The Sun.

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The Greatest Mistake of All.

Mr. TAFT hits the nail on the head when he says that the ugly complication with Mexico is the result of a series of mistakes the greatest of which is unpreparedness. Plainly that is the mistake of which the First Chief is now taking advantage with the guile of a born politician. With our population of more than 100,000,000 we have about 15,000 regulars in Chihuahua and 25,000 more in our own territory along the Mexican border, while we are mobilizing about 120,000 National Guardsmen, ostensibly for patrol duty in the border States but really for campaigning in Mexico. That is the sum of our present resources.

It will be some time, perhaps months, before the National Guard is completely equipped and ready to take the field in Mexico if war follows Mr. WILSON'S cautious negotiations with the de facto Government to escape or postpone armed intervention. The regulars have been patrolling the border for more than two years and are physically fit for any test. Those who are with General PERSHING in Chihuahua have done some hard work in that difficult country and know the Mexicans from frequent contact with them. But the National Guardsmen, in the opinion of army officers, must undergo military and physical training on the border, not for days but for months, before it would be prudent to throw them into a campaign in support of the regulars.

The regulars are supposed to be always in the pink of condition, but campaigning in the desert sorely tried their stamina. National Guardsmen are never in the pink of condition until they have had a good deal of camp duty, rigorous drilling and plenty of hiking in manœuvres. Moreover, the great majority of them are strangers to the exacting climate of Texas and northern Mexico. That they must be hardened as well as trained for active service in Mexico, and that the process will take some time, is not to be disputed.

As regards equipment, including motor transportation and the apparatus and skilled men for air scouting, the regulars are still far from ready. It is not necessary to discuss the case of the National Guard. All this the most intelligent Mexican officers understand, and their knowledge naturally leads them to the conclusion that whatever the future might have in store for a truculent de facto Government and its deluded supporters it can afford to present a brave front now and indite defiant notes to the United States.

What a different situation there would be to-day if the President and Congress, warned by portents of the revolution in Mexico and put on their guard by the possibilities of the titanic conflict in Europe, had hastened in the autumn of 1914 to place the United States on a war footing to protect its territory and be in a position to make the Government's policies respected. If the army reorganization bill had been put on the statute book in October, 1914, and appropriations had been provided for the complete equipment of both the army and the National Guard, Mexico would not be pettifogging and defying the United States in this summer of 1916. Long since 100,000 regulars would have been patrolling the border, ready if the summons should come to invade Mexico with as little delay as marked the German advance into Belgium in the first days of August two years ago. And for reenforcements if needed there would be 100,000 more regulars and 500,000 Guardsmen and volunteers.

Mr. TAFT is eternally right: the present ugly complication with Mexico is the result of a series of mistakes, but the greatest of all has been unpreparedness.

Austria's Fate.

Judging from the expressions emanating from Petrograd the Russians believe that their successes on the eastern front, if carried out, as they have planned, to the complete defeat of the Austrian army, will mean the elimination of Austria-Hungary as an important factor in the war, if not her collapse as a nation.

The condition of Austria has been considered the most critical of all the warring countries, with the exception, perhaps, of Turkey. Austria is said to be the least imbued with patriotism and to be held together only by the affection for her aged monarch, her customs and political necessities. These elements of cohesion, it has been said, could not withstand a great reverse; defeat would not arouse patriotic determination, because patriotism cannot exist in such a heterogeneous state.

No doubt there is some basis for this belief. There has been no truce among the races of the nation, and they still hold their grievances and still struggle for their rights or for preeminence. The Slavonic population, that has for years been vainly contending for a proper representation, had no desire for war against their Slavonic brothers; and there is reason to believe that they were not zealously aggressive in the first campaigns against the Russians and the Serbians. The Bohemians are in practical revolt over the question of home rule for the Czechs. The Rumanians of Transylvania have been agitating for union with the kingdom on the south that would gather all of the race within one national boundary.

But in each of these races there have been long feuds. The northern and the southern Serbs are not in accord; the Croatians are at dagger points with the Slavonians and the people of the Serbian kingdom. The Poles of Galicia are comparatively contented and better satisfied with the rights they possess than the questionable autonomy that might be secured by concerted action with bodies of North Slavs. The Rumanians of the kingdom have never come to definite agreement as to the terms upon which their Transylvanian brothers were to be incorporated in their nation. The German element could conceive no greater misfortune than to come under Prussian rule. The Hungarians do not love the Austrians; but at the same time their memory is long enough not to forget that it was Russia that in 1848 helped the Hapsburgs crush their insurrection for national freedom.

