

Trade and Commerce

LLOYD HARRIS URGES ACTION.

"What we want you manufacturers of Canada to do is to get after the British market, which needs everything that can be made in Canada. Go over there and look for business and you will get it, but you must do that for yourselves, we are not going to do it for you." This was one of the warnings issued to the business men at the special luncheon of the Canadian Club at the Windsor Hotel recently by Mr. Lloyd Harris, chairman of the Canadian Trade Commission in London, in the course of an address on "European Conditions and Prospects for Canadian Trade."

"On returning to Canada," said Mr. Lloyd Harris, "I found very depressing conditions here. I was willing to do this work, not so much for the Government as for the people of Canada, in order to do what I could to help in meeting after war conditions, and aid in securing export trade."

"From what I have seen it is evident that there is something wrong here. I have found a condition in some parts of the Dominion almost as bad as those in Russia. It is clear that there is something wrong. What we have to do is to find out what it is that is wrong, and rectify it. Capital may be wrong to some extent. Labor may be wrong to some extent — probably both are wrong. But we fought and won this war to make a better world, and every individual in the Dominion must feel that he has a responsibility on him to help make Canada a better country, with the best working and living conditions in the world, as it should have with its resources and opportunities."

"To attain this end capital and labor must work and pull together, and I hope the time is not far distant when they will arrive at a basis of agreement. Compromises must be made on both sides. You can make up your minds that this world will never be the same as it was before the war. We have no place in Canada for the idle rich, or the idle anybody — from now on everybody must be a worker and a producer. (Applause.)"

"If we accept these facts, and get together with the idea of compromise and production I am most optimistic as to the future prosperity of this Dominion."

Mr. Lloyd Harris said that when the armistice was so suddenly signed the Allied nations, including Canada, were just as unprepared for peace as in August, 1914, they had been for war. The Canadian Government had been the first of the Allies to form a definite reconstruction scheme, and their appointment of the Commission, of which he was the head, had excited much favorable comment in Europe.

During the war all Canadian business plans and connections had been practically brushed aside, and everything there was to sell had been taken by various Governments through purchasing commissions, so that ordinary trade connections and plans had gone, and now they must be re-established, which work his commission was appointed to help. In addition it would require great export trade to help meet the debt burdens piled on Canada by the war, so his commission had investigated the possibilities of foreign markets for our manufactured goods.

When the armistice was concluded it was found that British restrictions militated against Canadian trade. Through the efforts of the commission this was rectified, and, for the first time in the history of the Empire, there had been a practical Imperial preference. (Applause.)

Mr. Harris discussed the shortage of timber all through Europe, and said there was a great opportunity for Canadian trade there, especially after the splendid record made by our forestry corps and other soldiers overseas, which had paved a war road to peace trade.

The trouble was that France and other European countries had great needs, but were financially so hit by the war that unless credits were created they could not take our supplies for lack of means. Further he thought that any business with France would only be ephemeral, because as soon as the country had recovered from the war it would become one of our strongest competitors.

He sketched conditions in Greece, Poland, Rumania, Russia and other European countries, in all of which he thought there were great openings for Canadian trade, both in products and manufacturers, especially since the work done by Canada during the war had enhanced its reputation in a most favorable manner. There were great chances for developing exports in pulp and paper boots and shoes, and similar articles, in which the Canadian values were pre-eminent. But to secure this trade it was necessary to send men of wide knowledge, not mere salesmen.

CANADA'S TRADE WITH S. AFRICA.

W. J. Egan, trade commissioner at Cape Town, furnishes information as to the leather goods imported into South Africa from Canada and the United States. The substance of this report is given as follows:

For the first time the entry of leather belting is shown as a separate item from that of bands and belting, which took in all imports of this class. There were no shipments from Canada last year, but the United States shipped to a value of £8,680. As one Canadian leather belting firm is now represented in South Africa, some share of the trade should be secured. The big seller in beltings is on a composite belting, the figures of which are submitted further on in that part of the report referring to rubber goods.

Representation has been the means of securing some fair orders in this line, and the trade is increasing. The value of import from Canada increased over the year 1917 from 2,546 pounds, valued at £546, to 6,950 pounds, valued at £1,194 last year, and for the same period United States exports decreased slightly from 12,086 pounds to 11,658 pounds, but the value of export increased from £2,681 to £3,646.

