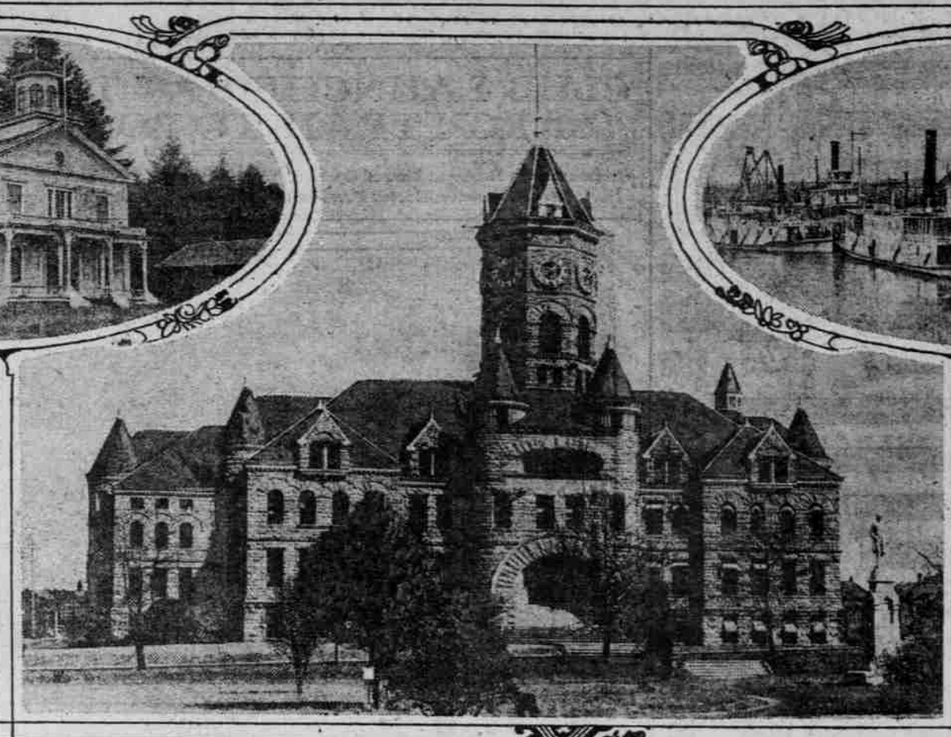
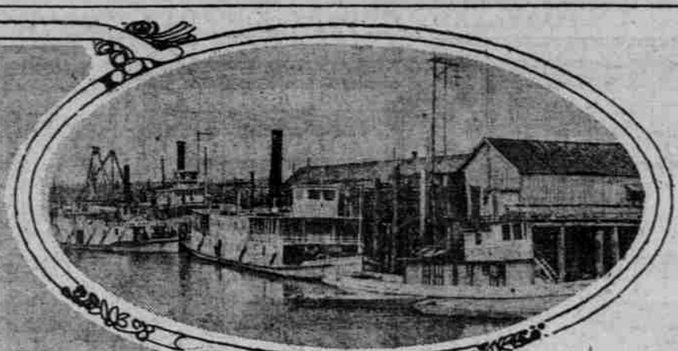
OLYMPIA, LONG SUPPRESSED, IS FINALLY BECOMING FACTOR

Capital, Ignored by Legislature for Many Years, Now Shows Material Growth and Good Trade Prospects.

Old Capitol at Olympia.



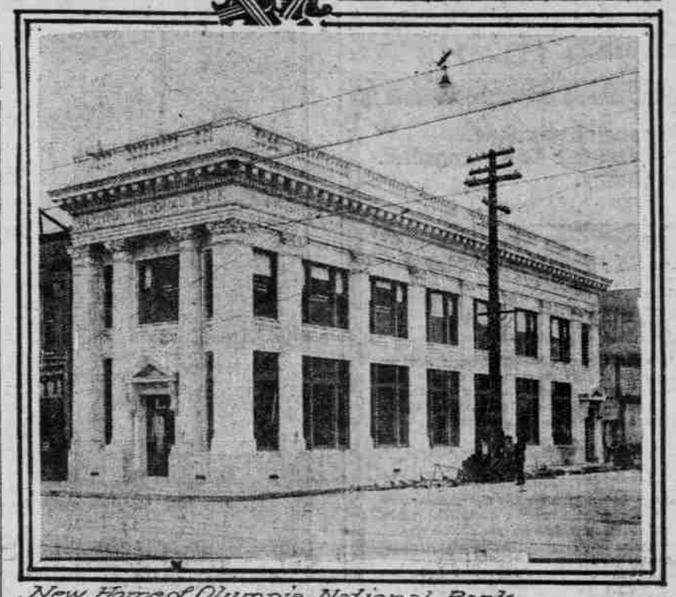
Washington State Capitol ©Jeffers.



