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The Paper That Does Things

JANUARY 2, 1918.

DRAFTING LABOR.

Incident to the investigations going on in Washington these days, there is serious talk of conscripting labor for war work, particularly for the construction of our new merchant fleet. Several senators are known to favor action by congress corresponding to the conscription of men for the army. With the experience of the first eight months of the war to judge by, they say, the country cannot safely leave so vital a matter to the voluntary patriotism of labor.

It has been testified, in the shipping inquiry, that out of 106 shipbuilding plants no less than 30 have had to shut down, for varying periods, because of strikes since we entered the war. That has meant a loss of 600,000 working days, equivalent to the labor of 20,000 men for a month. The unfortunate effect of such loss at this time, when the production of ships is so imperative, is apparent to everyone.

We used to point the finger of scorn at Great Britain for the "disloyal" spirit shown by many of her labor groups early in the war, but Sir Christopher Kent, an expert on British labor problems, says: "If Great Britain had one-eighth of the labor troubles which the United States has had since the commencement of the war in April, we would have been compelled to conclude a disgraceful peace with Germany long ago."

Under modern conditions, he adds, no nation can carry on war successfully unless there is industrial peace. That is self-evident, carry on war and somehow or other, we must insure such peace.

Workmen are flatly accused of "labor profiteering." Possibly that charge is not quite fair. The wages they have demanded may be necessary and just, in view of present conditions, but it is not necessary or just that they should prejudice the highest interests of the country by striking on slight provocation. If their claims are rights, there are other and better ways of having them considered, only at present no one knows what that way would be.

Another evil generally complained of in our war industries is that workmen leave their jobs and drift about too freely. This creates an artificial shortage of labor and seriously handicaps many important enterprises.

Soldiers do not strike for higher pay, nor for anything else. Soldiers do not leave their posts and drift around from one cantonment to another. Why should war-workers do these things?

"I cannot see," says Sen. Sherman, "that there is any moral, legal or theoretical difference between the government compelling American citizens to shoulder a gun and compelling the labor of the country to work under discipline."

Nobody really wants to place American labor under such compulsion, but it may yet be done. For once, we would say, Sen. Sherman has an idea, even though he must have borrowed it.

ORGANIZING ATTACK.

It has taken limitless patience for two years to watch the slow progress of the allied army butting against the western front. Up to a few months ago a gain of 500 yards was regarded as good. Around Ypres this fall there have been several gains of a mile at a time. In the attack on Cambrai, the first day's net was five miles, the biggest of the war, but if attacks were to slow up after one day and then a long period of preparation must follow for another, it is a tedious job pushing the Germans to their frontier.

Artillery preparation tears up the enemy defences pretty well for a mile or so, and the men can then go in and occupy the territory. Unless they have such a line of armored tanks as was provided for the Cambrai attack, the attacking force then finds itself up against even stronger defences. In them are the enemy, completely armed with machine guns, bombs and grenades. Our men meanwhile, probably have discharged most of their weapons and the attack has to hold up.

The problem then is, in the confusion prevailing, to keep our men so well armed and organized that they can keep up attacking. The situation is one of disorganization, confusing all plans and of tumult, upsetting every one's self command. The various units must be so intermingled that it is difficult for the supply system to see that no group of men is neglected.

Furthermore the guns must be brought up quickly so that they can support the men in their new positions and help them press on further, and all this time the food organization must follow closely, for no soldier can fight along while hungry and faint.

Maintaining organization and system amid all the upsetting conditions is one of the biggest problems before the officers, and it will take all the executive skill and presence of mind they can muster.

MEETING INTRIGUE.

One of Germany's greatest sources of strength is its world wide system of intrigue. Its spies and plotters and agents have accomplished in Russia what the German army could never do. They have broken down the resistance of a great nation where the armies could never have driven them back. The allies have been slow to meet this peril. They and our government should be prepared to confront German intrigue on its own ground.

The German agents have poured out their poison of lies into the heart of the Russian peasant. Meanwhile the allies have done little or nothing to present their case to the Russians. They need an efficient system for educating the Russian people up to what German power really means. They need to take steps to show the Russians that they must either fight the Germans or become their slaves.

There is a similar danger in Italy. It is now well known that the Germans broke the Italian line by the treacherous work of the spies and plotters and socialists who lulled the Italians at a weak point in the line with false dreams of peace. Meanwhile a shock of tremendous power was being prepared to overwhelm them.

If the German and Austrian people really understood the situation the war would end tomorrow. Austria is fertile field for educational work on the real meaning of the war. Here are a dozen different races held in slavery by the German minority. Had any of the allied nations been made up of such a racial tangle, the Germans would have been able to incite them to revolution long before this.

