CURRENT COMMENT

PROVINCIAL POWER MONOPOLY.

After prolonged negotiations Sir Adam Beck has at last been able to secure what is described as a clean up of the provincial power situation at Niagara. The price paid in the transaction, which will undoubtedly be ratified bp the people is $32,724,000 and includes the Electrical Development Plant at Niagara Falls, generating 125,000 h. p. nominal, but with greater potentialities, the transmission lines to Toronto; the Toronto Electric Light Co. with a steam-power auxiliary; and three radial railways, running north, east and west from Toronto. The government has approved and will validate the agreement. The provincial municipalities will vote on the question of taking over the radials outside Toronto city limits, and these will be included in the proposed radial railways, on which, apparently the government looks more approvingly than when the Radial Commission was appointed. The Ontario Commission will have 1,000,000 h. p. to dispose of and will need radial lines to feed the power out to the farmers economically. Power alone or radials alone can accomplish nothing like what they can do in combination. The Toronto World is the only organ that has continuously sought for the consummation now attained. Horatio Hocken, M.P., when Mayor of Toronto, tried to purchase the radials, the street railway and the electric light plant for $30,000,000, but the case was so misrepresented that the bargain was rejected. In the meantime the citizens have suffered no end of inconvenience and have now to pay $10,186,295 for the Electric Light Co. and the raidials which were offered for $8,000,000 eight years ago. The value of materials has of course greatly appreciated, but this operates on the street railway plant also, so that the city must get the railway considerably under $20,000,000 to equal the figure of eight years ago. For the province the purchase is one of incalculable value. Sir Adam Beck says that Ontario now has the greatest power system in the world. In the absence of coal this is marvelously opportune.

VICTORY BOND VALUES.

With the release of control over Victory Bonds by the government a good idea has been obtainable of the intrinsic strength of this security. A great many people unfamiliar with the operations of the stock market got the idea that the government had ceased to back the bonds and that they had better sell what they had before they fell like other stocks. A good many sales were the result of this lack of knowledge, but the offerings were quickly absorbed and a few days served to stabilize the market. It is well to repeat once more for the benefit of amateurs in finance that no matter what price may be quoted for the bonds on the market they are good for their face value when due and will be redeemed by the government at that value when presented at the proper time, and all interest will be paid when due. The difference in value between the face value and the price offered for immediate sale is simply the value of the accommodation of ready money to the man who sells his bonds. Everybody has to pay for ready money, even the government itself. Those who buy Victory bonds in the open market now at the reduced price will receive the full face value from the government when the bonds mature. The 1922 bond, for instance, selling say at 96½ will be worth $100 in 1922. For those who have them Victory bonds are good to keep.

BRINGING HYDRO INTO POLITICS.

A recommendation by a committee to study the question of Hydro rates that a minister of power be appointed is the revival of an idea which has been turned down repeatedly, and the adoption of which would be fatal to the Hydro-Electric organization. Sir Adam Beck, who has made many and great sacrifices for publicly owned and transmitted power in Ontario has regarded the success of the Hydro plans as dependent on keeping the whole system out of politics. He declined to be minister of power under Premier Whitney, and resigned from the cabinet under Premier Hearst. The Liberal party as well as the Conservative party also desired to bring the Hydro movement into politics, and the enlargement of the Commission and the appointment of a Liberal member was requested. Now a committee of the Farmer-Labor government makes a similar request, asking definitely for a minister of power. Such a minister would undoubtedly be of the politics of the party in power, and would unquestionably look upon the Hydro system as a legitimate field for the exercise of his influence in the distribution of patronage. There are many ways of destroying the Hydro system, but this is probably the most effective one. The failure of public ownership is confidently predicted by those who see in political control an inevitable source of weakness. The success of the post office has been explained by the fact that everywhere it has been kept out of politics. In the United States poor service in recent years has been attributed to the political interference of Burleson. Supporters of Hydro in Ontario declare that its non-political character is an essential of success, and the recommendation of the committee is regarded as but another attack upon the integrity of the system.

