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Germany at the End. From quarters in and near Germany come three reports about the triumph of the Allies.

Those reports, of immeasurable gravity to the world, are not official, and until they are official they cannot be accepted as fact.

But, official reports or unofficial, confirmed or unconfirmed, the events of recent days and hours leave no doubt that all the possibilities embraced in those three reports will soon become fact, to the happiness and blessing of mankind.

Why Not Stamp Taxes on Checks? One of the mysteries of our war taxes is emphasized by the decision of the Senate Finance Committee to try to place a stamp tax on bank checks.

There is no doubt that in the United States a huge revenue can be obtained from the stamp tax on checks.

The bank clearings of the whole country in the neighborhood of \$6,000,000,000 a week.

Probably nobody knows to a certainty the average size, in dollars, of the checks going through the banks to make up those clearances of six billions of dollars a week.

Surely, however, the average check is for a very small amount. There are some checks written for millions, but for every one of that kind there are tens of thousands of checks written by the public for only a few dollars each.

If the average bank check were as high as \$1,000—and it would be nothing like as much—this would mean 6,000,000 checks a week, which, with a two cent stamp tax on each, would mean a revenue of more than \$6,000,000 a year.

An average check of \$500, with the same two cent stamp, would mean a revenue of about \$12,000,000 a year.

An average check of \$100 would mean a revenue of more than \$60,000,000 a year.

An average check of \$50 would mean a revenue of \$120,000,000 a year.

And yet the Congress revenue raisers have never seriously considered this form of war taxation—the simplest, the easiest, the most popular that a tax inventor could devise.

Even now it is suggested that although the Senate Finance Committee has taken up the question it will not be welcome to the whole Congress or to the whole Senate.

What is this mystery about our failure to have a stamp tax on checks? Who is it that doesn't want it? Who is it that is able to stop it? Why?

The Minnesota Forest Fires. Because the State of Minnesota is equipped to meet promptly the emergency resulting from the destructive forest fires now devastating the northern portions of the State, there has been no appeal for aid from outside, and consequently the severity of this visitation has not been so impressed on the popular consciousness as it would otherwise have been.

The fact remains, however, that the disaster ranks with the worst that have occurred in recent years in this country, and nobody should be surprised if it becomes necessary for all to help the residents of the stricken districts, as was the case when San Francisco shook and burned.

The administration of assistance is likely to be more difficult in Minnesota than it is in San Francisco.

In the California calamity the suffering was confined to a comparatively small district; in Minnesota the forest fires have burned over a large area sparsely settled and in many parts difficult to penetrate.

This inaccessibility is emphasized by the absence from their homes of large numbers of skilled woodsmen, who are in the military service.

Notwithstanding these obstacles, the work of relief is being pushed and already plans are being laid for the permanent rehabilitation of the affected districts.

It appears that under a recent amendment to the Constitution of Minnesota the State may lend its trust funds on farm mortgages for long periods, and this circumstance in a measure simplifies the solution of the financial problems involved.

The origin of the fires is in doubt, and the suspicion has arisen that they were the work of incendiaries. It is entirely possible, however, that they may have had their beginning in that criminal carelessness which in the past has cost this country so many lives and such vast sums of money in forest fires.

The protection of woodlands has not been abandoned for the period of the war, but the service has been seriously impaired by the withdrawal of men.

Meanwhile, carelessly campers and settlers have not disappeared. If the persons responsible for the disaster can be found they must be severely punished, and it is of secondary importance whether they were enemies of the country, persons seeking to avenge a private grudge, or merely reckless fools.

Buy the Bond You Think You Can't Afford! There have been anti-Hohenzollern riots in Berlin, because the Germans take it from the President's decision that America, which turned the tide of war, is going ahead with her programme of keeping the drumfire roaring along the line; of fighting the Prussians without a halt until the white flag goes up.

Berlin has long known that America has wealth enough to crush her. She knows now, rather late, that America has the fighting men with the fighting will. Berlin, and all of Germany, is waiting to see whether our expressed purpose is indomitable. She has heard words. Six billion dollars—the greatest bag of war gold in history—clanked on the counter while she watched the two million Yankees now in France.

Make another riot in Berlin! Buy that bond you think you can't afford!

The Big Game Season. In most of the thirty-five States that have an open season for deer this fall, hunting is now on and already news is coming from the hunting grounds that the war has made inroads on the number of gunners afield.

Naturally, many of the best shots are not looking over their barrels at bucks, but at Huns. Many of these men are doing effective work across the sea in America's task that their type of recreation trained them for.

Fewer guides and attendants on deer drives will be found because of the workings of the draft and the high wages that can be found outside of the woods.

Reaching the peak of industrial production will keep thousands of men from their customary trips to the woods.

