

MILES, EAGAN AND EMBALMED BEEF

Will Republican Newspapers Apologize?

The recent exposures of the beef trust recall in a striking way what was known several years ago as "the Miles-Eagan Controversy,"—but which will be remembered now as General Miles' timely exposure of beef trust wickedness—and the series of systematic insults and attempts at humiliation to which General Miles was subjected.

General Miles charged that the packers under their contract with the government had supplied to the American soldiers "embalmed beef." He declared that he had "overwhelming evidence that the 'embalmed beef' was treated with chemicals in order to preserve it," and that he had affidavits from men who saw the meat undergoing the embalming process. He charged also that the canned meats and extracts were put up from spoiled material and were nauseating. He had urged that beef on the hoof be sent to the soldiers, but this request was denied, and he said that 500,000 pounds of "embalmed beef" went in one ship to Porto Rico, and that the beef was so bad that it would have caused a pestilence had it been taken ashore from the ship, and it was then thrown overboard. General Miles added: "What else could be done with it? Nothing alive would eat it."

General Charles P. Eagan was at the time commissary general. General Eagan was very indignant at General Miles' charges, and he appeared before the investigating commission, which had been appointed for the purpose of investigating those charges, reading a typewritten attack on General Miles. In this address Eagan repeatedly called General Miles a liar, and used unprintable language in denouncing him. The commission returned General Eagan's testimony as being unacceptable because of the vigor of the language employed, and it was resubmitted in an expurgated form. Eagan's attack upon Miles was so vicious that President McKinley ordered a court martial of Eagan on charges of conduct unbecoming an officer and conduct prejudicial to good order and military discipline. The court martial found Eagan guilty and ordered his dismissal from the army. President McKinley, however, commuted this sentence to suspension from rank and duty for a term of six years. The effect of this sentence was to retire General Eagan on full pay in advance of his formal retirement with the rank and pay of brigadier general. In his order commuting Eagan's sentence President McKinley referred to "the mitigating circumstances which were developed during the trial of the case." The administration was known to be unfriendly to Miles and friendly to Eagan, but Eagan's offense was so aggravated that it was impossible for his friends to avoid some proceedings against him. While Eagan was somewhat humiliated by his forced retire-

ment, his sentence practically amounted to six years' vacation on a salary of \$5,500 a year. And this "punishment" was severely criticised by some of the newspapers of the country.

The evidence offered by General Miles was so overwhelming that it would have been difficult for the commission appointed by the president to entirely vindicate the beef trust, although in its report it went as far along that line as it dared to go. It held that the beef was not treated with chemicals or "embalmed," and said that the canned roast beef was not suitable for continuous rations and ought not to be used oftener than one day in five. The commission held that very little beef was spoiled, and the spoiling was due to the tropical climate. The commission criticised General Miles, finding that he had no sufficient justification for alleging that the beef was "embalmed" or unfit for use by the troops.

Many newspapers denounced this verdict, the New York Times saying: "It is a very shameful report, an indecent and disgraceful report. In some respects, also, it is a cowardly report." The Philadelphia Public Ledger said that the case must now be remanded to the great jury of the public, adding: "It is surprising and regrettable that one of the generals who took the unpleasant initiative and concealed nothing in calling the country's attention to the conditions complained of should receive the crown of censure, while those who are really responsible for a lamentable situation are unnamed. Without imputing infallibility to General Miles it is firmly believed that his only motive in his frank statement of his belief as to the army rations was a humane and patriotic motive and was intended solely for the good of the service which he has helped to make illustrious."

But General Miles was roundly abused by the partisan republican organs.

The New York Press demanded that General Miles be cashiered, adding: "General Miles used the war department machinery to conduct an investigation for the benefit of his newspaper allies. He sought from the department authority which was readily granted, to pursue an inquiry into the subsistence methods of the army. The results of this inquiry he made known not to the department, not to the president, but to the public press. He turned the office of general commanding the United States army into an agency for the procurement of army scandals for sensational journals. * * * Had a second lieutenant been concerned in such disreputable practices he would be broke instantaneously. The same rule of official action must be applied to the major-general commanding when he stoops to methods of which, to the honor of the army be it said, no second lieutenant has ever been convicted."

The Chicago Inter-Ocean, republican, called for the suspension of General Miles, saying:

"General Miles has disappointed his friends and has given his many enemies the opportunity they have been seeking for twenty years."

Referring to the report of the commission the New York Sun, republican, said: "It will be read with profound satisfaction by all except those who have sympathized with the major-general commanding the army in his unsoldierly attempt to bring professional discredit on the service and political infamy on the administration. Those who have joined him, from one motive or another, in this unexampled enterprise will have to content themselves with their proportionate share of the resulting mortification and the disgrace. The inquiry ends in humiliation for the major-general commanding the army; humiliation as bitter as it is deserved."