Olympia's Water Front

Women's Club Building.

Post Office.



New Home of Olympia National Bank.

Masonic Temple.

BY ADDISON BENNETT.

OLYMPIA, Wash., Oct. 9.—(Special Correspondence.)—With but few exceptions, only two I think, Olympia is the oldest town in Washington, of which state it is the capital city. With only one exception, it is the smallest capital city in the United States. It had a population by the census of 1910 of 6996, which was but a trifle less than six-tenths of 1 per cent of the population of the state, as Washington's total population was 1,141,990. But to reach that percentage Olympia made a growth of almost 100 per cent during the preceding decade.

Now, I am not starting my article in this way to belittle Olympia. There must be reasons for this state of affairs, and I have been trying to dig these reasons out. When I state my conclusions I think any fair-minded reader will agree with me. But, first, let us go back to the foundation of the city. It was in 1846 that a little group of pioneers made their way from the vicinity of Portland and Vancouver down the Columbia River, thence up the Cowlitz River and across the divide to the Deschutes, and thence to the extreme southern end of Puget Sound, where the Deschutes flows into the Sound. The place where they made their camp was about the falls of the Deschutes at what is now called Tumwater, which is about a mile south of Olympia. This river should not be confounded with the river of the same name in Oregon.

Of course there is no man living today who can say just how these men argued that they had pitched their tents on what they considered the logical location for founding a city. But a pretty good guess can be made, for, ever since the foundation of civilization the important cities have grown up as near the headwaters of navigation as possible.

City Is End of Oregon Trail.

Seven years later, in 1853, the territories of Oregon and Washington were divided upon the lines existing today, and Washington was started out with a territorial government, and Olympia designated the capital city, and has so remained and ever will remain. That great man, I. I. Stevens, was appointed the first Governor, and the old mansion in which he resided is still standing. Not far from it was later set up a tablet marking the "End of the Oregon Trail," and it still stands there, in the present capitol grounds, as a monument likewise to the hardy pioneers who believed they had found also the westernmost end of civilization in their country.

There is no use in following closely the history of the city for the next two or three decades. It did not have a very rapid growth, but was the real metropolis of Washington. In 1890 the place had a population of 4558, but before that time events had culminated to start the wonder cities of the state. So in 1900 the population had dwindled to 3863.

To tell why the place had grown so slowly and then began to go backwards it is only necessary to look at the railway maps of the state. First came the Northern Pacific and undertook to build a metropolis where stands the present capitol was erected, a the City of Tacoma. Later came the Great Northern and made its terminals at Seattle. Both roads ignored Olympia. Indeed, so fierce became the railway opposition that in the early '90s, when the town was in doldrums, an attempt was made to remove the capital, Ellensburg making a strong fight principally through the Northern Pacific influences.

And during all these years the state was niggardly in support of its capital. It was only after a bitter fight that building which the state outgrew two decades ago. The legislators gave mighty little to Olympia that any other portion of the state wanted. Instead of having the state institutions here near heir controllers' hands, they scattered them all over the state. The penitentiary is at Walla Walla, the state asylums at Steilacoom, Cedro Wooly and Medical Lake, the Girls' Training School at Centralia, or near there, the Boys' Training School near Chehalis, the Hospital for the Feeble Minded at Vancouver, the Normal Schools at Bellingham, Cheney and Ellensburg, the Indian Training School at Tacoma and the state fair grounds at North Yakima.

The only state buildings here are the Capitol, the Temple of Justice (Supreme Court building), the State Law Library and the Reference Library. Now it cannot be supposed that the various state institutions were located remote from the capital through spasms of economy. Take the public institutions of Oregon; the governing boards can visit them all in half a day, can thus visit them often and keep close tab on them. To do that in this state would require an expensive trip of more than a week.

