

Egypt Weathers Cotton Crisis

Despite Many Big Failures, Business Men Hope the Worst Is Past.

GAINS FOR AMERICAN TRADE

Low-Priced Automobiles Have Effected a Conquest—So Has American Chewing Gum—Patent Food Products Also Popular.

Cairo.—Business men in Egypt, especially foreigners, pay very little attention to the political situation. They admit, of course, that the unsettled conditions of a year ago, as well as the general lack of knowledge of what the future holds for Egypt, is a deterrent to free commercial intercourse. The chief cause for business worry at this writing is the decline in cotton prices plus the general international slump in trade. The two events coming at the same time work more than ordinary hardship to the business life of Egypt.

One business man remarked that people in Egypt realized that the trade of the world was in a bad state; that prices were falling the world over, and that there was a general stagnation in buying. But, he continued, "other countries have usually more than one industry upon which to exist. Here in Egypt we must live or die at the whim of King Cotton. This whim is not left in our power to control. We grow the cotton, and Lancashire and Manchester, as well as your big tire fabric centers at home, manipulate the buying price. Of course, every one in Egypt with a grain of common sense, realizes that the law of supply and demand rules; but, depending as it does upon one industry, the business life of the community is more or less left open to unusual perils when that one industry fails."

Bulk of Business Life.

This business man was engaged in the wholesale supply of sundries and novelties. His point of view may be accepted as that of such traders in general—those who buy in Europe, America or Japan and import the goods to Egypt for local consumption. This work constitutes the bulk of the business life of the community. It is not the greatest in point of wealth, however, when one figures the immense amounts involved in the collecting, ginning and exportation of raw cotton. Egypt's normal cotton crop is handled by about a dozen large British and Levantine firms, with headquarters in Alexandria. These latter have been the biggest sufferers, but only from lack of some-

thing to do. They rarely invest their money in cotton before the selling season opens, when the goods come from the field.

As the drop in cotton prices began almost at the beginning of this season, the big brokers were thus not caught with a great amount of stock on hand. The merchandise dealers, on the contrary, continued their buying right up to November and are even now being loaded up with stock, if paid for before shipment, or with obligations if shipped against documents. This is spelling ruin for some of the largest houses. Many serious failures have occurred, and in Cairo alone three department stores have gone into bankruptcy. It is the general opinion that the worst period has passed. Those who have gone through the crisis, either honorably or dishonorably, will, it is believed, live to see another period of fair business weather.

It is common talk here that in business morality Egypt does not compare very favorably with any other big colonial market. Apologists for the country point to the large number of races engaged in commerce, Syrians and Armenians, Jews from Spain, Russia, Germany, Greece, Smyrna and Palestine; Arabs, Greeks, British, Americans, French and Italians all go to make up the commercial life of the place. It is a five-language country in business. First and most important, of course, is Arabic; then come French, Italian, Greek and English.

Growth of American Trade.

American trade with Egypt has made wonderful progress, considering the fact that before the war this market rarely knew American goods. The bulk of the shipments arriving from home, however, in 1920 consisted of coal from Newport News and flour from the North. American automobiles have captured the market, but

Meteor Shower to Mark Earth's Race With Comet

Berkeley, Cal.—For a month this summer the earth will engage in a race with the periodic comet Pons-Winnecke, and because it will have no chance to win it will endeavor, through astral influences, to "trip up" its gaseous rival, according to a report made public by the observatory of the University of California.

On June 27 the comet will flip its tail so hard against its terrestrial rival that the impact will send out sparks. These will go down into the records as a meteoric shower.

At the greatest brilliancy observable from the earth the comet will be of the eighth or ninth magnitude. Nothing greater than the sixth magnitude can be observed by the naked eye, so the world at large will see nothing of the visitor except at the tail-flipping episode on June 27.

no high-priced American cars are in evidence. It is explained that the cheaper to middle-priced American car is a more attractive purchase to the Egyptian and Levantine than similarly priced cars made in England or on the continent. Prompt deliveries, of course, were largely responsible for the American conquest of this field. When vessels from New York or Boston were arriving weekly with consignments of automobiles, only one or two cars a month were coming in from Europe.