URGES BANKS NOT TO PRESS TOO HEAVILY ON MERCHANTS

PRESIDENT C. A. BOGERT OF CANADIAN BANKERS' ASSOCIATION POINTS TO ENCOURAGING FEATURES IN CANADA'S FINANCIAL OUTLOOK.

Pressure by the banks on the business community to hasten liquidation will not be an embarrassing nature, generally speaking, if the advice of President C. A. Bogert to the members of the Canadian Bankers' Association is followed. Mr. Bogert, is addressing his fellow-bankers, discussed the decline in commodity prices, and urged that the banks do not bring undue pressure upon borrowers against commodities for liquidation, but asked them to give reasonable time for gradual absorption of the commodities by the public, thereby avoiding further depreciation and the accompanying disturbance.

On the other hand, the banks are very much interested in speedy marketing of crops, and Mr. Bogert said it was reassuring to know that the value of Canada's exportable food products alone this year would reach very large figures, and growers of products and grain dealers should be offered all possible facilities for the marketing of these products. The fact that Great Britain is now in the market for Canadian wheat was a matter for gratification, while Belgium, France, Switzerland and Spain had already been buying. The effect of these sales was just becoming apparent, and, although no material reductions have yet been made in the ordinary commercial loans, gradual improvement should take place during the balance of the winter.

Britain's Future Attitude.

Mr. Bogert did not share the view of those who were of opinion that restrictions recently imposed by the Minister of Finance, and co-operated in by the bankers, would permanently affect Canada's future borowing in Great Britain, but thought that, when Great Britain is again seeking investments abroad, Canada would obtain her full share. Comparative figures of the gold holdings of Canada by the banks and the Government before the war, at the conclusion of the war and at the present time showed Canada's position to be a favorable one, when compared with that of Great Britain or the United States. A comparison of the note circulation of the three countries showed that, while between December 31, 1918, and the end of August, 1920, Canada's note issue had decreased by nearly $2,00,000, in the same period notes outstanding in Great Britain had increased by $150,000,000, and in the United States by $250,000,000.

New Money Important.

Another favorable feature for Canada at the present time is the arrangement recently completed and already announced whereby Great Britain will repay its debt of $150,000,000 to the Canadian banks in monthly installments, until the money is all repaid by April, 1922. This would bring a large amount of new money into the country. Canada, in Mr. Bogert's opinion, was probably in a better position to recuperate from the war than any other country, with its great resources and steadily increasing volume of products. Many commercial readjustments would have to be made, and those engaged in lines of business holding merchandise which is depreciating in value with falling prices, would have to draw on their profit and reserve. Merchants in some lines of business would have to take losses, but he believed the majority of them had accumulated sufficeint surpluses during the profitable war period to provide for these contingencies.

As to the prospects for easier money, Mr. Bogert did not look for much improvement in this direction until well into next year, perhaps the summer.

Public Health Talks

(By Dr. J. J. Middleton)

Children Should Have Plenty o Sleep, Well Ventilated Rooms and Plenty of Recreation; Parents Should Make It a Practice to See That Their Children Develop Regularly in Their Health Habits; the Growing Child Can Make the Best Progress in Home and School If Proper Care Is Given.

Within the past few weeks the Medical Health Officer of a large city in Ontario found that thirty per cent. of the children of that city arriving at school age were under-developed through insufficient and improper feeding during the first two years of life. This is a serious situation, for the same condition prevails generally all over the province. If we add to this list the children who are weaklings by heredity or physical defects, the situation becomes even more acute. Serious-minded people are beginning to realize that combined efforts must be made by the Government and the public to combat all influences that tend to interfere with the health and well-being of the community; the protection of child life is one of the most pressing needs of the hour. Infections and contageous diseases must be stamped out—the general physique of the race must be improved. That the public are taking an active interest in these important matters and want to tackle them directly is shown by the recent formation of large and powerful voluntary societies to assist the Government in combating tuberculosis, veneral diseases, infant mortality and other scourages.

Scientific discoveries medical and otherwise of past and recent years have failed to bring about all the good results anticipated because the people have not realized how vitally important these discoveries were to each individual. The personal touch was lacking, and the advances in science have not seemed to apply to every day life and the ordinary man, woman and child.

Where Credit Is Due.

