European Economic Alliances When the War Is Over

HOW the United States May Be Affected—Trade Boycotts Now Being Advocated by the Belligerents—War of Trade to Follow War of Arms—Time and Economic Conditions Likely to Soften Animosities—Practical Problems—Abilities of Various Countries to Adjust Their Fiscal Policies and Trade Relations — Geographical Conditions May Play Large Part—Neutral Markets.

BY CHARLES M. PEPPER.

THE shadow of an economic war lengthens as the prospects for peace among the European belligerents brighten. There is a popular clamor in the allied countries for keeping up trade hostilities with Germany after the conflict of arms ceases. In Germany there is a strong demand for aggressive action to protect the commerce which was build up by so many years' systematic work.

Trade boycotts after the war are advocated by both sets of belligerents. The threat is made that even when nominal peace comes no patriotic citizen will help the recent enemy countries recover their standing by buying from them. The substance of this clamor is that the loser must pay for the economic damage caused by the war, although there will be no cash indemnities. Of course it is assumed among each set of belligerents that the other set will be the loser.

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Friends of peace who realize that commercial rivalry was back of the hostilities even more than the combatants themselves appreciate may wonder how there is to be peace at all if this state of mind continues. Yet nothing is clearer than that the war of arms will be followed by trade wars. The only question is how extensive these wars will be, and how long they will last.

The popular mind in all the countries today is such that the statesman who are guiding, or misguiding, their destinies do not hesitate to proclaim that the present alliances of the armies and navies of the different countries will be followed by economic alliances, and the mass of the population of all the countries seem to be determined that when peace comes they will not buy the products of their late enemies.

Time and economic causes will modify this feeling, yet no one can predict how soon these forces will operate, or how greatly the present animosities will be softened.

The practical problems back of these proposed economic leagues are infinitely greater than those back of the armed leagues. It is much easier to secure co-operation of half a dozen countries in armed hostilities than in economic hostilities. Fiscal systems and national policies do not have to be readjusted. No question of tariffs and trade relations enters into armed hostilities.

The interparliamentary economic conference of the entente allies at its sessions in Paris passed resolutions recognizing that the damage caused by the war in the countries represented should be repaired, and that enemy countries should be obliged in the treaty of peace to replace all materials and machines necessary for the resumption of industrial activity in the occupied regions. This meant chiefly Belgium and the parts of France which are in control of the German army, and in which are situated much of France's richest iron ore and coal deposits.

The conference succeeded in avoiding to commit itself on some questions where divergent economic theories, such as free trade and protection, would make it difficult to agree. But there cannot be an economic alliance among the entente countries after the war unless these divergent economic theories are at least partially harmonized.

In England and France, at the present time, there is a very strong sentiment in favor of a private boycott, which would eliminate some of the international difficulties when the peace treaty that must come some day is arranged. The governments might not commit themselves too strongly, but there is nothing which would compel a French firm or an English firm to buy German products, if they did not choose to do it. Conversely, there is nothing which would compel Germans to buy British or French products if they were willing to get along without them.

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The war has demonstrated that all of the belligerent countries can produce for themselves some articles which heretofore they have bought from other countries. This, in particular, has been true of articles entering into the manufacture of war munitions, but it extends to a great many other products which are consumed by industries of the different countries.

In the end, the question of these international boycotts resolves itself into one of international inconvenience. While England formerly bought large quantities of semi-manufactured products from Germany, equally large purchases of British products for use in her own industries were made by Germany. Put in popular parlance, international boycotting is a game that two can play at.

In the economic sense the question is one of the relative value of markets and the ability of the various countries to readjust their fiscal policies and their trade relations so that they will buy from one another what heretofore they have bought from the enemy countries. This is the basic proposition which must be considered in all the talk of economic alliances after the war. It has palpable limitations and reservations, yet something may be done along general lines if, when arms are laid down, the popular passions and the resentment of statesmen, or presumed statesmen, continue as strongly as at present.

Geographically, the proposition is to form a sort of an economic union of Great Britain, France, Belgium, Italy and Russia, against the central powers. Off in the far east is Japan as a factor. There are also the British and the French colonies with Germany's lost colonial possessions also to be taken into consideration.

