

equipment costs, rents and domestic expenditure remain high.

Outside Factors and Price Maintenance.

Professor Nourse faces the fact that outside forces might possibly defeat the most laudable intentions and super-human efforts to safeguard the farmers' condition, and he examined some of the possible contingencies. He considers that if European governments pursue an economic policy designed to foster domestic agriculture and discourage importation, the foreign market for farm products of this continent will be seriously contracted, and he notes the continuance of restrictions on imports of foods, notably in Great Britain and Italy. The export demand, based on the idea that Europe would have to be fed for five years, has failed to materialize.

In his opinion the European countries will first of all devote their attention and energies to supplying their primary needs of food and clothing as fully as their agricultural resources permit. Witnesses have been surprised at the rapidity with which land devastated by the war has been restored to effective use, and there is evidence that the productive effort of France and Belgium in 1920 will come very near to the pre-war basis, while England and the European neutrals will show an enlarged agricultural output as the result of the stimulus of the war.

Professor Nourse fears that a widespread industrial depression, as the result of blundering efforts at reconstruction may entail unemployment and decreased purchasing power in the industrial centres; the consumer's ability to pay high prices will wane, and there may be organized boycotts to force the farmer to sell his produce at prices which are really below the cost of production. It is therefore decidedly to the interest of the farmer that he should assist labor in preventing, as far as possible, any unfair depreciation of wages by the capitalist classes.

Domestic Supply and Foreign Competition.

A bumper crop might help to round a difficult corner and start the cost of living in raw materials downward without harm, but he thinks a succession of favorable years would be needed. There has been an impairment of fertility and a deterioration of general farming equipment, which will tend to make the yields smaller, but this will be counter-balanced by improvements in the technique of production and market handling. His opinion is that improved economics in agriculture have tended to increase the volume of production from a given outlay, but the deflation of the fertility of good lands has created an enhancement of costs. The great need of the moment is for further improvement in technique to enlarge the relation of output to outlay, and he welcomes the spread of the system of long and short courses in agriculture.

In the past the quickest source of the cheapest food and raw materials has always been looked for in the exploitation of new lands and a cheaper labor supply. Professor Nourse does not think that the possibilities of fresh exploitation in the world are by any means exhausted. He declares that there are in South America, South Africa, Manchuria and the interior of China enormous areas of land, which, worked by the cheap labor so abundant in these countries, under the guidance of competent experts from the older countries, could be made to yield a supply of food, which, transported by modern ocean vessels, could flood the European and American markets just as the agricultural surplus of North America flooded the markets of Europe between 1850 and 1900. He cites the case of the existing competition of Argentine corn, Manchurian beans, Chinese eggs, Siberian

butter and South African livestock. Brazil is showing herself capable of giving the American farmer keen competition in the matter of meat, butter, cheese and other products, and an exodus of Germans to that country would provide a directing force which would enormously increase its production. All South America has made enormous strides in agricultural organization as a result of the war.

Summing up, Professor Nourse finds the following factors:

(1) European and even American industrialism will seek access to the cheapest foods and raw materials.

(2) Financial and trade competition will facilitate the movement of such goods to the United States as never before.

(3) The creation of a national mercantile marine will ensure cheap rates from the desire to produce a large volume of traffic, and both rate wars and trade wars will accentuate the competition of younger lands.

Organized Effort to Lower Food Prices.

In his concluding pages, Professor Nourse voices his definite opinion that we are now due to see a strong effort made by the great industrial capitalist forces of the world to lower the market prices of agricultural produce, by turning from the existing organization of supply to the tapping of cheaper sources wherever they can be found. European industrialism will try to cut down the local consumption of meat, butter, eggs, etc., to the limits of the home supply, eked out by reinforcements from the cheapest possible sources. The change of heart in regard to trade with Soviet Russia is due to a desire for access to cheap agricultural supplies. If the undeveloped natural resources—only five per cent of the area is under cultivation—and the potential labor power of Russia and Siberia are brought under active direction which the old Tzarist regime never furnished, that vast territory might, within a comparatively short time put Europe and Asia in a position of self-sufficiency in practically everything which North America has to offer. An application of the modern technique of scientific agriculture to exploit new lands will assuredly bring in the coming years a comparatively low level of prices.

