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Shortage of Farm Labor.

Monmouth, Ore., April 5.—(United Press)—So many farm hands in the country districts have enlisted, a farm labor shortage threatens. Women may be forced to work on the farms in this part of the valley next summer during the harvest season.

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FARM SALE BILLS—Get prices on farm sale bills at The Observer office.

HOW GERMAN BUSINESS IS PROGRESSING.

(Continued from Page Three.)

vised by such men as Alfred Ballin, who built up the Hamburg-American Line; by Prince Furstenberg, who heads the "Princes' Trust," a half-billion dollar organization controlling expensive hotels, restaurants, theatres, department stores, omnibus lines, a real estate building syndicate, mines, health resorts, farms and forests, railroad and commercial concessions in the Holy Land and the German Palestine Bank; when we remember that the Kaiser is advised by Arthur von Gwinner, the head of the Deutsche Bank and a great railroad concessionist; by Walter Rathenau, now head of the billion-dollar General Electric Company of Germany; by August Thyssen, the Andrew Carnegie of Germany; and by Krupp von Bohlen, the new master of Essen, we realize that Germany is in the same sort of able hands that America would be were its economic future under the practical control of the giants of its economic life. So much for the brains to which is entrusted this "realistic state," bent on holding its enemies at bay, and shaping its resources toward the recovery of that five billion dollars' worth of world trade.

To understand the workings of industrial Germany at war, we must consider an organization formed in Germany at the break of war. It is the Kriegserzeugnisse-Gesellschaft—literally, "War Raw Material Company." This is presided over by Walter Rathenau, son of the founder of the General Electric Company of Germany. This "War Raw Material Company" is practically a government monopoly. Excluding food, it controls every bit of raw material in Germany today. It buys from the producers and sells to the consumers. There is only a five per cent increase between the price at which it buys the raw materials and the price at which it turns them over to German industry. This per cent covers all the overhead charges of the Rathenau organization. And this low figure is possible because men unfit for military service in the trenches give clerical service to the nation. They have to.

In distributing this raw material to industry, the needs of the army and navy are first considered. Consumers producing for the army and navy make their applications for material to the Rathenau organization. These requests are carefully checked, so as to make sure that no industry gets a bit more than it needs to fill the contract that the government has given it. No graft is known; no requests for more material than a factory needs to do its war business, so that the factory can then turn over the excess material to some other factory not manufacturing for the army and navy. All is decided by the Rathenau organization.

In such ways does the working of the German war staff take into consideration the peaceful industrial needs of the country. Railroads, inland waterways, and steamship lines are all harnessed to the imperial trade policy. Railroad chiefs, canal chiefs, trans-oceanic chiefs, all these men know the goods, the factories, that Germany has chosen as the advance guard in her fight for world trade when peace comes. Preferential railroad rates, cheap inland waterways tolls and ocean freight rates will be given exporters upon imperial suggestion, better to enable them to carry on "the war after the war."

Why Many German Concerns Can Manufacture Cheaply.

Let us consider how this imperial socialism is working today for German manufacturers, particularly in those lines which it will be advantageous to Germany to push once the war ends. All through this discussion you will notice that certain articles will be pushed by Germany most energetically when the war ends (the ones for the manufacture of which she has a superabundance of raw materials, of course). This is an exceedingly important and interesting point. One of Frankfurt's factories makes a product which we shall call A. In making product A it creates by-products, B and C. It has no use for them, but a factory at Cassel has, so by-products B and C are shipped to this Cassel factory. Now in America that would not be profitable unless the other factory were very near. Even the low transportation charges it would secure as a by-product might be too high. But the German government owns the railroads and many waterway routes, and the German government wants to see German industry aided in every possible way for the trade war to come. So the government railroads haul by-products B and C at an extremely cheap price from Frankfurt so that the factory at Cassel is enabled to use them profitably. That is one way.

Another is that a factory making goods for export, and, say, five hundred miles from a seaport, is perhaps enabled to transport its goods to the dock at no more expense than a factory a hundred miles from the seaport. The government railroads and inland water routes have elastic freight rates that favor factories manufacturing for world trade.

Lighten the burden for the exporter—that is the imperial order. We have seen how it is done by war-time transportation. We have considered this war-time Rathenau organization that controls every bit of raw material in the Empire, that has fixed maximum and minimum prices; that buys raw materials in enormous bulk, thus

getting them much cheaper; that then distributes these materials to industry at only a five per cent raise in price. Thus to the doors of the war-time factories come the materials at the lowest conceivable price. Even though this holds true only for war and war times, it nevertheless indicates a tendency.

The next point in the campaign for low-priced manufacturers is to transform this raw material into the war-time finished product. Of course that means labor. "Keep down the cost," is the imperial order. And it is done in an unusual way, in a way that has never perhaps been thought of before.

In considering this question of low-priced goods, we first must consider the war conditions of labor in Germany. German labor costs less than ever before in those industries which the government wants to turn out cheap goods.

In the prison camps of Germany there are today nearly two million men. Among them there is much skilled labor. This skilled labor is not all being used to build roads and to dig ditches. It is being used in some cases in German factories. The average prisoner, bored with the life of the prison camp, usually welcomes a change. Naturally there are many exceptions. The proposition of working, or doing something to relieve the monotony of prison life, and at the same time to obtain better food and some money, appeals to him in many instances. Of course there are prisoners who refuse to work, but it is reported that they are often made to work. The German government offers a certificate saying that they work under compulsion, however.

A factory in Solingen needed 50 men skilled in handling machines for turning out hardware (one of the favored lines for German export trade.) It wrote to the imperial war ministry in Berlin. The letter was turned over to the bureau for prison camps.

The matter was arranged, and the men secured. The result is that the favored hardware manufacturer of Solingen receives from a paternal government skilled labor at \$1.10 a day (this including the cost of the prisoner's food), or at a price much less than the same manufacturer was used to paying German skilled labor in peace times. Other cheap labor is furnished by dependent women, Germans from sixteen to sixty years (unfit for military service), and Belgian civilians sent from their country because of lack of work for them there. All of which means that some of the specially favored goods being manufactured by Germany today are being made at cheaper raw material, cheaper transportation, and cheaper labor prices than were possible in that wonderfully cheap era before the war.

"Keep the costs down"—is the imperial command in connection with these lines.

Some of the Reasons for the Methods German Business Is Using.

This is absolute necessity for Germany. Without low-priced goods the empire might find itself upon the coming of peace in a dangerous position for world trade. The protective tariff barriers of the Entente allies raised to fight German goods upon the coming of peace might effectively close markets. But what can a non-socialized do against a socialized state? The allies are adopting state socialism. It took Germany from the time of the fall of Bismarck, until today—two and a half decades—to get the people to accept the principles of monarchical socialism. That system was pounded into the heads of the young in school rooms, and in offices when they got out of school. It was pounded into the heads of banking and big business. Today—save for the arguments of the revolutionary socialists—it all works together, harmoniously, one enormous machine.

This is bringing us to the last step in Germany's plans for regaining her world trade. Certainly world trade is the paramount issue when the imperial chiefs consider "the good of Germany." Here the Rathenau organiza-

(To be continued.)

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