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GEORGE HORACE LORIMER, EDITOR

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## American Wheat Abroad

THE British have a way of testing out the political effect of a proposition that is completely beyond the best practices in the United States. Once Baldwin lost out on a proposition akin to protection. Returned to power, Empire preference is to be tested out on public opinion. It is hard to devise a preference for the products of the Dominions that will not look like a food tax to the consumer in the United Kingdom. The price of bread is already too high, the working classes feel; so the new government proceeds to try out public sentiment on meats and fruits. It is suggested that a million pounds sterling be used to facilitate the movement of meats and fruits from the Dominions to Great Britain. This may be in the nature of a freight subsidy, or something else. It is not the means but the idea that counts just at present. While the people of Great Britain are looking the proposition over, the several Dominions are trying to figure out where they would get on or get off.

In calories, the Empire is more than self-sustaining. The Empire is an exporter of wheat; an importer of corn, flaxseed and oil seeds. Also an importer of sugar and meat. To make the Empire self-sustaining in all foodstuffs, Canada, Australia and New Zealand must replace the United States, Argentina and Denmark in the markets of the United Kingdom with supplies of chilled and frozen meat, cured pork, lard and dairy products. It is hoped that with a little central aid these Dominions could be placed in position to provide these supplies at prices as low as are now being paid to the United States, Argentina and Denmark, or lower; in other words, Empire unity without increase in the prices of the foods, without a direct or indirect food tax. According to British opinion, the words are those of Baldwin, but the voice is that of Churchill.

An excellent illustration of trade unity within the Empire is furnished by the arrangement between the Coöperative Wholesale Society of Great Britain and the Coöperative Wheat Pool of Western Australia. The former is an old-established society with large financial resources. The Western Australian wheat pool is a voluntary pool under governmental auspices, but without state financial aid, holding some twenty million bushels of wheat. The British society is to finance the wheat pool. An advance

payment of three and a half shillings a bushel is to be made before the wheat leaves the farm. The importing society handles the shipping. Up to the present, wheat pools in the Dominions have operated under financial difficulties. But if large financial concerns in Great Britain ally themselves with the Dominion wheat pools, the wheat growers of the United States and Argentina may face a bearish atmosphere when they offer their next crop of wheat on the markets of Europe.

## "Consumption Cured"

THE Executive Committee of the Association of National Advertisers lately performed a useful public service in adopting and circulating strong resolutions deploring the recent increase in published advertisements of patent medicines offered as remedies for such ailments as tuberculosis and cancer, diseases which are at present regarded by the best minds of the medical profession as being incurable by drugs alone.

These resolutions declare that inasmuch as statistics seem to indicate that the spreading of proper information on the subject of tuberculosis has reduced deaths from this cause fifty per cent in the past ten years, to spread misinformation upon such a vital subject is to turn back the hands of the clock and to commit a social crime.

Very much stronger language might have been employed without overstating the case. Taking money from the poor and suffering is not the worst offense of which nostrum venders and the publishers who print their advertising stand accused. The most harmful phase of the whole business is the stalling along of ignorant victims until it is too late for proper treatment to be effective.

A large proportion of cases of both tuberculosis and cancer are completely curable if taken in time. Every day of delay in securing competent medical advice lessens the patient's chances of recovery. Procrastination for even a few weeks, due to a desire to try out a course of patent medicine, may mean death instead of life. These diseases sometimes progress with great rapidity, and a month of shilly-shallying may make a light case grave or a curable case hopeless.

Thanks to the tireless efforts of the better sort of advertisers and publishers, American advertising is by all odds the cleanest in the world. Some of the smaller newspapers furnish outstanding exceptions to the general rule. Even they in time will learn that dirty business drives away clean business. In the long run, it is clean business that pays.

## The Dominions Follow Suit

WHEN the United States refused to become embroiled in the ugly tangles of nations who were showing little or no tendency to straighten things out for themselves, the eager faultfinders at home and abroad seized upon that fact as just the ammunition needed for their persistent salvos of critical shrapnel. It was never quite clear what we were expected to do, except, of course, to write off the war loans and extend further credit. The fact that we elected to go about our own business until the time came when we could help to straighten out things was sufficient for the chorus of critics. It is interesting now to note that our policy of nonparticipation in Europe's endless quarrels is being adopted elsewhere, even in quarters where it formerly won the sharpest measure of reproof.

