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Editorial

A CRITICAL PERIOD IN THE WAR

With the Russian campaign at a standstill, comparatively speaking, interest now centres on two points—the Western front and the Balkans. In the former quarter the tide still seems to be running against the Germans. The British have made no further advance, but they are holding their own and repulsing all attacks. The French have made notable progress in the Champagne region, where they threaten the German railway communications. Whether this is due to a weakening of the German lines by the withdrawal of troops or not, it is an achievement promising great results. Not since the battle of the Marne has the allied troops had better cause for encouragement. The "drive" will inevitably proceed slowly; but every step gained counts. And time means everything in wearing down a strong resistance. It is in this way, probably, that Germany must be defeated, if at all. Information as to the actual numbers engaged is still scanty; but the conclusion that the Allies are improving in this respect while the Germans are deteriorating cannot be far from the truth.

The situation in the Balkans is still confused. We do not know, in the first place, how many troops the Allies have to land at Salonica, or what part, if any, Italy proposes to take in the movement, or whether Rumania and Greece are eventually to give their assistance. The massing of Rumanian forces on the Bulgarian front suggests that the former country, at least, will not long stand idly by and see the German-Austrian forces advance to the relief of Turkey. Nor is Greece likely, despite the efforts of King Constantine, to preserve an armed neutrality in such circumstances. Meanwhile the invaders have suffered their first check at the hands of the servians. This may be only a temporary disaster for them. The northern border of Serbia is far less defensible than the western, where the mountainous country makes the operations of an enemy difficult. Another consideration is the nature of the support which the Bulgarians will offer to their new allies. They are born fighters, presumably the Bulgarian army will do its duty. But the lack of national enthusiasm will tell upon their morale.

It is plain that the Teutonic Powers must win at this critical period of the war if they are to have any hope of ultimate victory. The allies can accomplish their purpose to an extent if they hold the German-Austrian armies back until it is to late

to save Constantinople. That is why the help of Bulgaria is so essential to Germany and Austria. If they break their way through Serbia and beat back the forces of the Allies, they will have the route open through Adrianople which Bulgaria followed in the first Balkan wars.—Philadelphia Public Ledger.

Traps In French.
A frequent trap in French for the unwary is the difference of meaning in similar phrases. For example, "faire feu" means to fire a gun, while "faire du feu" means to light a fire; "tomber par terre" conveys the idea of falling to the ground from one's own height, whereas "tomber a terre" means to fall from any height—in other words, to tumble down and to tumble off. In the same way "traiter de fat" means to call a man a fop and "traiter en roi" to treat him like a king. The English bore may be expressed in two ways—"un raseur" gives the idea of an active bore and "une bassinoire" of a passive bore.—London Saturday Review.

Trap For Quotation Experts.
If any one wants a catch question to spring on a gathering of self confessed literary sharps let him ask whence comes the quotation, "One touch of nature makes the whole world kin." This is one of the six best sellers in the world of quotations, yet not one person in a hundred knows where it comes from. It is comparatively easy to guess the author, but almost impossible to find a person who can name the work. One could build any number of parlor games around "One touch of nature makes the whole world kin." Try it.—Spokane Spokesman-Review.

Our First Silk Factory.
Ohio was the first state in the Union to engage in the manufacture of silk, according to Dr. William C. Mills of Ohio State university. "The first silk factory was erected at Point Pleasant in 1841 by John W. Gill and Thomas White," said Dr. Mills. "These men planted twenty-five acres in mulberry trees and began the raising of silkworms the following year. Dress silks, ribbons, silk velvets and figured silks were manufactured. The buckeye hurr in light buff was the first pattern woven. A vast pattern from this piece was presented to Henry Clay, who also wore a suit of broadcloth made in a Steubenville factory. Since 1877 not a yard of cloth of any kind has been made in Steubenville, although at one time there were twelve woolen, cotton and silk mills located there."—Baltimore American.

The Sublime Porte.
The phrase "the sublime porte" arises from an aspect of the sultan's capital. The French words "sublime porte" are derived from "porta sublima," meaning "the lofty gate." Constantinople city used to have twelve gates, and near one was a building with an imposing gateway called Babil-Humajun. In this building resided the grand vizier, and there also were the offices of the chief ministers, whence all the edicts of state were issued. The French phrase was adopted because at the time French was the language of European diplomacy.

Restricted Freedom.
One of the funniest things in the world is the self-conscious look of embarrassment on the face of a distinguished visitor when he receives the freedom of a city and its key, which he knows won't even admit him to a five cent moving picture show.—Philadelphia Inquirer.

