

THE EUROPEAN WAR AND ITS PROBABLE EFFECT ON THE TRADE OF CANADA

Some facts that should be considered before taking pessimistic view of the situation—Some parallels in history.

The following on the effect of war is sent out by the Canadian Board of Censors:

Will the war necessarily ruin British and Canadian trade? Before we are quite certain that it will, certain considerations should be weighed. History furnishes certain examples which afford a distinctly cheerful augury.

The main features need examination. These are:

1. The question of sea transportation. Will British ships be captured and shut up in harbors, will insurance rates run up, and will freight rates increase?

2. The question of trade itself. Will the interchange of commodities be greatly lessened and manufacturing be cut down?

First of all, it must be noted that the first few weeks of the war will not represent the real characteristics of the commercial side. A certain paralysis is to be expected at the outset, due to uncertainty and change of conditions. It is a century since there was so serious a war, and since there was any widespread fighting on the high seas; and it is natural to expect that manufacturers, merchants and ship-owners, who all their lives have experienced peace conditions, and peace conditions only, for a few weeks will be excited, apprehensive, and uncertain as to developments. Once they have grasped the new conditions they will set out to adapt themselves to them and a revival of activity is to be expected. Especially will they be ready to adapt themselves when new opportunities are set before them.

Secondly, in the past the trade and shipping of the British Empire have not suffered, as a whole, from war. Instead they have thriven upon it. During the great war between Great Britain and France, from 1803 to 1815, British trade and shipping increased enormously; and this in spite of Napoleon's continental system, which was an attempt to have Britain boycotted by the whole of Europe. Here, for example, is a statement by a contemporary writer:

"During all the operations of war and finance, the gains of our enterprising people were beyond all calculation, however the unproductive classes may have suffered from the depreciation of money and the inequalities of taxation. Our commerce has become more than double its greatest extent during the happiest years of peace."

Figures bear out this assertion. In 1792, in peace time, the imports and exports of Great Britain amounted to \$216,500,000. In 1796, after three or four years of war, they stood at \$261,000,000. In 1800 they had risen to \$558,000,000. Throughout the Napoleonic struggle the trade of the United Kingdom steadily increased.

These opening observations made, let us look at the two features of the situation just noted. First, as to attacks upon merchant ships by enemy warships or privateers.

In the great French war, from 1793 to 1815, there was almost incessant war upon the high seas, and for nearly all that period the French devoted their whole energy to commerce destruction. What followed? For one thing, French commerce itself disappeared. In the year ending 30th September, 1800, the whole of the direct trade between France and the three continents of Asia, America and Africa amounted to only some \$350,000, while that of Great Britain was \$350,000,000. For another thing, with all the activity of French warships and privateers, the losses of British shipping were not more than 2½ per cent. a year, and probably were under 2 per cent. Where careful and skilful arrangements were made, the losses were lower yet; in one very serious region in the Far East, a particularly able officer took certain precautions and the losses from capture fell to a lower figure than those from the ordinary perils of navigation.

Extraordinary facilities for commerce destruction were possessed by the French at that period. An exceedingly large proportion of British trade went up the English Channel, in slow-moving sailing craft, and small vessels could row out in the night from the French ports and board them.

A great share of the commerce of the day was held by the West Indies, and the French and Spanish islands abounded in ports and harbors which served as bases for privateers. These special advantages to the attacker do not exist today; the French coast is friendly, German ships have no for-

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defender to another, will see her with empty bunkers, a helpless hulk. The war is nearly three weeks old, and the German cruisers to the date of writing are not known to have captured one merchantman in the Atlantic ocean or on the Pacific coast of north America. The Karlsruhe, for example, has been too busy running away to do much chasing of merchant ships.

German Captors' Troubles Many

Even if a German ship captures a merchantman her difficulties will not be over. What will she do with it? If she sinks it she will have to take the crew on board, and high speed cruisers have little accommodation for passengers, or prisoners. If she puts a prize crew on board she will weaken her crew—the Leipzig, for example, carries fewer than 300 officers and men—and then she will not know where to send her prize, which will stand little chance of navigating the North Sea into a German port.

