

## No International Boycott After the War

In all previous wars, it has been assumed that hostilities terminated with the signature of the treaty of peace. In the very midst of the present conflict there are, on both sides, powerful combinations, both political and commercial, organized for purposes which are synonymous with the continuance of economic war after the military struggle has been decided. That the Central Powers, with the present outlook for their armed forces, should think it possible to achieve economic independence of the nations opposed to them is, perhaps, more remarkable than that the Allies should seriously discuss a post-bellum policy of boycotting their present foes. But both proceed from a common impulse; both are based on a theory of national wealth whose fallacy was long ago demonstrated. It was this theory that underlay the old colonial system according to which colonies were looked upon as public estates of which the profits were to be secured to the population of the Mother Country. It was this system that lost Great Britain her North American colonies, and it was so weak that it snapped under the strain of a hesitating attempt made by the Mother Country to obtain from the colonies a small contribution to the cost of wars in which they had a more direct interest than herself. The new system of voluntary association, and perfect freedom in regard to questions affecting taxes and tariffs has produced a magnificent voluntary contribution both of money and of men from the colonies that helped the Mother Country to fight a war in which her interests are more immediately involved than theirs. While there are important differences of detail between the old colonial system and the system of imperial preferential tariffs, a revival of whose advocacy has taken place in the United Kingdom, the fundamental principle is the same. An offensive economic league of the Allies against Germany, or an effort on the part of Germany to surround Middle Europe with a high tariff wall proceeds equally on the assumption that the seller profits at the expense of the buyer—that the poverty of one group of nations can help another group to grow rich.

The extent of the trade disturbances which would be caused by an effective boycott of the Central Powers may be judged from the fact that in 1912 the aggregate of the commercial exchanges, imports and exports, between four of the Allied Powers—Great Britain, France, Russia and Italy, on the one hand, and Germany, Austria-Hungary, Turkey and Bulgaria, on the other—was of the value of at least \$2,000,000,000. The total would be greatly increased by the inclusion of the trade of the United States and that of all the other members of the Allied group. Nor is any account taken in these figures of the trade done by the colonies and dependencies of the Allied States with the Central Powers. The statement has been made with obvious force that it needs a good deal of faith to believe that the British traders who in 1913 sold to Germany nearly \$220,000,000 worth of merchandise and bought back goods to the value of \$360,000,000—a large part of the latter being raw materials and finished goods needed by British industries—would be willing to forego this trade without some reasonable assurance that it would be made good to them elsewhere. But even supposing that Germany were entirely cut out of the markets of the Allies, it is obvious that the restriction of competition would benefit neutral countries quite as much as or even more than Great Britain, and this for the reason that a general embargo upon the trade of enemies and neutrals alike is quite inconceivable.

One of the most plausible forms which the revived colonial theory has assumed is to be found in the platform of the British Empire Resources Development Committee, at the head of which appears the name of W. Astor, and the most active and voluble member of which is Henry Wilson-Fox, M.P. The argument of the Committee runs somewhat as follows: The national debt before the war was about \$3,500,000,000; after the war it will probably not be less than \$20,000,000,000. The income of the Government before the war was about \$1,000,000,000; after the war the income it will need to pay its way will probably be not less than \$2,500,000,000. If taxation is to produce the whole of this extra \$1,500,000,000 a year everybody must be worse off. Fewer people will have money to spend; trade and employment will be bad; new enterprise and saving will be checked; and everybody, especially the poorest, will suffer. Hence the Committee are moved to propose a better way of providing for the debts of the Empire which consists in having the state on its own account de-

velop some of the immense resources of the Empire, and secure in this way both a large income with which to pay interest on the debt and also an immense unearned increment, out of which the whole national debt will be ultimately repaid. The figures of Imperial resources are certainly impressive enough. The wealth of the United Kingdom was appraised before the war at \$75,000,000,000 and the wealth of the Empire at \$150,000,000,000. This valuation takes no account of any of the undeveloped resources of the Empire and, according to the Committee, it only needs the addition of these to bring up the valuation of the natural resources of the British Empire to a figure very much in excess of that which represents the wealth of the United States, namely, \$200,000,000,000. The Committee keep carefully in the background all questions of colonial preference, contenting themselves with the general statement that one of their objects is to encourage and insure the conservation and development of the resources and opportunities of the Empire for the primary benefit of its citizens and its allies. But the spokesman of the Committee is not ready to admit that the commercial system of the eighteenth and preceding centuries was a failure, and he quotes Franklin and Otis to prove that it was not the exclusive trade policy of the Mother Country that they complained of, but the mode of its application. The idea of the boycott lurks behind all the British proposals for considering the development of the Empire as a thing unrelated to the progress of the rest of the world. It is, therefore, satisfactory to hear that a large section of British commercial opinion is entirely antagonistic to the weak and impractical methods that have been proposed of combating German competition, and that it wishes to see normal trade relationships re-established as soon as possible after the end of the war. — New York Journal of Commerce.

### BROOMHALL'S FOREIGN CROP SUMMARY.

United Kingdom—Weather wet and cool. Movement is slow and foreign arrivals lighter. Native wheat and oats moving slowly and receipts command firm prices. The quality is fair.

Balkan States—Weather favored seeding and from best information the acreage is large. Stocks and reserves are good and overland shipments have been important. There is no scarcity reported.

