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Guaranteeing a High Price for 1919 Wheat.

Maybe everybody has been wrong about that much-discussed wheat guarantee. The New York World is quite unconvinced by predictions of plentiful crops and low prices in the market this year and next.

What prices will prevail throughout the world between now and mid-summer, 1920, is wholly a matter of speculation, says the World. While peace has liberated some wheat not available in war, it is to be remembered that in the greater part of Europe's stocks are exhausted and the demand is urgent.

Great Britain has a fixed price, and so has Canada. Russia cannot be much of a competitor this year, and Argentina's crop is not great. There is better reason, therefore, to assume that the average world price for wheat for two years to come will be very high than to hold that it will fall to anything like the anti-war level.

The American farmer, then, may not be so legitimate a subject for envy as some of the experts have represented. He may not get any more for his wheat with Uncle Sam's guarantee of \$2.26 a bushel than he would have got otherwise, in the open market, in competition with the world. He may not get so much. The nation may be the beneficiary rather than the farmer.

Anyway, there is no reason to get excited about the matter. What is done is done, and what will be will be, so far as wheat is concerned. We can wait and see, secure in the knowledge that the present arrangement is probably fair enough, and neither producer nor consumer can lose much by it.

A Century of Growth in World Commerce.

The world is anxious to get back to business. Every country is struggling with its domestic trade problems while it awaits impatiently the assembling of the peace conference and the results of its findings, which will go so far toward establishing a basis for international trade relations.

In view of the present situation it is interesting to review a little the past history of world commerce, to recall that just one hundred years ago the greatest factor in the development

of world trade was launched—the steam-driven vessel for ocean traffic. It was in 1818 that the Savannah, planned by Daniel De Witt and built in New York by Isaac Fickel, sailed from New York to Savannah and thence to Liverpool, the first ocean liner.

At that time world trade was estimated at about \$2,000,000,000. In 1918 it stood at a value of \$20,000,000,000. The rapidity of its growth in the last one hundred years is due first to the steamship, then the railroad and telegraph and telephone lines, and last but not least, the establishment of sound financial and banking systems.

It is hard to realize that the past hundred years have seen more development in world trade than all the previous time in the history of man, and that much of this development is due to inventions which are the product of the present generation.

One thing, however, is certain: International peace is vital, for upon it hangs international trade and the welfare of the world.

Lost War Contracts Draining the Springs of Business.

The chief obstacle now standing in the way of American prosperity seems to be the holding up of \$1,500,000,000 of claims based on informal war contracts. Owing to a lack of technical authority for the payment of these claims by the government, the contractors are unable to pay the sub-contractors and the sub-contractors are unable to pay their bills for labor and materials.

This drains the springs of business. Those who supplied the raw materials cannot pay their labor. Employees are unable to pay their own bills. The public spending power is curtailed and credit is tightened. Workmen lose their jobs. So things tend to slow down, just when they ought to be speeding up.

It is especially bad that this happens just when our army is being demobilized and the soldiers come home expecting to drop into paying places in a busy industrial system.

No duty of the government, therefore, is more important than the prompt handling and settlement of these claims. The interests concerned are justified in demanding that congress provide the requisite authorization without delay, and that the executive departments check up the claims and pay off those that are obviously legitimate as promptly as possible. It is no time for red tape.

The Passenger Pigeons—Long May They Live.

Apparently authentic reports are coming, to public notice, that passenger pigeons have been seen recently in flight, or roosting sufficiently near for the observers to determine without question that they were specimens of what long has been mourned as a vanished race.

The annihilation of the passenger pigeon is one of the blots upon our history. It ranks with the destruction of our white pine forests in the early lumbering days as one of the colossal blunders rooted in ignorance and fostered by greed, with which the history of new lands is too often stained.

The folly of their destruction was recognized too late for the tardy game laws to do any good. Attempts were then made to breed the birds in captivity, but they are essentially children of the open and perished almost as swiftly under man's nurture as under his gun fire, the last known pair dying in 1914.

Rewards offered since then for the discovery of passenger pigeons have gone unclaimed, and until this latest news revived it, hope that they still existed had been abandoned.

Perhaps they have indeed been breeding in some secret haunt, as has been claimed, and now are venturing forth, tempted by whippers of world disarmament or stirred by jealousy

lest man with his new found wings shall wrest from them their realm for long and speedy flight. Perhaps the laws destined to their protection were not in vain after all, and continued safety has bred returning confidence.

Keep Chase and Inefficiency Away From Railways.

Whatever happens to the railroads, one thing is certain: They must not be allowed to go back to the old ways. In fact, such a thing is hardly possible.

Americans are a long suffering people. They have stood for abuses in public utilities which it seems incredible that any people should stand who have in their own hands the power to remedy them. But when they finally awake from lethargy on any subject, they awake to good purpose. Then they hustle and they dig and they give evidence of the American virtues of speed and action.

The chaotic duplication of stations and express companies which was allowed to go on beside the equally chaotic lack of stations and express facilities is finally being straightened out under government control.

Two bits of experience have penetrated the brain of the average American. Before the war he had an excellent passenger service which he appreciated and will never again willingly be without. But he had it at the expense of tremendous waste. During the war and immediately afterward, he began to see the results of co-operation in freight traffic as opposed to the evils of competition. This, too, he will never again be willing to do without.

Just what will be done with the roads, just what ought to be done with them, is still an open question. But this is sure—trains must not be allowed to run backward into confusion, extravagance and inefficiency. They must be run forward, to orderly, thrifty and effective service.

Unjust Criticism of the Y. M. C. A.

