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Injustice to Sewing Circles.

The metaphor employed by Admiral Mayo in his remarks to the House Naval Affairs Committee on Thursday was not entirely just:

"The League of Nations is rapidly getting down to a sewing circle with no means of enforcement and no international police force."

The commander of the Atlantic Fleet does a wrong to sewing circles and their members. These useful organizations are, as a rule, models of equitable cooperation.

The homes of the members are used in turn and each lady brings her quota of materials. The expense falls alike on each Dorcas.

If a lady was invited to a conference on the subject of forming a sewing circle and she discovered that on account of her strength and wealth she would be expected to clean the other members' spare rooms, to repair their houses, to discipline their employees, to provide lawyers to sue their in-laws, and to pay about half the cost of the other women's sewing stuff and tea and jumbles, would she join the sewing circle? Yet that is what the lady Columbia is being asked to do by the conference which Admiral Mayo refers to as a sewing circle.

How far Columbia is committing herself, or being committed, to the role of goat—not a word for a sewing circle, but none other is as suggested—can only be guessed at. Yesterday Mr. Looor expressed the uncertainty in the last word on treaties, is kept, and the uneasiness with which the adventure of the lady Columbia is regarded:

"We seemed already to have involved ourselves in serious differences with Australia and the Boers. I don't know just what we are doing and hence speak with some hesitation. The Senate is kept in the dark about it all except for casual and unofficial despatches."

"We apparently have agreed to guarantee and sustain a lot of states and republics made of Hottentots."

"The people of this country have no concern with the south Pacific or Africa, except, of course, to look after our own interests, as in Guam. Why we should go into an arrangement which involves us in difficulties with the Australians and Boers, whose friendship is important to us, I cannot see."

Our troops are in Russia, our troops are slated for Turkey, our troops are wanted in every quarter of the earth to do some other nation's job! If our money is talked of as salt and as if it belonged in every land except those United States:

Mrs. Columbia should put on her wraps and go home. The fire of patience is going out and the children are crying loudly because their taxes hurt them.

Applause for the Draft Master!

One of the incidents of national life that were recently recorded by the motion picture camera for the edification and education of several million patrons of the silent drama was the bestowal of decorations on a number of eminent army officers at Washington. The ceremony was severely simple, though lacking nothing in dignity, being conducted without military display of any kind. The scene was in fact one which might be expected to interest spectators, but not to stir them to applause.

However, one individual in the distinguished party has been warmly applauded practically at all the theatres in which this picture has been shown: and that individual is General EGOR H. CROWDER, who has managed the draft ever since the selective service went into effect, and whose name has been intimately associated with every American citizen who has been inducted into the National Army. Two years ago the person who profited by the draft would be gratefully accepted by the people of the United States, and that the man who administered it would be the recipient of applause in public places, would have been regarded as optimistic to the point of lacy. But the handclapping which is inspired by

General Crowder's picture on the screen testifies to a popular sentiment of approval that could not exist if the draft had not justified itself, and its directors had not proved competent for their difficult job.

We have never before heard of a popular Provost Marshal General, but General Crowder appears by the screen test to be entitled to the distinction of that adjective.

The Government Cannot Sell a Glut of Wheat at Famine Prices.

MR. JULIUS H. BARNES, president of the Grain Corporation of the Food Administration, does not say it in so many words, but does give the impression that the Government is going to try to sell to the consumer all the country's wheat at a \$2.26 basis. He was speaking specifically of the wheat coming to market before next June. But his whole argument reveals that he thinks it is his proper business, if he can get away with it, to resell to the consumer on a \$2.26 basis all the wheat—the recent and the next harvest—the Government has to take from the farmer at \$2.26, whether it should be a million bushels or two billion bushels, and whether the selling period should run till June or January.

Mr. BARNES, whatever he thinks, or thinks he thinks, is not going to do anything of the kind. The Government Food Trust can never sell a glut of wheat at famine prices. When foreign countries will not take our wheat on a \$2.26 basis or perhaps on a \$1.26 basis, the American people are not going to take it. If Mr. BARNES should put upon the American market, even at \$1.26, all the wheat the Government must buy this year at \$2.26, he could not sell it to go into American bread. At any price there will be more wheat in this country by hundreds of millions of bushels than the American people will want or will take for their bread from Mr. BARNES, President Wilson or anybody.