The German empire in the past has had the economic advantage. The zollverein, or customs union of the German states, was the beginning of Germany's trade expansion. The defeat of France at Sedan, and the treaty of Frankfort, under which humiliating terms of peace were imposed on France, gave Germany some advantage in her trade relations, although France gradually overcame this by her adroit economic legislation.

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Germany also was able to enforce her economic policy on Russia through Russia's inability to fight with arms after the war with Japan.

This economic aggressiveness of Germany, backed by her military prestige, was one of the grievances of the entente powers, or several of them, but they were powerless to remedy it. The question now is how far they will be able to remedy it in the future by their proposed economic alliances.

Germany, on her part, is somewhat on the defensive, and her statesmen are taking the position of an aggrieved nation, claiming that the allies are moved by the selfish purpose of destroying German trade and industry.

Geographically, Germany is in a better position to form economic alliances than are the allies. It is comparatively easy to stake off the German empire, Austria-Hungary, the Balkan states and Turkey in Europe, or what is left of Turkey in Europe. Their economic interests are not quite so diverse as those of England, France, Belgium, Italy and Russia. There are also grave difficulties, especially in the case of Austria-Hungary, and there are limitations quite as pronounced as in the case of the allies. Yet, in the main, Germany has the advantage of geography.

It further is to be remarked that while the allies are holding economic conferences and discussing theoretical measures and planning trade boycotts after the war, Germany has been going ahead and strengthening her economic position by making new alliances. She is encouraging closer relationship with Austria-Hungary, the Balkan states and Turkey, with the special purpose of securing for herself all possible raw supplies from those countries and obtaining all possible trade in manufactured products.

Bulgaria followed her armed alliance with the central powers by a trade alliance. Then the news came along from Bucharest, the capital of Rumania, saying that Austria-Hungary and Rumania had reached a complete agreement in regard to the exchange of merchandise, and that a commercial treaty had been signed based on the same conditions as the treaty between Germany and Rumania. This showed that Austria was acting in concert with Germany.

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Turkey in Europe is not of great economic consequence to the central powers, but Asiatic Turkey is, and in looking to the future sources of raw material and of food products Germany is mindful of the value of that section. The dispatches not long ago announced that a Turko-German treaty based on equal rights had been signed. This meant, of course, that Germany was insured the benefit of Turkey's natural resources in return for concessions of an international political character.

Germany's commercial conventions, which are marvels of minute knowledge of the trade and resources of other countries, went down in the abrogation of treaties by the war; that is, her conventions with the present enemy countries. But German system and German thoroughness, it is clear, are working out her future economic policy with a special view to conserving her present allies as an economic reserve in the economic war which is expected to follow the conflict in arms.

In the practical application of these proposed economic alliances the two principal beneficiaries are the two principal adversaries in the present hostilities. If England can readjust her free trade policy so as to bring her into closer commercial relations with her present allies, she will get a large share of the business which would result from driving Germany out of their markets. Germany, on her part, would benefit from the market which Austria-Hungray and the Balkan states and Turkey might take away from England, as well as from their supplies of raw material. In both instances it is a case of the big brother gaining by the sacrifices of the little brothers.

This probable result has a very direct bearing on what are known as the neutral markets. There has been very little discussion in the economic conferences of the allies, or in the outgivings of the German statesmen, regarding the policy to be followed in the overseas markets. It may be assumed that they would follow the practice of the international trusts and leave them open to competition among themselves. But if Germany can be driven from South America, for instance, England would be the chief beneficiary, because her iron and steel industries and her textile mills furnish the larger share of the manufactured commodities consumed in South America. Belgian industries, which once had a good South American market, will require a decade, if not a generation, to recuperate, and Italy and France are not serious competitors of England.

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Germany, on her part, will benefit by the support which she gets from her allies. Austria-Hungray has a very small South American market, and Turkey and the Balkan states none of consequence so that they leave the field free to Germany.

The markets of the far east offer a more complicated problem, but here, too, the chief parties in interest are England and Germany.

