IMPROVEMENT NOTED ONLY IN SPECIAL LINES

Emergency Orders for European Account Not Instances of General Strengthening

MUCH HAS BEEN DONE

Success Which Has Attended Efforts of Prominent Bankers To Solve Great Difficulties Reliable Criterion of Future Success Along All Lines.

(Special to the Journal of Commerce.)

Boston, October 31.—It is idle to argue that there is any improvement in business except in special lines where emergency orders are being placed for account of European nations now at war. In these particular instances inordinate activity is in evidence, but this far from makes up what has been lost on other lines because of the European imbroglio.

This does not imply, of course, that substantial progress has not been made in the past three months. Particularly is this impressive when a review is made of the unique and formidable situations which confronted finance and business when the war broke out.

In the order named, the following problems arose and have been practically solved: New York City bond maturity; the foreign exchange paralysis and the break-down in the cotton market; the establishment of the Federal Reserve System—admittedly something which will be of enormous help to the financial position—with its shifting of reserves was another thing injected into the situation. This, however, is proceeding, and within a short time the country should begin to reap the benefits from this new law.

The re-opening of the security markets, one of the last but not least important problems, is still apparently some distance off. Until this is accomplished it cannot be said of course, that financial conditions are approaching normal.

However, the success which has attended the efforts of the country's leading bankers and business men thus far is calculated to inspire confidence in the belief that we shall work out of the present poor business situation within a reasonabl yshort time. Admitting the unfavorable factors, such as smaller clearings and the poor, but not unexpectedly so, quarterly statement of the Steel Corporation, there are yet bright spots to be seen. Increasing exports and growing ease in money appear on the credit side of the business ledger, and after all, considering the shock which the business world has sustained, little more could be expected than the period of quiet through which we are now passing.

But there is an irreducable minimum to everything, and while the turn in business does not yet appear to be in sight, from now on any change should be for the better.

SOMEWHAT BETTER TRADE IS REPORTED IN CANADA

New York, October 31.—Bradstreet's reports that confidence is gradually returning in Canada, and colder weather with war's demands have made for somewhat better trade. Incidentally lower temperatures have brought out some sorting orders.

Up in the Northwest, ideal weather has enabled farmers to make progress with fall ploughing, and every indication points to a larger wheat acreage. Farmers are holding wheat.

Collections show some improvement, especially at interior country points.

Montreal reports that the English government has placed an order for 25,000 fleece lined coats, for 250,000 pairs of heavy woollen drawers and a contract for 50,000 pairs of army boots has been awarded.

Toronto notes that military demand for leather, steel sheets and woollen goods causes activity in lines that would otherwise be short of work.

Winnipeg reports that large orders have been placed for harness, saddles and horses, but domestic trade is quiet.

Bank clearings at sixteen cities for the week ending with Thursday last aggregate $153,769,000, a decrease of 10.6 per cent from last week and of 21.4 per cent from the corresponding week last year.

Business failures for the week terminating Thursday were 81, contrasted with 64 last week and 51 in 1913.

DUN'S REVIEW.

New York, October 31.—Dispatches to Dun's Review from branch offices of R. G. Dun & Company in leading trade centres of the Dominion of Canada, state that sentiment is improving and that, though trade generally is still quiet, the trend is towards improvement.

Montreal reports little change from a week ago. Sorting business in dry-goods is somewhat slow, but there is a higher volume of spring orders.

Textile mills, shirt, clothing and footwear factories are busy on government orders and distribution of groceries is well maintained. Retail trade is not quite so active at Quebec, but wholesale business is fully as good as a year ago.

Quiet conditions generally prevail at Toronto, the movement of dry-goods, clothing and other reasonable lines being restricted by the weather.

The situation, however, has been helped by large orders for war materials, certain factories having sufficient business booked to keep them employed until spring, and the outlook, on the whole, has improved.

Confidence is gradually returning at Hamilton, although the movement of merchandise does not as yet show much increase.

More favorable conditions appear to be developing in the Far West and Northwest and prospects generally are regarded encouraging.

Winnipeg reports that retail trade has been stimulated by cool weather, and wholesalers note a decided increase in inquiries and shipping directions, especially in seasonable goods.

There is a satisfactory demand for staple merchandise at Saskatoon, with the movement in most lines showing gradual improvemnt.

Both wholesale and retail trade are in fair volume at Regina, and most merchants expect a brisk fall and winter business.

Fairly satisfactory conditions now prevail at Calgary, demand for staple commodities being well up to the average.

