

## ENGLAND'S INDUSTRIES ARE EXPERIENCING GREAT BOOM

The Demand for Manufactured Goods Has Increased to Such an Extent That the Attention of Speculators Has Been Attracted and There Has Been a Widespread Buying up of Mills.

England's industries are experiencing something of a boom, according to Percy F. Martin, special correspondent in England of The World's Markets, published by R. G. Dun & Co. There is still a good deal of unrest in practically all circles of labor, and the signs are that unless there is a prompt and permanent fall in the cost of living, of which there is absolutely no indication at the time of writing, the troubles of a month or so ago will be repeated. But for the threatening aspect of the labor situation, the condition of trade in this country would be satisfactory enough.

In regard to the cotton trade, all markets, both at home and abroad, are fully engaged. To such an extent has the demand for manufactured goods increased, that the attention of speculators has been attracted, with the result that during the past two months there has been a widespread buying-up of mills at exceedingly high prices, so high, indeed, as to cause surprise even among those who have been tempted to sell, the idea being to re-sell at further advanced prices to other speculators. As a single instance of this kind of wild dealing may be cited the case of a small unimportant Lancashire mill belonging to a syndicate almost wholly composed of members of one family. The capital employed did not exceed £80,000, and the annual profits, even in good times, did not surpass 10 per cent. This mill was sold recently for £200,000, and the purchasers expressed the conviction that they would, in their turn, realize a 20 per cent. profit on the deal. All this is, of course, extremely detrimental to the permanent prosperity of the cotton trade, no matter how satisfactory present prices and orders may appear.

Then there is the question of labor. This has never been more lacking in more uncertain. Mill managers report constant friction and agitation upon the part of certain of the younger members, male and female, among workers. As a consequence many looms are idle, and there is no possibility of replacing reticent laborers owing to the strict attitude of the trade unions.

The busiest section of the cotton manufacturing trade is in the finer classes of goods. So great is the home demand that if any orders are being accepted for export. Prices are soaring to an almost undreamed of height, and there is a tendency among certain manufacturers to skip the work in order to keep pace with the demands. There is also great difficulty in getting the manufactured goods delivered, the railways being choked

with crates of finished goods awaiting collection and subsequent delivery to customers.

The drapery trades are naturally feeling the beneficial results of increased output. Such of the wholesale houses as can do so are obtaining speedy delivery by despatching special motor lorries to the factories and fetching away the finished goods. The turnover has already been phenomenal, and most of the retail houses that have been successful in getting their orders executed in time and delivery completed, report record business.

At first some alarm was felt at the setting-up of many profiteering tribunals, which sought to put an effective check upon the advanced prices asked by even some of the most reputable of retail stores. But the bogey has proved very uncertain and the decisions of the tribunals having been mostly in favor of the incriminated firms brought before them, the first feeling of concern has died away and profiteering continues as before.

As a fact, everyone seems to have money to spend and but a very few have the necessary time to devote to complaints, which, in the end, may prove costly to the complainant. There is, moreover, always a reason forthcoming for the further rise in prices. Take, for instance, the case of the corset manufacturers. The increase of wages paid in this trade by the different trade boards continues, and this fact is cited by manufacturers and retailers for the advance over previous prices—an advance, however, which, if analyzed, would be found to bear no relation to the actual increase in cost of production. New rates for shirtmakers have come into operation and the various houses are taking advantage of the circumstance to put another 15 or 20 per cent. increase on shirts that have been in stock for a year or more. Hosiery, also, has gone up no less than 100 per cent, and almost every other advanced proportionately, never, according to the best authorities, destined to fall again to within anything approaching the pre-war figures of retail selling. The hat industry alone seems to languish. This is due largely to the continued lack of female labor; and as a consequence, thousands of dozens of stiff and soft felt hats are held up at the factories untrimmed.

