

# The Dominican Republic

## It's economic position—Trade opening

The National Bank of Commerce in New York has issued a statement embodying the results of recent trade investigations into possible commercial opportunities for the United States in the Dominican Republic. Inasmuch as Canada is seeking new markets, and is hoping to develop her export trade, this statement is of interest to the Dominion as well as to the United States.

The statement gives statistics in regard to the Republic's trade, and also describes the particular lines of business opening for which there is a growing opportunity there. It presents these factors as follows:

The value of our imports into the Dominican Republic increased from \$4,452,347, or 66 per cent. of the total imports, in 1914, to \$14,320,351, or 82 per cent., in 1917. This gain was mainly at the expense of Germany, which dropped from furnishing 14 per cent. of the total imports in 1914, to supplying nothing in 1917. The percentage of the total imports which came from Great Britain, France and Italy also declined. For the year ended June 30, 1918, for which United States figures alone are available, the value of the imports from the United States amounted to \$16,011,019. Such figures suggest a field of trade expansion, exceedingly inviting to the United States, and particularly fallow under existing conditions.

That the Dominican Republic is growing rapidly is evidenced by the fact that the value of its foreign trade in 1917 attained the record figure of \$39,844,644, as against \$33,192,303 in 1916, and only \$24,327,575 in 1915; the exports for 1917 totalled \$22,444,580, or over \$5,000,000 more than imports showing, on the whole, a very favorable trade balance. In its barter with the United States for the year ending June 30, 1918, its exports were valued at \$8,061,412, or \$7,949,607 less than we exported to it.

Here, then, is a trade balance of inviting proportion in our favor to start with, and there will be found below some revelations as to the natural resources of the country and the awakening of its people to modern methods of business and living that suggest a most promising opportunity for American enterprise. There are natural resources of immense value to be developed, and in the process there will be large need for machinery and supplies.

The demand is one which the merchants and manufacturers of the United States may supply if they but learn the needs and conditions of the market and take the pains to meet them. Coupled with the practical monopoly of the field which the war has brought, for the time being, there is a distinct geographic advantage that forms a very material asset.

The Dominican Republic, which occupies the eastern and larger portion of the island of Santo Domingo, or Haiti, is but 740 miles from Panama, and 1,250 from New York. These distances, in comparison with a haulage of 3,850 miles to Southampton, emphasize the advantage which the United States enjoys in the matter of transport. The area covered by the Republic is about 19,325 square miles, and the population is given as 917,320.

A casual recollection of the Dominicans is apt to recall little more than a people given to revolution as a regular pastime, with perpetual shifts in control and no stability of government. But this has been changed with the establishment of military authority under direction of the United States, and there has followed good progress in the way of reconstruction and development. One of the primary needs of the country, and one which must be supplied, if the scheme of upbuilding is to be realized, is that of transportation. There are but two public railroads in the Republic, and these total only 150 miles, although there are 225 miles of private lines operating in the large estates.

Highways and bridges are few, especially in the interior; but by an executive order of November 23, 1917, the military governor appropriated \$60,000 to be expended on a trunk road planned ultimately to connect Santo Domingo, La Vega, Moca, Santiago and Monte Christi. When completed, such a system will open to development the natural resources of a large interior area and add immensely to the general commerce of the country.

This will also necessitate the bettering of storage and shipping facilities at the principal ports, such as Puerto Plata, Sanchez, Macoris and Santo Domingo, a step toward which has already been

made in construction of a splendid modern wharf at Puerto Plata. In this very considerable plan of development, there will be opportunity not only for the mills of the United States to supply machinery and material, but there will also be a chance for the expert representatives of Yankee producers to become acquainted with the conditions and opportunities of this new and promising field.

The Dominican Republic is essentially an agricultural country, and seems destined to remain so. For that reason its demand for manufactured goods from beyond its shores promises to continue. In supplying this need from outside, the United States plays by far the larger part. The products we ship to the Republic, with cotton manufactures at the head of the list, include manufactures of iron and steel, rice, wheat flour, leather and its manufactures, meat and dairy products, oils, wood and its manufactures, manufactures of vegetable fibres, chemicals, drugs, etc., preserved fish and fish products, and a very respectable shipment of soap.

The Dominican people have cultivated a taste for canned food stuffs—particularly tomatoes—to add variety to the rice which still remains the staple food of a large portion of the natives. Much of the iron and steel imported consists of bridges, railroad equipment and reinforcing for concrete construction of the wharves and sugar mills. Galvanized iron is used almost universally for roofing in the larger towns.

Of the agricultural products which the Dominicans offer in exchange for the outputs of our mills and factories the principal ones are sugar, cacao, tobacco leaf and coffee. These are the four main crops, and comprise ninety per cent. of the total exports. Banana cultivation on a large scale has re-

cently been undertaken, and the raising of long staple cotton is now being developed.