Venison is no longer being wasted as in times past. This is due to the work of the Biological Survey and the Conservation Commissioners of the various States that permit deer killing. It is felt now America's annual legal kill of 80,000 deer should save 10,000,000 pounds of beef, mutton or pork.

Killing deer in August and September, when warm weather will spoil the carcasses, is now practically unknown in America, although it was not such a long time ago that New York permitted the killing of deer beginning on August 15.

They will find outdoor recreation awaiting them, and so far as the deer are concerned, the supply will be increased by fewer killings this season, in which the American sportsman has a more important task to do. Incidentally, he is doing his job well too.

Are You Going to Quit? For nineteen months and more the President of the United States and all his multitude of assistants in offices conspicuous and obscure have unfalteringly and unwaveringly given of their best in mind and in body to win the war.

Their devotion has been continuous, unrelaxing, unquestioning. They have not hesitated, though their burden has been heavy; they have pressed forward with victory as their goal, depending on the support of the whole population of the United States to uphold them in their task.

For nineteen months the sailors in the navy of the United States have risked their lives by night and day, in fair weather and in foul, in calm and in tempest, to bring triumph to our arms.

They have not shrunk from any sacrifice, they have not faltered in the presence of any danger. They have paid the supreme price cheerfully, in order that the high aims of their country may be attained. They, too, depend on us to support them.

For nineteen months the soldiers of the United States in ever increasing numbers have performed their tolls—some and dangerous tasks without complaint, without hesitancy, without displaying the slightest reluctance, though they were called on to give their lives for liberty. Their valor has brought to their country undying fame, as it has brought to them deathless honor.

And they, powerful in their millions, strong in their discipline, depend utterly and completely on the folks back home.

We are the folks back home. On us the civil and the naval and the military establishments are absolutely dependent. To-day the Government calls on us to lend—not to give—our money to it, that the great commission it has undertaken to carry out for us may be successfully accomplished.

If any among us quit now; if any of us refuse or neglect to do his duty in lending every penny he can rake, scrape, save or borrow, he will betray the President, the navy, the army and the great mass of American citizens, who must and will make the Fourth Liberty Loan a success.

Mr. Ryan's Report on Our Effort in the Air. The report brought from Europe by Assistant Secretary of War JOHN D. RYAN concerning the situation of our aerial forces in France is one of the most heartening documents that have been produced with regard to this supremely important arm of the military service.

Unhappily there have been more discouragements than encouragements in the development of our flying squadrons; to-day the country is awaiting CHARLES E. HUGHES's report on the expenditure of great sums of money which, it is asserted, have been wasted, and there is a general feeling that in this department of endeavor the United States has by no means reached the standard it has attained in others.

But Mr. Ryan brings from the front a cheerful picture. He was with our armies in the St. Mihiel and Argonne offensives, and in both the French and British commanders agreed that "the air forces were stronger in numbers and perhaps as high in efficiency as in any battle of the war."

In each case the airmen were under American command, and American squadrons comprised half the strength of the forces employed. Of the aviators Mr. Ryan says:

"The testimony of all commanders, both our own and those of the Allies, was to the effect that our machines were fought well and that our pilots distinguished themselves. Their commendation of the work of our pilots was tempered only by a suggestion that perhaps our boys were too venturesome and over courageous, and I am inclined to believe that restraint more than anything else in the fighting of aircraft is necessary for our pilots."

Nobody has ever questioned the valor, skill or adaptability of American aviators; they proved their possession of the qualities that produce scores of times, notably in the service of France before we entered the war. Yet it is good to hear by authority that their conduct under their own flag still inspires respect and admiration in the minds of competent foreign critics.

Our machines have been condemned, however, and the assertions made concerning them have occasioned much uneasiness. Of them Mr. RYAN has this to say:

"The United States De Havilland planes were in general use for observation and day bombing in both the St. Mihiel and the Argonne attacks, and the pilots were to a man enthusiastic as to their performance, and while individual and seldom indicated anything more than a personal preference for some rearrangement of details.

"Commanders of all the squadrons using De Havilland planes, as well as planes of British and French manufacture in like purpose, told me that the pilots in every case would prefer to take a De Havilland machine with a Liberty engine over the line rather than any machine of a like type.

"This is due to the fact that the machine is fast and for one of its type is quite manoeuvrable; that it climbs well, and the pilots all agreed is a very efficient machine for the uses for which it is intended."

Mr. RYAN is unreservedly enthusiastic about the Liberty motors it

caused him more worry on his trip than anything else "because all of the allied nations were demanding more of them than could possibly be supplied." French, British and Italians have used the Liberty engine in their own machines at the front, and their building programmes as laid out are based to a considerable extent upon obtaining a supply of these motors in this country.