It may be that Japan will prove the obstacle to extending the principle of economic alliances into the far east. Japan's competition in that field, which geographically is her own, is as much with England as with Germany. Japanese competition with England exends to India. American consuls in India reported that the Austrians and Germans who were compelled to abandon the industries they had established in India were replaced by the Japanese.

The United States has a very live interest in these proposed economic alliances, if not in the international boycotts. An American consular officer, stationed at one of the principal posts in Europe, not long ago, in writing to a friend, declared that any economic ideas which Americans may have entertained in the past might just as well be thrown upon the scrap pile at once, since we shall have to adjust ourselves to a completely new and now unknown set of conditions. He remarked that if the measures of trade exclusion which are now considered with so much favor by the various enemy countries should become effective, we would occpy an intermediate position in allied countries somewhere between the excluded Germans and the favors the allies accord to each other.

The United States will find all the European countries just as anxious as ever for her market. It is an obsession in most of those countries that somehow the market of this country belongs to them. They always have resented our tariff legislation as though we had no right to legislate for our own people.

The first question will be what measures the United States shall take to protect her own markets. There is considerable difference of opinion as to the danger which may result from the European countries dumping their surplus manufactured products here, but this is really a minor question. The big question is the complete readjustment of the trade relations of the United States. This country cannot be a silent partner to any of the European economic alliances, whatever the sentiment of people may be on the subject of the war. It will be necessary to treat them all alike. Political friendship ceases at the seaboard.

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If the entente allies should succeed in perfecting a general fiscal system the United States could not afford to let itself be discriminated against. If the central powers should cement their economic union with the Balkan states and with Turkey the same observation would apply. The United States will be compelled to adopt a series of trade treaties; whether they be called reciprocity treaties or not is of little consequence. It will require the same treatment from all the European countries.

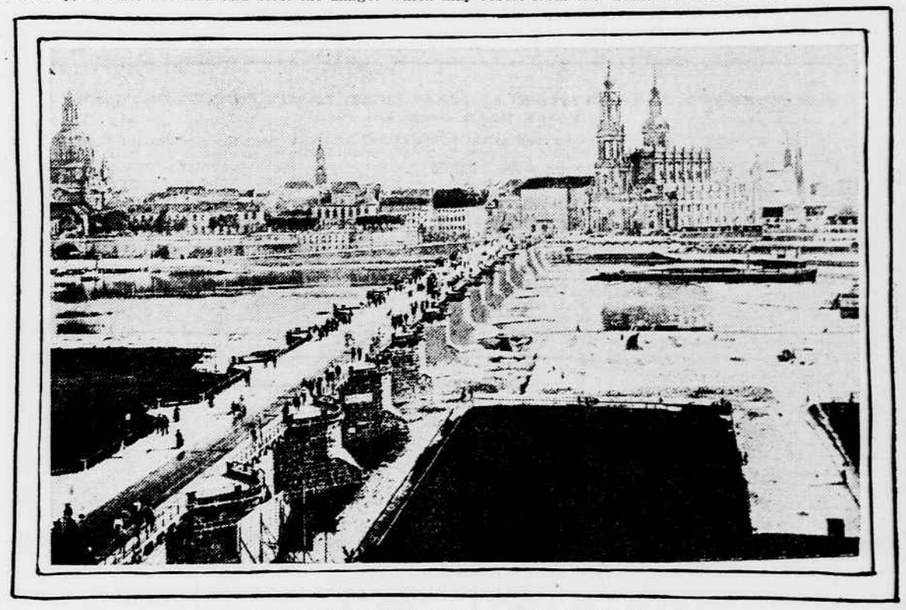
When it comes to neutral markets, such as South America and the far east, a new situation will arise. In spite of a good deal of bragging we have not increased our trade materially with South America in consequence of the European war.

Misleading comparisons are made with the first year of the war in order to show that our commerce with South America has increased materially, but that was a year of abnormally poor buying power on the part of South America, due partly to a commercial crisis which was at its height when the hostilities broke out; due partly to, also, the financial dislocation caused by the war. A comparison with the year 1912 or 1913 shows practically no increase.

