

ALTERED CONDITIONS IN THE WOOL INDUSTRY.

(Concluded from page 3).

Finance, Inc., in the United States and the Netherlands Overseas Trust in Holland, which guarantee against the re-exportation of goods so received.

"As a final step to stop suspected leaks in the wool embargo and likewise to prevent the possible purchase and subsequent storage in neutral countries until the close of the war by the Germanic allies, England on June 10, 1916, commandeered the entire wool crop of the British Isles. On November 25th it likewise commandeered the clip of Australia and New Zealand. This action has resulted, in even greater stringency in the issuance of permits. Wools thus commandeered by the Government have been taken over at approximately the market price, the recently commandeered Australasian clip having been paid for at a rate 55 per cent over the market rate in 1913-1914.

"Consumers in the United States have been fortunate in receiving a goodly portion of the wool clip of the United Kingdom. This is perhaps due largely to the fact that the Germans have brought pressure to bear in favor of the United States, because they have realized that if we were to be eliminated from the competition for their wool the price would sag, and partly because of the bearing that such exports have had upon the balance of trade and upon the rate of exchange between the two nations. At the present writing American buyers are anxiously awaiting announcements as to the course which the British Government will adopt in regard to the Australasian clip just commandeered.

After the War Conditions.

"A prophecy as to the future status of wool would not come amiss at this time. Certain it is that there will be an era of continued high prices in wool and wool-stuffs for some years to come. The flocks can only be increased gradually and an immediate appreciable increase is necessary to again bring the yearly crop up to the point where it is large enough to meet all demands. The yearly shortcomings cannot be offset by recourse to reserves, because the latter have already been seriously depleted.

"In the opinion of one high authority in woolen circles, the Allies will do everything in their power when the war is over to prevent Germany and her allies from purchasing any wool in the markets which they control. This will force the Germanic allies to bid against the entire neutral world in the independent wool markets, notably South America, in order to secure wool with which to enter immediately into the commercial battle to regain their lost foreign

trade, and will likewise keep the general level of prices high.

"Will the new entrants into the field of international trade be able to hold their newly gained markets in the trade war which is sure to follow the peace declaration? To a considerable extent they will. Japan has succeeded in taking over a large woolen trade dropped by the belligerents, most notably Germany, in the Far East, and has supplanted the textiles formerly sold there by a cheaper variety of goods containing a portion of cotton which has been very satisfactorily received. There is no reason to believe that with their shorter haul, cheaper labor, and the prestige of several years of successful dealing they will not be able to retain their share.

"The United States is likewise fairly certain to retain an appreciable portion of her trade conquests, and this applies to wools as well as to other commodities. While our foreign trade connections are rapidly being extended, so, too, are our facilities in this particular industry. Many of our staple textiles such as blue serges are manufactured on such a large scale in this country that in the matter of price we are fully able to meet the European competition. So that while some of our newly gained trade will be lost, it is safe to assume that a substantial portion will be retained after the war.

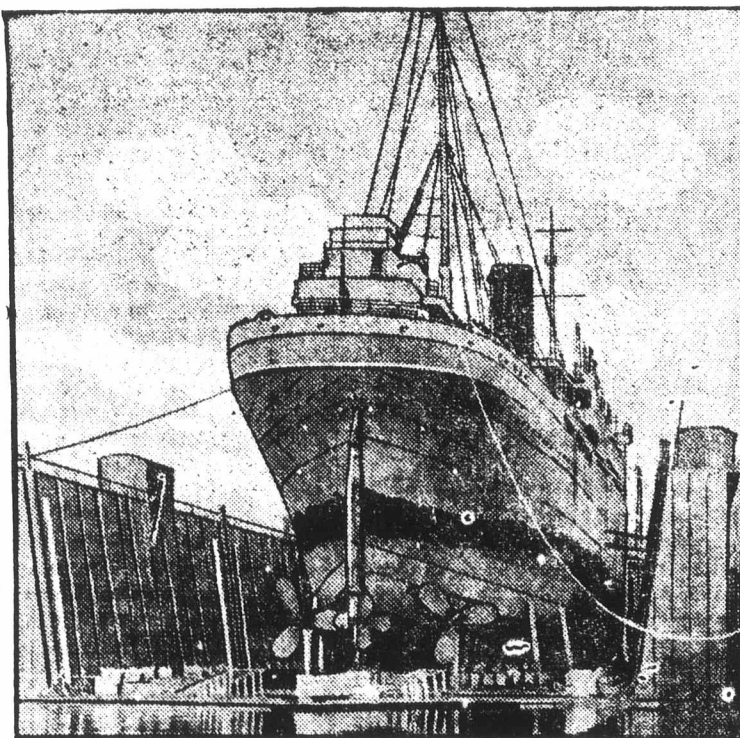
"Another after the war prediction is that a larger proportion of mixed cotton and woolen goods will be manufactured. This seems to be a logical consequence of present conditions and the trend is already visible in offerings by various manufacturers.