To the great mass of thinking people in this country, the attacks upon the service of the Y. M. C. A. abroad will be a matter of indignation and regret. That the Y. M. C. A., both here and overseas, rendered a tremendous service to our boys is unquestionable.

Of course there were mistakes, and since the undertaking was a colossal one, the mistakes may loom up with proportionate bigness. But like every other institution in this country, it is

QUICK RELIEF FROM CONSTIPATION

Get Dr. Edwards' Olive Tablets

That is the joyful cry of thousands since Dr. Edwards' produced Olive Tablets, the substitute for calomel.

Dr. Edwards, a practicing physician for 17 years and cholera's old-time enemy, discovered the formula for Olive Tablets while treating patients for chronic constipation and torpid livers.

Dr. Edwards' Olive Tablets do not contain calomel, but a healing, soothing vegetable laxative.

No griping is the "keynote" of these little sugar-coated, olive-colored tablets. They cause the bowels and liver to set normally. They never force them to unnatural action.

If you have a "dark brown mouth" now and then—a bad breath—a dull, tired feeling—sick headache—torpid liver and are constipated, you'll find quick sure and only pleasant results from one or two little Dr. Edwards' Olive Tablets at bedtime. Thousands take one or two every night just to keep right. Try them. 10c and 25c per box. All druggists.

Advertisement for N.W. West & Co. featuring a January Clearance Sale with every article reduced. The store is described as 'Keen Judges of Values' and emphasizes quality merchandise. Text includes: 'Do not go by prices; QUALITY MERCHANDISE is not built down to a price, but up to a standard. This store makes no compromise on QUALITY.' Address: 1710 Sixth Street, La Grande, Oregon.

to tell that would thrill the heart of the courtesy, the bravery and the generosity of the Y. M. C. A. men with whom they came in contact. The confession of Bill Smith, whose feet it dented from straying, should be heard, as well as the indignant avowal of Bob Jones that he needed no watching. The real character of its problems personal and financial, should be understood before decisions are made. President Wilson is fortunate that taxes do not always accompany citizenship.

Advertisement for Silverhorn's Family Drug Store. Text includes: 'BONDS WANTED: Will pay \$95 for Liberty bonds of last issue. Must have them soon if at all. Address by letter, telling how many you have and when they can be delivered. Money is ready. Bonds care Observer, La Grande, Oregon. 1-17-19. Observer advertising will bring results. Observer ads are widely read.'

Advertisement for Aunt Jemima Pancakes. Text includes: 'For Aunt Jemima Pancakes. FILLING AND NOURISHING, AS THEY COST ONLY ONE-THIRD AS MUCH AS EGGS OR MEAT. It does not seem possible that such rich-flavored satisfying cakes can be so inexpensive—but they are! They are inexpensive because everything is ready mixed in the flour—sweet milk in powdered form (saving the housewife the cost of milk); rich ground cereals; salt and all other ingredients. Just add cold water, have a hot griddle ready, and in two minutes you have delicious pancakes. In four-pound sacks 55c. PHONE MAIN 80. PATTISON BROTHERS GROCERY.'

Advertisement for Dried Fruits. List includes: 'Fancy California Figs, per lb. 60c; Fancy White Mission Figs, per lb. 50c; Fancy Black Mission Figs, per lb. 50c; Choice White Figs, per lb. 30c; Choice Black Figs, per lb. 30c; Fancy Prunes, 10 lb. box \$2.25; Fancy Nectarines, per lb. 25c; Fancy Dried Peaches, per lb. 25c; Choice Dried Peaches, per lb. 17 1/2c; Choice Dried Apricots, per lb. 30c; Choice Dried Prunes, per lb. 20c; Fancy Seeded Raisins, two for 35c. NO CHARGE FOR DELIVERY. Phone Main 43. J. G. SNODGRASS.'

Advertisement for La Grande National Bank. Text includes: 'Don't Let it Drop! Many people start a bank account and let it go at that. They make no effort to keep it on the increase. Start your account with this bank and see to it that it increases every month—don't let it drop! Your success in your undertakings will be measured by your effort to increase your Bank Account. If you bank money while you earn it, you will have money when you can't earn it. La Grande National Bank. Member Federal Reserve System. Designated Depository of the United States Government.'

Advertisement for Ladies' Silk Hosiery and L. J. French Shoe Co. Text includes: 'Ladies' Silk Hosiery gives the best of wear and looks the best. We have the following colors: Mahogany, champagne, castor, black and white. Price, per pair \$1.25. Ladies' Spats in light and dark gray. Price, per pair \$1.85. One lot Ladies' Black Kid Button Shoes in regular \$5.00 and \$6.00 values. Special for \$4.45. One lot Ladies' Colored Kid Shoes—just a few sizes left. Values up to \$10.00 per pair. Price \$4.85. Come in and let us put new tips on your laces free of charge. L. J. French Shoe Co.'

Advertisement for Delco-Light. Text includes: 'DELCO-LIGHT Increases Farm Efficiency. Fifty thousand Delco-Light plants in operation on American farms are saving at the most conservative estimate, an hour a day each—or over 18,000,000 work hours a year. That is equal to an army of 60,000 men working ten hours a day for a full month. Delco-Light is a complete electric light and power plant for farms and suburban homes. It furnishes an abundance of clean, safe, economical light, and operates pump, cream separator, washing machine and other appliances. It is also lighting rural stores, garages, churches, schools, army camps and railway stations. NATE ZWEIFEL, La Grande, Oregon. The Delco Engineering Company, Dayton, Ohio. Over 50,000 DELCO-LIGHT Plants in Actual Use.'