Mr. BARNES might as well talk about selling all the country's wheat at \$26 a bushel as at \$2.26. He might as well talk about selling all the country's sand at \$20 an ounce, like gold.

Mr. BARNES may not realize yet that the Government can no more sell a thing for which there is no demand than anybody else can; but before the wheat crop of 1919 is through piling up on the Food Administration at \$2.26 a bushel he will have full opportunity and plenty of time to learn what he doesn't know now.

Mr. BARNES, furthermore, will learn that holding on the \$2.26 basis a vast superabundance of wheat which should be offered to consumers under the laws of supply and demand, the Government will strike at the wheat farmers themselves a blow which will be fatal in the year 1920. Now the Government is under contract to pay the farmers \$2.26 a bushel for all the wheat they raise this year. The Government should take it at the price it must take it. But the Government will not be under contract to take the farmers' wheat at any price after this year's harvest. The Government, holding out for \$2.26 from the consumers and not being able to sell it, would be compelled to carry over hundreds of millions of bushels into next year. With that stupendous carry over burdening the future market, the farmers would not plant and harvest wheat in 1920.

The farmers raise what to sell. They would know they could never sell it when there was a vast surplus carried over from 1919 to 1920, because the United States Government had been fool enough to put such a price on the 1919 harvest that nobody would buy it.

If Mr. BARNES were mad enough to persist in such a course, putting a famine price on the bread of the American people though there were millions of bushels of wheat worth dumping into the sea, he would simply heap mountains of wheat upon the Government. He would drive the farmer out of the wheat business for 1920. He would ultimately starve the American consumers because their wheat farmers had gone to other fields of agriculture.

If the United States Government were blind enough to permit Mr. BARNES to persist in such madness even till the first of June of this year, the Food Administration would awaken in a very panic of remorse to the fact that the hundreds of millions of bushels of wheat which might have been fed to our people at normal prices must be finally disposed of somehow, though to get rid of it the hand of the President himself must apply to it ten thousand torches.

Saxons Unite With the Rumanians.

The announcement from Paris that the Germans of Transylvania will support the other races of this Hungarian province in their decision for a union with the Rumanian kingdom is considered as a settlement of the difficult Transylvanian question so far as the people are concerned.

The German, or more properly the Saxon, colonies of Transylvania have presented one of the most curious and interesting ethical conditions in Europe. They were founded in the twelfth century by Germans from Flanders and the lower Rhine, who were brought to Transylvania by a Hungarian King to repopulate and cultivate lands desolated by invading Eastern races. The people are largely the descendants of these original settlers; the colonies have not increased greatly in number, but remain to-day as in the past, isolated German communities in a land largely populated by Magyars and Rumanians.

Their towns were strongly fortified, each of their houses and churches being a small fortress, and they became the eastern defence of the military zone, the bulwark which Europe

erected against the western progress of the Turks. For their services to the state unusual commissions were granted to them. They preserved the German names of their towns, presenting curious contrasts to the surrounding Hungarian names; they kept their own schools, religion and language and they have jealously guarded all of their ancient customs. To them Transylvania is known only by its German designation of Siebenbürgen. The Saxons are the least numerous of the Transylvanian races; there are scarcely more than 220,000 of them as against the 1,500,000 Rumanians. They have been, however, recognized as the most advanced portion of the population. Through their own power and force they became one of the "three politically privileged nations" of Transylvania.

On account of the national and political strength of the Saxons the Rumanians were especially desirous of securing their support. The Saxons long ago broke off the tie binding them to Germany; they could not even be depended upon as supporters of the German party in Hungary. It was said early in the war they were favorable to the Allies and that they aided the Rumanians in their first advances north of the Carpathians. As supporters of the Rumanian kingdom they should form as important an element in the establishment of the new governmental rule in Transylvania as they formed in the early upbuilding of that province.

