

British and French Face Their Problems in Calm Spirit.

Boston Man Sees Order Growing Out of Confusion Following the War.

(Boston Globe.)

Merton L. Emerson, vice president of the American Pneumatic Service Company of Boston, who arrived home from a six weeks' stay in England and France a few days ago, takes a cheerful view of the situation in those countries, although he says conditions in England are much as they are in America. Nevertheless British business men view the situation calmly. "A prominent man told me," said Mr. Emerson to a Globe reporter, "that he had expected the industrial conditions to be in a turmoil for three years after the war, and they were really encouraged because matters seemed to be settling down within one and a half years. "Without doubt this general unrest is greatly intensified by the high cost of living and the British Government is dealing with many of these problems in a manner that to us would seem the extreme of Socialism. For example, all Civil Service employees, which means not only Postoffice clerks

and carriers, but those employed by the army and navy, Treasury Department, etc., have their wages automatically adjusted every three months according to the increase or decrease in the cost of living. On the arrangement the lower grade postal workers have had their wages increased up to the adjustment 135 percent over pre-war conditions. In addition they receive pensions, sick leave, uniform and shoe allowances, free medical attention, etc.

Government Aid in Housing.

"The Government is also going after the housing problem in a wholesale manner and during the next three years will pay up to 30 percent of the cost of houses of certain types and values. One architect alone told me that he had 4000 houses under construction in 17 different projects—the total cost of which would be around \$20,000,000 in American money. It is estimated that there is a shortage of over 2,000,000 houses in the United

Kingdom and the conditions are so grave that all other building is being suspended as far as possible.

"The attitude of labor in regard to housing is, however, very peculiar. Every one wants houses, but those men who build houses don't seem to want to work. Masons are restricted to laying 400-500 bricks a day, when they could lay two or three times as many. There is a great scarcity of labor, but, nevertheless, the unions will not even permit ex-service men to go in on this work.

"The situation is, however, I feel certain, solving itself slowly but surely. People at the time I left had stopped buying, therefore the shops were empty and prices were falling. The railroads claimed they could not afford to give Summer excursion rates, therefore, people are not traveling and so many employees are not needed. Neither London hotels nor theatres are crowded. There is every indication that the peak of high prices has been reached and that everyone is settling down to business. Threatened strikes are being postponed and workmen were greatly modifying their demands for wage adjustments. The attitude in general seemed to be that the time had come to get down to work.

Attitude Toward Americans.

"As far as relationships with our country are concerned, the attitude of all the British whom I met was quite the reverse of what I had anticipated. They do not dislike Americans, but they are fearful that Americans do not understand and therefore may dislike them.

"To my mind, the British need a good advertising manager to bring forward their good points and to boost

the many wonderful things they did, particularly in the war. You hear all about what the Americans did in the Argonne, the Canadian at Vimy Ridge, the Australians at Mt. St. Quentin, but never about the British. When they discuss themselves, it is usually about what the Government didn't do and how poor the Government control has been, and how much better things could have been—all of which sounds very familiar to American ears.

"It is only after one becomes well acquainted with these people that one ever hears of their terrible losses of the sons, brothers and relatives who have 'gone west,' of the great financial losses and hardships. They never complain—except that all agree that the war ended just a bit too soon. They are a wonderful people, who have been baptised in fire and who are ready to go through it again if the world demands it.

Dislike for Wilson.

"While to my mind both the British and French have most cordial feelings for Americans, though they admit frankly that they cannot understand our politics, one and all expressed the most extreme contempt for President Wilson. They look upon him as an usurper; as a man who claimed to represent America, when he knew he did not, and who advanced theories and caused delays when the whole world needed the most sane and practical kind of legislation. They also blame their own representatives and press for not giving them the facts instead of filling them up with glories of Wilson.

"No one seemed to know of the election of a new Congress which in any other country would have meant the retirement of the Cabinet and a new

Government and everyone assumed that the President had been authorized by the Government to act in the manner in which he did. The general conclusion seems to be that his one idea was to be the head of a League of Nations of whatever form that League might be.

"I heard a prominent Englishman say that no one believed a League of Nations practical or possible at the time of making a peace treaty, and that what Clemenceau and Lloyd George wished to bring about was an agreement between France, Great Britain and America to maintain peace until the equilibrium of the world should be restored. Our President, however, in the entire deliberations did he advance a possible or practical plan, conceived by himself or his associates.