How has this recent interest in the Public Health been stimulated? The credit seems to be due in great part to social workers who have gone in and out of the homes and mingled with the people of all grades in society, learning their joys and sorrows and their viewpoint on life. It is by this intimate contract with people that the social worker has been able to help in health matters, in sanitation and in all other ways that tend to improve the moral and physical condition of the people, and get them to take an interest in the things of life that are worth while. Statesmen and legislators have had the future safety of the people in mind, but no active means were at their command to actively grapple with conditions as they are, or do the spade work that leads to a healthier and happier race of people.

Lloyd George says:—"You cannot have an A-1 nation on a C-3 population"—a very apt expression.

If men of intelligence whatever their occupation, will help by giving their experiences and thought to these matters and be willing to advocate and sanction the spending of as much money on the health of the future adult as is now spent on insurance, fire protection, police, etc., we will have an A-1 nation without a doubt.

The Great Drawback.

The great drawback to public health progress at present is the fear of what it will cost. That is the first question that confronts the public health nurse or public health official wherever he goes. The people of a town or district are easily shown the benefits that a certain phase of public health work will bring, and they appreciate it but immediately ask "Who is going to pay for it?"

A record of the yearly expenditures for jails, asylums and hospitals in this Province, would provide striking evidence of what money loss we suffer in contrast to the trifle spent on preventive medicine and the public health. Through such early supervision many of the defects of childhood might be put right before they develop into chronic abnormalities of adult life, and so reduce the number of inmates of our public institutions, and incidentally reduce the cost of their upkeep.

That an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure is one of the truest maxims ever handed down from generation to generation, and yet in health matters we have only just begun to realize its importance.

The Magic Carpet

Visits to New Worlds

Sakhalien.

Cable despatches a few days ago announced that the Soviet Government at Moscow was prepared to grant concessions in certain portions of Russia's outlying territory in exchange for foodstuffs, the machinery so badly needed for rehabitations. Among the areas designated was the Island of Sakhalien. While it was not specified what portion of this island Soviet Russia was willing to allow foreigners to exploit—for a consideration—yet she has only the northern half at her disposal, for by the Treaty of Portsmouth which brought the Russia-Japanese war to an end all that part of the island lying south of the fiftieth degree of latitude was ceded to Japan.

Sakhalien is separated from Asia by the Strait of Tartary, the distance being only about four miles. This island is 586 miles long and varies in width from 12 to 90 miles. The Japanese portion has an area of 13,148 square miles, while the Russian portion is somewhat larger. The western coast consists of a series of high bluffs, while the eastern coast is high and mountanous. The climate is severe owing to the cold and the rainfall is exceptionally heavy. The aboriginal inhabitants are now few and in the Japanese portion known for their hairiness. Discovery of the island is credited to the Japanese in 1613, the first European to visit the island being Martin Vries. The Chinese later obtained dominion over the northern part of the island in 1700 and a century later Lieut. Koster took possession for Russia. In 1860 by the Treaty of Peking the island was formally ceded to Russia, but in 1905 it was conquered by the Japanese. There are some Christian churches, but the majority of the Japanese are Buddhists and Shintoists, while the Ainus have many interesting religious observances. Most of the island consists of primeval forests and the means of communication are poor. There are some coal mines, but the main industry of the island is fishing, salmon and herring being caught in large quantities and exported dry. The population in the Russian area is rapidly dwindling, while in the Japanese section it is growing fast.

Queen Christiana of Sweden, 1629-1689, was what in today's popular slang would be called a "wild woman."

Laboring men, in the month of Ramadan among the Moslems, are supposed to go without food, drink and tobacco from sunup to sundown.

THE ROUND TABLE

I suppose it is because they call me a book-worm; because, when I was a youngster I always "had my head in a book" and have never seemed able to outgrow the fascinating malady—that I think books make the best gifts of all.

There is not a child anywhere who is not the better for being taught early to reverence books. There is not a child who does not naturally take them and find the keenest delight in good pictures and clever stories. And there is such a wealth to choose from. Pass over the highly colored, slap-stick, comics—these are not books—and choose instead the picture book or story book that loving thought has made beautiful for your little ones to see and memorize.

