VOICE OF THE PRESS

IS PEN MIGHTIER?

Hitler is now writing the German war reports. Can it be that he has discovered that the pen is mightier than the sword?

—Chatham News

—o—

SCOTS WHA HAE

As one might say: there'll always be an England as long as Scotsmen like Robert Alexander Watson Watt go about inventing things like the radio plane locator.

—Brantford Expositor

—o—

WOMEN IN UNIFORM

Good luck to those Canadian women who will soon be wearing His Majesty's uniform. Good luck no less to those who will not; for let it never be forgotten that they also serve, and serve no less devotedly, who continue at their unspectacular jobs in the home and in civilian employment, carrying on without shoulder straps or chevrons the family life and the business life of the country.

—Saint John Telegraph-Journal.

—o—

ONE LICENSE PLATE?

Both the suggestions that have been made in respect to saving on steel in the manufacture of Ontario motor license plates are worthy of consideration. They are that plastics be used instead of metal, or that the front license plate be abandoned.

The latter proposal would seem to be the more reasonable. Plastics give promise of being an important factor in our war effort, and there may be need soon for relieving industries manufacturing these materials of all unnecessary calls.

Issuing only one license plate for a car would save half the steel now going into these articles, and it would not be a revolutionary step. There is really little need for a plate on the front, and Florida, as an outstanding example, has for years got along very well without it.

—Windsor Star.

Suggestions For The Week-Ender

Are You Planning to Visit Friends From Saturday to Monday This Summer? It Might Be Wise to Follow These Rules

There have been so many printed complaints against the summer week-end guest who forgets her bathing suit or who wants to borrow a sweater or even a little cold cream that many hostesses are finding the guest-hostess relationship pretty strained in spots.

There may be a lot of rules about not asking for things that haven't been put in plain view in guest or bath room. But it's ten times more annoying to any hostess to have a guest who won't wear a borrowed sweater when she is obviously cold than it is to have one just who up and asks for anything she wants, whether extra warm clothes or an extra blanket.

Its easier on the hostess to have a guest state her preferences about food than to say, "I like everything" and then not eat much of anything on the table. Saying "I don't play bridge" is easier on everybody, especially the hostess, than playing so badly that half the other guests are annoyed.

Nuisances

Any guest can tell her hostess that she would rather sleep than get up and go to church, or vice versa. No hostess minds having a guest sleep later than all others in the household, provided the guest doesn't mind making her own bed or offering to get her own breakfast.

Be Natural

Maybe this is the time for guests and hostesses to resolve to be natural and forget most of the ready-made rules. Summer week-ends might be more fun all the way around if guests just assumed that they were invited because they are liked and enjoyed and not because they observe dozens of rules.

12,500 Miles of Blades

During the past twelve months, thirty-three British manufacturers, says Maclean's Magazine, have sent overseas an average of 1,125,000 razor blades a day End to end, the 456,250,000 blades would reach 12,500 miles. The value of these exports is something like $3,000,000 a year.

The razor-blade export business used to be largely in the hands of Germany.

That is but one of the many examples. In spite of war production, bombings and sinkings, British industry is expanding its overseas trade.

How Nature Helps Reds on Stalin Line

Nature, as usual, is on the side of the defender in the Russo-German conflict as Nazis hurl new attacks at the Stalin Line, but even her aid has not halted Hitler's mechanized forces in the past. Map shows how Russia builds her great line, using rivers and difficult terrain as natural defenses.

THE WAR WEEK—Commentary on Current Events

Latest War Developments Improve British Position

Increased confidence was brought to the people of Britain and her allies by the speeches of Prime Minister Winston Churchill on July 14. This "dogged old warrior" said, to quote the New York Times, "that the tables had been turned on Germany in the matter of air raids and increased bombings could be expected, that there would be no truce with Germany, that Italy was on the bombing schedule and that London could continue to 'take it' if necessary."

Only the Beginning

"In the last few weeks alone," Mr. Churchill said, "we have thrown upon Germany about half the tonnage of bombs thrown by the Germans upon our cities during the whole course of the war. But this is only the beginning. We do not expect to hit without being hit back, and we intend with every week that passes to hit harder."

Shipping Losses Decrease

That Britain's position had vastly improved from a year ago was the opinion of Kirke L. Simpson, Associated Press military correspondent, who stressed, among other factors in the situation, the sharp decrease in British shipping losses. He said: "London's ship-loss figures for June tell the story. They were the lowest since July, 1940 (329,296 tons), except for a period in the dead of last winter. Indications are that the present month's losses will fall even lower, due to Nazi air concentrations in the east, to probable withdrawal of some German submarines for use against Russia in the Baltic and to British counter measures at sea." The Battle of the Atlantic would appear to be veering in favor of Britain and the United States.

