

New York Tribune.
 First to Last—the Truth—News—Editorials—Advertisements.
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A Grave Issue with Germany.

The torpedoing of the *Guilflight*, an American oil tank steamer, off the Scilly Islands, raises the clearest and gravest kind of an issue between the United States and Germany. It marks the head-on collision of two opposing policies. It must put to a decisive test the sincerity and validity of the German Admiralty's "war zone" proclamation and the sincerity and validity of our counter notice that, so far as American lives and vessels were concerned, Germany would pursue her programme of terrorism at her own peril.

Which government, in effecting a peaceful settlement of the *Guilflight* case, is going to eat its own words? Which policy is to survive and displace the other?

When the German Admiralty gave notice that as an incident of its unlegalized campaign of destruction against enemy merchantmen entering British, Irish and Channel French ports it might, inadvertently or otherwise, torpedo neutral ships and destroy the lives of neutrals, our government replied that it would expect from Germany a faithful observance of the established rules of international law in the treatment of shipping encountered inside the "war zone." The State Department said, in effect, that if American lives were lost through the torpedoing on sight of allied merchantmen, or American vessels, carrying contraband, were sunk instead of being searched and held for the action of a prize court, this country "would be constrained to hold the imperial German government to a strict accountability for such acts of their naval authorities and to take any steps it might be necessary to take to safeguard American lives and to secure to American citizens the full enjoyment of their acknowledged rights on the high seas."

The *Guilflight* was sunk and three of its crew were sacrificed in pursuance of Germany's programme of checking neutral trade with the unblockaded ports of Great Britain, Ireland and Northern France. Dutch, Swedish and Norwegian ships have been torpedoed for the same purpose. This defiance of neutral rights has not been inadvertent; it has been deliberate. If we now hold Germany accountable for the outrage committed on the *Guilflight* and the German government consents to make reparation, the proclamation of the German Admiralty becomes practically suspended so far as the United States is concerned. The Germans have contended that they were within their rights in threatening to sink neutral vessels traversing the "war zone." If they now admit that they had no justification for sinking the *Guilflight* the whole fabric of argument on which the "war zone" proclamation was based collapses.

Of course, Germany may again make use of the ancient treaty of navigation and friendship between the United States and Prussia. Under that she must make compensation to us whatever the character of the cargo carried by the *Guilflight* and whatever the degree of regularity claimed to have been observed in the destruction of that vessel. The Berlin authorities may try to treat the *Guilflight* case as only a repetition of the *Frye* case.

But according to the reports so far received the German submarine commander did not attempt to hold up the *Guilflight* and pass upon the contraband character of her cargo. He simply dispatched her on faith, as the Dutch, Swedish and Norwegian vessels were dispatched. It will therefore be extremely difficult to read into the incident the same degree of regularity as was alleged in the *Frye* controversy. Unless the German Foreign Office is unusually adroit, it will not be able to meet the just complaint of the United States without admitting the invalidity of the "war zone" proclamation.

On our part there can be no retreat. We are standing for the preservation of our sovereignty on the high seas. We oppose encroachments on neutral rights at the convenience of belligerents trying to enforce the doctrine that might makes right. We are fighting the battle of civilization and international law. We must make good our pledge to take any steps which it may be necessary to take to protect American lives and property from the illegal attacks of belligerents.

Food, and Food Only!

Time was in this city when a restaurant was understood to be a place for obtaining food in peace and comfort, not a dance hall or a variety show, with food as a side issue. For the benefit of old-fashioned people, who still desire to take their nourishment undiluted by fox trots and vaudeville, it is to be hoped that License Commissioner Bell's regulation of the cabarets will start downward revision which will stop just on the further side of elimination.

Not all the provender places have delivered themselves over to this digestion-destroying, misanthropy-multiplying device. It is still possible for the initiated to get a dinner in public eating houses

Slackness in British Factories.

There is probably a great deal of truth in the objections of the English labor leaders to Mr. Lloyd George's diagnosis of the troubles in the shipyards and elsewhere. There is truth, of course, on his side, too, but it may reasonably be suspected that he has laid too much to the charge of intemperance and that other causes, too, contribute considerably to the prevailing slackness.

Mr. Will Crooks, speaking for his own constituency, attributes the conditions at the Woolwich Arsenal to a want of intelligent organization. Though nine months have passed since the war began, no facilities have as yet been provided for the men to get their meals, and this, he intimates, is but characteristic of many shortcomings to be found there and elsewhere. His own opinion is that accusations of excessive drinking "have been spread broadcast by employers to cover up their own shortcomings," and this opinion is apparently shared by other labor leaders, who are no less resentful of the general disposition to lay all the blame on the intemperate workman.