If I could only give one story book to my little family, I think it would have to be one of John Martin's Annuals. This year's book will be number four and any bookseller will get it for you. Then there are the Strang Annuals and the Thornton Burgess books and Fairy stories and Bible stories and Annual stories in splendid array. You will have no difficulty in making a selection; but you can always send me a list and a post office order, giving me an idea who the book is for and what price you want to pay and I shall gladly get the books at the publishers and send them on to you.

I shall mention a few of the outstanding books of the season, giving you a brief resume of the story and telling you where you may send for copies. There are two Canadian books for the young people that deserve attention. One is "The Enchanted Garden" by Doctor Gordon, Professor of Old Testament Literature, McGill University. This collection of stories from Genesis is spoken of in glowing terms by those who realize how important it is to get the right kind of biblical stories for children. The stories are wonderfully told and full of dramatic interest that holds not only the boy and girl but the adult as well.

The author says in his preface: "There is no book in the Bible more fascinationg than Genesis. It charms us in our childhood, and it keep its spell to the end. For it is not only full of the enchanted poetry or the East, it is a shining mirror of life in every age and under every sky. As we follow these tales, we seem to be reading the story of our own souls."

"The Girls of Miss Cleveland's" is a story of Canadian girls at a Toronto school, written by a Canadian girl, Beatrice Embree, who as a pupil and then a teacher in such a school, knows exactly what she is talking about. It is the story of the pranks and good times, joys and sorrows of life in a boarding school and is just what girls love to read about.

"The Affable Stranger" by Peter McArthur, is also Canadian. Mr. McArthur, well-known farmer, philosopher and humorist, has written the Affable Stranger and therefore "rid his mind of the perilous stuff that accumulated during the war and since."

The author, urged by unkindly Canadian comment of our United States neighbors, deliberately set out upon a tour of investigation through the Eastern States. He wanted to find out the plain American opinion of the plain American business man and farmer. He hoped to find the chance comments of business conversation more enlightening than any formal interview.

He found out a great many things, which he sets down in his own popular way and makes interesting by his own observations, gained first and broadened later by his life on a Canadian farm—that perfect home, rich in never-failing fountains of delight and inspiration.

"Bulldog Drummond" by Cyril McNeile. Except for his Piccadilly accent, Bulldog Drummond would be a composite portrait of Diamond Dick and Young King Brady. He is strong as an ox, shoots to kill, and is an exponent of jiu jitsu. Of course he needs all these qualities to gain the heroine, who is a combination of all the virtues of all the heroines of Laura Jean Libbey. The climax of the volume is a battle between the hero and the villan, man to man, on the edge of a poison bath.

"The Conquering Hero," by J. Murray Gibbon. What a pity that so good a story should be handicapped by such a title. A cut on both "jacket" and binding of a very wooden and conventional cowboy, gazing off into the Rocky Mountain peaks, libels the story further, for it is neither wooden nor conventional. Although Mr. Gibbon has chosen for his scene the Canadian Rockies, this is far from being the ordinary Western story. It has little sensationalism. The characters are fresh and lovably human, the dialogue natural and amusing. Altogether a very light, refreshing cooling affair is "The Conquering Hero."

"Paradise Bend," by William Patterson White, is a thriller for the reader who likes the Western story where the surest shot is the most respected citizen; and where law and order is enforced by self-appointed sheriffs. The same characters are introduced—the dauntless young cowboy hero, the dark-haired, flashing-eyed daughter of the old ranch owner, the comedy cook, cowboy "supers" who say "shore" and "yuh" and "gal" and "fellah." The usual properties, too, are dragged forth from the storeroom in the shape of lariats, branding irons, and six-shooters. As a consequence. "Western atmosphere" is served up lavishly.

"The Autobiography of Andrew Carnegie." A truly great and permanent contribution to American literature. Mr. Carnegie's story of his upward fight from messenger boy to steel king will be an inspiration to every youth of ambition; his account of business experiences, and particularly of the formation of the steel trust, will make absorbing reading for every business man; and his wise and far-seeing comments on such subjects as the relation of capital and labor will illuminate the problems of today for every forward-looking reader. The Boston Transcript calls it "one of the four greatest biographies in American literature."