American sundries and patent food products have made marked progress. On every hand one sees America's favorite breakfast dishes advertised and displayed. American chewing gum has become the craze of the natives.

There are about 40,000 square miles of virgin forest and about 20,000 square miles of second-growth timber in the Philippines.

Shows Decline in Shipbuilding

Lloyd's Register Reports Total of 7,086,766 Ship Tons in Yards of World.

BIG DROP IN U. S. IN YEAR

Total Building Here, 1,102,000 Tons, Is Only About 40 Per Cent of Record Year Ago—Japan Shows Small Gain.

New York.—More than 7,000,000 gross tons of merchant vessels are reported as being in the shipyards of the world, says a statement by Lloyd's Register. Compared with the total on January 1, the 7,086,766 tons, to be exact, represents a decline of less than 100,000 tons, nearly 1½ per cent.

The actual decline in shipbuilding activity has been much sharper in the past three months than appears on the surface, says the statement. The total reported for Great Britain, 3,798,593 gross tons, is a gain of 89,000 tons over the January 1 record, but there has been marked reduction in the volume of tonnage on which work is actually proceeding, Lloyd's Register finds.

Work Suspended.

"Included in the total in the hands of British shipyards are 497,000 gross tons of vessels on which work has been suspended, and an additional 350,000 tons, the completion of which has been postponed, chiefly owing to the strike of the shipjoiners, which has

interfered with the fitting out of a number of large liners and other vessels," the report continues. "Taking this total of 847,000 tons into consideration, therefore, the total of new ships on which work is proceeding in British shipyards is 2,951,593 tons, or about 20 per cent less than the total at the beginning of the year.

"Additional indications of the conditions in the British shipbuilding are furnished by the returns of launchings and new work begun during the first quarter of this year. New keels represented only 391,000 gross tons, in comparison with 593,000 for the last quarter of 1920, and 701,000 for the quarter ended April 1, 1920. Launchings during the quarter just ended represented 431,000 tons, as against 576,000 tons for the last three months of 1920. Even with the delays due to strikes and other causes, therefore, work is being completed more rapidly than new work is coming on."

Decline in America.

Returns from American shipyards show that the decline which has been in effect more than a year continues, Lloyd's says. The total construction reported under way on April 1 is 1,102,000 tons, only slightly more than 40 per cent of the American total a year ago. The aggregate for all other countries except the United States, Great Britain and Germany (for the last-named no official returns are available) shows a gain of about 25,000 tons over the January total, Lloyd's estimates.

"The apparent world decrease in shipbuilding activity during the last quarter, therefore, has been not far from a million tons, a decline of about 12½ per cent," the statement says.