Galling as the rule of the Hapsburgs has been to most of the races, and far short as the monarchy has fallen of giving any of them the representation, freedom or recognition that they demanded, yet they have clung to it and fought for it. If they are lacking in patriotism they have at least something of an idea to fight for—they can preserve their national or racial unity as well under the Austrian double eagle as under the standard of any of its enemies. Besides, Austria defeated is not Austria lost. The same fortune that followed her in the past may continue with her. The Emperor FRANCIS JOSEPH, whose years span most of the life of modern Austria, never made a conquest in war, he never returned from the field to his capital a victor, yet his monarchy has remained during all that time one of the great Central Powers of Europe.

Restored to the Colors With Honor and Back Pay.

The discharge without honor of several companies of the Twenty-fifth Infantry, a negro regiment, for complicity in the Brownsville raid in the summer of 1906 has proved a blessing in disguise to fourteen of the disgraced soldiers. They are serving again with the colors, and each man must regard himself as a Crœsus, if he has not already dissipated the bounty bestowed upon him by a just Government. Enlisted men are generally improvident, and the most impecunious of all are the soldiers of the negro regiments, who are born gamblers. Imagine, then, the beatitude of the fourteen lucky soldiers of the regiment under a cloud when they found themselves back in the ranks with arrears of pay ranging in amount from $1,289.75 to $2,419.65, the last sum falling into the lap of Private ROBERT WILLIAM, a troop cook.

The truth about the Brownsville raid will never be known, although there were two investigations, one by a military court and the other by Congress, the latter dragging on for more than a year. It was after the first investigation that the battalion was summarily discharged, although most of the men who suffered could have had no hand in "shooting up" Brownsville. Some of them knew nothing about it, and others sinned by silence. The number of soldiers actually guilty of the atrocity must have been small.

Congress came at last to the relief of the helpless innocent by adopting a resolution directing the President to appoint a board of army officers to make what was practically a third investigation. They were authorized to receive and pass upon applications by the discharged soldiers for reenlistment with back pay and allowances. Some of the highest officers in the army were on the board and they went over the old evidence and listened to the pleas of the applicants, several of whom had been witnesses in the military and Congressional inquiries. These officers were convinced that fourteen of the old soldiers had nothing to do with the notorious raid, either as principals or as accessories.

And so their dishonorable discharge was struck from the record, and they resumed their rank and places in the army as if the intervening years of stigma had been wiped out. But each now had a bank account, if he were thrifty. Three corporals, ten privates and a cook rejoined the old Twenty-fifth. Some of the innocent are dead; others, no doubt, are still recorded as discharged without honor, being too distant to avail themselves of the chance of vindication. We trust that none of the guilty is in the honor and back pay list.

It is a gratification to know that by this act of reinstatement justice has been done in some worthy cases, and that in effect the precipitate action that caused the innocent to suffer ignominiously with the guilty stands condemned as irrational and unjust.

Branch Banks vs. Weak Banks.

Representative GLASS, chairman of the House Banking and Currency Committee, has the right idea of the kind of legislation which will tend to strengthen the banking system of the country. It is much better than the notion which the Comptroller of the Currency recently exploited in his bill proposed to enable small national banks to engage in non-banking activities in order to earn a living. The branch banks plan contained in the bill just introduced by Representative GLASS more clearly contemplates a step in the right direction.

Comptroller WILLIAMS thinks that the little national banks with a capital of $25,000, and constituting 27 per cent. of all the national banks, should be allowed to conduct a brokerage business in insurance policies and real estate loans. He implies that there is some connection between the desire of many such banks to make a fair return on their capital and the usurious interest which is exacted of so many rural borrowers. Accordingly, he wants to have them empowered to extend the scope of their occupations. Yet he might as well urge the creation of banking departments as an annex to the country general stores as to advocate the authorization of a real estate and insurance brokerage addition to the banking business.

If there are many small banks so situated that they do not make enough money to keep them going they are not an element of strength in the banking system. The process of creating a democracy of credit such as we have heard so much about can be carried too far. If the opportunities of a given community do not suffice to reward adequately the shareholders of an independent bank, the kind of banking business which will be done there is hardly to be commended. A weak bank cannot render good and safe service, and a multiplicity of weak banks is a defect in the whole financial structure.

The bill which Representative GLASS has introduced provides for the limited creation of branches of strong national banks. The measure recognizes in its very limitations the difficulties which have to be overcome in making branch banking a part of our financial organization. Anything of the sort is bound to be looked upon as a competitive invasion of a field already occupied by banks with an inferior equipment to meet competition. Nevertheless, the process of banking reform which was started with the Federal Reserve act in 1913 can be carried along in one direction only by permitting competent and strong banks to set up branches. In most of the progressive economic countries large banking advantages, in some respects superior to ours, are conferred by perfected methods of branch banking.

A Volunteer From Congress.