No; the locations were made more than likely by deals among the members of the Legislature—but always Olympia got the little end of the bargain. Going back to the railways; Olympia has never had, has not now, anything like adequate rail accommodations. For years the only line was the Gray's Harbor branch of the Northern Pacific. Now the Great Northern has a spur into the city from Plumb Station, 10 miles north of Tenino, which has one train each way a day. Not a through road touches the place.

However, the O.-W. R. & N. is now laying rails on a line that will lead out east seven miles to the joint lines of the Northern Pacific and O.-W. R. & N. Over this they promise good service and close connections with all through trains between Seattle and Portland, even with the Shasta Limited. This is the first ray of hope in the way of a good rail connection that the Olympia people have ever had—and they appreciate it. The depot will be in the heart of the city and the road will be in operation within a month or so.

I do not suppose I am voicing the sentiments of the Olympia people in publishing these facts. They have become so accustomed to getting the crow and letting the other fellows get the turkey that they are quite inured to their fate. The facts and deductions are my own.

It might be well to philosophize a little bit and draw upon the imagination as to what sort of a city Olympia would be if the Northern Pacific had been built at Olympia as originally intended. A mere moiety of what the grounds, docks and harbor connections cost at Tacoma would have dredged the entire bay west of the city to a depth of 35 feet at low tide, and connecting up with the deep water south of Tacoma. And the dredging would have made an ideal townsite large enough, with the high grounds back of it, for a city of 500,000 people. This was considered the logical site for a city by the pioneers of 1846; it seemed the logical location when Governor Stevens made his reports to the Northern Pacific people; it seems a logical location today.

Olympia Growing Rapidly.

Do not for a moment suppose that Olympia is standing still. In my figures I have given the city a population of 10,000. The directory people and the postoffice officials give it 11,000. It is safe to say that even if times wag along about as at present until 1920 the city of Olympia will show a growth for the present decade of more than 100 per cent.

I have been over the city pretty thoroughly and have taken notes carefully. I can say that there are 100 new dwellings in the city that have gone up within the last 12 months. When I was last here, about six years ago, Olympia was a sort of overgrown, straggling, mud-streeted village. Now practically every street is paved and well paved. The principal business street is about as fine a thoroughfare as you can find in any city of its size in the country. During the last year, mostly during the last six months, about a dozen good business buildings have been erected, and more are under way, some of them handsome structures.

None of them are skyscrapers, lots are too low in price for that; but good substantial two-story structures, mostly of brick or reinforced concrete. One of them, the new home of the Olympia National Bank, is about as handsome a structure as you will find anywhere. The new Capital Apartments is another handsome building, one of which any city might well be proud. It is a long time since I have seen a city showing a better growth than Olympia.

Another cheering thing is that business in all lines is mighty good and the merchants tell me it is getting better every day. I was talking with one of the largest general dealers in the city today and he told me his September business was almost 70 per cent over that of September, 1914. The city is growing, business is growing and the spirit of optimism is doing the same. One thing causing this is the action of the O.-W. R. & N. in building their cut-off during these days of railway depression. Indeed this is the greatest rift in the transportation clouds the city has ever experienced.

Several Public Buildings Completed.

The city has a great many fine buildings aside from the state structure. The Capitol is a very fine structure, but far, far too small. Plans are being perfected for grouping all of the state buildings, which means a new Capitol, perhaps twice as roomy as the present one. But more about that later. During the last year a splendid public library has been put up and the Federal building completed. This is an excellent structure also, its architectural lines being very artistic. The County Courthouse is another attractive edifice, this being the county seat of Thurston County. The Masonic Temple is another important structure.

Mentioning the county reminds me that Thurston County is about the size of Washington County, Oregon. Washington County has 713 square miles, Thurston County 709. Thurston has a population, or had by the last census, of 17,581 people, which was a growth of 77.1 per cent over 1900. Agriculturally speaking it is a good county, particularly adapted to dairying. There are two creameries here and several small ones scattered over the county. Dairying is advancing rapidly. In March, 1914, there were 4160 dairy cows in the county; in March, 1915, the number had increased to 5185. That is a mighty fine growth and of the right sort of an industry. If it keeps up with an increase of 25 per cent a year it will mean great things for Olympia and Thurston County. It is said that there have been more silos sold in the county during the year than there were here all told last Spring. In the first place it means an enlarged corn area, in the second place it means an increase in the average milk yield per cow—and more hogs and more silos.