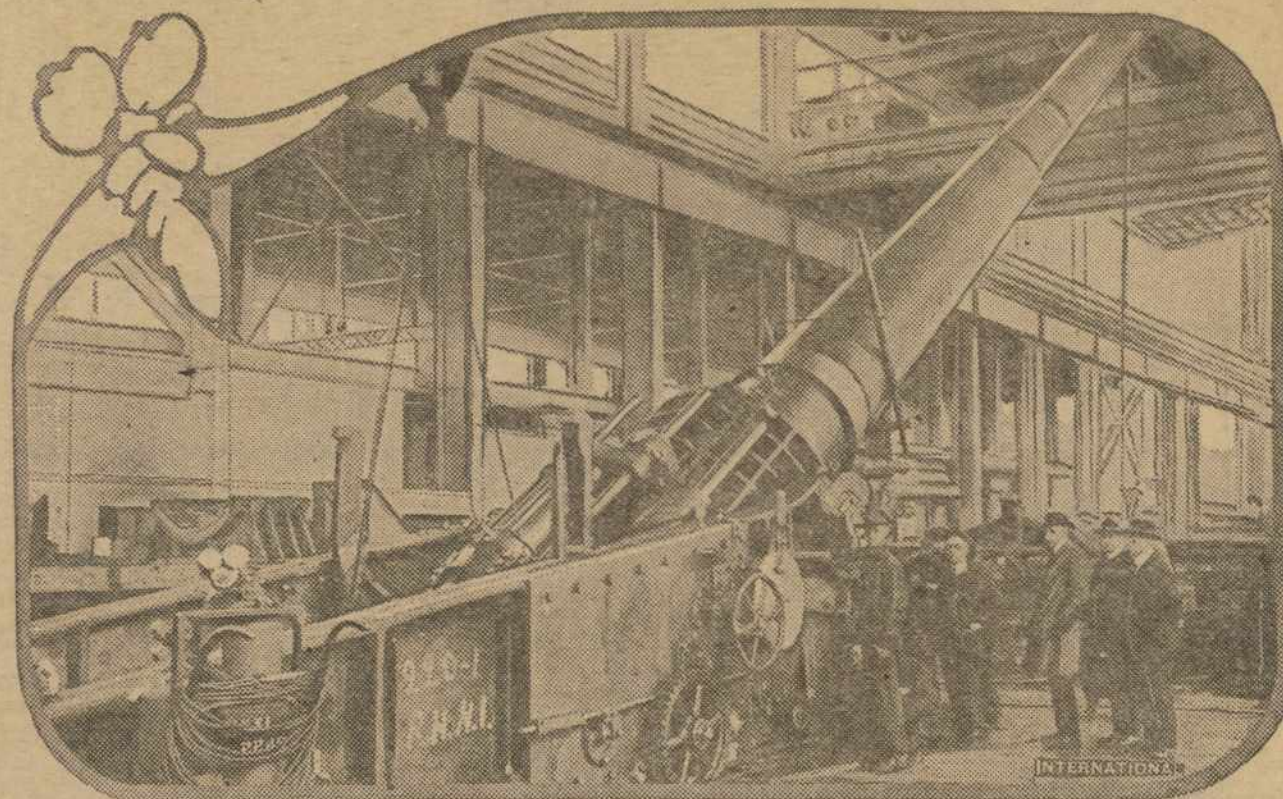
"In some directions, however, gains are shown in the volume of construction under way. These are most marked in the case of France, which now stands next to the United Kingdom and the United States as a shipbuilding nation, having displaced Holland during the last quarter. A year ago France, with only 240,000 tons under way, was led by Japan, Italy and Holland, and was constructing only 9,000 tons more than the British dominions. Today, with 427,000 tons building, she has nearly two and a half times the total for the British dominions, and leads Japan and Italy by 133,000 tons and 75,000 tons, respectively.

"Japan shows a small gain in the total under construction, as compared with the previous quarter, and Italy, Holland and the British dominions slight decreases."

Andes Crossed by Autoists.

Santiago, Chile.—Several Argentine automobilists have arrived here from Bahia Blanca, after having crossed the Andes by the southern pass, the distance covered by the party being about 1,100 miles. The journey was taken for the purpose of encouraging motor communication between the Atlantic and Pacific coasts of South America.

New Type Big Gun for the American Army



This is the new 16-inch gun, the first of its type, now being built at the Watertown, Mass., arsenal for the United States army. This gun will shoot at an elevation of 65 degrees and at all angles. The rifle is 63 feet, 9 inches long and weighs 189 tons. It is of the non-disappearing type.

Italians Flock Here in Drove

Number of Immigrants Will Be Limited by the Capacity of Liners.

STRICT CONTROL IN ITALY

Thieves at Naples Get High Prices for American Passports—Keen Competition for Foreign Ships—Maintain Close Inspection.

Naples.—The number of immigrants to the United States this year will only be limited by the capacity of the steamships, according to United States Consul Homer W. Boyington, who has been here for 15 years and has a good knowledge of the situation. The Italian companies lost a good many steamships during the war and have not yet been able to replace them, while the foreign vessels calling at Naples and Genoa for immigrants have dwindled since the war to an almost negligible number.