Nevertheless, the United States has got a better footing in South America. The extension of American banks has opened up a new chapter under which trade based on American investments may be expected. This development is certain to increase the zeal of the European countries to keep us out of South America after the war closes. They cannot, however, control the South American countries themselves, and though European parties to the two sets of economic alliances which are in prospect may be equally interested in crowding out the United States, they will not be able to do it. They will have to consider this country as the unknown factor in the equation of South American trade.

THE HEART OF PARIS—OPERA HOUSE SQUARE.

TOWN HALL AT DANZIG, PRUSSIA.



THE RIVER FRONT AT DRESDEN, GERMANY.

Annals of Animal Lore Replete With Tales of Wonders That Never Existed

STORIES Handed Down From Generation to Generation Until, in Some Cases, Their Origin Is Lost in Mists of Antiquity—Fable of the "Barnacle Geese" and How It Probably Started—"Neither Flesh Nor Born of Flesh"—Story of the Glass Snake, Which Is really a Member of the Lizard Family—The Truth About the Hairworm—The Unicorn, and the Toad's Reputation as a Hermit—The Salamander as a "Fire-Eater."

THE annals of animal lore are replete with tales of wonders that never existed. Familiar, indeed, are these mythical stories that have been handed down as incontrovertible from generation to generation.

How often has every child contemplated with awe and wonder the spectacle of a mass of hair ells or hair worms wriggling about in a pool and believed that they are the result of a transformation of horsehair into living creatures!

Popular zoology is full of such marvels. The old tales of toads which live for thousands of years in solid rock are duly chronicled from time to time, and credulous souls continue to believe in them, along with other fantastic creations like unicorns and mermaids.

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But these stories have no scientific basis of truth. They belong to the fabulous age of nature study, when fiction was more appreciated than truth. Curiously enough, a great many of these stories have been seriously considered as truthful for many years. Indeed, in many cases the facts strangely accord with nature, but if one digs deep enough the similarity is merely apparent on the surface and the real explanation is quickly found.

Take, for instance, the story of the glass snake, which runs like this: If a glass snake is struck with a stick it breaks into pieces, but the snake remains uninjured. In fact, it is said to glide away while the pieces remain and develop into other snakes. A marvelous mystic tale! But what is the real explanation?

Simply this: That a glass snake is really not a snake at all, but a lizard without external limbs. When the creature breaks up into fragments as the result of some violence the fractures always occur in the part of the body which corresponds to the lizard's true tail. These fractures never occur through the body. That the pieces wriggle about after the tail is broken there is no doubt, but this also happens with other lizards. As for their subsequent development into separate snakes, this is an embellishment added to the tale by some lover of exaggerated and extravagant detail.

An example of a well known animal whose tail acts in the same queer way as does that of the glass snake when violently treated is the American chameleon. In both the chameleon and the glass snake nature has provided great powers of resistance to accidents of this sort, and it has been noted that a new tail grows very quickly on these animals after the old one has been broken off.

The tracing of such myths and fables is a very interesting task. One of the most curious of nature stories is that regarding the so-called "barnacle-geese," a variety of geese, which by the naturalists of the middle ages were believe to be produced by barnacles.

Nearly every one is familiar with the barnacle, which is a kind of crab inclosed in a triangular shell attached o the bottom of ships or floating driftwood of the sea beach. If one of these little animals is seen in its native waters, a beautiful little series of feathery plumes may be observed waving backward and forward, attached to the organs within the shell. These are the barnacle's feet and they serve not only to sweep food particles into the mouth, but also to act as its breathing organs.

Now such an animal could have possibly given origin to a goose affords an apt illustration of the ready manner in which the fable of one year becomes transmitted and transformed the secure belief of the next.

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Literature concerning the barnacle-geese dates back to 1154, and a quaint old work of this time tells, after describing the barnacle itself, that "in process of time, having been clothed with a strong coat of feathers, it either falls into the water or flies freely away into the air." The author continues by saying that he has seen more than a thousand of these small bodies of birds hanging down from one piece of timber, inclosed in shells and already formed.

It is to be supposed that he presumes the barnacles to be geese in an undeveloped state. He further adds that "bishops and clergymen in some parts of Ireland do not scruple to dine off these birds at times of fasting, because they are not flesh nor born of flesh."

A great many of the natural histories up to the middle of the sixteenth century contain serious discussions of the minute particulars of the production of these fabulous geese.