Bank Standing High.

Olympia, like many of her neighboring cities, was bitten a year or so ago by the high finance bug. Consequently depositors, especially foreigners, are chary about dealing with banks. Hence the bank deposits of these cities are not what they should be. But Olympia is not ashamed of her financial standing. On the contrary, she is proud of it, for the showing made is good. There are now but two banks here, but both are strong in every way.

The Capital National is the oldest, having enjoyed a successful career, for the last statement, issued on September 2, gives a capital of $100,000, surplus and profits of $175,687, and deposits of $1,474,447. C. J. Lord is the president, W. J. Foster cashier. Mr. Lord has the reputation of being one of the safest and most astute bankers in the state. The bank is growing rapidly and is attracting funds from all over Southwestern Washington.

The Olympia National has a capital of $50,000, surplus and profits of $91,682, and deposits of $537,179. P. M. Troy is the president and F. M. Kenny the cashier. This bank has just about completed one of the finest bank homes that any financial concern in the Northwest has. This new building will be occupied between now and November. It surely speaks well for a city and well for a bank to erect as handsome a building as that of the Olympia National.

Papers Prosper With City.

Olympia has now four good newspapers, two daily and two weekly. The Morning Olympian was founded in 1891. It is ably managed by S. L. Lester. An evening daily is issued from the same office, the Olympia Daily Recorder. Both of these papers are controlled by that able and versatile newspaperman of Tacoma, Sam Perkins, who is responsible for the Tacoma Daily Ledger, one of the ablest papers in Washington.

The Washington Standard is one of the oldest newspapers in the state. It was established in 1860. It is issued weekly under the able editorial management of Eagle Freshwater. The other weekly, the Olympia Chronicle, was established in 1899. It is under the guiding hand of M. D. Abbott. All of these papers enjoy a good advertising patronage and represent well-equipped printing establishments.

An establishment that means much to Olympia, and will mean more and more every day, is the National Canning Company, which puts up all sorts of canned goods. It is a California corporation, George S. Pelton being the president, W. P. McCaffry secretary and treasurer, and Mark Ewald vice-president and manager. This concern has, during the last few months, shipped 25 carloads of its products to New York City, via the Panama Canal. It has a large plant on the waterfront and has ideal rail connections.

A number of years ago the Olympia people, knowing that to escape the railroad oppression they must do something for themselves, organized the Olympia Terminal Railway Company. They built a belt line running all along the waterfront and connecting with all of the docks and manufacturing establishments and with the Northern Pacific branch line. This was operated as needed until President Farrell, of the O.-W. R. & N., came along and purchased it for his company, which is now connecting it up with the line under construction out to the main line. It was a wise move of the Olympians. Perhaps had they not built it their day of deliverance would not yet be in sight.

Chamber Has Its Workers.

After all, I guess the most important factor in the remarkable upward movement now going on here is the Olympia Chamber of Commerce, of which J. L. Peters is president and H. L. Whiting secretary, with Fred Hepp as assistant secretary. Mr. Peters is one of the foremost and active business men of the city, and Mr. Whiting is an able executive officer.

The chamber has 280 members. I do not simply mean that number of names on their books. They have that number of active, working members. And they are leaving no stone unturned toward upbuilding their city. It is difficult and expensive to run an organization of that sort. Their expenses of entertainment are entirely out of proportion to their resources, for Olympia is the greatest convention city in the state. And the delegates are always well treated, while their wives and sweethearts are entertained in a way to send them home praising the Olympians for their hospitality.

Just now the chamber is busily engaged in arranging for the Thurston County Fair, which opens on October 18. It will be among the last fairs of the season, and they are making every effort to have it the best in the state. They are also engaged with the county agriculturist, O. C. Van Houten, in lending what aid they can toward getting more people on the lands of Thurston County.

To that end they have formed a board of five members to co-operate with Mr. Van Houton, consisting of a leading business man from the bankers, fruitgrowers, cannerymen, grocers and creameries. Now this is not a committee of idleness. Mr. Van Houton called them together for a meeting at 9 o'clock one morning when I was in the city and every one of them was present.