The consul said that the Italian government had consented to permit surgeons in the United States public health service to be present at the inspection of the immigrants before embarkation, so that they will be able to sign the bills of health and stop the detention of the steamships on their arrival at the quarantine station in New York. There have only been two cases of typhus in this port and they were Greeks from Piraeus. In consequence of this the government has put a tight ring around Italy and no alien immigrants are permitted to pass the frontier. The steamships leaving Italian ports for the United States now only carry Italians, and Poles, Czechs, Croats, Greeks, Ukrainians, Roumanians and other nationalities will have to sail from some other ports like Danzig, Bremen or Hamburg.

The staff at the consulate consists of 25 clerks, stenographers and interpreters, etc., who are chiefly employed in handling the hundreds of immigrants who through the bureau on the Via Santa Lucia all day long. Women with babies in their arms have precedence over all other applicants by orders of the consul. Under normal conditions the immigrants get away within three months of the date of their visas on the passports, but on account of the holding up of the liners in New York through the typhus scare, they are now fully six months behind, according to the officials.

Passports Closely Scrutinized.

The greatest care is exercised at the consulate to see that no more get by with false passports or counterfeit visas. The immigration authorities are also notified at New York to look out for the private marks on the passports, which will be changed from time to time in case they get known to the Italian crooks who are making a fat living by fabricating passports and visas for immigrants who may have some charges against their character which would prevent their obtaining a visa on their passports at the American consulate.

Two Americans who arrived from New York by the Canopic had their passports stolen and had to proceed to Rome to obtain emergency papers at the United States legation after getting identification certificates at the consulate here. These stolen passports, the officials say, are sent to Ancona or to Cosenza, which is near Naples, and the seals and visas are taken off and used for other passports. A well-executed false passport is worth 1,400 lire, about \$56 to \$60 United States currency, according to the rate of exchange, which fluctuates daily. At the consulate it was said that these two stolen passports would net the pickpockets who took them about 1,000 lire. Passengers are warned on landing in the custom

American Flyers Given 40-Acre Polish Farms

Warsaw.—Nine American members of the Kosciuszko air squadron, all soldiers of fortune, recently were awarded 40 acres of land each near the Polish-Russian frontier, as outlined by the Riga peace treaty.

All officers and soldiers of the Polish forces are being provided with tracts along Poland's eastern boundary, under a system worked out by the government, provided they take up cultivation of the land upon leaving the military service. By this plan Poland hopes to have trained men settled permanently where they would be handy for service in case the country is ever attacked again from the east.

spaghetti, yellow beans and onions, with a slice of meat on Sundays.

Suburbs of Naples like Portici and Resina—which is built over ruins of Herculaneum, 50 feet below under lava and ashes—swarm with children who, for number, can only be compared to those of Delhi, Agra and other cities in the East Indies. The average family consists of ten to twelve children, and persons who have fewer than eight little ones are regarded with suspicion as being lacking in patriotism. The sanitary conditions are so bad in the side streets of these ancient towns that the masses are germ proof and epidemics pass them by as hopeless, unless the disease becomes exceptionally aggressive and tries for a record.

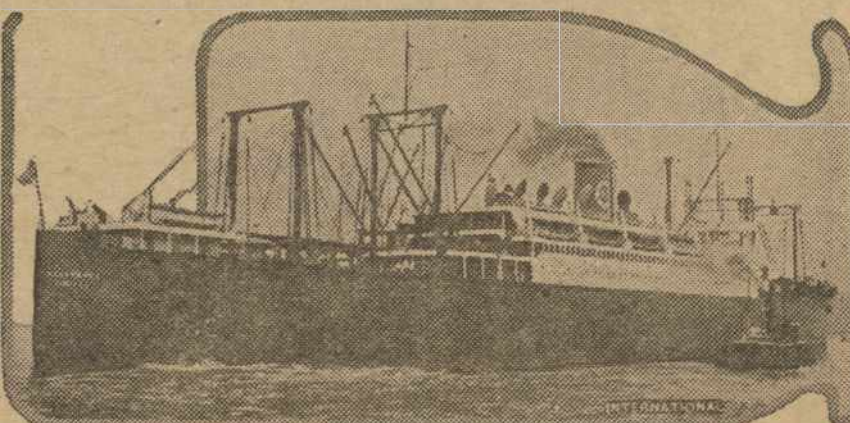
The workingman earned 3 lire a day before the war and was able to support his family comfortably upon that sum. Today he earns from 25 to 30 lire a day, but cannot keep his family as well as he could before, because rent has increased 600 per cent, and food and clothing from 500 to 800 per cent. Building is going on all over Naples, especially by the banks, which, during the war, made huge fortunes in exchange and are now erecting handsome offices. The municipality is also having the entire city repaved. The work employs hundreds of men who sit down and smoke their pipes comfortably while they chip the corners off the big flat stones, and look as if they would be on the job for years.