How the story of the production of the hair worm by the mysterious vivification of horse's hair was started is unknown, but it is nevertheless widely spread and ancient. It is true that hair worms do present the appearance of long, delicate, black hairs. However, they have a well ascertained life history which absolutely excludes the popular belief in its origin.

The worms in the early stages of their existence inhabit the bodies of insects. Sooner or later they leave the body of the insect and lay their eggs, fastened together in long strings, in water. From each egg a little creature armed with minute hooks is produced. This young hair worm burrows its way into the body of some other insect, there to repeat the history of its parent. Not a very miraculous story is this, and certainly not as interesting as the extreme modification.

The expression "crocodile's tears" has long passed into common use. As regards the tears of this animal, however, no foundation of fact exists for the belief in such emotional exhibitions. But a very probable explanation may be given of the manner in which the belief originated.

Crocodiles unquestionably emit very loud and singularly plaintive cries, which have often been likened to the howling of dogs. The earlier and credulous travelers would very naturally associate these cries with tears. Once begun the supposition was readily elaborated and firmly believed. But as far as scientists have been able to discover no actual tears accompany the cries.

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The oft-repeated story that a toad can exist in solid rock for years and years may be included in the sphere of marvelous zoological curiosities which are without foundation. These narratives of toads who have been liberated from imprisonment in dislodged rocks lose their plausibility under scientific scrutiny. First of all, in glancing over some of the peculiarities of toads it is seen that the skin of the animal is very important in not only supplementing, but also in some cases supplanting the work of the lungs as the breathing organ. Toads will live for months after the excision of the lungs, for their skin serves as a breathing surface. In the second place they can live for long periods without food and with but a limited supply of air.

These considerations, it will be seen, throw considerable light on the stories of the "toad in the rock." It is easily imagined that a young toad might gain access to a roomy crevice within a rock, where he might find a due supply of air and a diet of insects. There he would begin to grow and increase to such an extent that egress through the aperture of entrance would be impossible. The toad, however, may continue to live comfortably on a limited supply of air and food; this, taken into account with their habit of hibernation in winter, will explain how one might manage to exist—though under hard conditions—in what might possibly be considered solid rock. When the rock is split and the toad hops out, eager to expend some of its accumulated vitality, the apparently inexplicable possibility of the live toad imprisoned in solid rock awakens the interest of the superstitious mind, and the presumption that the toad was inclosed when the rock was first formed is the natural conclusion. But science strips off the poetical covering to such tales as these, and the animals are found to be very commonplace members of the animal series.

A really fabulous animal is the unicorn—a "critter" which never did exist and never will. Tales of the unicorn were brought to ancient Greece by travelers in India. It is probably true that these travelers did see a horned antelope which gave them the foundation for their stories or, it is possible that they referred to the Indian ox, which is single-horned.

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This animal, which still persists in its existence today on the arms of Great Britain, has been modified until it now has the head and body of a horse, the tail of a lion and the beard of a goat.

A fictitious animal which has a mooted reputation is the sea serpent. To date, no story of this animal ever could produce a foundation of actual fact. The alleged sea serpent, on close investigation, usually proves to be a long train of sea weed attached to a keg or the floating prow of a wrecked vessel.

A long and connected string of sea weed, extending some fifty or sixty feet along the surface of the sea, when slightly disturbed by the rippling breeze, may be moved on the waves in a manner strongly suggestive of the movements of a snake. The details of every sea serpent story, when related, give authentic evidence that sea serpents always resolve themselves into inanimate objects of one kind or another. Yet many zoologists and other writers have sworn that they have, "with their own eyes," seen these oceanic creatures.

