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THE EUROPEAN SITUATION.

THE Imperial German Chancellor, Dr. von Bethmann-Hollweg, cannot be reproached for any lack of frankness in defining Germany's attitude with regard to the European situation. Discussing the subject in the Reichstag he said: "When our allies, Austria-Hungary and Italy, in maintaining their interests, are attacked—although this is not the present prospect—by a third party, and thereby threatened in their existence, then we, faithful to our compacts, will take their part firmly and decisively. Then we shall fight side by side with our allies for the maintenance of our own position in Europe, and in defence of the security and future of our own fatherland."

The reference to the future of the fatherland is suggestive. The present interest of Germany in the partition of Turkey in Europe is trifling. When the time comes, as it inevitably must, for the breaking up of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, Germany's interest in the territory in dispute will be anything but trifling. In Russia the German Chancellor's speech is naturally regarded as a threat and the attitude of Russian public opinion, equally naturally, is that Russia is not to be intimidated by threats. Curiously enough, as the popular feeling grows more strained the relations of the governments of Russia, Austria and Germany seem to be getting more cordial. The explanation probably is that the governments have a greater sense of responsibility than those who profess to speak for the governed. For the reigning dynasties of Europe and their advisers, war is a game in which they have everything to lose and little to gain.

DEMURRAGE INCREASED.

THE Railway Commission has authorized the railway companies to increase their demurrage charges. The companies have not got quite all they asked and the concession they have obtained is accompanied by a warning. The increased rates will be allowed only from December 15 of this year to March 31 of next year. The railways asked for \$2, \$3, and \$4 for the first, second and third day respectively, after the free time allowed, but the \$4 charge was not sanctioned by the board. Henceforth \$2 will be assessed by the railways for the first twenty-four hours after free time and \$3 for each succeeding day. The order is not to apply to cars held

in transit at stop-over points under published tariffs which have been filed with the board.

Assistant Commissioner D'Arcy Scott in giving out the order divided the responsibility for existing delays involving the probability of a serious car shortage between the railway companies and the shippers. The judgment will probably put both the railways and the shippers on their best behaviour.

FARMERS AS BORROWERS.

THERE is a good deal of human nature in the farmer. In all ages and in all countries men call upon their gods to do for them what they could do for themselves. Mr. O. B. Taft says: "An increase of one bushel of corn per acre raised on mortgaged land in the United States would be equivalent to the farmer receiving a reduction of 3 per cent. interest on the average loan per acre of \$12.41 which such land carries. To the farmer it is worth more in dollars and cents than any saving hoped to be obtained by introducing the land credit system of Europe into the United States."

Even in England where the wheat yield per acre is much greater than that of the virgin soil of the Canadian west and very much greater than that of the United States, it is claimed that the country could almost feed itself if the farms were worked to their full capacity.

Mr. Taft says: "The wheat farmers of the United States could furnish their own working capital without the necessity of borrowing at all, if they would come up to the German basis of production. The average yield of wheat in the United States is 12 1-2 bushels per acre—and this on comparatively virgin soil. The German farmer, on land cropped for centuries, raises an average production of 30 1-2 bushels. The market value of this difference in production in one crop season alone would pay the average mortgage debt on these lands and place the farmer beyond any necessity of considering interest rates in any light whatever."

The United Kingdom imports enormous quantities of dairy produce which could be grown to advantage at home. Nearly all the farmers of the Canadian west eat imported butter; and Texas, which is said to be particularly adapted to growing corn and hogs, imports 60,000,000 pounds of pork per annum.