Though there may be little ground for such a charge, a deliberate conspiracy among employers, it is highly probable that conditions in the factories do contribute to the slackness observed there. "The British Medical Journal" suggested not long ago that the government would do well to appoint a committee of physiologists to su-

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whereat the palate may have its pleasures undisturbed by whirling dervishes or musical reviews—so-called. But the individual who feels hunger's pangs after 10 p. m. must hunt far and faithfully to find a refuge from song and dance. This, too, in a year which most restaurant people admit to have been financially and not wondrously hopeful in its prospects.

It seems time for retrenchment and Reform. Cabarets and miniature music shows are costly. If some enterprising food purveyor would only put into his cuisine, without raising the prices of his dishes, the money now spent for "entertainment" it is not too much to believe that his fame would travel far.

Serbia's Plight.

Those who have contributed in any way to the relief of unhappy Serbia may find some sort of melancholy satisfaction in the testimony of an eminent historian whose letter we publish to-day—such satisfaction as lies in the assurance, if further assurance were necessary, that their help was sorely needed and that for what they have done the sufferers are profoundly grateful.

All witnesses who have come from Serbia of late are of one mind, that it is quite impossible to exaggerate the sorrow and misery of her people. Mr. Trevelyan's plain yet harrowing account of what he himself witnessed there last winter confirms the observations of other travellers, and in this, as in all relations of the kind, it is manifest that not half the story is told. Out of the horror and misery on all sides it is possible only to take here or there an example that may serve to suggest the hideous suffering that prevails everywhere.

What has hitherto been done for these unfortunate yet uncomplaining people is small indeed in comparison with their needs, and it may well be hoped that Mr. Trevelyan's moving story of their plight may serve as a stimulus to further efforts on their behalf.

Politics or the People?

Mr. McAneny's analysis of the appropriation bills is ample justification for Mayor Mitchell's appeal to the Governor to delay action on financial matters until the city authorities have had a chance to be heard. Assumption of the necessity for a direct tax this year is based on the idea that each item in the appropriations as adopted by the Legislature is imperatively needed for the state's welfare and may not be cut one cent. If \$10,000,000 and more can be chopped out of the bills, as Mr. McAneny says, reasons for the direct tax become mere excuses and imposition of the tax itself an outrage, not alone on this city but on the state.

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pervise ventilation and heating in places where men work and to advise generally on questions relating to fatigue. It anticipated the labor leaders in attributing the failure in the supply of munitions largely to strain from overtime work to the unsatisfactory conditions in which the work is done. "Many of our factories," it said, "are worked day and night, and new hands taken on at a factory where gunstocks are made have complained to us of the excessive closeness—the old hands, they say, will have the windows shut."

This is but one complaint. There are many others no less considerable. Girl machinists are obliged to sit on benches in shifts of four hours morning and afternoon; they have not enough physical exercise to keep them in good condition. Working in badly ventilated, overheated rooms and without sufficient rest and recreation, neither men nor women can be expected to keep up to the pitch required in these strenuous times. The conditions, moreover, are peculiarly calculated to promote drinking, and it is not at all unlikely that the intemperance complained of is in large measure a result of these conditions.

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The bills now pending before Governor Whitman are no exception. With a total of \$65,000,000, against approximately \$57,000,000 last year, they contain salary raises and department allowances which are manifestly as much patronage grabs as were the various "ripper bills" which displaced Democratic officials for the benefit of Republicans. How much of this they contain only officialdom has yet been able to estimate, for the printed copies of the bills are just off the press.

A direct tax of 1.7 mills will mean that next year's budget here will have to include \$14,000,000 to pay the tax. That is, the city's tax rate will go up 17.5 points, to a figure which the Mayor well says will be "well-nigh confiscatory" of property here, on its 100 per cent valuation.

Governor Whitman has the choice between cutting down appropriations to a point permitting him to veto the direct tax and approving this practical confiscation of city property. He has the choice between economy—rigid economy, which is an inseparable part of sound administration—and money-grabbing which will handicap this city's development seriously and bring hardship to thousands of its citizens. He has the choice between helping to build up a party machine on public funds and curtailing this city's school facilities, its disease prevention and health propagation work, its recreation extension, its charitable activities.

After what Secretary Josephus recently said about love and marriage, he surely can't have the heart to refuse the request of a Brooklyn girl that the Olympia be sent here, so she may see her sweetheart.

Price of Ice to Large Consumers Advanced.—Headline. They may be trusted to pass along the advance to the poor ultimate consumers without delay.

Dr. Elliot Sets Forth Basis of Peace.—Headline. Peace with whom? Professor Kuno Meyer or Dr. Bernburg?

Italy's Pending Decision.—Headline. It used to be impending.

