

Winnetka Weekly Talk

ISSUED FRIDAY OF EACH WEEK

The Lake Shore Publishing Company
20 Prouty Annex, Winnetka, Ill.
Telephone Winnetka 388

SUBSCRIPTION \$1.00 A YEAR
Strictly in advance

Address all communications to the Winnetka Weekly Talk, Winnetka, Ill. Anonymous communications will be passed to the waste basket. The same applies to rejected manuscript unless return postage is enclosed. Articles for publication should reach this office by Tuesday afternoon to insure appearance in current issue.

Resolutions of condolence, card of thanks, obituary poetry, notices of entertainments or other affairs where an admittance charge will be made or a collection taken, will be charged for at regular advertising rates.

Entered in the postoffice at Winnetka, Illinois, as mail matter of the second class, under the act of March 3, 1879.



"My Country 'Tis of Thee, Sweet Land of Liberty."

FRIDAY, APRIL 27, 1916

Backyard Vegetables.

The backyard vegetable garden this summer will be no joke. When potatoes, onions, cabbage, etc., are selling at prices two to five times above the ordinary figures, it is time for the consumer to do something other than read the papers and curse the middlemen.

Conditions like these seem bound to continue while the war lasts. Many of our food products are being deposited at the bottom of the ocean by the German submarines. It is time for the man who has money enough to buy a hoe and energy enough to get busy in the backyard.

It is commonly complained that after you pay the expenses of a backyard garden, there is no profit left. That may be true where the householder hires all the heavy work done. Also he would better ask a little advice of experienced gardeners at the various stages of the game. But the earth is fruitful. If properly encouraged with good seed and patient care, quite a dent can be made in the grocery bill.

Slackers.

The large number of applications for marriage licenses since the plans for conscription were announced has created considerable indignation. In some of the city clerks' offices these applicants are being branded as slackers.

Probably that is unjust in many cases. When a fellow has plighted his troth to a girl and is working hard to earn money for a little start in life, he has practically assumed already the obligations of marriage, and is entitled to whatever exemptions that go with it.

Possibly there are some young men who have hustled around and secured a life partner in the brief time since the draft plans were announced. Such would be a real slacker, but there are probably not many of these.

There are plenty of young fellows bound by no promises as yet who are the ones who should take up this burden. Youth assumes these chances easily, and the majority of boys of this age enlist with a rather light heart.

Spy Systems.

The elaborate working out of spy systems in Europe is appalling to the simple-hearted and open American mind. These insidious ways of the Old World are revolting to our franker methods of procedure. Our secret service has been merely a scheme for detecting crime.

Over in Europe it is a vast mechanism for securing military information, influencing opinion in foreign countries, stirring up strikes, revolutions, and all kinds of troubles for peoples regarded as hostile. Our military position is no doubt understood quite as well in Berlin as in Washington.

Warfare with Germany means an unknown and insidious force of information gatherers and plotters right among us. No one can know where it is or whom it includes. A great deal of injustice will be done on suspicion to many loyal German-Americans who are standing by their adopted country.

But one can be sure also that some things that look perfectly innocent really mean mischief. The little tumble-down shop in some back alley where they apparently are turning out some trifling industrial product may be the place where deadly

bombs are being made for some wholesale destruction.

A great many ridiculous errors will be made. Engineers measuring a lot, telephone and wire gangs locating services will be regarded by some as spies. The police will come running breathless to question them. But people who seem to be taking observations and who are lurking in places where their business is not apparent and where they might do damage, will have to be watched.

The United States will have to resort to the measures long ago enforced abroad for the registration of aliens. There should be correct lists of unnaturalized foreigners, their addresses and business. No unoffending man will be hurt by such registration and valuable information will be secured.

Incidental Causes of War.

It is the history of wars that often some cause incidental to the main issues is the thing that finally stirs the fighting spirit. In the Spanish war the basic issue was not the destruction of the Maine. There has always been the question if that act was not committed by some Cuban bent on stirring trouble. But that event seemed at the time to show up the Spanish character and Spanish rule in such a light that our people would not tolerate it, and it was the immediate cause of war.

A great incidental cause of war with Germany has been the spy and plot system. It is not the principal grievance, but all this underground work is intensely repugnant to democratic ideas. It is doubtful if our people could have brought up to the fighting point had not their wrath been so aroused by the complicated machine of espionage. The Kaiser has spent many millions on his spy work in the United States, but it would have accomplished more good to his cause if it had been dumped into the sea.

The American Physique.