"I come home feeling that our allies consider the success of the United States in producing this engine in large numbers one of the greatest accomplishments in the war.

"The British and the French are now putting the Liberty motor in planes that formerly carried engines of either a heavier weight or less power."

As we said before, Mr. RYAN's words are inspiring in their confidence and definite declaration of faith in the success of our plans for superiority in the air. If he is not over optimistic—and Mr. RYAN is a hard headed, sensible man of affairs, not a dreamer—we have overcome the obstacles which so long hampered our airplane production and have made considerable progress in properly equipping our armies with the most useful of modern weapons.

Political Tours Are Not Necessary This Year. The possibility that Governor WHITMAN and ALFRED E. SMITH will abandon their tours of the State because of the danger of spreading influenza through public meetings will not perturb greatly the masses of the electorate. The chief concern of the people of this and other States is in the war, a subject with which the campaign for the Governorship has not a great deal to do.

What with the Liberty Loan drive and the various activities in which men and women are interested the voters are busy enough. There was a time when a political campaign was looked forward to by men in very much the same way that a boy looks forward to a circus parade, but that time is not now. There is less entertainment than there used to be in being told that the Democratic or the Republican party is a peril. Beside the German peril all other dangers are trivial.

No issue in the State campaign is so complex that it has to be dwelt upon orally in the light of the campaign torch. Both candidates for Governor are heartily in sympathy with American war purposes. Both agree that the State must support the Government in every way and meanwhile run its own business as economically as possible.

If either candidate for Governor suffer by the closing of the stump it will be Mr. SMITH. Governor WHITMAN has had the advantage of keeping his works before the people for the last four years. He has announced that he asks for reelection on his record, and as that record is quite familiar to the voters his appearance throughout the State would only add the personal element to his campaign.

As for Mr. SMITH, his followers, who believe that all who meet him like him, will regret that he cannot be looked upon by the up-State voters. Yet it is unlikely that any number of public appearances by the Democratic candidate would of themselves erase the impression, which has reason to exist, that Mr. SMITH is of and with Tammany Hall. If Mr. SMITH should choose to utter a formal repudiation of Fourteenth Street it would not be necessary for him to pronounce it from a hundred or even from one rural platform to make it known. A dozen words scribbled on a pad and handed to a reporter and the whole State would know of his decision the next morning.

There is nothing important that either candidate might say that cannot be said without gathering together groups of people upon whom the influenza germ might poise.

The late ROBERT RUD WHITING was a wit of discernment and, what is far less common, of discretion, but when this has been said the whole story of his attractive personality has not been told.

He possessed an analytic mind, well trained and well balanced; his perceptive powers were of the keenest; he reached no decision without careful study of the facts; the sanity and fairness of his judgments were notable. The loss of such a man, especially devoted as he was to the welfare of his country, must be the cause of sincere and enduring regret.

Mr. WHITING's last activities were in the service of the Government, for which he performed functions of the most delicate nature with tact and skill that inspired all with whom he came into contact.

Ten thousand Americans have died on the battlefields of France. They bought something for you at a price no part of which you can pay in kind. They died to give you a better world to do in that which you have an opportunity to do this week. How fast is your purse?

Some men who know just what Foch ought to do next find themselves incapable of the simple strategy of buying a bond.

The amount of the new deficiency bill is \$6,347,755,566.04, and we trust the profiteers will keep their hands off the four cents.

There are increasing indications that WILHELM has a rendezvous with CONSTANTINE and FERDINAND.

Mixed. From the Buffalo Evening News. Life and poker, both draw and stud, I have found to be a terrible bore. Prospects fall with a terrible thud. Always—never—it seems to me! I have found no use by the scores. Queens galore and occasional fours. Hays and thither a beautiful flush; Always, however, there fell a hush On the crowd and some fell would yell, Throwing his hand in the discard!

Mixed! Life and poker, ah, me! ah, me! Very, very, a tarnished shine! Quite selfishness, they seem to be. If there's aught in this mind of mine; I've found no use by the scores. Queens galore and occasional fours. Hays and thither a beautiful flush; Always, however, there fell a hush On the crowd and some fell would yell, Throwing his hand in the discard!

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THE ANTHRACITE OPERATOR'S FLIGHT.

A Serious Situation for the Owners of Hard Coal Mines.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—Sir: Your editorial article in THE SUN headed "This Week the Bonds Must Go," but Three Weeks From Now Kitchin Must Go," characteristically hits the nail squarely on the head. How can business men in other lines than munitions and certain preferred factories continue subscribing for Liberty Loan bonds when their income is reduced to practically nothing by what cannot be fairly regarded as necessary Government restrictions?

As a heavy sufferer, let me cite my own experience as an individual operator and producer of anthracite coal, universally conceded to be one of the prime necessities of life. I shall give absolute facts and figures, without any of those special conditions.