Antiseptic Tooth Washes.—From The Lancet. The use of a tooth wash does not approach the conditions of a laboratory test, though there can be little doubt that a good deal of germicidal work in the mouth is done by the vigorous application of the toothbrush, and it may be pointed out that the tongue may well be included in the process. To be effective, however, the action of all antiseptics takes time, according to the vitality of the organisms they encounter, and usually the tooth brushing process does not occupy many seconds. This question of time exposure is important, but it is very generally overlooked and consequently the antiseptic treatment of the teeth falls short of that effectiveness which is shown to be the case in laboratory experiments. The tooth washing process should be more prolonged and the antiseptic wash allowed to remain in contact with the teeth and gums for some minutes instead of seconds before finally washing the mouth clear of antiseptic with plain water.

Buds Awakening.—Everywhere 'neath the ground,
 Listening for the gentle sound
 Of the magic voice of spring,
 Lies a tiny living thing.
 How we welcome baby flowers,
 Wakened by the misty showers;
 From their mother earth they creep
 At the glorious sun to peep.
 H. L. VARNUM.
 Newport, R. I., May 3, 1915.



NOT A SHORT CONSTITUTION

But One Making Definite Provisions for Governmental Structure.

To the Editor of The Tribune.

Sir: I am quite frequently hearing expressions of opinion that the New York constitution should be a "short" document, "containing only essentials"; that it should "define the fundamentals of government" and "leave the law-making power to the Legislature." It seems to me that this public impression—if I may call it such—is fanciful and sentimental. In other words, I think the "essentials" are very numerous and should be adequately taken care of.

For instance, it appears to me to be as plain as A, B, C that the time is now ripe for determining accurately the structure of state government, defining the appropriate departments in the constitution and making the various heads of departments constitutional officers. At the present time there are more unnecessary departments than there are necessary departments. The functions of these various departments cross and intercross, and each year the situation becomes worse instead of better.

Further than that, it has become the established practice for each succeeding administration to reorganize departments, principally for the purpose of securing partisan jobs, the Legislature of 1915 probably being the worst offender in this respect that we have ever had in Albany. At the risk of a much longer constitution, I should like to see our Constitutional Convention go into this subject with the greatest thoroughness, defining the ten, twenty or thirty departments which it regards as absolutely essential; create these as constitutional departments and provide that all new functions which may arise must be assigned by the Legislature to one of these departments.

I do not see how it can be expected that a man of character and experience can be asked to make the sacrifice of accepting a tenure of office of six years at a moderate salary, when there is added to it the contingency that even that six-year term may be chopped off by a ripper Legislature at the end of two years.

In the same connection I have introduced a proposition for amendment to the constitution providing among other things for the re-establishment of the state convention for state officers. I have heard the suggestion made that, whatever the merits of my proposition, this is a question which should be left to the Legislature. I do not agree. It has been the policy in past constitutions to define with some particularity the conduct of elections. For instance, as to registration. I do not think that in defining one or two details the constitution goes far enough. I think it high time that the voters should be able to familiarize themselves with the fundamentals of nominations and elections in periods of twenty years instead of having to learn annually of changes in the election system.

There are also a great many other subjects which will occur to any one as to which there is real need for scientific definition and stability, and I think that the safeguarding of these various subjects by adequate provision in the constitution is of more importance than the idea that we should have a "short" constitution, rather than a full constitution. I should not be speaking on this subject at this time except that I feel some one should make this alternative suggestion, so that the general public may have it in mind. JOHN GODFREY SAXE.
 New York, May 3, 1915.

Dummy Musicians in Parks.

To the Editor of The Tribune.

Sir: I was very pleased to see the letter published by you on April 24 calling attention to the absurdly inefficient manner in which the money devoted to music in our public parks is administered. During the last year I attended as many of these performances as possible, and the conclusion was forced upon me that the city money is being shamefully wasted.

I detected quite a number of "dummy" musicians, men who sat with an instrument in their hands which never "spoke" at all. The letter signed Uriel Davis brings out very clearly the crying need for responsible and expert oversight. If there is, which seems incredible, a committee of supervision of park bands it is pitifully incompetent.

MARY S. BEERE.
 Brooklyn, April 30, 1915.

Christian Science and Deafness.

To the Editor of The Tribune.

Sir: The objector to Captain Mathews' way of describing his experience with Christian Science healers is like many other well-meaning people who are strong believers in free speech, free press, free schools and the right to worship or not worship God according to the dictates of their own consciences until you strike their golden calf on the nose. Yes, I paid the aurist his price. I paid the Christian Science teacher her price, and the time spent with each made the cost per week the same. I did not accept free treatment: I told the lady she