Seas Swarm With British Cruisers

The case of the Alabama is often cited. The Alabama destroyed two great advantages which the modern commerce destroyer lacks. She could use her sails and so save coal; and the present rule of international law forbidding warships to coal more than once in the ports of a neutral had not been formulated. She had a third advantage which German ships cannot count upon; the northern navy conducted its operations against her very unskillfully. Speaking generally, their ships trailed after her instead of heading her off.

The Karlsruhe Outsteamed her

The Karlsruhe outsteamed her and in a few hours was out of the Suffolk's sight. But the Suffolk had summoned by wireless the Bristol and this ship was lying ahead of the fleeing German, waiting to take up the chase. Again the Karlsruhe—which is a very swift ship—outsteamed the protector of commerce and got away. But, apart from any damage done by the British ships there is this fact to consider: that the Karlsruhe spent a day or two steaming at her highest speed, and must have used up at least four hundred tons of coal which it will puzzle her captain to replace; and she carries 1,200 tons. A very few weeks this accident will be a serious handicap, handing her over from one commerce

earned there will be redistribution of trade rather than diminution. Agricultural produce plainly will command higher prices, and if Canada's basic industry is kept prosperous, the others will have an opportunity to steady themselves.

What is needed is a cool and steady frame of mind. The trade of the world is not going to stop. Ships will still furrow the sea, and men still will produce and buy and sell. A stout-hearted determination to adjust our industry to new conditions is what the situation demands.

HOPEWELL HILL

Hopewell Hill, Aug. 25.—Mrs. McCarron of Harvey spent Saturday and Sunday with her sister, Mrs. William Dawson, who is seriously ill. Mrs. McCarron of Moncton and several of Mr. Dawson's relatives from Harvey motored to the Hill on Sunday also expressing much anxiety for her recovery.

Leaves Couple of Weeks with his Uncle

Edward Hattie and Coleman McFarlane, who reside near Boston, returned today from a pleasant visit with their aunt, Mrs. J. C. Stevens. Mrs. Stevens of Dawson accompanied by her three children have also been the guests of Mr. and Mrs. Stevens.

The Public Schools Re-open on Wednesday

Miss Achsah Rogers and J. W. Robinson will have charge of the Hopewell Cape school. Miss Ivah Newcombe at Lower Cape, the Misses Mary Archibald and Mary Russell at Hopewell Hill; Miss Edna Stevens at Chemical Road.

The Many Friends of George B. Peck of Hillsborough will be glad to hear the operation for appendicitis he underwent on Sunday was very successful.

Wheat for sale

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ST. MAJESTIC will sail from North End for Washburn and intermediate points every Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday at 10 a. m., returning alternate days, leaving Washburn at 8 a. m. D. J. PURDY, Manager.

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(FOR BELLEFLEUR)

Steamer Champlain will leave St. John on Tuesday and Thursday at 12 o'clock noon and Saturday at 2 p. m. for Hatfield's Point and intermediate landings, returning will leave Hatfield's Point on alternate days, due in St. John at 1 p. m.

No freight received after 1:30 p. m. on Saturday.

STEAMER MAY QUEEN

will leave P. Naso & Sons' wharf, in downtown, Wednesday and Saturday mornings at 8 o'clock until further notice, for Chipman and intermediate landings, returning will leave Hatfield's Point on alternate days, due in St. John at 1 p. m.

No freight received after 1:30 p. m. on Saturday.

THE MARITIME STEAMSHIP CO. (LIMITED).

Until further notice the S. S. Coos Bay will run as follows:

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STEAMER ELAINE

Leaves Indian town, Old May Queen wharf, foot of Hammond street, every Wednesday and Saturday morning at 8 o'clock for Chipman and intermediate points. Returning leaves Chipman every Monday and Thursday at 6 a. m.

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