Canada secured some nice business in cushion leather from the South African Government Stores during the past year, and another good order has been placed for delivery during the present year.

Leather of other kinds than the above and pigskin, are this year under two headings of "not adulterated" and "adulterated." In the year 1917, the import from the United States was under the heading of "other leather"; this totalled 175,367 pounds, valued at £32,823, while last year's quantity under "not adulterated," was for 95,209 pounds only valued at £32,791, and under the heading "adulterated" there was shipped last year 18,260 pounds valued at £3,118. Canada's shipments in 1917 were for 356 pounds only, valued at £102, and last year in the "not adulterated leather" the export amounted to 1,022 pounds valued at £910.

There have been a number of inquiries from Canada as to the possibilities of securing a boot and shoe trade in this country. Full particulars have been submitted, but so far no Canadian manufacturers have come forward who are able to supply the medium-priced and cheaper-grade goods required for the big share of the trade. One line of better grade goods in men's wear made agency arrangements, but owing to ocean shipping conditions there was a big delay in shipping the very good sample order placed by the agent, and unfortunately when the shipment arrived here more than one-half of the shipment

had been stolen, which prevented business being done until a representative line can be got together again.

While it is true that boot and shoe manufacturing has made immense strides in this country, there will remain a very large import trade, and it would seem as if Canada should share in this. Pre-war the vast bulk, fully 92½ per cent of the import men's trade, was held by the United Kingdom. The Americans have made big headway since 1914, when the total shipment was 20,000 pairs; this had increased to 205,857 pairs in the year 1917, which again increased to 367,575 pairs last year, valued at £253,997. Canada's shipments decreased from 645 pairs in 1917 to 437 pairs last year, valued at £527.

The American boot and shoe manufacturers have made bigger inroads in the supply of women's boots and shoes than on the men's. During the past three years they have increased considerably the lines sold by the jobbing trade, and their sales on special brand lines have increased greatly. From a supply of 42,000 pairs in the year 1914, their trade had grown to 142,000 pairs in 1917, and last year this increased to 415,123 pairs, valued at £238,079. From these figures it will be noted that they must have made a special effort on a \$2.25 to \$2.50 grade. One line of women's boots from Canada was introduced and gave good satisfaction. In another range representation is being arranged and results are sure to follow. It is a matter of price for the big business. Canada's trade increased from 126 pairs in the year 1917 to 371 pairs valued at £271.

On one line of Canadian misses' and children's boots and shoes, a sample representation order has been despatched to Canada for immediate execution; if competitive in price good business will result. Canada did not ship under this heading last year, and only 67 pairs were received in 1917. The American exports increased from 54,710 pairs in the year 1907 to 116,238 pairs last year, valued at £32,747.

Canada's trade on this line dropped from 1,120 pairs in 1917 to 256 pairs last year, valued at £43, and the imports from America increased from 2,858 pairs to 5,918 pairs last year, valued at £1,636.

There is very little prospect of big import in this line, as the industry here has arrived at that point when they can supply the greater part of this demand, with the exception of staple English lines, which have dropped in value of export for a number of years. The United States shipped to a value of £1,124 in 1917, and increased this to £2,032 last year. Canada did not ship last year, and in the previous four years at no time more than £14.

Under the heading of Leather Manufactured, N.O.D., Canada's trade increased from £12 to £88 last year, and the United States increased their exports from £3,234 in 1917, to £3,905 last year.

CANADA UNDER HANDICAP.

The Canadian shipping scarcity is attracting attention, writes the London Daily Graphic parliamentary representative, on account of the fact that while Canadian goods for England are held up on the other side, the United States, with no handicap to the use of her shipping, is able to come in here and sell over the heads of Canadians.

Last March the British Government removed the necessity for import licenses upon goods entering Great Britain from British Dominions, but this import concession is largely nullified by the fact that under the present method of British shipping control, Canada suffers both from lack of tonnage and exorbitant freight.

The Canadian manufacturers' margin of profit on low grade commodities needed in the United Kingdom and the devastated areas of Europe is not high enough to pay excessive freight rates demanded by the Atlantic steamship lines.