Oysters in Demand Everywhere.

Wherever a person along the coast, from Mexico on the south to the Canadian possessions on the north, speaks of Olympia, the auditor's first thought is: "That is where the delicious Olympia oysters come from." Well, Olympia sends out about $500,000 worth each year, or has during the last couple of years, and the demand is growing steadily. I noticed an express truck on the platform at the depot one morning, on which there were about a dozen boxes, all containing oysters. Out of curiosity, I looked at the labels on them. I found two boxes going to San Diego, two to Los Angeles, four to San Francisco, others to Denver, Salt Lake City, Butte, St. Paul and Winnipeg. And in no other place do they mature with the perfection that they do in their native waters hereabouts.

Several years ago an enterprising man of small means living here purchased a little hand knitting machine. The operator stuck to his knitting so closely that today he is the proprietor of a knitting establishment that is employing about 30 persons and turning out hoods, coats, sweaters, scarfs and caps of such rare varieties that it promises to become one of the large institutions of the Northwest.

Another important industry that has developed beyond expectations is an extract concern, the Buckeye Extract Company. Starting in a very modest way a couple of years ago, it now employs a good many persons, principally girls, in the factory and constantly keeps three salesmen on the road.

Of course, the lumber business is the greatest here, and always has been. There are four sawmills and three shingle mills almost in the city limits, and also one door manufactory. These concerns have had a pretty steady run during the lumber slump, and from now on it is expected that they will increase their output, for it seems a turn has been reached in that business, a turn for the better.

Brewery Prepares for Drought.

"It's the Water!" Did you ever see a sign reading like that. Did you ever try the product founded on Olympia's famous water—and the famous hops of Oregon and Washington? Yes. Well, all admit it was a pretty good article of beer. However, there is a rumor circulating up and down and around thhrough Oregon and Washington that plain water is to be the fashionable drink after January 1. I think I can hear the managers of the Olympia brewery saying "We should worry."

As a matter of fact, they have partially turned their brewery into the soft-drink channel. They may put out a near-beer, but I am not sure. But they are already turning out about the best fruit juices I ever tasted, their "Luju" being as fine an article of loganberry juice as there is, and put up in all-sized bottles from the 10-cent size to the quarts. Then their "Fruju," or fruit juices, are simply delicious and made in eight different flavors. The principal part of the juice extracting is done at Salem, so Oregon will get some of the benefits, at least for a while. That the late brewery people will make a success of their venture is assured. With their large capital and great business ability they are sure to make a go of it. Soon we will probably see an electric sign at the bend in Sixth street, Portland, with an electric liquid flowing over a fall, and over all a great electrical sign "It's the Ju."

Going down to the business center of Olympia, at Fourth and Main streets, you will see on the telephone poles certain marks. If you are wise you will know that the marks on Fourth street signify that it is a part of the Olympic Highway; the marks on Main street signify that street forms a part of the Pacific Highway. By following the marks on the poles you will have no trouble in keeping on the main highway. As long as you see no mark, keep straight on; if there is a large white L on a black ground, turn to the left and soon you will come to a pole that has, if the road goes straight on, a wide white band between two black bands. In all cases such a sign means straight ahead, an L means to the left and an R to the right. It strikes me that this is a mighty fine way to mark these important highways. On the posts in Portland I have seen signs that must have been put up to confuse instead of instruct; by the method in vogue in Washington there can be no confusion, no delay.

On occasions the people of Olympia find they have about 2500 strangers to take care of, usually when the Legislature is grinding. But they always do take care of them. This shows that there must be ample hotel accommodations. Well, I would hardly say that the hotels can "sleep and eat" 2500 strangers, but with the assistance of the numerous restaurants and the many rooming-houses there is never any real difficulty.

School System Is Good.

However, the city has two good hotels, and large ones—the Mitchell and the Kneeland. I was fortunate enough to stop at the former, where H. M. Pierce, the manager, took good care of me. It is about as good a stopping place as you can find anywhere. The Kneeland, I was told, gave mighty good accommodations.

I might go on for a few columns and tell about the stores, the schools, the churches, and—and the new or contemplated future grouping of the state buildings. As to the schools, it can simply be said that, like all Washington cities, they are good. Of churches there is no lack, about all of the denominations being represented. Some of the church buildings are very beautiful, and I tried to get pictures of half a dozen of them to form a sort of mosaic. But my time was too short to do so.