Nat Goodwin.

NAT GOODWIN, who died yesterday, was never known professionally by any other name, although he used to tell of the banquet in London at which the late Sir Henry Irving introduced him as "the famous American actor, Mr. Nat Goodwin," which long had the same regard for him that it might have felt for a spoiled child.

For many years he was privileged to do about as he pleased, with no penalties to pay. Who of his admirers has forgotten that performance of "A Gilded Fool" in Brooklyn which it was found expedient to interrupt in the middle of the play for the sake of the star? The next night when the beloved NAT appeared again in the same play he was welcomed with applause enough for a returning hero. His domestic life received probably more public attention than that of any other actor; but for years he was nevertheless one of the most liked of the comedians.

His eminence continued throughout a long career. He emerged in "Evangeline," which will always be remembered also for the artistic success of W. H. CRANE and HENRY E. DIXIE. He acted in farce, then, and in melodrama when that style of play was most in demand, appearing of course in the broadly comic roles. Then he felt himself prepared to attempt a higher comedy and in "When We Were Twenty-one" he delighted the public.

CLYDE FRIZZ, at the time the most popular of American playwrights, wrote "The Cowboy and the Lady" and "Nathan Hale" for him, and AUGUSTUS THOMAS gave him another distinctive American type in "In Mizoura." It was inevitable that his ambitions should turn to the old comedies, in which he acted Sir Lucius O'Trigger and David Garrick, and later to Shakespeare. He played Shylock and Bottom, with the greater success in the latter role.

But every part he assumed was more or less marked with the stamp of his personal genius. For he belonged to that famous group of which he alone was left when JOSEPH JERRESON ceased to act. Nothing finer in contemporaneous comedy has been witnessed than his interpretation of the Judge in "Why Marry?" which was his last role in New York.

No actor possessed more magnetism for the public. Perhaps his popularity was greater in the past than it was in recent years, although it was not necessary to see him in a play to realize how the public yielded to the fascination of his manner. He has more than once stepped on the stage of the Palace Theatre with no more dramatic problem ahead of him than the recital of a few stories such as any after-dinner orator might recite. But the communicating warmth of his genius, the distinctness of his artistic methods and his innate humor left the audience tingling with a responsive glow when he had finished.

Few actors of the contemporaneous theatre are of the same artistic stature as this comedian, who in his natural endowment, his fitness and variety seems rather to belong among the great men of the past. But it would be a melancholy thought that we are never to look upon his like again, rare as such manifestations of natural genius and finished methods are in the art of the theatre to-day.

That "American Crime Wave" in Paris.

In the police records of Paris the "wave of crime" attributed by certain French journalists to American soldiers, who are being over there, there is a tendency to regard lightly the offenses of men who failed in their full duty; moreover, in a number of cases there have been inequality of treatment and unnecessary harshness. Yet within the State it stood and stands ready at all times to respond to whatever call may arise for its services.

REGARDLESS OF THE EXPENSES.

Janetuous correspondence concerned a woman. Last Thursday quite a number of the men folk of the M. E. Church took it in their heads to go to ladies' aid and surprise them, giving them a treat with fine apples costing to cents a pound or about 6 cents apiece, and were splendidly received and cordially invited to come again, their names being put on a list.

Geometrical Definition.

Knicker—What is a railroad line? Bicker—The shortest distance between two revolving fuses.

THE LITTLE BOND HOLDERS

Protection for Those Who Lent Their Savings to the Government.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—Sir: I wish to commend your editorial article of January 24 on "What is a Business Basis for the New Victory Loan?" The article is absolutely sound, and its criticism of the opinion of Mr. McGarrath as to what is a business basis for any future loan is well founded on fact.

I find that many people of very humble circumstances bought the various Victory bonds, not for the sake of the small interest yield, but in order to have a safe place for their principal, made up to a great extent by their hard work of many months. Many a dollar was brought forth from his hiding place and put into these bonds by people who have never had a bank account, and also many a person who had a few dollars paid to a bank the first instalment and borrowed the balance.