Representative WOODSON RATCLIFFE OGLESBY of the Twenty-fourth New York district, who was born in Shelby county, Kentucky, and is now in his forty-eighth year, has set a fine example to his contemporaries in public life by offering his services to the National Guard of New York in the present emergency. He revives the tradition of a day when Americans in Congress or eminent in State affairs volunteered to serve their country in the field. Patriotism was spontaneous. There was no need of appeals to Americanism. The terms were synonymous.

Among the volunteers for the war with Mexico in 1847 were Senators, Representatives and Governors, and in many cases they were not young men. FRANKLIN PIERCE, afterward President, who had served two terms in the House and one term in the Senate and was 43 years of age, offered himself as a private, but was made an officer and appointed to command a brigade. JEFFERSON DAVIS had just finished a term in the House of Representatives when he volunteered for Mexico at the age of 39. Dying in 1889, JEFFERSON DAVIS survived by two years Colonel ALEXANDER WILLIAM DONIPHAN of Missouri, who raised a regiment of volunteers and made a famous march from Valverde, New Mexico, to Chihuahua, fighting against great odds as he advanced. DONIPHAN was also 39 years of age.

Representative OGLESBY served with the Seventy-first Regiment of the New York National Guard in the Spanish war of 1898, and if it will receive him into its ranks again he will resign from the House of Representatives. But the ex-Kentuckian seems to be the kind of man who would make no conditions when his country called him.

If it is to be a question whether Earl CURZON or Earl DERBY shall succeed the Duke of CONNAUGHT as Governor-General of Canada, her loyal people, assuming they know the noble Earls, would naturally prefer DERBY. The self-importance of CURZON is too awful for ordinary intercourse.

HENRY FORD must have credit for ordinary gumption after all. He declares that his attitude toward men in his employment who belong to the National Guard has been misrepresented. "When they come back," he says, "it will certainly be without prejudice." Without prejudice! That is a good deal for a pacifist of Mr. FORD'S stripe to say. We sometimes think that if HENRY ever got his dander up he could pass muster as a soldier.

The job of holding horses while another soldier empties his rifle into the enemy is not highly esteemed in the cavalry, for the enlisted man hates to be out of the fighting. But at Carrizal there was a compensation, inglorious as it might be.

One of our aeroplanes, descending to an altitude of 900 feet, attacked with a machine gun a horse transport and caused it to stampede.—*British headquarters report.*

In the warfare of the future when the sky is full of aircraft with "field guns" as well as machine guns, also the most destructive explosives, operations on terra firma will undergo such limitations as are now undreamed of.

Who ever heard of paying pensions before war was declared?—*Senator* GORE.

The objection of Mr. GORE to Senator REED'S bill to pay enlisted men in the National Guard who have been called to the colors $30 a month was figurative rather than pertinent. The pensions would come later and no doubt copiously.

The Russian offensive has introduced some new geography that is at least pronounceable. Kuty and Kimpolung are a welcome relief from Przemysl. But the bitter must be taken with the sweet. In the "Zublino - Watyn - Swinjatsche line, south of Tortschin," there is the old orthographical frightfulness.

B-r-r-r, how cold the Argentine aeronaut BRADLEY must have been when drifting in his balloon over the Uspallata Pass in the Andes!

THE STATUS IN MEXICO.

If It Is Not War Now, What Can It Be Called?

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* What is the difference between war and our position in Mexico? If the presence of our armed force in Mexico in daily and deadly encounters with the Mexicans is not war, what is it?

Our officers and troops are being killed or captured by the score, and to my mind it has every appearance of war, though the Washington authorities have not yet given it that name. Congress, I believe, is the only power that can declare war, and yet I can't see what change it will make. CRITIC.

SOUTHAMPTON, June 24.

Is Not Benevolent Intervention the Only Solution?

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* It appears now that the Government of Mexico is not only incapable of preserving order in its territory but is unwilling to take the necessary steps to that end. Instead of accepting our cooperation it has done all in its power to drive us out, and consequently President Wilson could not, after our troops had dealt with the outlaws, use his authority to render the Carranza Government efficient, an action which would be proper if Mexico had not been guilty of bad faith.

As intervention is both just and necessary, and as South America seems to think we are in the right, the President might, after proclaiming martial law for Mexico (as seems inevitable), undertake to hold an election in that country, allowing the people to choose their constitutional government, and then he should back that Government as we back the Cuban Government.

NEW YORK, June 24. J. F.

Our Mission Is to Protect Our Citizens, Not to Serve Humanity.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* What is the use of further theorizing on the Mexican situation? From the facts recited in Mr. Lansing's latest note to the "de facto Government" it is perfectly obvious that Mr. Carranza has for some months past been determined to force a state of war between the two countries. Granted that he is a man of intelligence, he has deliberately chosen "to ride for a fall," in the expectation of uniting Mexico and being the acknowledged leader after it is all over but the shouting.

