

Mexican Trade

Unsettled political conditions in Mexico have kept down trade with that country, still it has doubled during the interval under consideration, having gone from \$1,522,473 to \$3,063,666. The value of the imports is over six times that of the exports, being \$2,648,915, as compared with \$414,751. The reason is obvious for until settled conditions are established firms have no desire to take chances on payment for goods. Trade with Central American countries has increased from \$509,413 to \$1,320,324, the value of imports having more than quadrupled.

Developments This Year

Since the beginning of the present calendar year there has been a marked decline in exports to Europe, especially to the United Kingdom. On the other hand, imports from Europe, especially the United Kingdom, have increased very rapidly. Imports from the United States have continued to grow, as have exports thereto, the latter, however, at a

much slower rate than the former. The following comparative figures show the situation as disclosed by the trade returns for the first four months of the present fiscal year, that is to the end of July, as compared with those for the same months in 1919.

First, as to total exports: Those to the United Kingdom during this period were valued at \$96,263,533, an increase of \$69,933,000 over the same period in 1919; to the British Empire outside the United Kingdom \$25,851,636, an increase of \$8,810,000; total British Empire, \$122,116,169, a decrease of \$78,744,243; to the United States \$165,410,768, an increase of \$28,650,000; to foreign countries outside the United States, \$64,068,235, an increase of \$25,214,000.

Imports from the United Kingdom, \$89,738,308, an increase of \$66,925,900; from the British Empire, outside of the United Kingdom, \$21,595,800, an increase of \$7,985,584; total British Empire, \$111,334,100; an increase of \$74,911,550; from the United States, \$308,522,000, an increase of \$125,218,436; from foreign countries outside the United States, \$54,656,200, an increase of \$39,855,500.

Board of Commerce Activities Are Postponed

Members Resign and Staff Disbanded—Board Remains in Existence. However, Awaiting Privy Council Decision—Wheat and Sugar Control Worry Government—Loans to Soldier Settlers Increase—License System to be Adopted for Collection of Luxury and Sales Taxes

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AFTER a short but spectacular career the Board of Commerce has now passed out of all, except nominal, existence. Last Friday the premier announced that the three members had tendered their resignations and that no appointments would be made to the positions. Premier Meighen's statement does not occasion much surprise in the capital, as it was felt here that the resignations of the members of the board were certain to be handed in, following the cabinet's reversal of the board's order with regard to the maximum price of 21 cents per pound for sugar. The three commissioners who have now resigned are Captain William White, who was formerly secretary of the board, and who was appointed a commissioner on the resignations of the original commissioners; F. A. Acland, deputy minister of labor; and Major G. A. Dillon, purchasing agent for the department of justice. The formal announcement of Captain White's appointment as chief commissioner of the board of commerce is gazetted in the "Canada Gazette."

The appointment of the three members was stated to be a temporary measure, following the resignations of Judge H. A. Robson, of Winnipeg, the first chairman; W. F. O'Connor, K.C., and James Murdock, Labor representative of the board. Mr. Murdock's letter of resignation, written to Premier Borden, was the subject of much discussion just prior to the ending of the last session of parliament.

Await Privy Council Decision

The right of the board to issue orders, placing certain restraints on export of Canadian products, was challenged in connection with the export of pulp and paper. In regard to this the prime minister's statement says: "The jurisdiction of the board will shortly come before the judicial committee of the privy council for final determination. The Dominion government has been pressing to have this case heard with the least possible delay, but as the provinces have a right to be heard, it has not yet been possible to have the exact date of the hearing decided on. When a decision is given as to the extent of the federal authority in relation to the Board of Commerce Act, it will be for the government to consider what should then be done."

In the meantime there are several important matters pending before the board, matters which must now be shelved indefinitely—and probably never again dealt with. There is first and foremost the question of an alleged combine on the part of the Dominion and Canadian Cannerys. The board has not yet decided whether this alleged combine is illegal under the Act. A hearing to establish its status was set for August. Difficulty in securing a chartered accountant is alleged as the reason for delay in prosecuting this inquiry. Now the hearing must be postponed. Then there is the inquiry into the textile industries, an interim report on which was made. The final report may never be forthcoming.

Soldier Settlement Activities

Nearly \$1,500,000 represents the increase in the amount of loans to soldier settlers made by the Soldier Settlement Board in the month of September. The total of loans approved to October 2 was \$78,285,752, and the number of settlers' loans 19,526. Loans were for the following purposes: To purchase land, \$42,631,096; to remove encumbrances, \$2,169,466; for permanent improvements, \$8,991,015; for stock and equipment, \$24,594,175. The number qualified by the board for the privileges of the act is 41,161, out of applications numbering 56,974. The number of grants of free Dominion lands to soldier settlers is 7,987. The total area represented by these soldier grants exceeds 1,900,000 acres.

The settlers who have received loans are distributed among the provinces as follows: Prince Edward Island, 291; Nova Scotia, 392; New Brunswick, 491; Quebec, 454; Ontario, 1,374; Manitoba, 3,233; Saskatchewan, 4,765; Alberta, 5,625; British Columbia, 2,991.

Want Higher Ocean Freight Rate

Confirmation of the report from St. John, N.B., that the Royal Mail Steam Packet Line, which gives a service between Canadian ports and the West Indies, is applying to the government for increased freight rates because it is losing money, has been secured from Sir George Foster, minister of trade and commerce. Sir George said:—

"The fact that the Canadian government merchant marine has placed vessels on the different routes connecting with the West Indies, which to some extent interferes with