Hungary—Neutral advices refer favorably to seeding and also stocks of grain.

Scandinavian Peninsula—weather cold and wet, supplies are light and great scarcity is reported. Foreign arrivals are increasing and it is expected that arrival will continue on a limited scale.

Spain—Weather favorable for seeding and a full acreage is reported. Supplies of both native and foreign wheat are liberal and normal conditions exist.

North Africa—Weather and crop advices favorable. Acreage to wheat large. Shipments moderate of wheat and corn.

Canada—The quality of wheat and flour arriving is excellent. Receipts keep large and grading favorable. Visible stocks large.

Russia—Weather generally is unfavorable for agriculture and sowing disappointments. This is largely due to labor trouble, and the great unrest throughout the country and already supplies for natives are becoming apprehensive. The government has confiscated all grain supplies and great scarcity is noted in parts, as railway facilities are poor.

France—Sowing is mostly finished, with the acreage moderate, owing to unfavorable weather and scarcity of labor and seed. Stocks everywhere are light of all grains and buyers are anxious. Large purchases have been made in Australia, which is slow of movement, and Argentine purchases liberal for January shipment. American wheat arriving slowly. Interior stocks small. Import needs important.

Italy—Seeding is progressing, with weather favoring. Labor is scarce and seed not plentiful and the recent cold weather was against agriculture. Estimate of the acreage are pessimistic. Supplies moving slowly. Foreign arrivals moderate.

Argentina—Weather favorable in the north and centre and harvesting is progressing with yield and quality fully up to expectations. Weather is cool and parts wet, and this is not favorable. Arrivals in port show a better quality. Freight advancing with scarcity.

## Condition in the West

By E. CORA HIND.

Winnipeg, November 22.

The final announcement of the Royal Wheat Supply Commission that Great Britain will take the Canadian crop at the price fixed by the Board of Grain Supervisors, has been hailed with great satisfaction by both the trade and the farmers. It was never really doubted that this would be the final outcome but the definite assurance is decidedly more satisfactory.

Markets for coarse grains continue in a rut, and the volume passing is not large. Special efforts have been made in forwarding wheat, and the movement has been extraordinarily heavy. The amount of wheat inspected up to November 20th was 73,786,000 bushels, as compared with 53,640,000 bushels for the corresponding date in 1916. On that date also there were 25,450,000 bushels in store in country elevators, or three million more than last year, while the amount in transit was 9,000,000 compared to 4,800,000 in 1916. Allowing for feed, seed and country mills at 35,000,000 the amount of the wheat crop accounted for is 141,236,000 bushels, leaving some 73,000,000 bushels in farmers' hands to come forward.

The fine weather of the last two weeks has made possible the winding up of the threshing, and there is probably not more than three per cent of unthreshed grain in the west to-day.

The amount of oats inspected is only a little over ten millions, compared with over eighteen millions to the same date last year. Barley, flax and rye all fall below last year.

The Saskatchewan Co-operative Elevator Company held their annual meeting this week at Regina, and show a most satisfactory year's business. The net profits are \$350,572, after allowing for interest on loans, war tax, depreciation, etc. The dividend paid shareholders was 8 per cent, or a total of \$70,945. Shareholders' interest in the company now amounts to over \$2,000,000. During the past season 41 new elevators have been added to the system.

The company is well represented at the war as 496 shareholders and 44 of the employees are in the fighting line.

The Victory Loan campaign is being pushed with the utmost vigor, and already Manitoba has passed \$11,500,000 mark.

Livestock situation has been somewhat exciting this week, owing to the announcement that an embargo had been placed against the United States. This occasioned great confusion for a day and a half, and everyone finally learned with relief that for the future the Board of Food Control would only act on livestock matters on advice from livestock branch.

### BIG WORLD CROPS.

Large world crops of corn, oats, potatoes, rice, sugar beets and tobacco for this year are shown by estimates compiled by the U.S. International Institute of Agriculture, made public Saturday by the Department of Agriculture. Wheat, rye, barley and flaxseed, however, have fallen below the five-year average of production from 1911 to 1915.

The production of wheat in seventeen countries, not including the Central Powers, will be 1,863,000,000 bushels, 86.6 per cent of the average. Corn raised will amount to 3,312,000,000 bushels, which is 14.1 per cent greater than the average production for the last five years. Other crops are estimated as follows:

Rye, 147,000,000 bushels, 92.2 per cent; barley, 587,000,000 bushels, 96 per cent; oats, 2,682,000,000 bushels, 113.9 per cent; rice, 70,000,000 bushels, 115.5 per cent; flaxseed, 38,000,000 bushels, 69.8 per cent; potatoes, 719,000,000 bushels, 112.4 per cent; sugar beets, 10,000,000 short tons, 106.6 per cent; tobacco, 1,186,000,000 pounds, 12.5 per cent.

### FLOUR AND BREAD PRICES.

In the United States bread prices advanced fifty-five per cent during the sixteen months ending October 1, while the price of flour advanced 249 per cent in the same period, but on October 1, had declined to 128 per cent above the July, 1916, price, according to a chart presented by the baking industry on Saturday, to the Food Administrator. The analysis shows the average cost of other bread ingredients advanced 194 per cent during that time, but on October 1, had declined until they were 119 per cent higher. Shortening increased 102 per cent, fuel 65 per cent, and sugar 32 per cent.