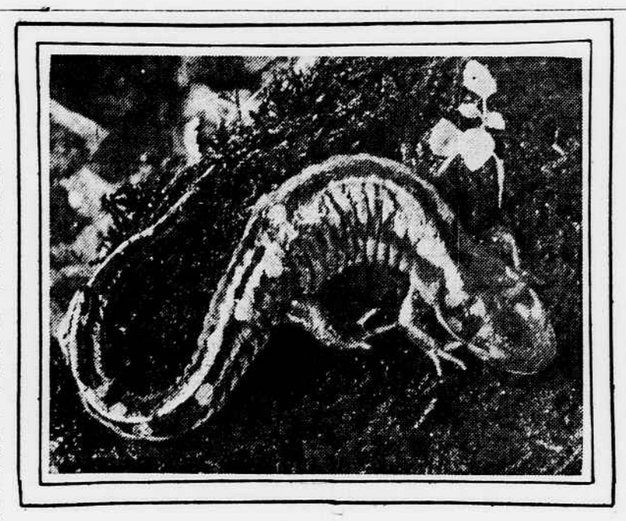
A safe way in which one might dispose forever of the verification of the sea serpent is to wait until the dead body of one is brought to the museum for exhibition and study. Then it can be determined whether the animal is an abnormal marine monster or a truly new and distinct species.

Tales of erroneous belief in regard to animals have descended to the level of "old wives' tales," but they are interesting for no other reason than they expose superstition as a mingling of one per cent fact and ninety-nine per cent imagination.

The tale of the salamander, for instance, which tells how this little animal is able to go through and extinguish fire, has no less authority than Aristole for its authenticity. But it is also a myth. So prevalent, however, did the belief in its truth become that asbestos, in the days of Bacon and his cotemporaneous writers, became known as salamander's wool.

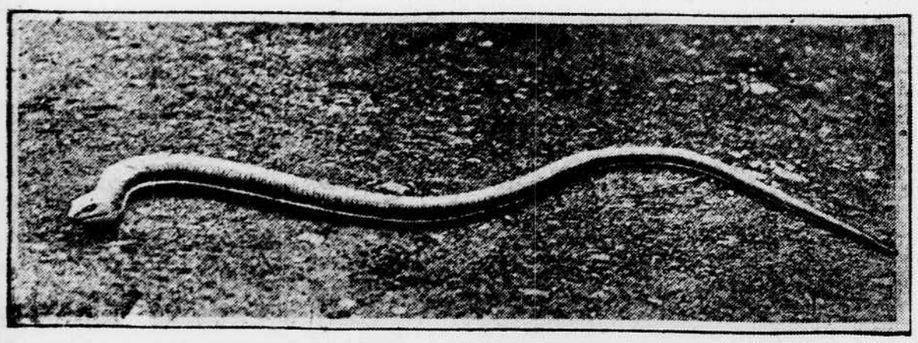
It may be interesting to state at this point that the venerable story of the pelican which feeds its young from blood from its breast has no foundation, even though it is given an important place in ecclesiastical history. The story probably originated in the fact that the flamingo ejects a curious bloody secretion from its mouth and it is possible that this bird was mistaken for the pelican of the wilderness.

In short, in the past, there seems to have been nothing so wonderful to be told of animals that people would not believe it. The story is told of an old lady, whose young seafaring son entertained her with tales of things he had seen in his travels in the world at large. She listened with delight and belief to accounts of mountains of sugar and rivers of rum, and to tales of lands where gold and silver were more plentiful than precious. But when the story teller told of fishes that were able to raise themselves out of the water in flight, the old lady's credulity began to waver and she repressed what she considered her son's tendency to exaggeration by saying: "Sugar mountains may be, and rivers of rum may be, but fish that fly ne'er can be."



THE SALAMANDER, WHICH IS SUPPOSED TO BE ABLE TO GO THROUGH FIRE WITHOUT INJURY.

(Photo by Dr. R. W. Shufeldt.)



THE GLASS SNAKE. PHOTOGRAPHED FROM LIFE.

Chivalry and Bad Roads.

THE late Senator Francis M. Cockrell of Missouri often used to tell a story in illustration of the bad roads of the south.

"I once had thirty miles," so he would begin, "to go by stage in Mississippi. The roads were terrible, for it was early spring. The passengers consisted of five men and three women — three large women, swathed in shawls and veils, who kept to themselves, talking in low tones on the rear seat.

"Well, we hadn't gone a mile before the stage got stuck two feet in the black mud. Down jumped every man of us, and for ten minutes we tugged and jerked and pulled till we got the stage out of the hole.

"We had hardly got our breath back when the stage got stuck again, and once more we had to strain our very hearts out to release her.