Gross earnings of all Canadian railroads reporting to date for the three weeks of October show a decrease of 27.5 per cent. as compared with the earnings of the same roads for the corresponding period a year ago.

THE ARMY OF PRODUCTION.

By Peter McArthur.

Ekfrid, October 28.—In resigning his position as acting President of the Ontario Agricultural College rather than be responsible for the organization of corps of military engineers to be recruited from the student body, Prof. Zavitz calls attention to a phase of the necessary preparations for war that has received scant consideration up to the present time. In the report that I saw his action was attributed to the conviction that the students could do more to promote the interests of the Empire in this crisis by devoting themselves to the best methods of agriculture, so that the inevitable need for farm supplies may be met. If this report is correct, Prof. Zavitz's position is well taken. The man behind the plow is going to play a more important part in this war than in any war known to history. The task of feeding the vast armies in the fields may yet be so urgent that good production may be regulated to some extent by military authority. It may be as necessary to start recruiting stations to provide soldiers for the army of production as for the armies that will go to the front. In all past wars the number of soldiers was relatively small as compared with the people engaged in productive occupations, but this war threatens to drain away the manhood of the countries engaged to an extent that will cripple every industry. To avoid such a disaster it is quite necessary that the minds of the people should be directed to the problem by such a stand as that taken by Professor Zavitz. While we acclaim all honor to those who are willing to die for their country, patriotism may show itself in the counting-house, the factory and on the farm before this war is over.

* * *

In order to get some idea of our preparedness for a prolonged war in which production will play a part, I took a hasty census of this district. The township is laid out in blocks of eight farms each. Taking six of these blocks as the basis of my investigation, I found that on the forty-eight farms of one hundred acres each there are at present only fifty-one men. As several of these men are well over seventy years of age and past doing effective labor, it appears that we have about one man to each hundred acres of land. This is not enough to do any kind of effective farming. Two able-bodied men to each hundred acre farm are barely enough to do the most ordinary kind of production, and if even a limited form of intensive farming were attempted two men could be employed all year round on fifty acres. In the district under consideration at least one hundred extra men should be employed to do farming that would be worth while. Of the fifty-one now on the land, only eight are of military age—between nineteen and forty-five— and of these five are married and have young families. From time to time I have seen articles in the papers that deplored the fact that so few farmers' sons are enlisting for the war. How many would the writers of these articles say should enlist from this district? Instead of sending men away we need more men, not because it would profit the farmers to employ them but because the Empire will need food. I incline to the opinion that this district is in no way peculiar and that a census of other parts of Ontario would reveal the same conditions. A majority of the young men born on these farms are now in the west or in the cities and most of the farms are being worked by boys and men over forty-five. Our farms are no better manned than the farms of France and Germany, where all the able-bodied men have been called to the colors. We have been supplying the business and industrial armies of the country for so many years that we are now as greatly reduced in farming population as if a war had been in progress. This is a source of weakness that may need urgent attention in the near future.

* * *

This state of affairs in the country calls attention to the unemployment in the cities. Why cannot the agricultural army be recruited from the city unemployed? On this point a correspondent writes:

"Those who know not of it shout "Back to the Land." That is all very well as a shout, but it does not aid or comfort the hapless who would be more helpless if they had to make their living out of the land. The farmer who would have to employ the hapless and helpless would soon be out of business. The chief remedy is a training (as you have suggested time and again) in farm work. If all were taught how to make a living out of the soil and the animal life that roams its surface there would then in times of stress be some value in the injunction "back to the land." Necessity, of course, will drive men back to the villages from the large centres and then the townships would get in touch with those who desire to till the soil rather than endure the struggle that the poor man has in the cities."