As to the grouping of the state buildings, that is so far simply a proposal. It will soon come, beyond a doubt, for the Capitol is wholly inadequate to the present needs of the state. A plan of segregation has been worked out and drawings made of it.

Finally, let me say that I was greatly surprised to find Olympia the attractive city it is. My last visit, a half dozen years ago, left a bad impression with me. So I went there last week rather reluctantly—only to find it one of the finest cities I have visited for a long time—and prosperous. I think I can say in all candor that Olympia today is making greater headway, taking, of course, population into consideration, than any other city in Oregon or Washington. And you must remember I get around a lot and see about all of the cities in the two states.

OPTIMISM IS FOUND ON ALL SIDES IN GERMANY

People Unanimous in Opinion That United States Was Unjust in Treatment of Lusitania Affair, Says Richard Koehler.

GERMANY in war times—industrial Germany, social Germany and political Germany—are described by Richard Koehler, retired purchasing agent of the O.-W. R. & N. Company, who has just returned from a year's visit in various parts of that country.

Mr. Koehler, in response to repeated inquiries from friends, has prepared for The Oregonian an explanation of the German attitude toward the United States Government over the Lusitania and Arabic incidents and over the various other subjects of controversy between those two countries.

Life in German cities and in the homes of the people is unchanged from times of peace, he says. The people are hopeful and optimistic, loyal to their government and patriotic.

"Freedom of the seas for all nations and the right of Germany to compete for world trade with jealous competitors," he declares, is the sole object of the German nation in the present war.

Some of the principal questions asked of Mr. Koehler and his replies to them follow:

What was the attitude of the German people towards the American Government over the Lusitania and Arabic incidents? Did the German people seem to justify the sinking of the Lusitania?

America Considered Unjust.

The German people were unanimous in the opinion that the American Government was unjust in its treatment of the Lusitania incident, in that it disregarded the position in which Germany was placed by previous measures of Great Britain by her declaring a blockade of the English Channel and a large area of the North Sea, instead of attempting to block the German harbors under recognized rules of international law or usage; and in subsequently inaugurating measures under its so-called orders in council, intended to cut off all food and other supplies from reaching Germany, even if noncontraband.

The German people cannot understand why the United States acquiesced in these measures, while strongly protesting against German measures, resulting in the submarine warfare against English commerce and did not go beyond a mild protest to the English government and allowing the entire controversy, so far as Great Britain was concerned, to rest for an indefinite time, while on the other hand vigorously protesting to Germany and threatening with severe measures unless submarine warfare were modified. Germany considered it the duty of the United States as the only powerful neutral to act on behalf of all neutrals and force Great Britain to abandon her measures intended to starve the civil population of Germany and to dominate the sea to the exclusion of all other nations. German people were, therefore, in full accord with their government in measures taken in retaliation, especially in view of the timely notice given in establishing a submarine commercial warfare.

Germans Behind Government.

Much as the great loss of life was regretted by every German (and it may here be said that the rapid sinking of the ship seemed to point to some inner explosion, caused by the nature of the cargo), they stand behind their government, asserting that ample warning had been given to intending passengers before embarking, by the general notice in February and by special notice published before sailing. They looked and still look upon the Lusitania as an auxiliary cruiser and registered as such, carrying munitions and other contraband.

The wholesale furnishing of munitions by Americans, although it is not declared to be prohibited by law, is, of course, looked on as an unfriendly act and has embittered the German people to a high degree, so that they have been looking on any attempt of their government to prevent munitions reaching their enemies as an act justifiable; in fact, as a duty to the country.

The Dumba incident occurred about the time I was leaving Germany and while I am unable to say from personal observation I think that the position of the German people is fully expressed in the action taken by the German Ambassador in Washington, who brought to the attention of the German citizens residing in the United States the provisions of the German law, making it a criminal offense for persons of German citizenship to lend aid in the manufacturing of ammunition or other war material intended for the enemy. I do not think that they are sanctioning measures calculated to raise international strife in the industrial world of the United States.

Berlin Life Is Normal.

