefields of Europe and the consequent condition of the German armies on the western front counted divisions where of between forty and fifty were trained shock troops. The remainder are German divisions which had been held in Russia as too old and unfit for serious fighting. Since March 21st these 210 divisions proportionally have passed into battle, 434 times and been withdrawn to have the gaps filled.

The withdrawal of a division means that it has suffered a minimum of 20,000 casualties. Four months alone caused 863,000 casualties in a battle to which must be added considerably over 100,000 more, the latter due to the normal losses of the last six months when the divisions were holding the line. Thus with approximately a million casualties the statesman's promise has been fulfilled. Sixty per cent. of the casualties in the last six months were permanent. The French high command is keeping the enemy constantly outside the big battle area. Although never mentioned in the communiqué it was learned today that General Gouraud's army by constant nibbling on the Champagne front has retaken practically all of the outpost positions on the wide battle front that were lost July 15, including nearly all of the Massifs. The French high command is keeping the enemy constantly outside the big battle area. Although never mentioned in the communiqué it was learned today that General Gouraud's army by constant nibbling on the Champagne front has retaken practically all of the outpost positions on the wide battle front that were lost July 15, including nearly all of the Massifs.

Mother Knew.
 Little Girl (before statue in museum)—What's that?
 Attendant (after a pause)—That's Mercury, the messenger of the gods. You have read about him, no doubt?
 Mother—Of course he has. But do you know, my little girl has such a very poor memory for Scripture.

Aroused Her Curiosity.
 Dora—I wonder how old you are?
 Little Girl (before statue in museum)—What's that?
 Attendant (after a pause)—That's Mercury, the messenger of the gods. You have read about him, no doubt?
 Mother—Of course he has. But do you know, my little girl has such a very poor memory for Scripture.

Debuting 600,000 casualties, which meant the loss of the best men in the German armies from the totally inferior depot reserves who were called upon to fill their gaps the number of troops remaining in the depots today is 735,000, of which about 50,000 are youths of the youngest class conscripted to the colors. The remainder are "recuperatives." Adding the total remaining depot reserve to the German forces in the field the fighting strength of the German army is 2,760,000.

Over a year ago a Socialist member of the Reichstag succeeded in inserting in the records of that body that over 4,000,000 German dead littered Europe's battlefields. With every man, woman and literally cat and dog in the empire mobilized the total of 1917, taking the places of the fallen, his figure was presumably correct, and with present estimates of the losses, gives a startling insight into what the German people have been doing by the militarists and the Hohenzollern dynasty.

What remains of the German army today is far inferior in quality compared to the millions who flowed to mobilization in August, 1914, flooded across Belgium into France and eventually were thrown back into North-western France where in the battle which probably will go down in history as the first battle of the Marne. Such highly efficient bodies of men do not exist in Germany's two million odd men today.

Hindenburg's greed for speedy victory killed them off, and I have seen ferocious bodies with life still in them, shock troops littering the battlefield on the banks of the famous Marne. It also has been smaller and much inferior bodies with life still in them because they readily surrendered when the Allies took the offensive on the sector where the flower of the German army was not present.

Germany's remaining forces can and will perhaps fight on for months, but today they are not only outnumbered by the Allies, but militarily are dominated almost everywhere. If they elect to fight to the finish figures show that they will inevitably be overwhelmed. This is why I have attempted to show in recent cables that the German offensive is most likely to be a peaceful peace offensive.

Another proof that the enemy has great force south of Soissons is shown in the desperation of his resistance at Villenotte Thursday evening. The village lies on a quarry-like hillside, organized as a veritable fortress with bristling machine guns.

The French advanced to the outskirts several days ago. The fighting

Little Benny's Note Book

BY LEE PAPE.

Me and my cousin Artie was setting on my front steps tawking and saying different things about different things, and all of a sudden my yel-
 I wish I was a cat and could jump out of windows like that, sed Artie, and I sed, I woodent want to be a cat but I wish I could jump out of windows like that, and Artie sed, G, I got a peetch of a idee to make some money.

Wat, how? I sed, and Artie sed, You take Fluffy down to the corner where those 3 ladies is standing tawking, and start to treat him brutal, and then ill come along and rescue him as if I was insulted as anything, and the ladies will give me sumthing for being so kind to dum animals, and ill give you half.

G, thats a heck of a good idee, maybe theyll give you a dime, I sed. Maybe if I gave you a cupple of kicks it wood work even better, sed Artie.

Like fun, no sir, jest ack insulted, I sed. I can pertend kicks much harder than they reely are, they wont hert nutch, sed Artie.

No sir, nutting doing, you got new pointy shoes and everything, I sed. And I picked Fluffy up and went down to the corner where the 3 ladies was and put him on the pavement and grabbed a hold of his tale and started to pull him the opposite way he wanted to go, being fruntwards, and one lady sed, My goodness, wat a horrid crool little boy, and another one sed, I never herd of such a thing, and the other one sed, its diakracefull, thats wat it is. All meaning me, and jest then Artie came up, me watching his feet to see if he was going to kick, Artie saying, for shame, you crool ruffian, for 2 pins id kick you black and blue in the face, unhand that innocent cat, scoundril. And he came up close and I quickly left go of Fluffy's tale on account of thinking he mite hurt me, and the 3 ladies all patted Artie on the hed, saying wat a brave boy, wat a good little boy, how noble. And me and Artie stood neer them a while, and they started to tawk to each other agen and forgot all about us, and after a while me and Artie wawked away, Artie looking sad and saying the reason why nutting happened was because I woodent leave him kick me.

Last night was in many places a man to man struggle in the streets. Almost every house had to be captured separately. Two hundred prisoners are but a fraction of the enemy's casualties.

The French have advanced beyond the village on a small plateau that is separated on the eastward only by a valley from the great treeless plateau southeast of Soissons.

At Fere-en-Tardenois.
 The railroad and road centre of Fere-en-Tardenois is probably doomed as the result of the capture of Oulchy-Le-Chateau, just north of the Ourcq. The Poles have progressed eastward beyond Oulchy. The French high command is keeping the enemy constantly outside the big battle area. Although never mentioned in the communiqué it was learned today that General Gouraud's army by constant nibbling on the Champagne front has retaken practically all of the outpost positions on the wide battle front that were lost July 15, including nearly all of the Massifs.

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