These \$100 bonds have gone down until the second 4s are worth \$93.15 and the 4 1/2s \$94.45. This larger depreciation is very small to the people of New York, but to thousands it is very great.

Would it not be wise for the Government to use the funds it has on hand for the purchase of bonds to buy only the 4 1/2s or \$100 bonds, and so help the sightless way from the courts and into these small bonds?

The Government cannot afford to lose the confidence of the thousands of small investors who have made their first investment in these bonds. A buying by the Government of the small bonds in preference to those of larger denominations would keep them near par and protect hundreds of poor people from loss, and would be a great incentive to them to buy other bonds in the forthcoming loan.

EDWARD G. FORMAN, FREEMAN, N. Y., January 31.

A Premium Paid by Patriotism on Liberty Loan Bonds.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—Sir: At the time the last Liberty Loan was brought out I bought \$5,000 worth of these bonds at par. I would have gone to a banker or broker and bought the Third Liberty Loan bonds for about \$3, or \$100 less than I paid Uncle Sam for my Fourth Liberty Loan bonds.

I did not make any complaint, and I have bought liberally of every issue that has come out, but I do not expect to buy any bonds of the fifth loan and pay Uncle Sam \$100 more than I can buy them for on the open market. The war was on when the bonds of the fourth loan were bought; the war is not on now, and it would not be any more patriotic in my opinion to buy United States Government bonds than to buy bonds of our railroads or great industries which are not on the war.

Official statistics have rescued the good name of our men and they stand exonerated from the charges brought against them. In this country those charges were never taken seriously, for we know our soldiers, and we had no fear that they would not do honor to themselves and their uniform in Paris or anywhere else.

WAR SQUANDER IN PEACE.

That nearly three months after the armistice the Treasury should still be making war expenditures in a volume scarcely smaller than when the embattled armies of civilization were drenching the soil of Europe with blood is of no consequence if those expenditures are cleaning up the war debts of the past. A treasury of \$1,600,000,000 paid out in January is a colossal thing; yet if it is closing a financial chapter of the war itself it is not now worth a thought.

But how about war work, war waste of labor, material and cash since the war itself ended? Is the Government still turning out shells for great guns by the shipload, when in the whole year and a half we were in the war we never fired from a great gun an American shell? Is the Government still manufacturing tons and tons of high explosives? Is the Government still building acres and acres of plants for the manufacture of such explosives? Is the Government still making gas masks by the tens and tens of thousands?

If, with the war nearly three months ended, billions of dollars still being paid out to settle the actual fighting bills, the Government is no longer doing such things, will Secretary of War BAKER, or somebody authorized to speak for the United States Government, stand up and say so in plain English? Or what?

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TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—Sir: Few small buyers of the Liberty bond issues cared to buy the bonds at the prices offered by the patriotic sellers of the securities. One appeal that met your eye on door, fence and curb, "Buy! Buy! Buy! Buy!" was an enigma to me. Well, I took out my savings bank balance and willingly put it into bonds at par.

Without adding to my expense, I contemplated the daily fluctuations of my Liberty bonds the meaning of the slogan "Buy! Buy! Buy! Buy!" is revealed to me.

But I am a real American and a patriot, and the next issue is announced I'll be ready to buy again. Yes, and buy if it breaks!

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PEACE IN THE ARMORIES.

No Danger of Hostilities Between the Old Guard and the New.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—Sir: A wrong impression is given by statements like the following about the State militia:

Among the former National Guardsmen there has been a growing feeling of resentment over the occupancy of their rank and file by the present New York Guard. In fact, the members of the old National Guard organizations want to resume as formerly the present organizations are to a man quite willing to turn over the "whole shooting match" without question; hence the "take possession forcibly" is held to be a joke but a rank injustice to the members of the New York Guard.

Many persons who misinterpret or misread such statements as that quoted will think that the two forces are on the verge of hostilities, when, as a matter of fact, the members of the old National Guard are only too willing to join in any warm patriotic reception to the returning victorious warriors and give them the whole town along with the armories.