The Detroit Journal, republican, printed an editorial entitled "Mendacity Exposed." The Journal said: "The exoneration of the contractors, or packers, is not the least meritorious and satisfactory part of the report. That American citizens engaged in the business of curing meats for general consumption could or would take advantage of their government in an hour of stress to foist upon it inferior or doctored meats was too monstrous for belief. The report emphatically declares that the packers furnished to the government the same kind and quality of meats furnished to the trade. Heat and hurry and violence in handling impaired the quality. This exculpation of the packers will tend to silence much of the criticism heard in foreign countries and repair in part a great injury to our foreign trade."

The Philadelphia Press, republican, said: "The original charge of 'embalmed beef' made by General Miles falls completely to the ground. * * * The report of General Wade and his associates is the beginning of the end of the long coil of calumny which has succeeded the war. This court is as able as could have been organized in the army. Its members are able, honorable and above reproach. They had all the powers which a score of newspapers assured us the war commission had not. Their investigation has been exhaustive. They reach the same conclusion as the war commission. They find no personal corruption, no collusion, no failure by beef contractors. The 'embalmed beef' charges proved baseless. None was furnished. The refrigerated beef was sound."

The Philadelphia Inquirer said: "What could the court of inquiry do other than it has done? It has not been able to find 'embalmed beef,' that is, fresh beef treated with chemicals. It, therefore, reports General Miles' charges in this respect as unfounded, or rather as 'not proven.'"

The Boston Transcript, republican, approved the report, saying: "We should think that General Miles would see the wisdom of accepting the verdict as final."

UP GO THE PRICES IN EUROPE

A reader of The Commoner directs attention to the following dispatch printed in the New York Herald:

"Washington, D. C., May 26.—Reports on the continual rising prices on nearly all classes of merchandise reach the bureau of manufactures from all parts of the world.

"Consul Edward B. Walker sends an English version which says that bacon, cheese, eggs and butter are scarce and dear in England, largely owing to the enormous demand for these commodities in America and Germany. America is also using more of its wheat, and Germany more of its beet sugar. Germany formerly exported bacon, dairy and poultry supplies, but now that empire is depriving England of part of the American bacon supply, and is scouring Europe for eggs.

"England formerly received vast supplies of eggs and butter from the Balkans, Russia and Siberia, Denmark and Sweden, but Germany is now taking the lion's share at higher prices. England is now forced to turn to Ireland for eggs, and prices are twenty per cent more than last year.

"From Sydney, Australia, comes news that with the increasing depletion of American goods in stock, the effects of increased prices and freights are becoming apparent. The rates of

wooden, hollow ware and metal goods are being increased in sympathy with the rises in Europe.

"German hotels and restaurants are advancing prices charged patrons, reports Consul J. I. Britain who says the union of public house proprietors in Strasburg raised their bill of fare rates ten to thirty per cent on May 1. They allege the cost of meat, vegetables and other food products is continually increasing, and they are also obliged to pay more for labor. One Strasburg restaurateur cites as an example his cook, who now receives \$28.50 per month, whose former wages were but \$19. He also states that there had been an advance in the prices for cooking utensils. It is said similar advances have been made by hotels in various parts of Germany.

"There appears to be a decided upward tendency in prices in Germany, which will doubtless make it more difficult for German exporters to compete with other countries in foreign markets. These advances pertain to raw materials, manufactured products and labor.

"Consul Kohl writes from Stettin that the German breweries will be forced to pay \$3,000,000 additional per annum for material under the new tariff, and these expenses will be saddled on the public.

"Consul Urbain J. Ledoux, at Prague, records

the upward trend in prices of Austrian productions, writing to the bureau of manufactures that the manufacturers of celluloid wares have raised their prices ten per cent, giving as a reason the extraordinary rise in camphor in Formosa. The shoe manufacturers of Prague have granted their workmen shorter hours and increased pay, in consequence of which and the higher cost of raw leather shoe prices have been advanced twenty per cent. This should help the sale of American shoes, which have gained great popularity in Austria.

"Various industrial strikes are in progress in Bohemia, owing to the increased cost of living, while in Germany the United Metal Workers are considering a general strike."

This Commoner reader adds: "Bland and Bryan were right. The quantitative theory has been proven correct. Money is not the value for which goods are exchanged, but the measure by which they are exchanged."

OF COURSE

The St. Louis Globe-Democrat says that The Commoner "still stands by the quantitative theory of money." Of course! And if the Globe-Democrat does not now recognize the quantitative theory it stands practically alone.