It ought to be possible to smuggle literature and information about American aims into Austria, sufficient to make its people understand the real meaning of the war, and induce them to resist the autocracy that is driving them to battle against their interests.

CHILDREN'S CHANCES.

It's no use saying, "every child has an equal chance." It isn't true. The child's chance depends, to a tragic degree, on its parents' income.

Investigations made by the federal children's bureau in many cities show that among families where the father earns less than $550 a year, one child out of every six dies in its infancy. Among families where the fathers earn $1,050 or more, only one baby dies out of 16. Thus it appears that the doubling of the minimum income nearly triples the baby's chance of survival.

The same sort of difference is found as incomes increase beyond the $1,050 point, though the contrast is not quite so striking. Within reasonable limits, money inevitably means health and life for the children.

And personal care means as much as money. It was found, in this same inquiry that the babies of mothers who "went out to work" died at more than twice the rate of those whose mothers were able to stay at home and look after them.

And so, after all, that announcement of a tremendous German offensive on the western front, accompanied by a terrific bombardment all along the line, including new long-range gas shells, was merely a bluff, meant to scare the allies. After three and a half years of continual disillusionment, the Germans still imagine that, like the old fashioned Chinese warriors, they can frighten the enemy into submission by making horrific faces, noises and smells.

Every wine cellar is more than ever a gold mine, since congress adopted the federal prohibition amendment. Every bit of liquor "bottled in bond" takes on new value. Dealers are making the most of the situation, realizing that they may never be able to buy another quart of spirituous liquor. And despite the prevalent prohibition sentiment, they seem to be finding a surprising number of consumers willing to pay their monopolistic prices.

The individuals who put ground glass in canned tomatoes and breakfast cereals destined for the American army must have been the same gentle Germans who put tacks in oats shipped to the allies some time ago. When the miscreants are found, they ought to be fed forcibly on their own glass and tacks.

Other Editors Than Ours

THE COLLEGES IN WAR TIMES.

(Springfield Sun.)

Cornell university has decided to close four weeks earlier next spring. It is predicted that many colleges will take similar action. This will release a body of capable young men who will be available for the various forms of war work. It will help toward getting a force of students at work on the farms in the planting season.

No aspect of our national life can go on unchanged during the war. We must adapt everything to this period of storm and danger. For the colleges to go on studying the classic humanities in their secluded cloisters for nine months in a year while the world is on fire, makes them seem too much apart from life.

This does not mean that we can afford to close up our institutions of higher education. To meet the world's new needs, we must have the best trained men, both in technical equipment and in the world's books of wisdom. But the courses can be cut a little for this emergency without serious loss. An instructor can concentrate the ripeness of his knowledge and philosophy into eight months about as well as nine. It would be a good policy to go a bit farther and make very brief holiday and spring recesses, so as to close in the spring at the earliest possible date.

The student who goes out early and takes up some useful work in agriculture or other war task, will find it a useful supplement to his book education. It will count him much more than if he spent the intervening months in sports and social life.

He will thereby gain a knowledge of fundamental processes, an understanding of life of manual toil, an acquaintance with the great working democracy. He will learn how to meet and get along with all types of people. He will go back to his books with a comprehension of common life that will give his learning a very human touch.

THE AMERICAN NEGRO IN THE WAR.

(Elkhart Truth.)

Germans who thought they could breed disloyalty among Negroes in this country were much mistaken in their estimate of the Negro's Americanism. But they were right in their estimate of his value to this country.

The response of the colored citizens of the United States to the nation's call for service has been great. Negroes enlisted in many branches of the army and navy. A fine group of Negro officers were produced under the officers' reserve training camp system. For the first time we have Negro soldiers commanded by men of their own race.

But the men who have joined the fighting forces are not the only members of their race who are sharing the nation's war work. There are many thousands who are materially aiding the country by faithful work, by production and conservation. Colored men are busy loading steamships, building transportation lines, working in factories. Colored women are eager to learn the part they can play in winning the war, in their own homes, as servants and in the industrial world.

Germany had it doped out beautifully when she figured that we would be seriously inconvenienced by a Germanized Negro population. Americans, both black and white, have cause for pride in the fact that this scheme of Germany's was so utterly impossible to carry through.

THE MELTING POT

"Come Take Pot Luck With Us"

NEWS FROM THE FRONT.

By Ella Wheeler Wilcox.