"I said that the British do not understand our politics. More especially they cannot understand our attitude on the Irish question. They look upon this as a family matter—in the same relationship as one of our States would be to us. The fact that the Republican platform did not mention the subject pleased every one, and the press in general commented on it. The situation seems to be that the British don't know what to do with the Irish problem, principally because the Irish themselves don't know what they want. To-day Ireland is the most prosperous part of the Irish Kingdom—during the war the Irish had special privileges. In the past Ireland was not properly treated, so say all Englishmen. But as for her being a republic or a separate country, all the Irish whom I talked to in London said such a thing was as ridiculous as New York to become a separate country in order to escape prohibition.

Doesn't Seem Possible.

"As for prohibition—well, the English can't believe it possible, even though Scotland may go prohibition itself before they know it. They admit it must be a good thing, but, like New York, they don't believe it to be possible, at least in this stage of civilization. To them it is the most remarkable thing America has ever done.

"Conditions in France are quite different from those of England. There is absolutely no metal money, in spite of the fact that you can't take more than 1000 francs, metal or paper money out of the country. Postage stamps are used instead of small coins, different cities issue their own paper money and the value of it therefore depends on where you are.

"The country and the people, particularly in the devastated section, are a pathetic sight, but they want no sympathy, except in money credit. In the cities, they are having strikes, but the citizens are getting tired of them and have volunteer organizations, so that when the Government owned railroad employees, the underground employee or the electric light men strike, the 'citizens' merely carry on, until the strikers get tired and come back. There is no sympathy for strikes or strikers and that method of arbitration seems to be going out of style.

"In the devastated regions, every one is working. Conditions there are beyond description, but the battlefields are being slowly put under cultivation and in another year most of them will be cleared up and the hundred thousands of soldiers' bodies, as far as possible, put into military cemeteries. But the country and even the soil has changed. On the Somme front all the trees and forests have gone. It is now one vast treeless plateau—more than 200 little towns have disappeared, not a trace remains. Mustard marks the lines of filled in trenches and shell holes. Where did it come from—it did not grow there before. Also in the deep shell holes which have water in them, bull rushes grow and frogs live. Neither existed on the great plateau before the war.

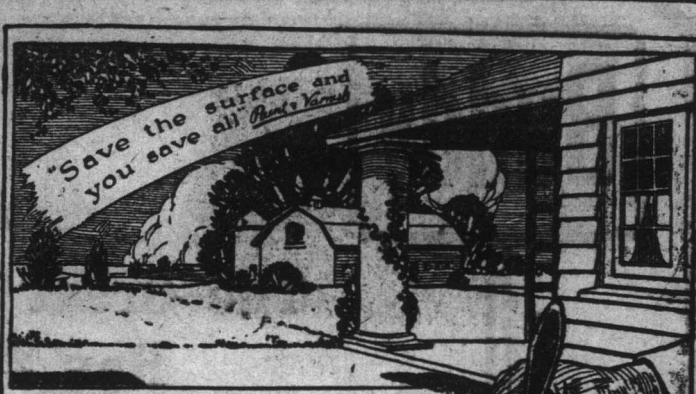
Coming Back in France.

"The large cities, like Arras, Peronne, Bapaume, Soissons, Rheims, etc., are cleaning up, as far as they can and so are the hundreds of little villages that were destroyed everywhere. If the cellar remains, the owner comes back and lives in it. If part of a wall is standing, he uses it. In most every case a house of about the same kind, made of the same material is being erected on the same site by the former tenant and his family. Where and how these people live is simply a mystery.

"In Lens, for example, which was destroyed by the Germans before they retreated and not one building left standing—10,000 people are said to be living on May 22. Temporary shacks are, of course, erected everywhere and, also temporary shops, cinemas, etc., but it will be many years, if ever, before the marks of war are effaced from these cities and towns.

"No one can realize without seeing the conditions of these countries how serious their situation is, and yet every one will also feel, I am sure, that they are going to pull through because they must, if the world is to be held together.

"I heard Mr. Lloyd George, speaking in the House of Commons on June 7 on the question of trade relations with the Bolsheviks, say that, whatever conditions might be, the time had come when the world must have peace and find itself, or there was no knowing what the future might bring. He said that no one detested the Bolsheviks more than he, but that Great Britain, Europe and the whole world needed Russia, and that the only way he knew of to break down Bolshevism was by trade relationship which would let in