"In covering fifteen miles we stuck eight times, and in going the whole thirty we lifted that old stage out of the mud seventeen times by actual count.

"We five male passengers were wet, tired and filthy when we reached our destination, and so you can imagine our feelings when we saw the three woman passengers remove their veils, their shawls and their skirts, and, lo and behold—they were three big, hearty, robust men.

"As we stared at them with bulging and ferocious eyes, one of them said:

"'Thanks for your labor, gents. We knowed this road and prepared for it. Will you liquor?'"

Nothing Gained.

SENATOR FALL was discussing the Mexican situation, which he has made his specialty.

"The action you speak of," he said, "seems to offer some redress and satisfaction; but consider it closely and you'll find that it gives you nothing at all. It is like the remark of the waitress in the cheap boarding house:

"'Mamie,' a boarder protested to her, 'this roast beef is overdone.'

"'No, it ain't, sir,' she replied; 'it's done over. It's the same roast you had yesterday.'"

THE VALUE OF CORN BREAD

THE popularity of corn bread has fluctuated up and down, and in a general way it may be said that the great mass of people living in the corn bread belt prefer wheat bread, or "white bread." However, a very respectable percentage of people remain true to corn bread, and the corn "pone" and the corn cake are by no means extinct in Washington. Washington is in what was the corn bread belt, and many of its citizens and many thousands of their ancestors were nourished on bread made from the sweet meal of corn.

A Virginia authority on corn bread once wrote that the value of corn bread is not as a dentifrice only, but as a food it contains almost all that man needs for sustenance. "While man may not be able to live by bread alone," says that southern writer, "he can come nearer doing it literally on corn bread than on any other kind, and corn bread has been for generations the staple article of food on southern tables, from the pine bench of the negro to the mahogany board of the millionaire. It is distinctly southern bread, and nothing can ever take its place in the eyes or the mouth of the southerner. But it must be bread from southern corn which has been dried or cured in proper fashion, and not the hasty, damp, undercured product that too often comes from the mills of the north."

In referring to corn bread as a dentifrice it is interesting to recall that two or three years ago Allen Stuart of the naval recruiting station at Atlanta was reported as saying that "practically no southern boy applying for enlistment in the navy is rejected on account of bad teeth, because of the corn bread that is eaten in the south, the mastication of it developing and strengthening the teeth."

Everybody knows that men can live, work and keep strong on meat and corn bread, but the researches, analyses and figures of food scientists show that there is more nourishment in the same amount of wheat flour than in anything made from corn. Experts prove that, weight for weight, wheat bread contains greater nutrient properties. It has also been proved that the human system requires something more for its support than "nutriment." It has been said that it also needs something to fill the digestive tract with the proper waste matter, for this, apparently, exercises a healthy function.

It may be recalled that various experiments have been made with "concentrated" food and "capsule" rations. Some time before the outbreak of the war the German military authorities conducted experiments under which the nutrient properties of the whole army ration were condensed in capsules and a "poison squad" fed with them, being required at the same time to do the regular duties of a soldier's life. These men fell away in weight and declined in nervous and muscular vigor, while the squad that chewed their bread, meat and vegetables in the old-fashioned way waxed fat and strong.

In Cinema Land.

DE WOLF HOPPER said at an al fresco luncheon in Los Angeles:

"The biggest fake in the theatrical world today is the cinema star's salary. Why, if you believed all you hear you'd think every Tom, Dick and Harry in the cinema world made half a million a year.

"I know a second heavy who believed these cinema yarns, and applied to a cinema manager for a job.

"'What salary do you expect?' the manager asked.

"'Oh,' said the second heavy, 'about $525 to begin with.'

"The manager pursed up his lips, thought a minute, and then said:

"'Knock off the odd hundreds, and I'll engage you.'"

The Idea Lingered.

ALAN HAWLEY, aviator, said at the New York Automobile Club:

"The first automobiles were made like carriages—as if a pair of horses were to draw them, you know. For years the automobile designer couldn't get away from the carriage model—couldn't help providing for the horse.

"In fact, I have heard of several chaps in the first days of automobiling who designed two-story garages, the upper story being for the hay and feed."