So, too, what is the use of disguising the fact that we are forced into "intervention"? Why call it going into Mexico to insure "pacification of the border"? We have a thankless job to perform. We neither seek nor desire acquisition of a territory with such a hybrid population, but we have a duty to perform, not for "humanity," but for our own self-respect in the protection of our own citizens, and the sooner and more effectually we get at the job the better. EDWARD S. FIELD.

NEW YORK, June 24.

The Decoration.

What shall we pin upon our hero's breast?
A tribute from America the free,
A symbol that above his heart may rest
When time has passed into eternity?
A cross, a golden star with jewels set,
A ribbon that will mark him as a knight?
A belted guerdon of his country's debt
To one who bled and gloried in the fight?
An arch-way, mammoth, curving to the cloud,
A monument that columns to the sky
With sculptured legend of his story proud
That men may bravely live and bravely die?
He vaults the flag into the flame of fight
And rushes on the cataract of fire
That threatens walls of liberty and right,
Leaving his life upon the nation's pyre.
Sound but the camp good night in twilight dew—
And clasp his hands, smiling into his eyes,
For God has reached to mark his manhood true
And crowned him with a laurel from the skies.

KATE MASTERSON.

On a Dakota Prairie.

A week ago I heard the church bells chime,
And calling school bells sounding, loud and near;
I saw the arc lights shining, white and clear,
And saw the wheels pass by that war with time.
But now, before a cottage door I stand,
And see the wide, bare prairie fade away
Into the lucent brightness of the day—
Unshadowed day, fresh from the Maker's hand.
No life seems near except the browsing herd—
Far tiny dots upon a sea of green—
And a faint spiral on the clear air seen
Shows where some settler his lone fire has stirred.
No mariner feels more alone than I—
Are bells still ringing, do wheels still flash by?

NINETTE M. LOWATES.

The Conqueror

Throughout the length and breadth of earth to-day
Men spring upon their brothers, fain to slay;
We cry upon red tides we cannot stem
That Corsica has conquered Bethlehem

'Tis yet too soon to yield the victor's palm.
The end shall come, and in the final calm
It shall be plain for all mankind to see
Helena may not conquer Calvary.

McLANDBURGH WILSON.

THE "MESS IN MEXICO."

Letter to Bill in the Middle West, Who Wants Information.

DEAR BILL: I have your letter saying that you and your neighbors are much disturbed over the existing Mexican situation and asking if I can throw any real light on it. This is not a cause for wonder, for here in Washington as well as in Boston, New York, Philadelphia, &c., much uncertainty is seen among men in all walks of life. Therefore it is natural that there should be anxiety among those like yourself who live on farms or in small towns in the interior of the country.

Let me say at once that war with Mexico may be decided any moment one way or the other by any of a hundred possible developments. In fact actual hostilities or a resumption of "peaceful" relations may occur before this letter reaches you. At the moment of writing, however, war has not been declared.

You ask whether the country as seen from Washington is supporting the President. And I can reply without hesitation that in this crisis the country certainly is supporting the President, but that as a whole the country certainly is not supporting Woodrow Wilson. This distinction you will do well to keep in mind.

In other words, when American citizens and American troopers are being wantonly killed either by Mexican bandits or by soldiers or others attached to the de facto Government of Mexico, the whole United States is standing alongside the President, shoulder to shoulder. The only exceptions are a few publicity seeking freaks, both men and women, who are properly regarded as irresponsible children, and to whom no serious attention is paid.

You ask for a frank statement of the situation as I see it here. I will endeavor to give it, without prejudice, without fear of being misunderstood. Mexico is an enormous country. Part of it is civilized, but a large part consists of mountains, passes almost inaccessible, high plateaus, jungles, with means of communication extremely difficult and with roads lacking. The population may only be guessed at—roughly estimated—for it has been impossible to obtain an accurate counting at regular intervals of the millions upon millions of savage and semi-savage Indians. If war is declared and the Indians join, as they probably would, years may ensue before law and order are restored and peace consummated. Just now some newspapers and some men in public life who ought to know better seem to think that 50,000 regular troops and 100,000 National Guardsmen could "clean up Mexico in a few months." In my opinion this is an insane proposition. If we undertake to "clean up Mexico," put down anarchy, restore processes of law and maintain order until the Mexican people can continue a government of their own whereby law, order and safety for foreign residents will be a permanent fact—if we undertake this big job, I repeat, it may mean that we will be in for a war lasting years, a war in which 500,000 or more seasoned troops will be needed before the job is finally accomplished.