"An outgrowth of the situation which is bound to come and which has even now been made the subject of organized and concerted action up the part of the wool manufacturers of the United States is a campaign for more sheep throughout the world. This movement is certain to gain momentum at the close of hostilities, and will, it is hoped, bring relief from the acute situation brought on by the war."

ST. JOHN RAILWAY DEAL.

In a circular issued to stockholders the St. John Railway Company, controlling tramways, electric light and power and gas in St. John, a special meeting is called to consider an offer to purchase the entire assets of the company. The New Brunswick Investment Company, Limited, formed for the purpose, has offered \$1,300,000 for all the company's properties and franchises and, in addition, \$10 a share for each share transferred, making a total of \$140 per share net to the shareholders. The circular says, "the directors are of the opinion that the offer should be accepted."

GIANT STEAKSHIP IN DRY DOCK AT PRINCE RUPERT.



This great ship, which is being overhauled and repaired at Prince Rupert, British Columbia, is of 15,500 tons displacement and has a total length of 600 feet. She is the largest vessel that has visited the Grand Trunk Pacific Dry Dock and Ship Repairing plant, and the ease with which she has been handled demonstrates the great lifting capacity of the dock, conceded to be the best on the Pacific Coast. Few people realize that Canada has, forty miles below the Alaskan boundary line, at the Western terminal of the Grand Trunk Pacific's transcontinental line, a plant capable of building or repairing twenty-thousand ton steamships.

CUNARD LINE

Canadian Service

LONDON TO HALIFAX

(Via Plymouth)

HALIFAX TO LONDON

(Calling Falmouth to land Passengers)

For particulars of sailings and rates apply to Local Agents or to The Robert Reford Co., Limited, General Agents, 20 Hospital Street, and 23-25 St. Sacramento Street, Montreal.

ANCHOR-LINE DONALDSON LINE

PASSENGER SERVICE

Glasgow to Portland, Me.

also

Glasgow to St. John, N. B.

Portland to Glasgow

Halifax to Glasgow

For information as to rates and sailings apply to Local Agents or The Robert Reford Co., Limited, General Agents, 20 Hospital Street and 23-25 St. Sacramento Street, Montreal.

COAL SITUATION DIFFICULT.

The freight embargoes on Canadian and American railroads have added many difficulties to an already critical situation in the coal industry. Soft coal is particularly scarce and prices—which are exceedingly high at the moment—are purely nominal through lack of supplies.

Many factors during the past twelve months have culminated in the present shortage. The contracts with the miners in Pennsylvania expired last year on April first, and it was some little time before the men returned to work, causing loss of production by the delay. The greatly increased activity of the steel trade made it necessary for this industry to get more men. They therefore raided the mining regions and procured as many men as possible. Consequently an acute labor shortage amounting to about 30% in both the anthracite and bituminous coal fields resulted. This together with the large shortage of cars due to the industrial situation has resulted in much less coal being shipped and mined this year compared with previous years. In the face of this, heavier supplies of coal were required to meet increased industrial operations.

Toronto has probably suffered more than Montreal, due to the fact that Toronto relies solely on the supply of soft coal from American points. In the summer time, however, they get some coal in by boat. Ever since the close of navigation there has been an embargo on all coal shipped via Buffalo and Black Rock. The consequence is that western Canada and the Toronto district have been practically unable to get coal.

The situation in Montreal is somewhat different. The Dominion Coal Company brought up quite a supply of soft coal last year, although not nearly sufficient to supply their customers. One reason for this shortage was the fact that the British Government commandeered the fleet of boats belonging to this company, thus greatly reducing the available tonnage. As a result of this, a reduction of 40% in orders of coal was necessary and many concerns on account of not being able to get coal from the Dominion coal Company had to resort to the American mines for their supply.

Thus with the very large imports, the American lines into Montreal have become congested. The very heavy snow fall of the last two weeks has simply made it impossible for the railways to even run their passenger trains regularly. This will give some idea of the situation in bituminous coal today.

As regards anthracite, Montreal and the surrounding districts at the present time are very short of this coal. This is attributed to the congestion on the railways and the fact that the output at the mines has been reduced through lack of miners and laborers. With the amount of anthracite coal arriving in Montreal by rail we have hitherto never been short of fuel supplies. During the last fortnight on account of the heavy storms and the consequent congestion on the railways, it has been practically impossible to bring in any coal. All the large firms have enough coal to supply their customers, but on account of the cold weather so many people want their bins filled at the same time it is very difficult for the coal companies to satisfy the demand. For the most part coal is being doled out in small lots to regular customers only.