

SAFEGUARDING OIL SUPPLY OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE

Must be Reasonably Independent of All Other Countries
—Concessions in Persia Most Important—English Interests Fully Alive to Situation and Prepared to Take Necessary Steps.

(Manchester Guardian.)
The stern lessons taught by the war and the present threat of industrial reconstruction have brought into the limelight the importance of a clear understanding and speedy solution of the oil position of the British Empire. Before the outbreak of hostilities in 1914 this country was to all intents absolutely dependent on foreign sources of supply. Today the position is even more acute, since, for various reasons, oil and its manifold by-products play a far greater part in our daily life. But, faced as we are with what amounts almost to a crisis, it is well to differentiate between what are normal and abnormal conditions and to seek out a remedy that will be sufficiently elastic to deal with both.

Rise of Liquid Fuel.
In pre-war days the chief factor determining the price of crude petroleum, and consequently its production, was the relative value of coal, since at least 40 per cent of the coal produced was used in the liquid fuel in direct competition with coal. The advance of modern refinery science and the keen appreciation of the high calorific value of oil products make it impossible for such a wasteful use of conditions to continue. Thus, whereas in the old days one ton of oil fuel was considered the equivalent of one and a half tons of coal, the introduction of internal-combustion engines of the Diesel and semi-Diesel type have shown that one ton of oil is equivalent to at least four tons of coal. Broadly, therefore, apart from any increase in the world's production of petroleum, the efficiency with which it is now being used is much greater than what it used to be, and there still remains a wide field for improvement.

One of the consequences of the war is that the large coalfields in Europe are so dislocated that their output is insufficient even for home requirements, let alone for export. The same conditions apply, though happily to a far less extent, in the United Kingdom, and in proportion as the exports from this country have increased, hence foreign countries have been forced to seek out and develop their own fuel resources. In finding substitutes for British coal attention was necessarily first directed towards liquid fuel, and as a result countries like Mexico—whose production of oil is dependent solely on means of transport—have been richly benefited thereby.

Another important factor arising out of the war was the appalling destruction of animate horse-power, causing farmers and other pre-war users of horse transportation to avail themselves of internal combustion engines for traction and other purposes. In America the growth of motor traction has been phenomenal; in one state it is reported that one out of every five inhabitants owns a motor car. In fact, it has become recognized that prosperity and motor transportation go hand in hand. The day is not far distant when the United States will have little, if any, oil available for export. The importance of this to the British Empire will be appreciated when it is realized that only 2½ per cent of the world's yield of petroleum is produced within the Empire, and even if the production from Persia be included British oil would only amount to barely 5 per cent of the world's output.

A chance for the world of supply. Turning to new sources of supply, the outlook is by no means depressing provided enterprise is allowed a free hand. In the United States the community became alarmed at the all-encompassing growth of the Standard Oil Company. Other countries, especially the United Kingdom, should be careful to steer a happy course between unduly favoring monopolistic groups and encouraging independent operators, even though the latter may sometimes be imprudent. It is unquestionable that the world's production of oil has been built up mainly by the efforts of comparatively small operators. In America there are hundreds of thousands of men who work their own properties, selling their production to large pipe-line companies and refiners. In fact, the day has long gone by in the United States when the "big man" was able to squeeze out the "small man" unfairly, the anti-trust laws having successfully curbed the predatory aptitudes of the former. Now both recognize the need of the other man's existence, and it is a happy co-operation between them that today enables new districts to be opened up more rapidly than in any other country in the world.

One of the fields of Northern Texas developed a production at the rate of about 3,000,000 tons a year within 12 months of the drilling of the first well, and despite sweeping and for the most part quite erroneous statements made about the appalling wastage of oil in America, it is questionable whether the wastage in that field has been as much as 5 per cent, and certainly it does not approach the inefficiency or waste of the average carburettor. In unhappy contrast may be cited the well drilled at Hardisty, near Chesterfield, about a year ago, which encountered a remarkable high-grade petroleum under sufficient pressure for the well to flow. Had this well been drilled in America, hundreds of others would by now have been drilled in its vicinity had oil continued to be found in commercial quantities.

Persian and Mesopotamian Supplies.
Recent public discussion of Mesopotamian and Persian affairs has centered very largely in the oil position in these countries. In the case of Persia the position is simplified by the fact that owing to the great enterprise of W. K. D'Arcy, an Australian, a British company secured a concession over the whole of Persia, with the exception of certain northern provinces. That the British Government subsequently took a share in the development of this concession is a matter of history, and its operation

AMERICAN INVASION OF CANADA COMING

Tourists from the Republic Pouring Into the Dominion in Eve: Increasing Numbers

New York, June 23.—(By Canadian Press.)—An unprecedented invasion of Canada by American tourists this summer is reported by representatives of Canadian railways here. The records for June show a big increase over previous years and the railway men declare that advance bookings indicate that the rush will continue throughout the summer.

The Canadian west appears to be attracting a very large number of wealthy citizens of the United States, including thousands from New York City, and the opening of the eastern tourist schedules this week brought a big exodus to the Ontario and Quebec resorts.

An official in the local office of the Canadian Pacific Railway told the Canadian Press that the office has been besieged for the past six weeks by prospective tourists seeking information regarding Canadian resorts. "I have never seen anything like it in my railway experience," he said. "Every year we have had a great many inquiries regarding Canada and Canadian summer resorts, but this year has surpassed all previous records. This is particularly true of the western resorts. The Canadian Rockies are the objective of thousands of wealthy Americans and a large proportion of the visitors to the far western Canadian resorts will be from this side of the line."

This official stated that a new feature of the tourist traffic this year appears to be a thirst for adventure on the part of many of the travellers. A large number are planning amateur exploration trips through the Crow's Nest and Kootenay valleys and pack horses will be in great demand. Following the little known trails of the great Canadian range with pack trains has been indulged in chiefly by American writers and artists in the past. This year the idea has spread in some mysterious way and Americans who have never before done anything more strenuous than cut coupons or play golf are off to British Columbia to rough it in the style of the old-time prospectors.

Inquiries received at the Canadian railway offices here also indicate increased interest in mountain climbing and many New Yorkers are joining the Canadian Alpine Club. Several have announced their intention of trying to reach the top of Mount Aspinloine, the objective of every good Canadian Alpinist, which, however,

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has been reached by comparatively few.

At the Grand Trunk office here it was stated that the past few days have brought a flood of inquiries regarding the Muskoka Lakes and Algonquin Park. The customary rush of Americans to these summer resorts is being augmented this year by hundreds who, by their inquiries, have never before turned to the Dominion for their summer vacation.

One reason for the big rush is declared to be the fact that steamship accommodation to Europe is booked up for practically the entire summer and many Americans, having "seen America first" during the war when international travel was difficult, are bent on seeing some other country now and are naturally turning to Canada. Another theory advanced is that many are attracted to Quebec province by the promise of cooling beverages which are now denied them in their own country.

"That is probably helping to make travelling through Canada popular," said one railway man. "And you can't wonder at it. Whenever I have to make a trip out of New York I always try to arrange it so that I can travel via Montreal myself."

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