Considerable confusion prevails in the boot and shoe trade, mainly on account of the continued interference of officials of the Board of Trade, the majority of whose regulations are framed and carried out without any consultation with either the manufacturer or the operatives and to the pronounced dissatisfaction of both.

As recently as February last certain new regulations came into force, but before these could be thoroughly tested by actual experience, they were swept away and others substituted, again without any co-operation with the trades concerned. The repairing branch has been the most seriously affected. The new rules have been imposed by uninformed officials, who have also lost sight of the fact that both repairing and boot making take place in the same factory, and that the rules now introduced apply to manufacturers and repairers in an unequal manner. Apart from this, however, the boot and shoe manufacturing trades are well engaged and the number of foreign orders continues to accumulate.

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## WILL SCOTLAND HIT THE TRAIL

Antis Fear the Home of Good Liquors May Follow Lead of United States.

People in England deeply interested in the success of the prohibitionist campaign in the United States do not know, or have had time to forget, that an important division of Great Britain is within measurable distance of following the lead.

Eight years ago there was unostentatiously added to the Statute-book a measure entitled, "The Temperance (Scotland) Act. It provided that Scotland shall be divided into areas, including burghs or towns or country parishes.

The electors within these boundaries shall have power to deal drastically with the management of the liquor trade. The bill provides three alternatives:

(1) No change in present management.

(2) Closure of one-fourth of existing public houses.

(3) Prohibition of the sale of drink.

Upon the demand of a title of local government electors in an area a poll shall be taken at which a majority may be made for any one of these proposals. A majority of 55 per cent. on a poll of not less than 35 per cent. of the electors in the register will suffice to decree prohibition.

Here is a local option Bill exceeding in practicability parliamentary efforts of the late Sir Wilfrid Lawson. In order to gently break a possible fall it was ordered that the Act should not come into operation for a period of eight years. The interval will elapse on June 1. The temperance party may be depended upon to put it in immediate operation.

A further step in legislation has been made since the Act was passed, calculated to have an important effect on the issue. The reform Bill of 1917 added 800,000 women to the Parliamentary electorate. The Scottish electors will be divided into three groups. A large majority are confidently counted upon to support prohibition.

Success of the crusade will inevitably lead to extension south of the Tweed. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, an advocate of temperance, will regard the movement with mixed feelings. Its success would certainly make a serious gap in revenue returns.

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Some Canadian Political Topics

J. D. Palmer's Replies to Mr. Crear's Curious Calculations Regarding Profits of Shoe Manufacturers—Calgary Farmers Express Their Views.

(Quebec Chronicle.)

Free Trade Misrepresentation.

It is to be sincerely hoped that the address delivered by Mr. J. D. Palmer before the convention of the Canadian Shoe Manufacturers will find a wide circulation and serious study throughout the Dominion. While in no sense a political pronouncement, it has yet an important bearing upon the existing political situation in this country where the farmers are making a determined bid for power.

Although the main plank in their platform is obviously selfish and detrimental to the interests of the majority, that of Free Trade or a Low Tariff, they yet pose as people who are interested in the welfare of no one class and are desirous of effecting reforms that will benefit the whole State.

This being the case, we can derive some insight into the merits of their pretensions from their use of the shoe industry as an argument against protective tariffs. If we find that they have been guilty of deliberate deception in this regard we can fairly conclude that their standard of public morality is no higher than that which they desire to apply, nor can we do better than reproduce certain material passages from the remarks of Mr. Palmer who, after showing how the Agriculture Council had evaded an invitation to investigate the profits of the shoe industry, continued thus:

"I find, The Farmers' Platform states in their article on page 19, that the Shoe Manufacturers made a profit of \$10,171,893.00. The way they arrive at that amount of profit is by calculating 30 per cent. on the total output."