Detached from life, the women overseas
Wait only for one thing—news from the front.
The olden joys, and worries, hopes and cares,
Aims and ambitions, which made up their days
Are meaningless and empty. Nothing seems
Of any import but the waited word
From dear ones who have heard the country's call
And answered it and left vast loneliness
And hunger of the heart in silent homes.
Bravely they do the things that must be done
And make no protest; but, one wish alone
Fills all their thoughts by day, their dreams by night—
News from the front!

I, too, detached from all that life once meant,
Perform my duties and pursue my tasks
As cheerfully and as bravely as I can:
While like dead leaves on bleak November winds
Old aims, ambitions, interests and desires
Blow by me. One who heard the call of God
And answered it left such vast loneliness
And hunger in my heart that now my life
Has room for only one compelling wish,
Which fills my thoughts by day, my dreams by night—
News from the front!

(Copyright, 1917.)

THE MANICURE LADY.

By William F. Kirk.

"I got a secret I'm going to spring on you, George," said the Manicure Lady, who had been gazing dreamily out of the shop window at the passing pedestrians.

"Shoot," said the Head Barber. "Nothing ain't no surprise to me no more."

"I have been told that there is a fortune in my voice," the Manicure Lady declared.

"You mean singing?" asked the doubtful Head Barber.

"Just that, George—singing! I have found out, George, that I have got one of the swellest mezzo sopranos that was ever in a human chest. That's what a high priced teacher told me last week, and I guess my days around here is numbered."

"I guess so, if somebody told you you could sing," said the Head Barber. "If you tried practicing around here we would have to give you your release anyhow, so you might as well resign."

"I ain't ready to resign just now," said the Manicure Lady hurriedly, "Don't jump at none of them confusions, George. I only mean that some day, when I get good and famous in them operas, I may have to give up this situation."

"Who would ever have thought it?" gasped the Head Barber. "Of course, I knew you had a grand talking voice, kiddo, always oiled up and in grand form, but I never dreamed that you was a singer. How did the neighbors find it out?"

"I been practicing," said the Manicure Lady. "Only by hard practice do we surmount them obstacles on life's pathway, George. Only by labor do we mount them heights.

"Labor never took me up to no top story," said the Head Barber sadly.

"Labor along one narrow line won't do it," said the Manicure Lady. "But labor along them scientific and artistic lines of endeavor will lead the mortal on to hazy heights of knowledge of which he never had no idea of."

"It don't seem possible," said the Head Barber, scratching his head. "And so you are going to be a great singer. Well, well! This is kind of sudden, kid. Give me time to think it over."

"I won't be walking out of this here situation right off the reel, George," said the Manicure Lady. "I intend to be around here long enough for you to find a new manicure girl that has my skill, of course, and all like that. I wouldn't leave the shop flat, George, even to sing before them crowned heads."

"I wouldn't want to sing before them crowned heads these days," said the Head Barber. "They would be a kind of grouchy audience for a singer now, I'm thinking. You better think twice before you pass up a sure thing, kid. You know every Saturday night the old envelope is waiting for you here, to say nothing of tips you get through the week."

"The less you say of tips these times the better," said the Manicure Lady. "Tips is going the way of kings, George, the way it looks to me. My customers lately is as changeless as eternity, like them poets says. It is a longing for change, George, that has decided me on this change I am going to make."

"All right," said the Head Barber, "and I sure hope you make good singing. You sure always made good talking."

The War Against the Clothes Moth

BY GARRETT P. SERVISS.

Some facts about clothes moths recently published by Ralph C. Benedict of Brooklyn seem to me of such universal interest that they ought to be rendered available to everybody. All housewives surely must be glad to be acquainted with them, for the war against moths is unending, and if you don't know your enemy well there can be no hope of finally defeating him.

It appears that Mr. Benedict has been engaged for some four years in a special investigation of clothes moths, and he makes the disquieting statement that "moths were seen emerging from cocoons, and larvae were seen feeding during all months of the year." This seems to dispose of the traditional belief that moths come out only in the spring, and that their voracious progeny devour furs and woolen garments only during the warm months.

One's faith in the protective effects of simple "cold storage" is also shaken by Mr. Benedict's statement that winter stops the activities of the moths only when the temperature is very low. I gather fom the experiments of other investigators on the persistence of minute life organisms under low temperatures, that cold at the best can only temporarily paralyze, and cannot destroy, such creatures. Heat is a destroyer, when intense enough; cold an arrester and preserver. But you cannot apply flame to fur garments or scald expensive clothes in boiling water.