What will such an undertaking cost? Nobody can tell how many hundreds of millions in money. And God alone knows the multitude of young American lives which would be sacrificed in the colossal task. Is the effort worth the price? The answer to this is absolutely sure: If Mexico forces us to act we will go in, with set teeth, and finish the job regardless of cost in life or treasure.

You say that out in your part of the country people cannot understand just how we got into this mess—for it is a mess, an awful mess. In justice to the Administration, I must add that here, along the Atlantic seaboard, there also is a difference of opinion. Yet the fact remains that whether or not Huerta was legally elected President of the Mexican Republic some years ago, he really and truly was exercising the functions of that office when Woodrow Wilson decided that it was for the best interests of "humanity" to overthrow him and fire him out of the country.

I may be wrong in sizing up the situation, but it is my honest belief that right there was where all the serious trouble started. Huerta was in charge of the Mexican Government. If the people of Mexico did not want him it was up to them to eliminate him and put some one of their own choosing in his place. Why, in the name of all sense and reason, Woodrow Wilson should have "butted in," as he unquestionably did, is a problem that nobody yet has answered, to my knowledge. Some who are lenient in their attitude toward Mr. Wilson seek to excuse this hazardous action by saying that he couldn't help it—that it was due to his "temperament." As to this, also, every citizen is entitled to his own opinion. But considering possible consequences, we may be pardoned for regarding with mixed feelings a national Administration which is swayed not by observance of international law, not by calm, cool consideration of things as they are, but by "temperament" of any kind.

And after Huerta comes Villa, and after Villa comes Carranza, and after Carranza come squadrons of bandits invading United States territory, shooting up border towns that are under the sovereignty and protection of the American flag. And now we see the existing crisis. Also, we should not forget that more than three years ago this same "temperamental" gentleman ordered to Vera Cruz one of the largest and most powerful fleets of warships ever assembled under the Stars and Stripes, with the avowed determination of compelling "a salute to the Flag." We all know what happened—we know the number of men wounded, the splendid young fellows of the marines who were killed. Likewise we know, as does all the world, that after months of bravado, of "hot air," this great fleet was "withdrawn"—for reasons not yet announced—and that the Flag has not been saluted down to date.

Think over this one incident, Bill, and then imagine what opinion you would have of the United States, this great nation of 100,000,000 people, and resources immeasurable, if you were a Mexican. Honestly, wouldn't you laugh? Wouldn't you be filled with glee? Wouldn't you have downright contempt for such a nation? Is it any wonder that hordes of stupid, ignorant Mexicans, including multitudes of Indians in the fastnesses of those inaccessible mountains, regard the present embodiment of Uncle Sam as a great, flabby, overgrown child, lacking decision as well as virility, whose face may be slapped with impunity?

And then, to make it worse, that weird, "temperamental" outburst that sometimes a nation may be "too proud to fight"; the vacillating policy, regarding military and naval preparedness; the well nigh treasonable mouthings of some men and some newspapers. Of course those who are near the centre of things pay no attention to these people or papers—they are annoying, at times irritating, but nobody takes them seriously. Yet their outgivings undoubtedly are accepted in Mexico, as they once were in Germany, as representing an important phase of public opinion. We must not forget, either, that in defiance of the highest army opinion Woodrow Wilson directed or assented to lifting the embargo on rifles, machine guns, ammunition, &c., and allowed these elements of destruction to go into Mexico. President Taft, you remember, had foreseen that serious trouble might come at any moment and shut down on border traffic in arms and ammunition. What caused the insane folly of that "temperament" in behalf of "humanity"? Don't ask me, Bill. Give me an easier one.

I had occasion yesterday to run up to New York on business. There in that great city which we Western fellows have been taught, has always been lacking in patriotism I talked with many people, and on surface cars, in subways, in hotel lobbies, in office buildings and in two of the large clubs, I heard hundreds of remarks as to the Mexican situation. On every block, almost, were young men in khaki hurrying to join their National Guard regiments. Bodies of engineers and hospital corps were entraining for the great assemblage site at Camp Beekman where the New York guardsmen are already being mobilized. Business concerns, almost without exception, were notifying their employees belonging to the National Guard that their salaries would be paid in full while they were away on duty, that their jobs would be held open until they came back. Some of the big houses gave their young men a rousing send-off as they hurriedly left to join their regiments. Everywhere in New York, everywhere throughout the country, as I see it, there is but one national note—the unshaken resolution to stand by the Flag, to back up the President.

The United States may not approve of Woodrow Wilson and his alleged "temperament." But the United States of 100,000,000 people has squared its shoulders, rolled up its sleeves and is determined to go into Mexico—if the fanatics there force us to—and stay there just as long as necessary to help law abiding Mexicans establish a Government, whereby they can live in peace, whereby the lives and property of foreign residents will be safe as in other lands. Don't make any mistake, Bill. In this thing our country is with the President, absolutely and unhesitatingly. Yours, JIM.