We are obliged to sell at the mines the three sizes of prepared coal commonly in use for domestic purposes known as egg, stove and chestnut for the average fixed price (a ton of 2,240 pounds) of \$5.80. This, to the average individual operator, returns a profit of 10 cents.

As an example, I will give figures of the cost in one of the largest and most important anthracite mines in the country, a hundred miles from New York city. They are as follows:

The retailer pays the producer for a long ton of 2,240 pounds \$5.80. The freight costs him \$2.90, a total of \$8.70. Under the price regulations set for coal by the local fuel administrator he is allowed to sell this coal at \$11.75, but to this should be added the 12 per cent. difference between the net ton that he sells and the gross ton that he buys, equalling \$1.41, making his total price delivered \$12.16, and leaving him a profit of \$4.46. His claim for a delivery of 100 tons of coal, with delivery with the usual self-gumming trucks should not average over \$1 a ton, leaving a profit of at least \$3 a ton.

The anthracite operator usually has an investment at his plant of nearly a million dollars, often more, and what is more, he is obliged to sell his coal during the life of the coal. The holes he has made in the ground have absolutely no value; his breaker and machinery very little more. A few thousand dollars obtained for scrap is all that he can get. On the other hand, he has created an enormous hole in the coal dealer's pocket, amounting to more than a few thousands and can ordinarily be used as long as the sun shines, danger from German invasion and vandalism having happily become unlikely.

I think very likely the questions will be asked, why, if this be true, does the anthracite operator continue in business? Why does he not demand relief from the Government? The latter some have done and are doing unavailingly thus far. Every item of cost in anthracite production has been constantly increasing, and labor, while vastly dearer, in most cases is not nearly as efficient as it was. Yet we cannot stop without incurring the risk of our operation being taken away from us. Should the Government carry out the threat of taking over the plant, the result would be in many cases absolute ruin. Mining, as the writer hereof, has the object of securing an immediate increase of production without great danger of injury from caves and other results of hasty work.

The question will also be asked: "How is it that the anthracite production has increased under such conditions?" The answer is plain. That increase has been entirely from working of the old waste or culm piles, mostly from small sizes heretofore considered as worthless. Mixed with soft coal and for certain other purposes, it has for some time past commanded a good price. Stamp mills to crush the waste or culm production that without it would have added to public apprehension of trouble for lack of fuel. This fuel is also carrying some of the otherwise unprofitable anthracite colliers "over the top" as the cost of production is very slight compared with fresh mined coal. "Over the top" means that the waste or culm has no such source of relief. I therefore beg leave to submit to the all powerful public at least the fact that existing conditions are absolutely unfair to those of us who are obliged to endure, while nearly all the assets that we have are being slowly and surely useless taken from us.

Why not put a fair limit on the selling price that the retail dealer is allowed to charge and remove the restriction on the producer? Then the mine owners will have to meet it or stop producing, as has frequently happened in previous times. EDWARD B. STRONG, New York, October 16.

HAVE JUNE IN DECEMBER? If Advancing the Clock Helps, Why Not the Calendar?

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—Sir: We are all more or less familiar with the gaylight saving scheme, its blessings and advantages; how we get up an hour earlier in the morning, go to work sooner and eat lunch in the middle of the forenoon, all for the sake of retiring an hour earlier in the evening.

It is therefore proposed that the calendar be set ahead six months on the first of November. By doing this we escape the long, cold winter, save coal—whether we have any or not—enjoy theoretically the balmy spring days of May almost immediately, and in a word gain everything while losing nothing but time, which so many are trying to kill anyway.

My suggestion may be passed on for discussion without reserve or copyright. EARL ORANGE, N. J., October 16.

That Exasperating Star. TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—Sir: Why do they call it the "Imperial" German Government any more than the Imperial British Government or the Imperial American Government? This "Imperial" stuff makes me sick.

In the light of so much lying, stealing, plundering, torturing, gassing, murdering, bombing, raping and crucifying they ought to call it, instead of "Imperial," the "hunnish, fendish, hellish German Government." HOWARD P. TAMM, Syracuse, Conn., October 16.

BONDS, BUSINESS AND PATRIOTISM.

For Once the Good Citizen Can Eat His Cake and Have It.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—Sir: My limit on Fourth Liberty bonds had, I thought, been reached, but if we are to have victorious peace this year or in a year or two, it seems to me the best possible business proposition to raise the limit, even if it does hurt.

When peace comes the profits of my business will be greater and my income taxes less. And even if I should find I have bit off more bonds than I can comfortably manage I can always borrow on them to a greater percentage than I can on any other security, and so bridge over the hard spots. In this way I can, if necessary, spread my payments over three or four years.

In the end I will have a 4 1/2 per cent.