In the reports that I have read I have noticed that from six to eight months of military training are required to prepare men for the army of defence, and any farmer who has ever employed an inexperienced city man will agree that that amount of time would be short enough to prepare men for the army of production. There are few farmers in this district who wolud not employ competent help if it could be secured at a reasonable rate and with any guarantee that the supply would be permanent. At the present time the few competent men who offer themselves for employment on the farm are in such demand that they are able to ask wages that makes it impossible for any but the best equipped farmers to employ them. On most farms the wages of a modern hired man would exceed the share of the earnings that would go to the farmer employing him. With their present equipment farmers cannot employ competent men, and owing to the scarcity of money and credit few of them are in a position to increase their equipment. In a recent issue of The Grain Grower's Guide there was an editorial dealing with the need of an agricultural Kitchener. Although it was obvious that the article was not intended to be taken seriously, it nevertheless dealt with a serious matter. Lord Kitchener in "organizing victory" may find it necessary to mobilize an army of production, and Canada more than any part of the Empire, can furnish the land for the operation of such an army. I am inclined to think that Professor Zavitz showed more patriotic foresight than those who are inclined to criticize him for discouraging enlistment among the students at Guelph. Many graduates of the College acting as district representatives may now be regarded as officers of the Army of Production, and the young men being trained in the College at the present time may be urgently needed in officering a further and systematized extension of that army. At different times in this column I have urged the need of training farms where emigrants and those wishing to go back to the land could get the necessary training before offering their services to the farming community. The need for such farms now seems more urgent than ever. Shortly after the outbreak of the war I offered to give what information I could to those who wished to go back to the lanr. The resulting correspondence convinced me that I could give no effective aid because so few of my correspondents had any idea of what it means to go back to the land. I answered as many as possible of these letters and hope to have them all answered within a few days, even though I can do nothing more than write a word of sympathy. I am afraid that the net result of that experiment will be nothing more than the sorrow it caused me to get so many intimate glimpses of the terror and misery that now prevails among the unemployed of the cities. The people must get back to the land, but the work of sending them back cannot be left to chance. If the Army of Production is to be properly recruited and kept in a state of efficiency we certainly need an agricultural Kitchener.

NO CONSISTENT SALE FOR AMERICAN COTTON

Poor Patronage Displayed for These Goods From the United States in Argentina

FLOUR BAGS NOT IMPORTED

Cloth, Which is Secured Largely in Calcutta and Dundee, is Taken to Argentina and the Bags Are Now Made Up in That Country.

Washington, October 31.—According to a report by Consul-General Leo J. Keena, Buenos Ayres, the total of textiles of all kinds imported into Argentina during 1912 (the figures for that year being the last available) were valued by the Argentine customs authorities at $76,627,205, being 20.4 per cent. of the total imports for that year. About half the value of textiles imported is furnished by manufactures of cotton.

Articles.	1910.	1911.	1912.
Cotton goods	$37,375,090	$34,331,365	$36,803,560
Woollen goods	12,994,070	13,750,510	13,870,490
Silk goods	5,429,180	5,660,025	6,318,670
Textiles of jute, linen, etc.	10,174,180	13,515,750	18,634,480
Total	$65,972,375	$67,257,650	$75,627,200

Manufactures of cotton have for some years constituted the largest single item of Argentine importation.

The value of imports of cotton and its manufactures in 1910, 1911 and 1912 by countries was as follows:—

Imported from—	1910.	1911.	1912.
United Kingdom	$15,706,300	$15,156,390	$17,330,940
Italy	9,180,185	6,799,055	6,786,880
Germany	5,259,065	5,062,720	5,527,865
France	2,737,210	2,864,185	2,574,270
Belgium	2,002,335	2,008,355	2,067,030
Spain	1,229,775	1,082,990	963,425
Netherlands	481,435	576,415	810,865
United States	395,685	358,435	445,400
All other countries	383,100	422,820	296,885
Total	$37,375,090	$34,331,365	$36,803,560

It will be seen from this table that about one-half the total of cotton goods imported comes from Great Britain. It is evident also that Great Britain is still holding its place in the Argentine cotton goods market, exceeding in percentage of increase in 1912 its nearest competitors, Italy and Germany.

The records show that no particular article of American-made cotton goods has enjoyed a consistent sale for three consecutive years. For instance, in 1908, $350,000 worth of cotton bags was imported from America, constituting half the total importation for that year. But the amount dropped to $100,000 in 1909 and has been dwindling ever since. Also, in 1909, $205,237 worth of grude cotton yarn was imported from America, which figure also represented the average importation for the five-year period 1905-09. Since that time the importation of this article in 1912, $37,303, has been by far the largest of any year. On account of these fluctuations it is impossible to discuss reasons for either increase or decrease in sale of American cotton goods, except possibly in the matter of cotton bags, of which $350,000 worth was imported in 1908.

It is stated by a large Argentine flour mill which annually uses a great number of bags for flour that they are not imported any longer in considerable amounts, but that the cloth is imported and the bags made up there. This cloth comes from Calcutta and Dundee, and from the same places also come such bags as are imported ready made. There is no reason, however, why American bags and bag cloth should not be imported if proper efforts are made to push their sale. An exception must be noted in the case of canvas and duck, in proportions, Americans have always obtained their share. In fact, white duck was the only article in the importation of which American goods led in 1912.