Collapse of Vichy Resistance

The British lifelines had also been greatly strengthened in the Middle East by the Syrian victory, and the political results, it was predicted, would be of much more consequence.

There could be no doubt that the outbreak of the Nazi-Soviet war had much to do with the collapse of Vichy resistance to the British-Free French allies in Syria and Lebanon. It ended the last hope of the "men of Vichy" for effective German intervention there. Surrender followed inevitably.

British-Soviet Pact

The new British-Russian pact signed at Moscow on July 12, said Mr. Churchill, "is, of course an alliance and the Russian people are our allies." General Jan Christian Smuts, Prime Minister of South Africa, in commenting on Mr. Churchill's statement to the British House of Commons, said: "Let no one say we are now in league with the Communists and are fighting the battle of Communism." The British-Russian treaty pledged that each nation would support the other in war against Hitlerite Germany; and that neither would sign a separate peace with the enemy.

The New York Times last week presented a clear picture of the moves and counter-moves of the two great powers now in the fourth week of war: "It is still hard to believe that the German and Russian reports of hostilities are talking about the same war. Berlin tells of sweeping advances. Moscow reports victorious counter-attacks.

"The German High Command restricted itself to a report of 'progress' on the whole eastern front, but the German news agencies told of the imminent doom of two of Russia's greatest cities, Leningrad and Kiev. In the north the Nazis were aid to have crossed the Luga River, last great barrier to Leningrad, and in the south the fall of Kiev was said to be a foregone conclusion.

"The Moscow communique said the drive at Leningrad had been stopped with a successful counter-attack in which the Nazi columns were being hurled back or destroyed 'section by section.' In the central sector, the Russian line was said to be holding at Vitebsk, while the southern thrust at Kiev was declared to have been thrown back in disorder near Novograd Volynsk."

Which Way to Jump

The belief that something spectacular was brewing in the Land of the Rising Sun was vindicated last week when, after paying a visit to the Emperor, Premier Prince Fumimaro Konoye resigned, and with him the entire Japanese Cabinet. Obviously this meant serious internal dissension in the matter of Japan's foreign policy, and disagreement over the steps that should be taken in the face of the changing international situation. European diplomats generally professed to believe that the Nippon government had been considering some move to counter Russia's action in mining Soviet Far Eastern waters; in British and American circes in Tokio, attention was centred on French-Indo-China and Southeast Asia.

But while the Japanese prepared for more "action." Washington was readying counter-measures that would almost surely follow a new Japanese act of aggression—economic counter-measures, such as a possible embargo on shipment of oil to Japan, or blocking of Japan from entrance into the Indian Ocean.

Canada and the War

"A gallon a day keeps Hitler away," Canadians heard last week at the beginning of a government drive to cut gasoline consumption in the Dominion. Hours of sale for the "buggy juice" were restricted to between 7 a.m. and 7 p.m. daily, not including Sundays; and the price was upped by 1c. If these gentle hints didn't work, car-drivers were cautioned to expect strict rationing by fall.

The successful conclusion of the Canadian Army Active recruiting drive—the quota was reached last week—removed the possibility, for the time being at least, that conscription would be introduced. The Department of Defense obviously could get all the men it wanted through the channels of voluntary enlistment. Could Mr. King's tour to the west have acted as a strong stimulant to the recruiting campaign?

Saving Ontario's Natural Resources

G. C. Toner
Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters
(No. 50)

PROBLEM OF EROSION

This article will deal with erosion. I showed last week how erosion cuts down the highest mountains, given time, and how nature uses it to fashion the earth. But this is slow natural erosion not the swift man-made [illegible]idation of the land that occurs when we misuse our natural resources. One is necessary, the other will eventually make our land a desert unless it is controlled.

Where soil or rock is exposed to the atmosphere or to water chemical and physical changes take place. Freezing and heating break up the rocks and the harder soils. Acids from the air and from minerals acted upon by the air help to dissolve away the hardest rock. These reactions and many others are continuing all the time but very slowly for there are other factors acting against them.

In Ontario's History

In our land there are few places where the soil or the rock is normally exposed to the air. Nearly everywhere under natural conditions a heavy growth of plant life covers and protects the soil. This protection cuts erosion to a minimum so that very little soil disappears into the rivers during the year. At one time every stream in Ontario flowed clear and cool the year around. Erosion hardly existed because of the cover of plants and trees.