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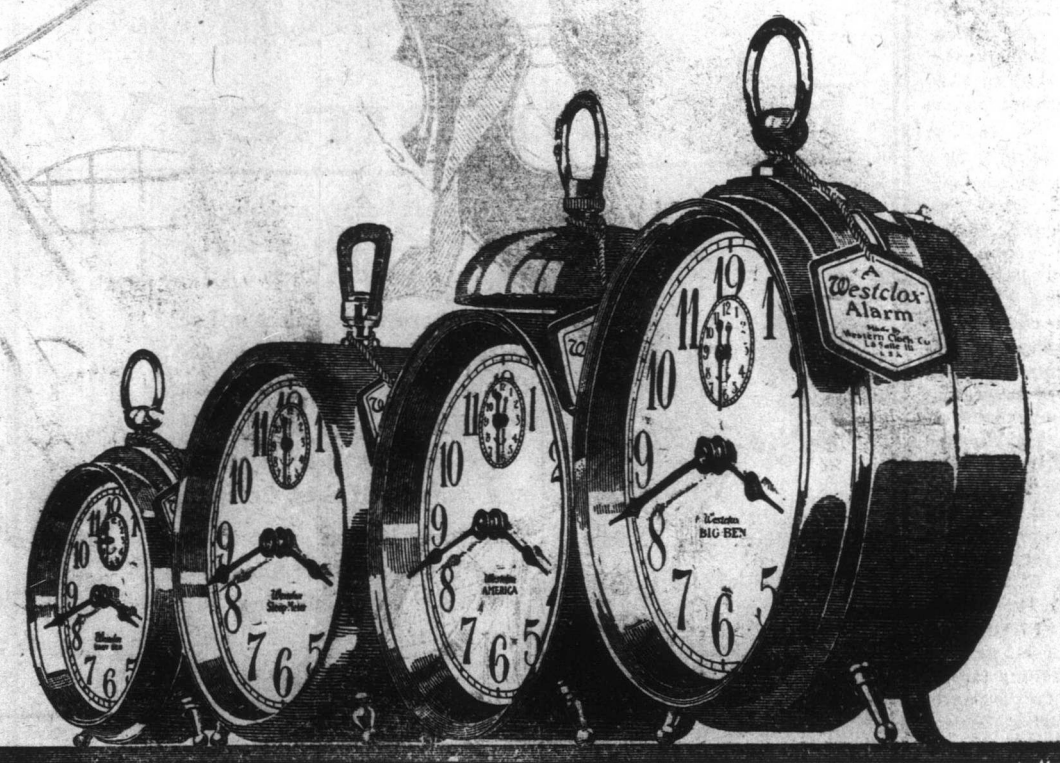
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the light and the news, so that in time the Russian people would know the truth, for as long as intercourse was refused with the Bolshevik Government, just so long would the Russian people be kept in ignorance of actual conditions.

Need Moral Support and Credits.

"I do not believe that either the English or the French think the people of the United States of America selfish because they think of their own country and problems and dislike to enter into European politics. On the other hand I am sure that they believe that a country which looks to its own problems, first is a pretty sane country, and one that can be depended on at all times to do what is right at the right time. What these countries need most of all is moral support and credits, so that they can have the opportunity to work out their own salvation.

"As for Germany, I did not go there, but I talked with many who did. One thing is certain, and that is, as long as her Government is so divided, with no strong majority in power, she is going to be a plague spot, fertile ground for Bolshevism, and a problem for herself and the world for years to come. Every one agrees that if the war had lasted only long enough to permit German soil to be occupied, the German problem, with which is bound up the peculiar psychology of the people would be so much the easier to solve.

"As conditions are, England is the creditor of all the Allied Nations except America. These Nations are looking to Germany to pay them, so that they in turn can pay their debts. An unsettled German Government means stagnation in business and no

money with which to pay debts. Above all the question is, what is America going to do? The general feeling seems to be that if the Republicans come back into power some constructive action will result, whereas if the Democratic party should be continued in power chaos will continue.

"The public and the press are looking to America for cooperation and help in solving the many puzzling problems that affect the world to-day. Every London paper, with the possible exception of the yellow sheet, John Bull, takes great care to explain to its readers what different political situations in America mean.

This is done in their own language and it does look strange to see our Secretary of the Navy referred to as the First Lord of the Admiralty, Mr. Daniels, or Congressman Gallivan, speaking on prohibition, referred to as the Member of Parliament from Boston.

"One thing I feel certain of and that is that while we may row and wrangle with England in the future, just as we have in the past, our relationships are bound to become more and more close, for the English-speaking countries only can work out and must work out the peace of the world."

CONCERT APPRECIATED.—The Band Concert given by the C.C.C. Band in Victoria Park was well appreciated by the large crowd present. The programme was a splendid one and the director and his aides are to be complimented on providing such wholesome entertainment.

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