"You will note that they state that the Shoe Manufacturers made a profit of over \$10,000,000.00 on the year's transaction but as I have outlined above you will notice the difference between the cost of the materials, wages and salaries, added together, and the selling value of the product was \$2,781,880.00 so therefore, every taking their own basis of argument for it, they have deliberately misrepresented the figures given in the Census of Industry. But when we go into the matter further, we find that the Census of Industry figures for 1911, do not cover items of expense such as rental of offices or works, cost of power and heating, insurance, taxes, royalties, advertising, travelling and selling expenses, repairs, depreciation, interest and many other items of overhead that would not be covered in the three above mentioned classes, viz: Cost of materials, wages and salaries, so that this \$7,781,380.00 would be very largely wiped out, when the above additional items of expense or cost of production are considered."

The Calgary Confession.

(Montreal Star.)

Economic group organization for political purposes is much more straightforward as a policy than political group organization for economic purposes. The people of Canada owe a debt of gratitude to the United Farmers of Alberta who, in convention at Calgary, have declared themselves an economic class rather than a political body.

A class movement is organized in the interests of a class that backs it. The Calgary pronouncement means, then, that the United Farmers of Alberta are in politics for the United Farmers of Alberta.

Agriculture to organize an agrarian movement capable of general support receive a severe setback from this Calgary confession. Perhaps the United Farmers of Alberta should be known as the Unsophisticated Farmers of Alberta. Nevertheless, it is noted that a prominent delegate was cheered to the echo when he declared: "We must have a political machine!"

Hon. T. A. Crear and others of the Canadian Council of Agriculture have been telling the country about the United Farmers' movement in language. The United Farmers of Alberta themselves have just shown the country what the United Farmers' movement means by deeds. Not from the speeches of Hon. T. A. Crear about the United Farmers, but from the spirit shown by the rank and file of the United Farmers, will Canadians judge the national significance and value of this much-discussed venture into political life.

Canadians a Race?

(Ottawa Journal.)

A complaint that has some justification is registered by the Toronto Star against the official dictum that there is no such race of people as Canadians. When the people of this

country are required to make registrations for official records, as in the case of births or deaths, they must trace their origin back to some other country. Thus, in the latest registration forms issued by the Registrar-General it is stipulated that the terms "American" and "Canadian" may not be used to indicate race. The form declares that these terms signify citizenship, not race. The Toronto paper holds that the effect of this ruling is to declare that there are no Canadians in Canada. "Why should the state itself go to such great pains to repudiate her children and insist, generation after generation, that they are but strangers here and ever must remain so?" it asks. The people of this country, it thinks, should be encouraged, not forbidden, to look upon themselves as Canadians on all occasions. Many people in this country are undoubtedly more Canadian than anything else. "People whose forefathers lived in Canada for two or three generations have little of the racial characteristics of the countries of their origin. A distinct race of people has been developed in this country. The people of the Old Country do not look upon Canadians as English, Scotch or Irish although they descend from those races. We are considered by them as a distinct race, but we are not permitted to consider ourselves as such."

The Board of Commerce.

(Toronto Mail and Empire.)

The complaints of the Retail Merchants' Association, the Canadian Council of Agriculture, the Manufacturers' Association and other bodies, against the Board of Commerce are proof that the orders of the Board are not visible to the consumer, because prices have not been materially reduced in any line in which the Board has made an order, and in other lines where the farmers are making a determined bid for power.

Although the main plank in their platform is obviously selfish and detrimental to the interests of the majority, that of Free Trade or a Low Tariff, they yet pose as people who are interested in the welfare of no one class and are desirous of effecting reforms that will benefit the whole State.

This being the case, we can derive some insight into the merits of their pretensions from their use of the shoe industry as an argument against protective tariffs. If we find that they have been guilty of deliberate deception in this regard we can fairly conclude that their standard of public morality is no higher than that which they desire to apply, nor can we do better than reproduce certain material passages from the remarks of Mr. Palmer who, after showing how the Agriculture Council had evaded an invitation to investigate the profits of the shoe industry, continued thus:

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