

IRON AND STEEL.

In its weekly review of the iron and steel trade, the Iron Age says:

"More impressively than in any previous week, the government has put before the steel producers the demands it will make upon the country's capacity in the next six months, and the still greater needs of 1919. It is now realized that the ship programme is to be increased next year beyond anything yet believed; that railroad purchases must far exceed those for 1918, after years of starvation buying, and that shell steel must be furnished at a 5,000,000-ton rate. Moreover, the strain great crops have always put upon iron and steel capacity is also to be reckoned with now.

"In its third warning to the consumers of steel within three months, the War Industries Board put the needs of the second half of the year for war and essential industries at 20,000,000 tons of finished steel products or 3,500,000 tons more than the expected output. A sharp challenge of the 20,000,000-ton estimate came from automobile interests, accompanied by a call for a definite assurance as to steel supply, even on a reduced scale. No assurance has been given, nor can it be given, the most certain thing in the prospect being that the use of steel for war purposes will increase, while production is less likely to increase. The week has brought a reminder that summer heat will yet be a factor.

"The ability of iron and steel jobbers to replace their stocks is a moot question. Manufacturers generally rule that replacement orders can only be filled to the extent of shipments for war essentials in the preceding month. This policy points to a lessening percentage of warehouse business.

"The existence of good sized stocks of steel in manufacturers' hands, amounting in the automobile industries to three or four months' supply in some cases, explains that absence of shutdowns with the gradual tightening of government control, but points to some radical readjustments in the next few months.

"Buying of finished steel has fallen off greatly, the government policy being to keep about three months ahead of the mills. Accumulated orders may be expected to decline, therefore, but without signifying a change in operating prospects.

"Among the smaller producers of pig iron the feeling grows that an advance in the price should be made for the fourth quarter. Virginia, Tennessee and Eastern Pennsylvania furnaces are especially concerned in the agitation for zone prices. In case of a pig iron advance, if only for less favored producers, the claims of certain plate mills would be urged again.

"The largest new structural steel undertaking involves 12,000 tons for the new Liberty Ship Yard of the Bethlehem Shipbuilding Corporation, at Alameda, California, to be supplied by the McClintic Marshall Company.

"How well the steel makers have met shipbuilding demands is shown in the shipments from mills of 265,000 tons of material for the Hog Island yard and 197,000 tons for the Submarine Boat plant.

"Even with the prodigious increase in tinplate output, plants for the new capacity is announced. The Steel Corporation's plant at Gary will be more than doubled as quickly as the work can be put through."

ONTARIO CROP OUTLOOK.

Taking all lines into account, says the Globe, of July 27th, a prosperous year for Ontario agriculture now seems assured.

So far as coarse grains are concerned, present prospects in Ontario leave little to be desired. Barley will probably give one of the best yields per acre on record. Oats, although rather short in the straw in many cases, are heading well, and color was never better. Spring wheat, with much beyond the usual acreage of late years, is uniformly good. Even hay, taking the province as a whole, will be little, if any, below an average yield per acre, and acreage is large. Potatoes, despite occasional cases of leaf roll, etc., promise better than usual, and acreage seems to be at least normal. Roots, with small acreage, look well, but corn outside of southwestern Ontario, will certainly be much below the average and may be very much below.

Pastures are in unusually good condition for this season, and second growth is coming on fast on fields from which hay has been harvested. Livestock show

POWER WASTE ON HIGHWAYS.

According to a recent computation the power that is going to waste on American highways is equivalent to the daily work of 250,000 horses. The basis of this statement is found in the fact that it requires a tractive effort of 218-pounds to haul a ton of freight over a dirt road, as against 28 pounds of tractive effort over a smoothly paved roadway. Thus there is a loss of 190 pounds of tractive effort on every ton of freight hauled over a dirt road. Of course, it is not practicable to pave every country highway, or even a considerable share of them. But the high value of paved through routes between industrial centres and markets is coming to be better understood. This is partly due to the sudden conversion of such paved routes into freight roads by the use of the motor truck. The Government now plans to send 30,000 war-motor trucks laden with war material from Chicago to an Atlantic port under their own power. Without well-paved roads the establishment of motor-truck freight lines would be impossible, or at least, impracticable. All of which suggests that, whatever measures of retrenchment in public expenditures are undertaken to ease the burden of war taxation, there should be no halting in road improvement. And with traffic bursting from the steel rails and overflowing on to the highway, speedy provision should be made for giving a permanent hard surface to the through routes, in order to save the waste of power involved in dirt surfaces. —Minneapolis Journal.

The old lady entered the taxidermist's in a blazing wrath, carrying a defunct bird in a glass case.

"It's an imposition," she said. "You stuffed by poor parrot only last summer, and here's his feathers falling out before your very eyes."

"Lor bless yer, mum, that's a triumph of our art," was the reply. "We stuffs 'em so natural that they moult in their proper season."

prime condition. Small fruits will be in smaller volume than they have been for years, and apples, although better than last year, will be a very light crop.

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