The time of delivery of cotton goods from New York is somewhat longer than that from Europe, some times by a week, some times by two weeks. One month may be regarded as the minimum time necessary to effect the delivery of a shipment from New York to Buenos Ayres, and usually it takes longer.

GRAIN MARKET REVIEW.

Chicago, October 31.—The grain market has been steady, the week closing with only a fractional change from the prices last Saturday. There was a tendency toward lower prices in the early part of the week due to the liberal receipts and an unusual increase in the visible wheat supply, but the continued heavy demand for exports took care of the freer offerings and resulted in a moderate rally. Export sales of wheat are now averaging 1,500,000 bushels daily, and while this continues, present prices will undoubtedly hold, in fact, wheat is expected to stay around the $1.25 a bushel mark, while the foreign war continues.

Receipts of corn are liberal, which is a natural sequence to favorable weather for curing and marketing corn.

Oats receipts are running exceptionaly high, primary receipts for several days this week being double those of a year ago.

Provision prices continue high, reflecting the heavy export demand. The exports of lard, for instance during the week ended October 24, totalled 13,404,000 pounds, against 106,84,000 pounds last year, a difference of approximately 2,800,000 pounds.

ORDER-IN-COUNCIL WOULD PREVENT AID TO ENEMY.

Ottawa, October 31.— The Cabinet has passed an Order-in-Council to prevent the exportation to an enemy's country, or to any country which will in turn export to an enemy's country, any articles which would be useful during war to the enemies of Great Britain.

A number of articles are specially mentioned such as nickel, nickel ore, woollen goods, food, explosives, horses, fodder, leather, coal, copper, petrol, aeroplanes barbed wire, etc.

GERMAN CROP RETURNS SHOW DECLINE THIS YEAR

Never Has There Been So Much Interest Shown in Agricultural Wealth of Fatherland as This Year When Results Are Vital.

The Hague, October 31.—Crop returns have never been of so great an interest to the German public as they are this year, because it is realized that upon the amount of food in the country depends in a large emasure the ultimate result of the war.

Efforts are now being made to establish in accurate figures the quantity of food in the country. So far final returns are obtainable only in the case of Prussia. The table covering the crop of breadstuffs and oats, upon which the army especially depends, is given first:

Year.	Winter wheat Tons.	Winter rye Tons.	Tons.
1911	2,182,000	8,367,000	5,210,000
1912	2,448,000	8,793,000	5,831,000
1913	2,569,000	9,267,000	6,560,000
1914	2,182,000	8,401,000	5,945,000

The table shows that this year's crops have not been as good as they were in 1912 and 1913. The winter wheat crop of 1914 is 387,000 tons short of the 1913 rcop; winter rye is 886,000 tons short, and oats 611,000 tons. It is asserted, however, that this has been largely met, firstly, by imports during the first weeks of the war, secondly, by the release of provisions stored by the Government for military purposes; thirdly, by the relatively better crop in other States of the German federation.

Other crops of the present year are: Summer barley, 1,705,000 tons; winter barley, 70,000 tons; summer wheat, 360,000 tons; summer rye, 64,000 tons.

Much had been expected of the potato crop, but it is certain now that it fell short of expectations. The cvrop is more than 6,500,000 tons short of 1913, which for Prussia was an exceptioally good year, however.

German authorities generally assert thatt here is enough food in the country to last over a year, and that the new crop, while sufficient perhaps to carry the country another year without imports, will meet all demands likely to be made upon it.

PROTECT SUGAR BEET CROP

Leaf Spot Disease Reduces Both the Tonnage and Sugar Content of the Beet.

Washington, October 31.—Leaf-spot, one of the most serious and widely distributed diseases of the sugar beet, can be controlled by a careful system of crop rotation and by deep fall ploughing, according to recent investigations conducted by the Department of Agriculture. By reducing both tonnage and the sugar content of the beet the leaf-spot disease is a serious menace to the profits of beet growers. In addition the disease lessens to a very appreciable extent the feeding value of the beet tops. Sugar beets are, of course, grown primarily for the money value of the roots, but the tops are also very important as stock feed. A bad visitation of leaf-spot disease will reduce the feeding value of the tops at least 50 per cent. What this might amount to is indicated by the fact that if the disease caused an average loss of 10 per cent. in the value of the crop of beet tops the loss to the country would amount to over $300,000 a year in this one item alone. The loss in sugar would, of course, be far greater.