Another popular belief demolished by Mr. Benedict's studies is that cedar chips, or cedar-lined closets and tobacco will repel moths. He put the insects in a closed tumbler where tobacco was burning and they minded it no more than some men mind a smoking car. Cloth soaked in all sorts of odoriferous substances, warranted to repel moths at the first whiff, were promptly filled with eggs by the flying mine-planters, and the eggs hatched with normal regularity.

An important fact, which may be new to most persons, is that the moths seeking nests for their eggs will use cotton or silk fabrics as readily as fur or wool, although the larvae (caterpillars), do not feed upon silk or cotton, and must consequently emigrate in search of provender as soon as they are born. It is on the larvae, Mr. Benedict says, that the war against moths must be concentrated. It is useless to fight them in their filing stage. Everybody knows that they can beat a football player in dodging and the recent experiments have shown that their noses are not delicate, and they don't mind smells.

But now, lest the reader should begin to despair, thinking that the great moth war has arrived at a deadlock, let us turn to something more encouraging from Mr. Benedict's report. After saying that any method of attack to be effective must be directed toward the larval stage, he adds:

"Camphor and naphthelene, in closed places, kill all stages."

After reading that re-animating sentence one finds a grim satisfaction in perusing its descriptive successor:

"The eggs and larvae turn from whitish to a yellowish brown in color; the larvae cease activity almost immediately."

Thus, after brushing aside some of the most cherished superstitions about moths, we have one very old and very popular belief triumphantly vindicated, the belief of our grandmothers, who were very wise women, as it now appears on the word of science, that camphor (they were not so familiar with napthalene then), is a deadly enemy to moths as well as to headaches. How that brings back in memory the penetrating odor that spread around the house when the arrival of the first snow, and the jingling of the earliest sleigh bells, brought out the mink cloaks, muffs and collars from their summer hiding places.

Interesting possibilities are also suggested by a further statement of Mr. Benedict's: "No gaseous poisons were tried, but undoubtedly the common ones would be effective. Kerosene and gasolene fumes were not effective." But the special practical object of the research was not after all attained, and that was the discovery of some poison, harmless to human beings, that could be introduced into cloth and make it "moth proof." This is a desideratum yet to be reached.

One surprise attended the investigation, viz: that the species of moth which does nearly all the mischief is not the spotted-winged Tinea, but the yellow Tineola bisselliella. This, however, is a tid-bit of information for naturalists alone. Picturesque facts were developed concerning the manner in which the female moths carefully fasten their eggs among the threads of cloth, and the way the larvae make dumb-bell-shaped holes in cloth by eating first from one end and then from the other end of their woven cases, afterward making a slit between the two.

Interesting also is such a statement as this: "Hatching began in seven days, the larvae emerging as millimeter-long, translucant white, active caterpillars. These began to feed immediately, and were then colored according to the color of the cloth used. Experiments were tried with felts of several colors and as a result larvae were obtained with a median streak of red, blue, green, etc. The dyes passed through the alimentary canal apparently unchanged."

CONQUEST and KULTUR

Aims of the Germans IN THEIR OWN WORDS

A compilation from German authorities by the committee on public information.

By Wallace Notestein and E. E. Stoll
The University of Minnesota.

SECTION IX.

SUBORDINATION OF FRANCE.

"In the first place, our political position would be considerably consolidated if we could finally get rid of the standing danger that France will attack us on a favorable occasion, so soon as we find ourselves involved in complications elsewhere. In one way or another we must square our account with France if we wish for a free hand in our international policy. This is the first and foremost condition of a sound German policy; since the hostility of France once for all can not be removed by peaceful overtures, the matter must be settled by force of arms. France must be so completely crushed that she can never again come across our path."

(F. von Bernhardi, Germany and the Next War [1911], trans. 1914, pp. 105-106. For similar demands see pp. 58, 167.)

"Whatever Providence may hold in reserve for Germany it is on France that will fall the task of paying the costs, but in another measure than 44 years ago. It will be no paltry five billions they will have to pay to ransom themselves, but perhaps 30. The holy mother of God at Lourdes will have much to do if she undertakes, even through miracles, the task of healing all the bones that our soldiers will break in the bodies of the unfortunate inhabitants on the other side of the Vosges. Poor France! There is yet time for her to change her plans, but in a few hours it will be too late Then France will receive blows that will be remembered for many generations."

(National-Zeitung, July 21, 1914. Quoted by Dampierre, L'Allemagne et le droit des gens, 1915, p. 105.)

(Speaking of France in the event of a war:) "The victorious German people will be in a position to demand that the menace of the French forever cease. France then must be crushed. We must demand further that so much French soil be ceded to us as we shall need for final security. Then will be the time to consider the evacuation of which we have spoken. We would finally take such of her colonial possessions as we need," etc.