The first settlers needed agricultural lands so they cut the trees from many parts of the country. Where the soil was exposed it was rich and deep, crops grew marvellously for the first years. Later as the rich organic humus, that held the soil together, disappeared, the land became more open and less packed. And under such conditions erosion is speeded up a thousand-fold. Every heavy rain carries away the soil to the rivers which are dirty from their heavy load of silt. As the top soil goes, the organic humus already gone, the deeper soils are exposed and these cut away even faster until bare rock is reached. This is the problem we must face very soon. Prevent erosion or our agricultural lands will disappear forever.

Stalin Line Makes 1,100 Mile Barrier

Fortifications Run From Black Sea to Gulf of Finland —Soviet Secretive About Descriptions

Few facts have leaked out about Soviet Russia's Stalin Line, which the German war machine has been bucking for the past couple of weeks, and there is no reliable basis on which to judge its strength.

Here is the best available picture:—

In general it is a 1,100-mile man-made barrier running along the entire old Russian western frontier from the Black Sea to the Gulf of Finland, and it was built principally to guard against invasion from Germany.

It combines the features of France's Maginot Line, including great, full-equipped concrete fortresses built underground, with the advantages of Germany's West Wall, which is built in greater depth. Whether or not it can be flanked, as was the Maginot, is a matter of speculation.

Underground Fortresses

The bulk of the Stalin system was completed in 1933, but the Red Army's leaders have added to it and strengthened it continually ever since, and are reported to have installed the most modern machinery available to keep the fortifications impregnable as new weapons of attack have been developed.

Details about the Stalin Line, obviously, are military secrets, but the Kremlin has not permitted even general descriptions as much as the French did.

One exception was an article published April 11 in the Soviet Army newspaper Red Star—the first mention in the Soviet press of the Red fortifications in several years.

A special correspondent told of entering a great steel and concrete underground fortress through a door concealed in a hillside. Inside he found a warm, well-lighted labyrinth of defence machinery, complete with power plant, dormitory and fire stations.

The guns and machine guns were said to be a unit in a completely fortified zone of fire.

25-Mile Depth

These underground fortresses are provisioned with reserve stores for long sieges.

An invader must do more than conquer these Maginot-type fortifications, however, for the Stalin Line runs in depth for distances varying up to about 75 miles in some places. The depth is said to average 25 miles.

Making a Freight Car

To build a box car for the freight services of the Canadian National Railways requires approximately 2,000 man-hours of work.

The Book Shelf..

"The Forgotten Village"

BY JOHN STEINBECK

The top ranking American novelist who wrote "The Grapes of Wrath" has joined his superb talents with those of the film director who produced "Crisis" and "Lights Out in Europe," to tell the story of the coming of modern medicine to the natives of Mexico. Steinbeck supplies the text, Kline the beautiful photographs for this study of the Old Mexico and the new — "The Forgotten Village."

The camera crew that recorded this narrative of birth and death, of witch doctors and vaccines, spent nine months on the off trails of Mexico. They travelled thousands of miles to find just the village they needed; they borrowed children from the government school, took men from the fields, their wives from the markets, an old medicine woman from her hut by the side of the trail. The motion picture they made (for release this autumn) is 8,000 feet long. From this wealth of pictures 136 photographs were selected for the book.

John Steinbeck himself says: "This is a story of the little pueblo of Santiago on the skirts of a hill in the mountains of Mexico. And this is the story of the boy Juan Diego and of his family and of his people, who live in the long moment when the past slips reluctantly into the future."

"The Forgotten Village" . . . by John Steinbeck . . . Toronto: Macmillan Company of Canada . . $3.00.