While wood and its manufactures, to the value of \$490,146, were imported in 1917, it was not for lack of abundant raw material, for forests of the richest woods cover the interior uplands, to an area of 9,500,000 acres, it is estimated, or 85 per cent. of the total land surface. These forests include a wide variety of growth, among them being such hardwoods as mahogany, lignum, vitae, satinwood, walnut, oak and many other kinds of cabinet trim and construction woods. In addition, there are excellent varieties of pine and valuable dyewoods. This immensely valuable timber asset is practically untouched and must await development of transportation before becoming available; but once within reach of tidewater and American markets the Dominion coffers will benefit immensely, with consequent impetus to trade enlargement.

There is another natural asset which promises much for the future. A large proportion of land in the Republic is ideal for grazing, as it is covered with nutritious grasses and other forage which are available at all seasons. Cattle range without other feeding throughout the entire year, and, while the cattle tick prevails, it does not affect grown cattle. Contagious foot-and-mouth diseases, blackleg and charbon appear to be unknown. The supply of cattle is plentiful and is drawn upon freely by the people for food.

There has been a steady increase in the export of hides, particularly to the United States, since the war began, although much leather is consumed at home in the manufacture of foot-gear. This comes from several tanneries located at various points, some of them being well equipped with modern machinery. There is a boot and shoe factory at Santo Domingo. Other lines of manufacture include cigars, cigarettes, hats and matches.

While deposits of gold, copper, silver, iron, lignite,

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### WEEK'S RECORD OF ACTIVE MONTREAL STOCKS.

Sales.		Open.	High.	Low.	Last sale.	Net chge.	—YEAR—	
							High.	Low.
200	Abitibi .....	48	49	48	48	unch.	51½	48
302	Asbestos .....	38	40	38	48	unch.	40	15
317	Do., pfd. ....	59¾	61½	59¾	61½	+1½	61¾	45
1,097	Brazilian .....	51½	54	51¼	51¼	+¾	60	32
1,114	Brompton .....	61¾	61¾	60	60¾	—¾	63¼	41¾
535	Canada Car .....	32	33½	31½	31½	unch.	38¼	18½
455	Do., pfd. ....	85	85	83	83	—2	92	49½
2,169	Canada Cement .....	66	67½	63	63½	—2¼	69½	*57
231	Do., pfd. ....	95	95	95	95	+¾	95½	90
565	Can. Steamship .....	48¾	49	47¾	49	+½	49½	39¼
2,308	Do., pfd. ....	80	80¼	*77¼	*77¼	+½	80½	76
399	Con Smelting .....	25	*25	25	*25	+½	26	25
200	Dom. Bridge .....	123	123	123	123	unch.	128	*123
360	Dom. Cannery .....	32	35	32	34	+3¾	43	23¾
165	Dom. Iron, pfd. ....	93½	93½	93½	93½	—½	*97	88
6,260	Dom. Steel .....	*60½	*63¾	*60½	*62	+1½	65	*53
252	Dom. Textile .....	99¾	99¾	*97¼	*97¼	—½	100½	80¾
100	Howard Smith .....	65½	65½	65½	65½	—6	66	65
2,411	Laurentide .....	178½	183½	178	182	+3	*184¼	152
200	Maple Leaf .....	*135	*135	133	133	—2	140	94
4,580	Mont. Power .....	85	87¼	85	85	—¼	88½	68½
130	Ottawa Traction .....	80	80	*79	*79	+12½	80	66¾
100	Price Bros. ....	147½	147½	147½	147½	—1½	151	*120
150	Riordon .....	117¼	117¼	117¼	117¼	unch.	123	117¼
387	Shawinigan .....	116	116	115½	115½	unch.	118½	107
1,812	Spanish River .....	15½	17¼	15	17	+2	20	13
1,615	Do., pfd. ....	55	62	55	62	+7¾	62	50
4,990	Steel of Canada .....	61	65¼	61	62¾	+2	74¼	*49¾
116	Do., pfd. ....	93	93	93	93	unch.	976	89¾
605	Wayagamack .....	50	50¾	50	50¾	+¼	53	50
— BANKS —								
12	Commerce .....	190¾	190¾	190¾	190¾	+5¾	190¾	185
25	Imperial .....	198	198	198	198	+13	198	*185
35	Merchants .....	167	167	167	167	unch.	168	167
50	Molsons .....	179¾	179¾	179¾	179¾	unch.	179¾	179¾
32	Nova Scotia .....	251½	251½	251½	251½	+3½	251½	248
303	Royal .....	208	208½	208	208½	+½	208½	208
69	Union .....	160	160	160	160	+6½	161	143
— BONDS —								
\$10,000	Bell Telephone .....	90	91	90	91	+1	92¾	87¼
44,900	Can. Loan (1925) .....	95½	95¾	95½	95¾	—½	96¾	93¼
13,000	Do. (1931) .....	95¾	96	95¾	96	+¾	96½	92¼
41,500	Do. (1937) .....	96¾	96¾	96½	96	+¾	96¾	91½
15,000	Cedars Rapids .....	88	88	88	88	unch.	88½	80
— UNLISTED SHARES. —								
148	Laurentide Power .....	61	61	60	60	—2	62	50
925	N. A. Pulp .....	2½	2½	2½	2½	—¼	4¾	2¾

\* Ex-dividend.