While the present New York Guard was not called upon for service, the members of the old National Guard were ready at all times to respond to whatever call may arise for its services.

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AUTHORITY THAT GALLS.

Trying Moment for a Young Woman Who Went Out With a Soldier.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—Sir: There are times when the showing of military authority galls, and here is such a case outlined.

A young lady friend went to New York on the evening of Sunday last in the company of a private soldier. As they were approaching Forty-second street and Broadway a provost guard tapped the soldier on the shoulder and told him to "come along." In tones loud enough to attract general attention, the provost guard said to the young lady, "The soldier is under arrest, and you are to accompany him to the station."

She watched her escort taken down the street about half a block, not knowing whether he was going to be incarcerated or delayed; she was about ready to start for home alone when he rejoined her. The explanation was that the P. G. had seen an officer go by the soldier unattended, and had taken him away to call him down.

This all seems rather unnecessary, especially when one sees so many officers in that neighborhood during an evening. It would take a marvel of quickness to see all that went by in time to salute them.

And furthermore it seems rather unnecessary to make such a public display of such an offence against military law at the expense of a young lady's feelings, as the girl was proffered assistance in the way from the courteous gentleman "who would see her home" to the woman who explained, "It's all right, dear, I've a friend in the army, and it will be all right" while all the time she was trying to make herself as inconspicuous as possible.

Certainly this is a case where more tact and less bulldozing would have made it easier all around. P. W. H. HOOKER, JANUARY 31.

DISTRIBUTING MILK.

A Plan to Avoid Duplicate Routes, Breakage, Bad Debts and Graft.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—Sir: The figures quoted showing it costs about as much to distribute milk as it does to produce it cause one to wonder if some more economical method of distribution than the present can be devised.

Obviously, the high cost of distributing is principally due to the following causes, if published accounts of the same are correct: 1. The inefficient manner of delivering the product, due to the fact that a number of different distributors cover the same routes with resultant scattered stops, which is an instance where competition raises the cost and consequently the price instead of reducing it.

2. The loss through bottle breakage. 3. The loss by reason of uncollectible bills. 4. The money paid to janitors and others to influence the sale of a particular company's milk in a particular building or section; call it graft or what you will.

The following plan, which is suggested as a basis for discussion, does not pretend to work out the details of the problem, but only to suggest in a general way what seems to be a better method than the one now employed.

The idea is to have the distribution of milk in large cities like New York controlled (not owned) by the municipality, the city to be divided into zones arranged so as to make for the most efficient receiving and distributing, and the business of each zone to be controlled by one distributor.

Control of the business in each zone would be given at regular intervals, say for a period of five years, to the company guaranteeing in competitive bidding to supply milk and service in that zone, of a specific quality for the lowest price (a number of different grades as now sold could be covered by specifications, each to be quoted on).

No company would be permitted to receive awards for more than a certain share of the business of each zone, as provided for the future competitors at future biddings.

Sufficient guarantee of fulfilling contract should be insured by bond or other satisfactory means. Inspection of milk for quality could be conducted without adding to the expense of the city by employing machinery it now uses for that purpose.

The sale of milk would be made on a cash basis to consumers, so eliminating bad debts, except where for convenience sake a customer desires an account, paying a deposit in such a case of say five to insure payment of bill. A plan similar to this is found practical in the case of gas and electric companies.

Customers would be restrained from using milk bottles for other than the purpose intended by the distributor and be penalized for breaking by a charge representing the actual cost for bottles not returned.

Milk distributed in bulk for sale loose by the local grocer would be embraced by the same plan, and perhaps butter and milk products might be considered in the scheme.

The term of years suggested as five should be sufficiently long to justify new interests entering the field, which they would not do unless they could obtain business for a sufficient period to warrant the purchase of equipment. This would even permit drycleaning themes to come into this city and other cities as a cooperative company to distribute their own milk.

The manner of conducting the bidding for distribution privilege could be planned in a manner to preclude any possibility of favored interests having an advantage. JSA PEA HAV, NEW YORK, JANUARY 31.