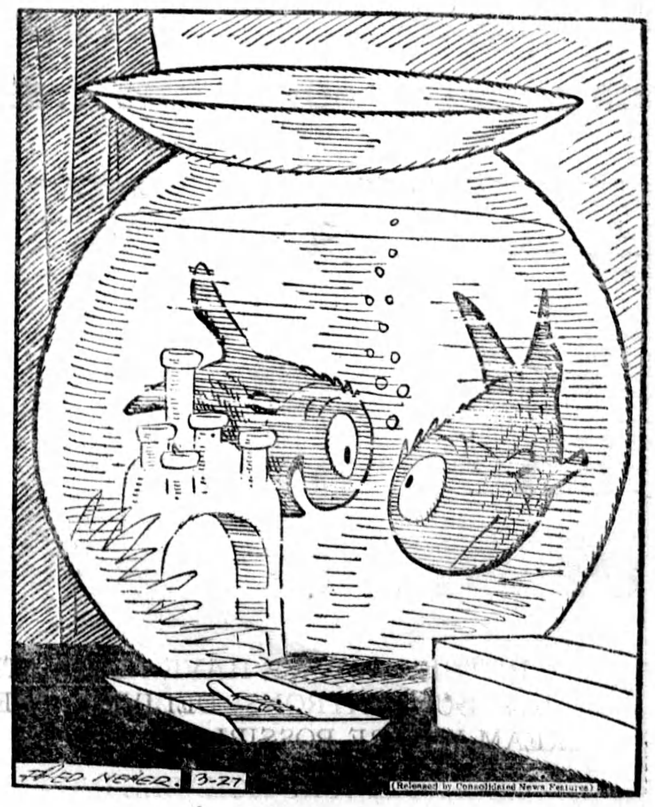
Harden Surface of Dusty Cement Floor

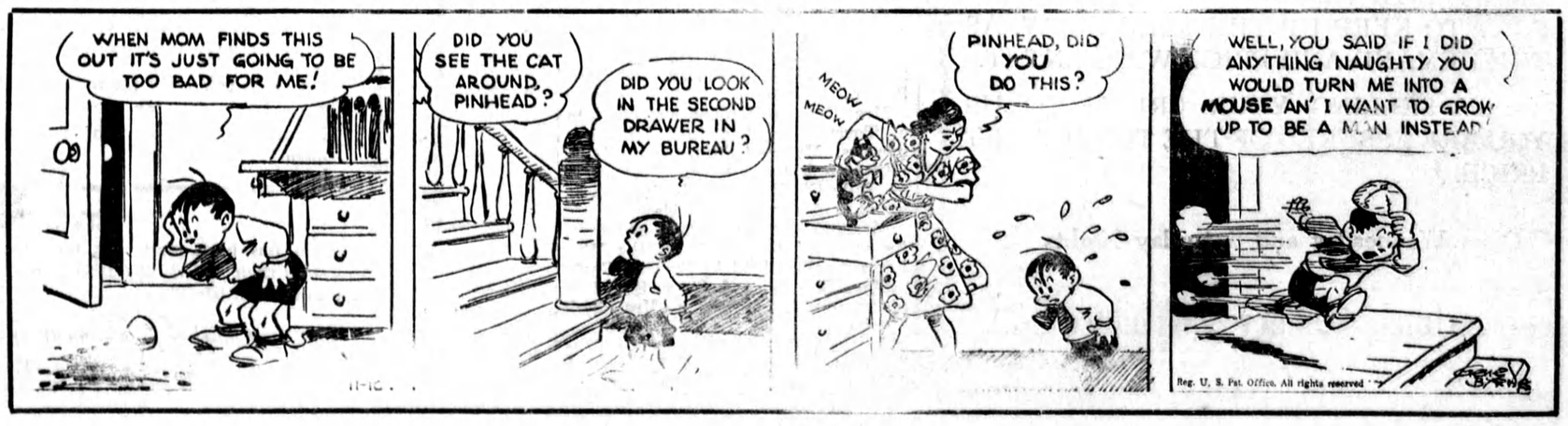
The most practical treatment for cement floors which seem soft and inclined to dust is to saturate them thoroughly with sodium silicate (waterglass) as follows:

Wash the floor thoroughly with clear water, scrubbing with a stiff broom or scrubbing brush removing all dirt. Allow the surface to dry. Mix one part waterglass (sodium silicate) with three to four parts of water depending upon the porosity of the concrete—the denser the concrete the weaker the solution required.

Apply with a brush, one coat evenly over the entire surface. This will penetrate into the pores of the concrete. Allow the concrete surface to dry; after 24 hours apply another coat the same as before. Again allow the surface to dry, and apply another coat. If after 24 hours, the third coat is not flush with the surface in any part of the floor, apply another coat. That which remains on the surface can be readily removed, thus smoothing up the floor. That which has penetrated into the pores has come in contact with the alkalies and salts in the concrete and formed into an insoluble hard mineral glue.—Ottawa Farm Journal.

LIFE'S LIKE THAT By Fred Neher



"Where are you going to be after lunch?"

REG'LAR FELLERS—Taking No Chances By GENE BYRNES