A Facilitator.
Impatient Guest—Waiter, I must catch a train, and I'm in a hurry. What are the chances of my getting served at once? Waiter—About one to one, sir. Impatient Guest—I get you—\$1 to one waiter. Here you are! Now slide!—Exchange.

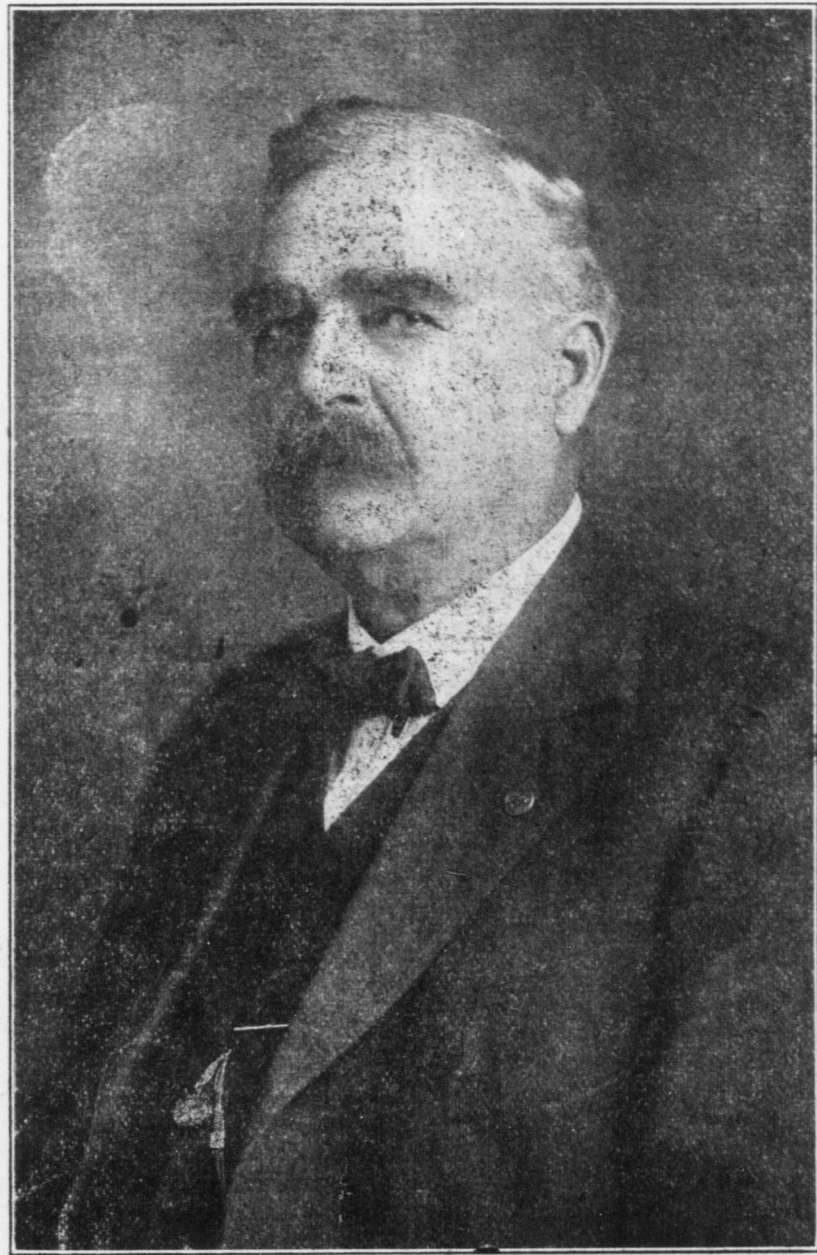
Presence of Mind.
Young Arthur, the pride of the family, had been attending school all of six weeks, and his devoted parent thought it was high time he should find out how things were running. So he asked one afternoon:

"And what did my little son learn about this morning?"
"Oh, a mouse. Miss Wilcox told us all about mouses."
"That's the boy. Now, how do you spell mouse?"
"It was then that Arthur gave promise of being an artful dodger. He paused meditatively for a moment, then said:
"Father, I guess I was wrong. It wasn't a mouse teacher was telling us about; it was a rat."—Harper's Magazine.

Couldn't Blame Them.
Papa had a grouch, and an atmosphere of deep gloom settled over the family dinner table. Even little Bobby felt that something was wrong, but he had to talk or burst, and he preferred to talk.
"Daddy," he asked, "why did they throw the tea overboard in Boston harbor?"
Daddy twirled the spoon in his cup, while he thought up this mean thing to say: "If it was anything like this stuff they certainly had a mighty good excuse for throwing it overboard."
Having got this remark off his chest, the old man felt so good that he actually smiled, and before he knew it his grouch was gone.—St. Louis Post-Dispatch.

