

make the furbearing animals and the game for the Indians. Before the white men came our forefathers lived upon these and were independent. Then the white men came with their demands for fur, and the Indian turned from his hunting fields and became a trapper for the white man. Now we are not as our fathers were. To-day the game is scarce, the fur must be hunted long and over great distances, and because of this we have come to look to the white man for many things. We have made the men of the Great Company outside," he waved his hand dramatically toward the south, "very rich. They have great wigwams and much food stored away even in times of war. Why then should they make us suffer for something that is not our fault? Have we not these many years travelled far and hunted much for them? Have we not always paid off our 'debt' and brought much fur to the post? Yes, my brother, we have done all this. And yet the white man would take away our 'debt' when the winter is coming on, when we must travel far and many of our squaws are big with child. My brothers in council have begged me to lay these matters before you. You are one of us, have been long a part of the northland." Opapamotao stopped abruptly, gazed for a long moment at the Factor, stretching out his arms in a gesture of supplication. "You, Okosapuhchegac, understand that we are not as our forefathers; that now without the white man's aid we cannot live."

With a little sharp gesture of finality, Opapamotao resumed his seat. There was a long silence. Frazer sat with bowed head, a new realization of the situation sweeping over him.

Yes, that was it. He understood now. Recognizing as he had never fully done before, that it was he and his kind that had changed the wilderness, making the Indian a dependent.

Slowly Frazer got to his feet, duty, obedience, the training of thirty long years put behind him. "It is well, my brothers," he said, "the words of Opapamotao are good and full of wisdom. Tomorrow you shall be given a 'debt' as before, so that you may go to the wilderness trapping grounds."

Turning, Frazer went within the post.

For an hour he figured carefully, arriving at last at the total cost of this hundred and thirty Indians. It was no small sum. Then he rose and crossed to the leather bound little trunk where he kept his own papers, bringing from it his bank book on the bank in a distant city more than five hundred miles away. He had never been a saving man, and now, after all these years, stared at a balance that was pitifully small. But his heart jumped with joy, for there was enough money there to enable him to personally pay the Company for the goods he was on the morrow to supply the Indians with.

Carefully he drew out an old faded cheque book, tore off a blank and neatly filled it in, an order payable to the head office of the Great Company. This done he placed it in an envelope with his official report that to-morrow Attilaw would return with to the outside. Then, his heart strangely light, he began preparing his lonely bachelor meal.

**Editor's Note**—The great European war at its outbreak caused a terrific slump in the fur trade. The market was for a time dead. As a result of this the great fur companies operating in northern Canada notified the Department of Indian Affairs that they would not during the coming winter supply the Indians with the usual advance of food, ammunition, etc. It has been the custom of northern fur posts since time immemorial to make advances to the Indians. This was known in northern parlance as "debt," and is paid off by the Indian the following spring out of his fur catch. The Canadian government, harassed and needing money as it was to help finance a great war, still found enough to send aid to the Indians, which was distributed through the offices of the Royal North West Mounted Police. This was in the first winter following the war. Since that time, by reason of the immense demand for fur to supply the armies with coats, and also a heavy American demand caused by tens of thousands of people made wealthy by the war and

who are now buying large amounts of the finer kinds of fur, the fur market has experienced a boom, and the Indians, today, are in a little way reaping a reward from this change of conditions.

#### How They Made Some Good Fires

The fire marshal of Wisconsin has issued a bulletin which he terms a "Comedy of Errors."

He looked for a gas leak with a match, and found it.

He lighted a match to see if his gasoline tank was empty. It was not.

He smoked while filling his auto tank, but did so no more.

He smoked in the hay mow, but will not do so again.

He smoked in bed, so did the bed clothes.

He threw the matches into the waste paper basket. He is wiser now.

He threw a cigarette stub into some rubbish.

He saved his oily waste and oily rags and they burned his shop.

He washed his hands in gasoline near the stove. The doctor washes them now.