A great many would-be recruits for the Army are being rejected on account of physical defects. It is a disquieting suggestion that American youth is not physically as vigorous as it should be.

The type of fellows one finds in colleges and the higher schools show up well in this respect. They have commonly developed their bodies by athletics. But when you stand outside the average factory and office and watch the young men coming out there are too many pale and flabby faces. Of course, a fellow doesn't show up for his best with the dust and dirt of work on him. But the average Sunday street crowd, with everyone rigged up in his best, shows a great many youthful faces that indicate physical debility.

In many cases this is due to unsanitary, unventilated workshops. But the progressive manufacturer knows that he must provide wholesome conditions now or his help will not work with any life. If there is a lack of physical vigor, it must be due also to other causes.

Probably the prevalence of vices is the principal reason for physical defects. Millions of American youth spend spare time in loafing places and hangouts, desiccating and inflaming themselves with cigarettes and alcohol. Loose sexual relations tend to still further debilitate. They think they are smart and enjoying life. Old-fashioned morality is only for old maids and ministers.

They pay their price for their fun. The Army does not want them because they are not sound of wind and limb. No employer cares for them save for emergency help. It takes some self-control and independence to go through life on a wholesome basis today, and command a clear head for business success. Many enticements must be flatly turned down. But it pays in a business way, and it is the secret of military power in a nation.

A woman active in village affairs the other day made what is termed an "awful break." She told a woman friend she was "looking older." Now there is not so much friendship lost between them as formerly.

Unfortunately the man who will start a garden in nice Spring weather and the man who will hoe the weeds out on a hot July day are not always one and the same person.

But the most pitiable suffering is expected from Kentucky, where it is expected the distilling plants will be used by the United States for the munition business.

The American people are watching out carefully for the plotters during the daylight hours, which is just the time the plotters are asleep.

SUBMARINE SLAMS.

Torpedoes Topical and Typical Suggested by Periscope Observations Taken from Within the Editorial Conning Tower.

Inasmuch as several of the popular young ladies of the village are offering to lighten the labors of the soldier and sailor boys by correspondence, the captain of the Submarine feels it incumbent to offer to perform the same duty toward some charming young Red Cross nurse. Do not all speak at once, please.

The New Trier merchant who cannot afford to advertise his spring goods probably has to afford interest money to carry a lot of them over another season.

Every time the village citizens read that food speculation must stop they feel like helping to do the stopping.

One of our inquiring readers writes to know if all the pacifists came from the Pacific Coast.

As submarines are being seen everywhere, with the aid of vivid imaginations, it would not be surprising to see one sneak up Sheridan Road.

Some of the Illinois National Guard feels that it is all dressed up with no place to go.

Col. Roosevelt is bound to go to the trenches and there are some men in this village who would like to accompany the Colonel were they not afraid of their wives' temper.

One of the most conspicuous signs of spring in the village should be "Fresh Paint."

If the cost of foodstuffs continue to mount local restaurants will be charging a dollar apiece for prunes.

And it will probably then be considered a mark of respect to tell a man he is full of prunes.

Speaking of prunes, it is whispered that Henry Ford proposes to give away one of the California variety with every joy cart sold hereafter.

And that brings to mind that a certain cereal manufacturing company proposes to reduce the high cost of living by incorporating sunflower seed and sawdust into a new product to be known as the "Pacifists' Pride."

If the Sheridan Road young lady who called the police one night recently and reported that she just escaped capturing a burglar will send in her house address she might possibly be given an opportunity to make a real capture.

One of the local telephone operators, assuming that she had the correct calling number on the line, said to the subscriber, a well-known resident of the village:

"Ready on your call to Joliet." Whereupon the gentleman replied: "That's a good one, operator. My friends are all out. I don't call there any more."

It would be real economy and a decided home help if the young girls of the village who make it a practice to smear their faces with paint would slip about 95 per cent of it to dad so he could rejuvenate the front porch or the living room woodwork.

Also the use of less paint and the taking of more outdoor exercise would give a far better complexion.

And, incidentally, save money for the owner of the face.



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Under present conditions ministers in New Trier have not registered protests against Sunday gardening, but those who want to go motoring think it is all wrong.

It is suggested that you keep the garbage can covered this summer. Be thrifty. Do not waste the odor.

The writer has listened to several arguments in this village and has come to the conclusion that they are invariably settled by the ones who can yell the loudest.

Congress votes billions with the nonchalance of a village housewife voting hubby his tobacco money.

Everything comes to he who waits and the local bachelors are looking around for choice spring chickens who can prepare their chickens so they will not have to pay triple prices to the old rooster who dishes

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