To control the disease, the Government investigators advocate first of all a proper system of crop rotation. This, indeed, is essential to good farming, whether leaf-spot disease exists or not, but the fact that it is extremely valuable in fighting the disease is still another reason why it should receive the greatest attention from farmers. Certain pests, like the fungus of leaf-spot disease, can thrive only on certain kinds of plants. When their food supply is cut off by the planting of other crops the pests must inevitably suffer. The fungus, which causes leaf-spot disease, cannot, as far as scientists have been able to discover, thrive upon small grains, corn, clover, alfalfa, cowpeas, beans and many other plants which are in other respects suitable for a rotation with sugar beets. Their use, therefore, will not only improve the land but go far toward eliminating the pest.

COTTON EXCHANGE REOPENS NEXT MONTH

While Exact Date Not Determined Activity is Expected About Middle of November

EUROPE BUYS MORE FREELY

Marked Increase in Exports to Italy, Whence Cotton Will be Shipped to Germany—French Mills Still Busy, and England's Demand Will Increase.

New York, October 31.—The prospects now are that the Cotton Exchange will reopen by the middle of November. There is no doubt of this fact, and the only question is over the exact date.

Meantime the European demand for American cotton is evidently increasing. Exports are watched with increasing interest, the total showed a gratifying increase.

It is evident that every effort will be made to stimulate exports of American cotton. Even Germany is beginning to buy more freely. The cotton, it is well known, will be shipped to that country through Italian ports. Recently a fair amount of the cotton exported from American ports has gone to the Continent, that is, exclusive of France, and presumably not a little of it was destined for Italy, with a view of trans-shipping it to Germany. It looks, too, to many as though the British consumption will be far larger than some have expected. It may easily turn out, too, that the consumption by Germany will reach a large total, as Germany is not now in the war zone.

Cotton, moreover, is still being exported to France, and it appears that in spite of the war some of the largest of the cotton mills are still in operation. If Italy can keep out of the struggle there would seem to be no reason why the consumption of cotton by the mills of that country should not be generally large.

In the last 13 years the number of active spindles in Italy has increased from 1,940,000 to 4,400,000, and the annual mill consumption from 475,000 bales to 800,000 bales.

Of late the Southern spot markets have shown in some cases more steadiness. They are far from active, however. Within a week the lowest prices have been witnessed since 1897 and 1898. At interior points many sales have been made at 5½ and even in some cases as low as 5 cents. At points like Savannah and Houston and Augusta, however, 6⅛ is quoted.

The ginning report appeared during the week, and it showed a large total.

The quantity ginne up to Oct. 18 this year was 7,610,682 bales, against 6,973,518 in the same time last year, 6,874,206 in 1912, and 7,758,621 in 1911. So that the ginning thus far this year, despite the evil times, or rather perhaps, partly because of them, is well ahead of last year. The increase this year is in fact 637,164 bales. All the states show increases over last year, except Alabama and Tennessee.

INCREASE IN FOODSTUFF EXPORTS.

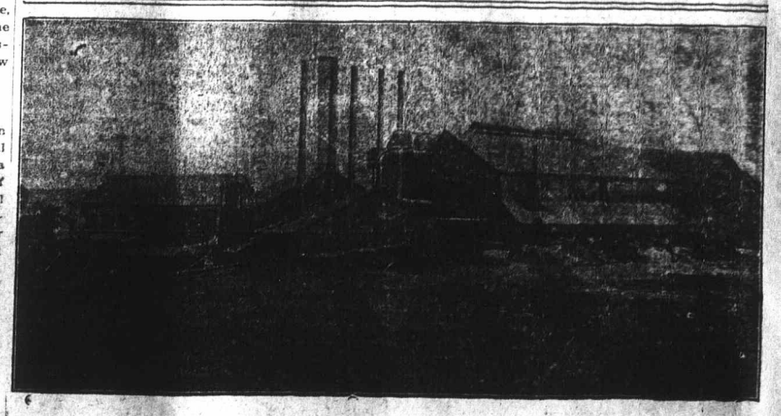
Washington, October 31.—Nearly all classes of American foodstuffs are being exported in record breaking proportions, says a report issued by the Department of Commerce. France, according to the statement, has placed all fresh meats on the free list.

Exports of fresh beef during September amounted to 7,000,000 pounds, or eleven times the total for September, 1913. Practically 3,000,000 pounds of canedbeef were exported during last September, being eight times as much as during the same month last year.

26,000,000 bushels of wheat were exported during September, or more than twice as much as a year ago.

Exports of oats increased from less than 330,000 last year to 10,750,000 bushels this year, and rice from 146,000 to 712,000 bushels.

September exports of refined sugar rose from less than 4,000,000 pounds in 1913 to more than 52,000,000 this year.



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