He notes that restriction of output is already being practiced, e.g., in the corn belt fewer sows have been bred for spring litters, but at present the contraction is not too great in view of the enormous expansion during the war years. He is doubtful of the wisdom of starting a campaign "with definitely announced price objectives." The farmers, in his opinion, cannot force the issue in a weak market. Organized attempts to hold prices at their present level would discourage consumption of local products and help the development of rival sources of supply. Nor does he believe in tariff protection for agriculture; by enhancing industrial costs it would handicap the development of an export trade in manufactures and impair the home market by more than the amount of any direct benefit. Restrictionist policies in regard to output, he thinks, are more difficult for the farmer than any other class. "To abandon production," he says, "is for the farmer practically sawing off the limb he is sitting on." Likewise in the case of herds and orchards, quick reduction is difficult. The National Federation of Farm Bureaus ought to be able to help in making calculations about restrictive policies by finding out what effective demand is available and the exact sources and extent of rival supplies, so that American producers can gauge their labors with the maximum of wisdom and economy.

Decline of Cost and Selling Price.

In his eyes the most hopeful path of endeavor would be in the direction of protecting the farm-

er's net return by ensuring that costs move down in conformity with inevitable declines in selling prices. The farmers' organizations should therefore foster all efforts which increase productive efficiency on the farm and in their marketing arrangements. They should mobilize to check advances in transportation costs, which are demanded to pay either extravagant dividends or superlatively high wages. The American farmer, according to Professor Nourse, is acutely conscious that the price of his machinery, fertilizer and other supplies are artificially enhanced owing to the inordinate demands of industrial capital and labor, and in the coming epoch he is likely to feel more burdensome than ever the incidence of tariff protection and the monopolization of natural, especially mineral, resources. He speculates on the chances of a demand among American farmers for tariffs on agricultural imports, a move which would be of serious import to Canada. In that event he thinks that the American industrial interests, as in England in the period 1840-1850, would come out as free traders, in order to secure raw materials and food for their workers at the cheapest possible prices. His contention is that the American farmer could expect little gain from encouraging a tariff policy. His final word is that a high level of education and a high standard of organization are the best weapons available for the farmer to enable him to hold his own in competition with countries whose fertility is fresher and whose people have a lower standard of living.—Reprinted from the "Grain Growers' Guide."

The Franklin Medal for Parsons.

The award of the Franklin Medal to Sir Charles Parsons is a happy indication that engineers and men of science recognize no boundaries in the case of eminent services to progress. The Franklin Institute bestowed this honor "in recognition of his epoch-making success in the development and construction of the steam turbine, which has revolutionized the art of steam engineering, particularly in regard to the propulsion of mercantile and naval vessels, and the driving of electric generators." The greatness of this success is now as well established and understood as is the fact that it is due almost wholly to Sir Charles. It is interesting to recall that when Sir Charles first hit upon the notion of his steam turbine he separated from his partners because they became discouraged about the prospects. For many years it was impossible to get the turbine taken seriously by the majority of engineers, but with the characteristic pluck of his race Sir Charles carried on until he won universal renown. The steam turbine has halved the cost of producing electricity and greatly raised the speed of transport by sea. Thus Great Britain has well sustained the tradition of Watt and Stephenson.

Ye Country Editor.

Most any man can be an editor. All the editor has to do is to sit at a desk six days a week, four weeks a month, and twelve months in a year, and edit such stuff as this:

"Mrs. Jones, of Catcus Creek, let a can-opener slip last week and cut herself in the pantry. Joe Doe climbed on the roof of his house last week looking for a leak and fell, landing on his back porch. While Harold Green was escorting Miss Violet Wise from the church social last Saturday night a savage dog attacked them and bit Mr. Green on the public square. Mr. Frang, while harnessing a broncho last Saturday, was kicked just south of his corn crib."—Yarmouth Light.