Nonparticipation seems to be the keynote of the present attitude of the British Overseas Dominions. They are displaying a degree of independence, in fact, which rather hampers Downing Street. When Lloyd George considered a resort to arms as the remedy for his Near East blunders the Overseas Governments made it very clear that they would not support any such undertaking. They are now demanding the right to be consulted on the measures to guarantee French security if they are to be expected to participate in any consequences thereof. This attitude, however, evidences a reluctance to accept anything that goes beyond the original covenant.

The British Colonies have every reason to steer clear of Continental complications. They are situated geographically so far away from Europe that they can have no direct

interest in European problems. They are not in sympathy with Continental ideas or ideals. They do business on different lines and believe in democratic forms of government, which do not seem to work in Europe. They played a magnificent part in the war, with no racial axes to grind and nothing to gain but the vindication of a cause. They suffered heavy losses in men and money and are still struggling from the economic aftermath of the conflict. Is it any wonder that they now refuse to put themselves voluntarily in any position where the murder of an archduke or a dispute over a Balkan border line might involve them in another catastrophe?

The Overseas Dominions are beginning to realize some of the truths which impelled the United States to stand clear of entanglements after the supreme duty of participation in the war had been attended to. Occupying a position that closely parallels our own, they are coming around to the only logical and sane stand. That they are doing so should serve as an effective answer to our own faultfinders.

## The American River's Real Job

THERE is much talk of the navigable rivers of the United States. In truth we have, with the exception of such tidal estuaries as the lower stretches of the Hudson, the Delaware and the Columbia, few or no streams navigable in the commercial rather than in the technical sense of the word. The Ohio and the Mississippi, the most nearly so, are carrying less traffic than they did fifty years ago, despite continuous artificial stimulation.

Of all the streams that have figured in Rivers and Harbors bills, the Mississippi from St. Louis to New Orleans possibly is the most promising. After private and municipal enterprise, with Federal aid, had failed repeatedly to establish a profitable and dependable freight service from St. Louis to the Gulf, the Federal Government stepped in directly. First as the Railroad Administration, then as the Inland and Coastwise Waterways Service, and finally, by enactment of the Sixty-eighth Congress, as the Inland Waterways Corporation, the United States Government has operated a continuous freight service on the Mississippi since the war. The Inland Waterways Corporation is an adjunct of the War Department, but it functions as a private transportation agency under the direction of trained river-shipmen. Powerful twin-screw tugs move eight barges carrying a ten-freight-train load downstream at five miles an hour and upstream at half that speed. Express steamers make the down trip to New Orleans in six days and the upstream pull in nine days.

The last line of defense of those who still believe that rivers and barge canals can meet the railroads and highways in free competition for freight has been the argument that the selfishness of the railroads in refusing to interchange traffic with the inland waterways is the fundamental obstacle. But in the case of the Inland Waterways Corporation the United States Government, by means of the Interstate Commerce Commission, has been able to compel 165 railroads to enter into interchange relations with the Mississippi-Warrior rivers water services. Agreements for the equitable division of accruing revenue for joint hauls have been made with the two principal railroad competitors, the Illinois Central on the east side of the river and the Missouri Pacific on the west, the Government being the judge of the equity.

The service still is not paying its way, but it is bringing canned goods from California by an all-water route through the Panama Canal more cheaply than the railroads can haul them overland; cotton is shipped from Memphis and Vicksburg to New England mills at a saving of 11½ cents a hundred over the direct-rail route, and there is hope that it may justify itself permanently.

Whether success or failure, the Father of Waters will no longer loaf his way from Lake Itasca to Baton Rouge. It has been generating electricity at Keokuk for ten years, and now a \$35,000,000 power plant which will have three times the year-round capacity of Muscle Shoals, and four times that of Keokuk, is building at Cahokia. The destiny of the Mississippi and of most other American rivers probably lies in harnessing their flow to turbines rather than to barges.