(Daniel Frymann: Wenn ich der Kaiser ware [1911], 21st ed., 1914, p. 152.)

"For the sake of our own existence we must ruthlessly weaken her (France) both politically and economically, and must improve our military and strategical position with regard to her. For this purpose in our opinion it is necessary radically to improve our whole western front from Belfort to the coast. Part of the north French channel coast we must acquire, if possible, in order to be strategically safer as regards England and to secure better access to the ocean.

"Special measures must be taken to keep the German empire from suffering internally in any way owing to this enlargement of its frontier and addition to its territory. In order not to have conditions such as those in Alsace-Lorraine, the most important business undertakings and estates must be transferred from anti-German ownership to German hands, France taking over and compensating the former owners. Such portion of the population as is taken over by us must be allowed absolutely no influence in the empire.

"Furthermore, it is necessary to impose a mercilessly high war indemnity (of which more hereafter) upon France, and probably on her rather than on any other of our enemies, however terrible the financial losses she may have already suffered owing to her own folly and British self-seeking. We must also not forget that she has comparatively large colonial possessions, and that, should circumstances arise, England could hold on to these with impunity if we do not help ourselves to them." * *

(Confidential petition of the German professors and other intellectuals [June 20, 1915] [G., p. 134]. Among the signatories are Fredrick Meinecke, professor of history, Berlin; Hermann Oncken, professor of history, Heidelberg; Herr von Reichenau, retired diplomat; Herr von Schwerin, Regeirungspräsident, of Frankfurt-on-Main; and Dietrich Schafer, professor of history, Berlin. This document, the other parts of which are equally harsh, was signed by 352 professors, 158 educators and clergymen, 145 administrative officials, 182 business men, 252 artists, writers, etc.; in all by 1,352 men of position. It breathes the same predatory spirit as the Manifesto of the Industrialists.)

"We can secure Germany's position on the continent of Europe only if we succeed in smashing the triple entente, in humiliating France, and giving her that position to which she is entitled, as we can not arrive at an agreement for mutual cooperation with her."

(F. von Bernhardi, Britain as Germany's Vassal [1912], trans. 1914, p. 207.)

"If the fortress of Longwy with the numerous blast furnaces of the region were returned to the French, then when a new war broke out, the German and Luxemburg furnaces (list of which is given) would be paralyzed in short order by the few long-range guns. Thus about 20 per cent of the production of crude iron and of German steel would be lost. * * *

"Let us say, by the by, that the high production of steel derived from the iron ore gives to German agriculture the only chance of obtaining the phosphoric acid needed when the importation of the phosphates is blockaded.

"The security of the German empire, in a future war, requires therefore imperatively the ownership of all mines of iron ore, including the fortresses of Longwy and of Verdun, which are necessary to defend the region."

(Manifesto of the six industrial associations to the imperial chancellor. [G., pp. 129-30.] See note, p. 65.)

A CHANCE FOR THE YOUNG OLD MAN.

Placing so many young men in the fighting ranks of the country is giving the young old man a chance for a comeback.

The young old man has plenty of activity, but has been cast aside by employers in favor of younger blood.

You may belong to this class.

Have you ever tried to analyze the why of your starting down the ladder instead of making a steady progress upward?

You got into a rut and you remained there—is about the sum and substance of the whole matter.

Had a disposition to ridicule modern ways of doing things and stuck to the way which was modern 20, 10 or even five years ago.

Then you just got stubborn and thought that every man or person who endeavored to make suggestions was insulting you and to act on his suggestions would be to admit that your ideas were not of the best.

Well, you have had your lesson—another chance is given you to make good.

Are you going to modernize your ways at once and then keep up with the procession, or will you be a loser again?

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WHICH WOULD YOU DO?

By Ella Wheeler Wilcox.

(Copyright, 1917.)

If in a neighbor's yard you saw
A vicious beast grown wild,
And if you heard the frightened cry
Of some death menaced child,
Would you pass by without a sign
And say "It's no affair of mine,"
Or would you get your gun?

The world is now our neighbor's yard,
And there the wild beast roads;
And all the children of the earth
Are menaced in their homes.
Will you go culling summer flowers
And say "It's no affairs of ours",
Or will get your gun?

BANDITS RAID THREE TOWNS AND ROB TRAIN

NOGALES, Ariz., Jan. 2.—Three towns were raided and looted and a Southern Pacific de Mexico train held up Monday by bandits operating between here and Cananes, Sonora, according to reports reaching here Tuesday. Three hundred federal soldiers have been ordered from Hermosillo to take up pursuit of the marauders.