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How to Tell if it is Silver.
To distinguish silver from white metal the Jeweler and Metalworker gives the following directions: Rub on a piece of slate, wet the streak with dilute nitric acid, by which it is dissolved, and then a drop or two of hydrochloric acid from the end of a glass rod, when a curly white precipitate is formed which does not disappear on the addition of a small or large quantity of water, being, in fact, indissoluble in this, while most other metals will not be thus affected.

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NATURE AND THE MICROBE.

How the Nose and the Stomach Fight Disease Germs.

The thoughtful reader will say, "Surely, in the battle of man against microbe there must be some natural means of defense by which men have conquered in the past, long before the microscope was invented." He is right, and science is never better employed than in studying these natural defenses. For example, we find no microbes at all in air just after it passes through the healthy nose. The nose is the original "domestic filter" for all microbes in dust in the air. Its secretions are antiseptic also, and man has no more valuable outwork of defense than a normal nose. A choked nose, through which a person cannot breathe, means that microbes enter the lungs freely by way of the effortless mouth.

In the stomach we find free hydrochloric acid, produced some half hour or less after a meal. Its production from the common salt, or sodium chloride, of the blood by the living cells that line the stomach is one of the wholly inimitable feats of the body. Until recently most of us thought that the hydrochloric acid was formed in the stomach solely in order to digest food, but now we have evidence to show that this hydrochloric acid is also a valuable antiseptic, working, for once, inside the body without hurting it and probably often saving us from the microbes of consumption and typhoid fever.

Thus the two great avenues of entry to the body are in a large degree guarded. It may be added that no known microbe can, unaided, penetrate the surface of the unbroken and healthy skin.—Dr. C. W. Saleeby in Youth's Companion.

EVOLUTION OF SHORTHAND.

Modern Stenography Had Its Start in the Time of Cicero.

To the average person the idea of shorthand writing is generally considered as being modern, because of the rapidity with which it has been introduced into business life in this country. This is not the case, however, for history traces the use of a similar art with definiteness back to the time of Cicero, about 70 B. C. The invention is sometimes credited to Cicero and sometimes to his secretary, Tullius Tiro.

Nothing seems to be known of any other system of shorthand during the Greek or Roman ascendancy nor for fifteen centuries afterward. The first of the noted systems at the beginning of the present era of shorthand was that of Timothy Bright, whose treatise was dedicated to Queen Elizabeth. In 1600 Peter Bales brought out a system similar in some respects to Bright's, but which was difficult to memorize. The next system to indicate progress appeared twelve years later, by John Willis, which was called "The Art of Stenography or Short Writing by Spelling Characterie." Then came Edward Willis, Jeremiah Rich, William Mason, Thomas Gurney, as well as many others. All of these systems had many defects, and the entire idea was rejuvenated when in the early part of the nineteenth century Isaac Pitman, who afterward was knighted, presented his system, which is still in use and which has been the foundation for most of the systems now practiced.—Exchange.

DARING BELLE BOYD.

Brilliant and Romantic Career of the Famous War Spy.

Stonewall Jackson's valley campaign was one of the great deeds of history. Not since Napoleon's time have men been so dazzled as they were by that great exploit of his. Yet Stonewall might have gone down the valley in defeat had it not been for a little college girl named Belle Boyd.

The Union general, Shields, was quartered at Miss Boyd's house. He held a council of war there. Miss Boyd bored a hole in the floor of her chamber, which was over Shields' room, and lay there with her ear to it throughout the night. The next morning Stonewall Jackson was in full possession of the plans for a great battle and was able to defeat the Union army.

She kept up her valiant work for the Confederates until the Union officers began to suspect her, and Jackson ordered her to move from her Shenandoah home to Winchester. She had been arrested by the federals and had flirted her way to liberty, for she was a pretty girl despite the libelous photographs of her. In Winchester Jackson conferred upon her a commission as captain in the Confederate army. By this time the whole north had become aware of the services she was rendering the Confederacy, and every officer and private was on the alert to get her. Yet she escaped until 1864, when she was caught on a blockade runner. Her captor lost his heart to her, deserted the navy and married her, and the Prince of Wales, afterward Edward VII, attended the wedding.—New York Times.

Three Rivers.

Nansmond, the name of a river in Virginia, is from the Indian word Nawnschmund, "the place from which we were driven away." The Flint, in Michigan, was called by the Indians Perwong, "the river of the flint," from the abundance of this stone on its banks. Humboldt river, in Nevada, was named by Fremont in honor of Baron Humboldt.

Some Reputation.

Binx—What kind of a reputation has Jones got?
Jinx—So good that he can wear cuff buttons with other people's initials and get away with it.—St. Louis Post-Dispatch.



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