WHAT MORE TO DO?

A Philosopher's Search for the Best Field of Investigation.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* To-day what question or subject if investigated and developed would concern man the most? What is the best field of investigation to-day?

In 1882 I made the first electric bell device I had ever seen. At first I thought it was perpetual motion. Then I made the first electric motor I had ever seen. After keeping it secret for a while I wrote to New York attorneys about having it patented. I was informed that patents had been granted for about 180 electric motors; so I quit my electric investigations in disgust and gave my electric experiments to another.

That heat, or repulsion, is the force of gravitation, instead of an imaginary attraction, and that the stars are repelled apart by repulsion came to me in 1886 in less time than it takes to tell it. I wrote up this subject; buried the manuscripts in tin cans in the cellar, then went to the West Indies in 1888. On that trip I observed that what I had learned at school about the tides was not true and that my new science explained the tides.

A leading astronomer of Connecticut informed me that my principles of universal force and the cause of the axial positions of planets were entirely new, so I continued with the subject about thirty years, out of which developed as a sort of by-product about a hundred weather rules, which any high school student could apply with success and get useful weather information two or three years in advance.

Being tired of the weather subject, as I was interested more in outlining its principles than in the forecasting, I often wonder what subject, if developed, or what other field of investigation, would be of the most use to man. What do we want to know about to-day? D. A. N. GROVER.

KANSAS CITY, Mo., June 24.

Rose Bugs.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* A considerable degree of protection against the rose chafer or rose bug may be obtained when the insects first appear and begin to destroy flower gardens by timely sprays of heavy solutions of arsenate of lead, using four or five pounds to fifty gallons of water, although a thoroughly effective remedy against this insect is yet to be discovered.

"Any application that may be made," reads a bulletin issued by the Department of Agriculture, "is unsuccessful unless applied almost continuously, for as often as the bugs on the plant are killed others arise from the ground or from neighboring fields to take their place. Many so-called 'sure' remedies, including compounds of copper, lime, kerosene and tobacco, have failed to give results when put to a rigid test. Whatever practice of remedial nature is undertaken, whether collecting or spraying, it should be begun at the first onset of the insects' attack and should be continued until they disappear. The work should not be confined entirely to those youthful plants which it is particularly desired to preserve, as the insects attack many other plants."

Since the rose chafer is sensitive to disturbance when it is in the pupal stage in the soil a second method of destroying them may be found by simply stirring the breeding ground to a depth of three or four inches.

The condition of rose bushes and grape vines especially after the rose chafer or rose bug makes its appearance is a matter of grave concern to garden lovers and florists.

The insects appear as long legged beetles of yellowish brown color, usually at this time. They strip all flowers of blossoms and where especially plentiful do great damage. L. M.

NEW YORK, June 24.

Churchill and Kitchener.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* Lord Kitchener was born on June 24, 1850, and it is a curious coincidence that just two hundred years before that, on June 24, 1650, was born John Churchill, who for his victory at Blenheim was made the first Duke of Marlborough.

F. S. DICKSON.

RANGELEY, Me., June 24.

Das Ewig Weibliche.

Lady Godiva made her famous ride.
"Of course," she remarked, "I've just washed my hair and can't do a thing with it."

Mount Josephus Daniels.

Some of mere molehills mountains make:
One mountain's greatest grief is
A molehill's size it's bound to take
From being named Josephus!

BELGIUM'S NEUTRALITY.

England Charged With Not Always Being Solicitous About It.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* To a traveller and student in England and Europe for years and a constant reader and observer the attitude of America toward the belligerents in the war is interesting and curious.

In 1887, the treaty of Belgium with its guarantors being as they were in 1914, Alsace-Lorraine lost provinces, but England friendly with Germany because Germany was not yet the wonderful strong nation she has grown to be, England repudiated the idea of allowing herself to be involved in war by any violation of Belgian neutrality. War was then believed inevitable between France and Germany, and "the difficulty of Belgium" was discussed by the press. It was stated by the Government organ and the press generally that the new chain of forts toward Germany made an invasion over "the right of way" probable, and that if "in a sense" that would be wrong it was not at all like taking the territory. There could be indemnities, &c.