The air is full of dust and the small one-horse cabs bump the riders about from side to side as they struggle through the streets. The horses are still upon war rations.

Jail for Life Saving.

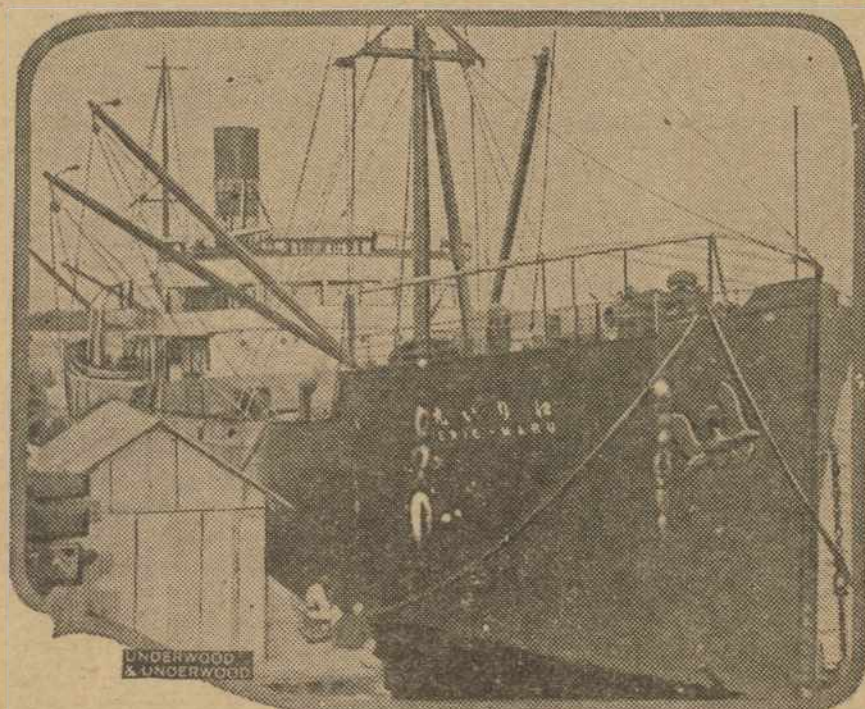
Omaha, Neb.—Saving a man from death in a water-filled hole beneath a burning shanty at the Dietz club here the other day may result in a prison term for C. M. Wallace, who was arrested by the police, charged with automobile theft after they had read of his heroic deed in the papers. Wallace escaped the police recently and had been in hiding. When summoned by the screams of a woman calling for help from a manhole he ran to the rescue. Two hours later he was in jail.

Shipping Board's New Wenatchee



The United States Shipping Board's new \$8,000,000 passenger carrier Wenatchee leaving Brooklyn on her maiden trip. She has been allocated to the Pacific Steamship company and will run between Seattle and the Orient.

Japanese Freighter Is Libeled



The big Japanese freighter Erie Maru was raided by federal prohibition enforcement agents at Jacksonville, Fla., and libel papers have been served on it. It is charged that the vessel brought 26 cases of intoxicating liquor from Cardiff, Wales, which were not reported in the manifest. The photograph shows the Erie Maru at dock in Jacksonville.