He did not worry about fires, as he "had plenty of insurance," and forgot the safety of his wife and children upstairs.

He stuffed up the chimney holes with paper and rags.

She cleaned her gloves with gasoline and saved fifteen cents, but paid the doctor and druggists fifteen dollars.

She poured kerosene into the lamp while the wick was burning.

She put gasoline into the wash boiler on the stove to make washing easier.

She dried clothes too near the stove. She used the wrong oil can.

She used gasoline to exterminate bed-bugs. They are all cremated.

She burned sulphur all over the house to fumigate.

She used the woodbox back of the range as a waste paper receptacle.

She looked for a dress in the clothes closet with a candle.

She was "coming right back," so left the electric current on in her iron.

She swung the gas bracket too close to the curtains.

She fixed up a fine tissue gasoline stove for the lamp.

She filled the tank of her gasoline stove while one burner was on.

The comedies have turned to tragedies; many of the scenes of action are in ashes and too many of the actors are maimed or asleep; others will follow, no doubt, as they are prone to ignore the advice of profiting by the errors and sufferings.

## Britain Has Solved The Rubber Riddle

Rubbers and Overshoes Are Cheap as Ever Today, While Other Necessities, Particularly Shoes, Have Nearly Doubled In Price.

Rubber has been one of the most insistent and intensely interesting problems of the twentieth century—and its solution is proving of vital importance to the Empire in this great war.

Until 1910 the world depended for its crude rubber on the forests of South and Central America and Africa. The supply increased slowly, if at all, while consumption, since the advent of the motor car, has grown enormously. From an average of \$1.00 a pound in 1908, the price jumped to \$3.00 in 1910. Manufactures of rubber kept pace—no doubt you remember what rubbers cost for a year or two—and the situation looked alarming.

The search for synthetic rubber was redoubled in vigor. German chemists had been working on it, and the world seemed to expect them to come through with some ingenious process for manufacturing rubber from its known ingredients, on a commercial scale and at a low cost. But the world still waits—and so does the Kaiser, judging from his indignation over Britain's refusal to let him import rubber by registered mail.

Relief from a rubber famine came instead from the far-sighted development policy of Britain's Empire builders, who for years, in spite of general ridicule, had been encouraging the growth of plantation rubber on a large scale in Ceylon, Sumatra, Java and the Malay States. Money was advanced to planters to carry them through the seven-year period before the trees started to produce, and hundreds of thousands of acres were planted.

By 1910, when the pinch came, British plantations produced 8,200 tons—11% of the world's output. The next year saw 14,000 tons of plantation rubber—nearly 20%. In 1912 it had grown to 29%—in 1913 to 44%—in 1914 to 59%—last year to 68%—or 107,867 tons. This year's production is estimated at 150,000 tons, or 75% of the world's supply.

With three-quarters of the rubber production thus controlled by Great Britain, and the seas in the grip of her mighty fleet, the Allies are assured of an abundant supply for war purposes, while the Teutons' troubles from lack of it are growing daily more serious.

Having a practical monopoly of the supply, and the power to impose such prices as she chose, Great Britain has made it, except to her enemies, a benevolent monopoly, and has set the price of crude rubber lower than it was before the war.

To Canadians this is doubly important, because the climate makes rubber footwear a necessity. Now, when shoe prices are soaring, while rubbers and overshoes are as cheap as ever, it is clearly economy to protect expensive leather footwear with rubber, and to wear rubber farm boots instead of those made of leather. Besides the big money saving, there is the valuable protection to health. Wet feet and colds go hand in hand, with a ghastly train of ills—easily avoided by wearing rubbers.

Then there is the patriotic side. Vast quantities of leather are absolutely necessary for the army, and the scarcity is growing. Every pair of shoes we save helps to ease the situation, and so serves the Empire to which we owe this welcome cheapness of rubbers.

**Save your Shoes and Serve the Empire!**