The *Pall Mall Gazette* said there was no guarantee, and the *Spectator* said England would probably insist on Belgium not being made a theatre of war, but that they would not, indeed could not, "bar troops from traversing her soil." Sanders and Norton in their recently published book (in England) on the relation of England to Belgium state that all the evidence shows that England had never considered herself obligated to go to war for Belgium. From year to year essay after essay had appeared on the subject, every leading magazine taking part in the discussion. Every time Belgium showed a desire to be independent and treat with Germany as with the other guarantors England at once expressed resentment. The guarantee was denied or repudiated or called an anachronism. Belgium was to be a buffer for England and an ally, or was to be considered an enemy. When Holland began to fortify Flushing, England threatened to take Java, and no forts would have been allowed in Belgium facing any way but toward Germany in the last twenty years. In 1914 the British fleet was mobilized and in the North Sea by July 19, and that was the real cause of the invasion of Belgium.

In 1911 England would have plunged Europe into just such a war as this if she had not been able to prevent France from coming to a satisfactory understanding with Germany over Morocco. If it is a wicked war now it would have been wicked then. Fullerton in "Problems of Power" (1913) says there was no treaty in existence worth the pulp in the paper on which it was written, and that England and France never had any idea of keeping their agreement with Germany as to Morocco, for it would have meant economic subjection in ten years, which is to say cynically, what the best and finest English have said in anguish, that commercial competition must not be allowed at any cost.

England has fought with all the pressure she has and it is a pressure beyond calculation, the opening of the Orient by railways, irrigation, cultivation and trade. She fought to the last to retain control in Turkey. She wishes the Mediterranean to remain what it now is, an English closed sea, and she wishes to control the waterways while hindering any development on land except it be absolutely controlled by her. By endless arrangements entered into by the short sighted politicians of various countries—to call them statesmen is to give them too dignified a name—by threats, by bribes, by a thousand and one subtle, inexorable methods used in every part of the world, so far England has succeeded. But does any calm student wish her success to be permanent? Is there any American who really wishes to see trade competition throttled and natural development prevented?

NEW YORK, June 24. M. SNOW.

ARCTURUS FURIOSUS.

Splitting Space Horrendously, His Passion Yet Is Futile.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* At this present time around the hour of 9 P. M., there is one star so high in the firmament that, as a rule, we can see and study it despite the roofs and spires of city buildings. This star is Arcturus, and is at the bottom of a constellation named Bootes. It is the fourth brightest of first magnitude suns—although this claim has been made for Vega—and next to incomparable Sirius the most brilliant sun in our northern heavens. At the present time it can be found without difficulty, for not only is it high in the darkened firmament but also it glitters and glows with a yellowish color mingled with a suggestion of red. Arcturus sparkles below the zenith, southwardly, its constellation Bootes for the greater part extending somewhat like a starry kite upward toward the zenith.

There are a number of astronomical reasons why this ruddy sun of night should be interesting to us. In the first place, like many other stars, it is trillions of miles distant, so many in fact that it takes its light rays approximately forty-four years to reach us. In other words, these light rays starting back in 1872 dart in the direction of our earth are first seen by us in 1916! In the meantime they have been speeding forward with a velocity of about 186,000 miles a second. Another interesting reason why we should go outdoors and look for Arcturus is that it is rushing through space so swiftly. So stupendous is its distance, however, that from one short observation this swift movement cannot be detected; but astronomical instruments have revealed unmistakably that Arcturus is speeding through space with a velocity of perhaps 60 or more miles a second. We think of a modern cannon ball shot with a muzzle velocity of 2,000 or more feet a second as something terrific, but here is a huge fiery body in our universe perhaps a thousand times as large as our own sun, and our own sun is about 1,300,000 times as large as our little earth, rushing through space with a speed of at least 200 times that of a modern war projectile!

There are other very interesting astronomical points about the sun Arcturus, as for example, that it is slowly approaching us, but most of us are chiefly interested in Arcturus from the standpoint of unassisted eyesight, in its natural appearance. Arcturus, brilliant and golden hued, is certainly king of the summer suns of night, just as blue and beautiful Vega is queen, although toward September this great sidereal sky monarch rises further and further from its former throne near the zenith, further and further into the western firmament. I may well be called the harbinger of springtime, and it certainly descends more and more into the west as fall comes and advances. And at this present time around the hour of 9 P. M. Arcturus is well worthy of more than a moment's study and admiration, glittering and glowing so brightly above the roofs and spires of city buildings.

CHARLES NEVES HOLMES.

NEWTON, Mass., June 4.

Loan Fund for Women Students.

From the Kansas City Journal.

Loan funds for women students who work their way through school at the University of Missouri at Columbia have saved many from having to top at a time of temporary financial difficulty. The Women's Self-Government Association, a student organization, has raised a fund of $953 by entertainments and tag days. Alumnae organizations have contributed small amounts. This money is lent to women students in sums of $2 to $50 without interest while the student is in the university. Afterward interest is charged. Women in the university may also borrow from the river loan fund. In making loans from any of the funds to either men or women the character of the student is always taken into consideration.