In regard to life in Berlin and other cities during the war period as compared with life in normal times, to the casual observer it would seem, generally speaking, about the same as in peace times; that is to say, the streets are as crowded at certain hours of the day and night as heretofore. The restaurants and coffee-houses are frequented as much as in time of peace; theaters and concerts are going and well attended. The only difference seemed to be that night life was curtailed by order of police or military regulations, securing an earlier closing of places of amusement. The theaters cut out many plays of origin belonging to hostile countries, especially those who made themselves particularly obnoxious, like Gabriel D'Annunzio and others. Plays of Shakespeare or Moliere could be seen on many of the prominent stages. Repertoires in theaters had largely a patriotic tinge.

The character of the population filling the streets was only changed insofar as you would notice a smaller proportion of younger men in civilian attire. This was offset, however, by a greater number of uniformed men, officers, as well as men from the ranks; men in all kinds of uniforms, for to the arms of cavalry, artillery and infantry there are now added the airmen, the chauffeurs, the motorcycle men, the hospital corps, physicians, etc. There is a constant throng of men of all arms coming and going; men recently called to the colors; men drilling; men moving to the front or men on furlough coming from or going to the front. Added to this is the contingent of the sick and wounded. You would see the latter frequently at places of amusement listening to a concert or whiling away their time in some other suitable way of recreation.

Transportation Is Lacking.

One distinct change is shown by the smaller number of vehicles to take care of passenger locomotion. Horse carriages as well as motors are not in abundance. Lack of transportation made itself felt, however, only during such hours of the day when there was a particular rush to and from places of work or to and from the trains, and especially in the morning and evening and at the time when theaters and concerts begin or end. Then it was, indeed, difficult to obtain accommodations.

Regarding food in sight or in prospect to supply the German civilian population for the probable length of the war, I think no dearth need be expected. Measures taken by the government in time tended to prevent waste and insure a rational use of stocks on hand.

There was some fear in the beginning that foodstuffs would run short, for Germany always imported not inconsiderable quantities for man and beast. Statistical information obtained in the earliest period of the war showed that by economic handling any danger of shortage ought to be avoided, but in order to obtain desired results, measures were frequently taken by the government, mostly of a highly socialistic character.

Cereal Distribution Requested.

The first thing to be taken in hand was to regulate the distribution of wheat, rye and other cereals. A large concern for the purchase of these foodstuffs was established; maximum and minimum prices were fixed and the entire country which already in peace time was organized for self-administration down to its smallest units the "communal-verband," composed either of one large city or a group of smaller towns and villages or a district, facilitated materially this distribution and equalization.

Owing to the shortage of wheat no pure wheat bread was allowed. A composition of wheat, rye and potato flour was adopted, which is nutritious and palatable and which involved no hardship on the population, proper care being taken of the sick by an exception from this otherwihe universal ruling to use such bread.

In order to cut out unnecessary consumption of cereals by an overstock of about 5,000,000 hogs, an early slaughter of these was arranged, converting them into meat products of lasting quality, such as hams and smoked ware, sausage, etc. Potatoes and many other products required for the sustenance of life were likewise put in full control of the government and administered by it for the common good, cutting out undue speculation and maintaining reasonable prices for all alike. In fixing the amount that could be obtained on individual bread tickets the allowance, while large enough in the average, was not sufficient for hard-working laboring men, and after taking an inventory of stock, which, in most instances showed quantities of commodities in excess of estimates, the government promptly modified the allotment of bread to laboring people.

Check of supplies on hand and in sight after the harvest of 1915 could be fairly estimated, which harvest was only an average one, perhaps even slightly below the average, showed a sufficiency for the support of the nation. And in addition to home product Germany now controls by occupation almost the whole of Russian Poland, most of Belgium and a good slice of Northern France, which contains vast agricultural areas that are under cultivation.

What do the German people say that Germany is fighting for, and what is the ultimate object of Germany in this war? The German people are fighting for their existence as a nation; for their right to expand their trade and for the right to maintain themselves as an equal to other world powers, and this involves the right to use the seas which they wish to have free to all nations on like terms. Their ultimate object in this war is to obtain as speedily as possible an honorable and lasting peace which will secure to them and to others the above aims. They assert that the war was not of their seeking; that it was forced on them to defeat their attempt at further progress towards industrial and commercial expansion.