"The Drums of Jeopardy," by Harold Macgrath, is one of the most exciting and interesting stories of the year. It is just one romantic mystery after another and works up to a splendid climax. Kitty Conover, beautiful and Irish, gives food to a starving man who appears at the window of her apartment and thereupon embarks upon a flood of international intrigue. There is one disappointment in the story. Perhaps I should not speak of it, but it struck me very forcibly.

"Cutty," newspaper correspondent and secret service man is not the hero of the story, but the reader wants to make him one, and the fact that Cutty always falls just short of happiness gives a tinge of sadness to a perfect story.

"The Man With the Lamp," by Janet Laing. This book deserves much more than passing mention and I hope it may be reviewed at length and much discussed in this department. It is just as well written as Miss Laing's "Before the Wind," but it is broader and bigger in every may.

Martin Ascher is a German who loves his country, but hates its policy. He had been educated in England and was very much English in inclination. The story deals with his problem in the year 1918, as it is, worked out near Rathness which looks out upon the North Sea.

It makes a gripping story which will be appreciated by those who read good prose.

"The Mysterious Affair At Styles," by Agatha Christie, is a detective story that is exceedingly interesting and baffling. Mrs. Inglethorp, an energetic and capable English matron, is found poisoned. There are five people who would profit by her death and suspicion points at different times to every one of them. An ingenious little Belgian who had been befriended by the victim, solves the mystery in masterly fashion.

"Hidden Creek," by Katharine Newlin Burt, is a Western novel brimful of stirring adventure. Sheila Arundel, dreamy daughter of an unsuccessful artist, goes west to enter the astounding profession of "barmaid" in a tavern in the Rockies. She is forced to give up this precarious method of earning a living and goes into the mountains with a woman rancher who turns out to be a demon. Often happiness seems just within our heroine's reach to be snatched away again. Events move rapidly and thrillingly to a dramatic climax. It is a good story, strongly written, a worthy follower of Mrs. Burt's first success, "The Branding Iron."

"The Enchanted Garden," by Alexander Gordon D. Litt., D.D. Published by McClelland & Stewart, Toronto. $1.50.

"The Girls of Miss Clevelands'," by Beatrice Embree. Published by The Musson Book Company, Toronto. $1.50.

"The Affable Stranger," by Peter McArthur. Published by Thomas Allen, Toronto. $1.65.

"Bulldog Drummond," by Cyril McNeil (Sapper). Published by Hodder & Stoughton. $1.75.

"The Conquering Hero," by J. Murray Gibbon. Published by S. B. Gundy. $1.90.

"Paradise Bend," by William Patterson White. Published by S. B. Gundy, Toronto. $1.90.

"The Autobiography of Andrew Carnegie. Published by Thomas Allen. Price $5.

"The Drums of Jeopardy," by Harold Macgrath. Published by S. B. Gundy. $1.90.

"The Man With the Lamp," by Janet Laing. Published in Canada by J. M Dent & Sons.

"The Mysterious Affair At Styles," by Agatha Christie. Published by the Ryerson Press, Toronto. Price $2.00.

"Hidden Creek," by Katharine Newlin Burt. Published by Thomas Allen. $2.25.

ELINOR MURRAY.

Seven Rules For Success.

Charles M. Schawb, the U. S. steel magnate and multi-millionaire, recently gave the following fundamental for a a successful life:

"Boys you can have a good time in life, or you can have success in life, but you cannot have both.

"Unimpeachable integrity; this the foundation.

"Loyalty to those with whom associated.

"Liberal education in the finer things of life, of art, of literature, as sources of imagination.

"Make friends, and whatever your misfortunes just laugh.

"Learn to concentrate and don't be afraid of mistakes.

"Go at your work—find yourself; don't hesitate to change from distasteful work.

"Give the best that is in you; let nothing stand in the way of your going on. A good workman is entitled to more than a poor man."

More than 10,000 railroad locomotives are standing idle in Germany's repair shops.

Before the war only 345,000 persons held British government securities; the number now is 18,000,000.