DEFECTS OBSERVED IN WEST SIDE PLAN

Citizens Union and City Club Prepare Reports for Board of Estimate.

WILL BE READ TO-DAY

The proposed settlement of the New York Central-West Side improvement is the subject of two reports to be made to the Board of Estimate to-day, one by the Citizens Union, the other by the City Club. Both reports deal with what are considered defects in the plan, although they do not condemn it outright. The City Club in fact writes to the board that the plan "is so much superior to earlier propositions that we think the occasion should not be allowed to pass without reaching a settlement," although it should be amended in certain respects. The merits of the plan, the City Club believes, are decidedly superior to its demerits.

"The vital factor which your proposed solution probably emits," the City Club report states, "in our judgment, is the retention of sufficient opportunity to other railroads for an adequate entrance into the Borough of Manhattan. We know, as you do, that the railroads at present terminating in New Jersey have as yet shown no keen desire to enter the Borough of Manhattan with an all rail connection, but it seems to us that a sound observation of the city's future requires that no obstacles to such an entrance should be permitted.

"While desiring a settlement at the earliest possible date it seems to us that before committing itself to the proposed plan the city should make a careful study of the means by which other railroads could physically enter Manhattan, of the physical possibility and means of reaching a marginal elevated freight railroad and of the possibility of subsurface freight terminals and of the points at which it might be physically necessary to preserve the right of subsurface crossings of the New York Central right of way."

The City Club suggests that a "jack-knife bridge" over the Harlem Ship Canal would be better than a swing bridge; that the city reserve the right to make an ample screen against any possible annoyance from the Manhattanville freight yard; that the elevated structure south of Fifty-ninth street be ballasted; that the city investigate and consider every feasible plan by which the future use of the lower part of the city for railroad facilities be thoroughly conserved for the future.

The report of the Citizens Union concludes that "certain of the major considerations, namely, a potential monopoly of freight facilities contained in the grant and the failure to treat the plan as part of the port and terminal problem of the port of New York; the considerations for the franchise grants to the railroad and the failure to protect Manhattan Valley from the business of noise, smell and unsightly structures, have not received the attention they deserve" from those engaged upon the proposed improvement plans.

"Nowhere in the report [of the Board of Estimate's committee]," says the Citizens Union, "does it appear that any consideration whatever is to be paid to the city for the additional valuable franchise granted to the railroad. If the railroad through the agreement with the city is avoiding the payment of a franchise tax to the State upon so much of its railroad as will be operated upon land acquired in fee from the city is it not fair that the city should receive by way of rental at least an amount equivalent to the franchise tax which would be paid to the State?"

The report adds: "With the railroad owning property on both sides of its right of way, it is quite evident that future access to this section [below Fifty-ninth street] by other roads for terminal facilities is effectively blocked. The use of tracks on the marginal way would necessarily be confined to the shifting of freight from pier to pier with a very limited opportunity of terminal warehouses to the eastward. This means a virtual monopoly by the New York Central of terminal facilities in this section, contrary to the policy of the city."

Regarding anticipated "nuisances" the Citizens Union says:

"If there be added the feature of landing of barges and lighters along the marginal way, with the noise of the constant shifting and shunting of trains, it will become apparent that the present plan contemplates the creation of a permanent eyesore and noise nuisance in this section of the city."

WILSON COMING TO BANQUET

Will Be Guest of Press Club at Waldorf-Astoria.

President Wilson's first public utterance on the serious question now facing the country will be given to the world next Friday night, when he is to be the guest of honor at the annual banquet of the New York Press Club at the Waldorf-Astoria.

Ever since 1878, when Ulysses S. Grant, then President of the United States, overcame his aversion to public dinners and consented to appear at the board of the New York newspaper men, every one of his successors has followed the custom.

Others who are to address the Press Club and its guests are Ralph Pulitzer, Irvin S. Cobb and Edward Percy Howard, the club's president.

One of the features of the dinner will be the singing of "The Star Spangled Banner" by Miss Frances Alda of the Metropolitan Opera.

FOR ECONOMIC PREPAREDNESS

Conference to Begin in Washington Next Thursday.

A conference on preparedness will begin in Washington next Thursday afternoon. But instead of military and naval preparedness or industrial preparedness the subject under discussion will be economic and social preparedness.

Health, the development of the country's natural resources, industrial relations and similar topics will be discussed by speakers including Edward T. Devine, Edward A. Ross, Arthur Ernst Hopper, who will preside, Dr. Samuel Slaughter, William T. Cravens, Walter Fels, Prof. Irving Fisher of Yale, Prof. Lovejoy, secretary of the National Child Labor Committee, Wil