

A DANGER SIGNAL

Last week we published some facts in regard to the prevalence of high prices in spite of the existence of unprecedented quantities of supplies on hand. We pointed out that, with the supply of labor increasing and the demand for labor decreasing, there was grave danger of acute suffering, and that unless some relief was found, there would probably be bread lines, and perhaps starvation, in the larger cities.

The plain fact is that unemployment is increasing at a dangerous rate, and therefore this is a peculiarly unfortunate time to permit the artificial boosting of food prices. The following dispatch, sent to the New York Herald, by its Washington correspondent, shows the danger ahead:

Unemployment in the United States has reached an alarming stage and daily is becoming worse.

Officials of the United States employment service are putting forth tremendous efforts to solve the problem, but are unable to reach its basic cause.

The general trend of the situation acknowledged as "dangerous," and unless checked is likely to reach a crisis in February of the most far reaching seriousness.

This conclusion is justified by information given to the Herald today by officials of the United States Employment service and by information furnished by the Bureau.

"I believe the problem can be solved," said N. A. Smyth, assistant director general, "but its general trend today is extremely dangerous. The area of unemployment is spreading the numbers of the unemployed are constantly increasing. The renewing of business activity will solve the problem, for there is a natural labor shortage in the country and the whole situation depends upon when the normal activities of the country will be resumed. The next few weeks will be the critical period."

210,000 Men Unemployed

The surplus of labor over employment is increasing daily, having moved from 11,000 in a group of representative cities on January 14, to approximately 210,000 today. The area of unemployment is spreading all over the country, starting in Maine, running on a line along the northern tier of States to Minneapolis. Starting again in Montana, it jumps to the coast and back again, through the Southwestern and Southern States. Daily reports received by the National Employment service show this condition increasing with every twenty-four hours.

In the area of unemployment, Pennsylvania is in the best condition, showing a shortage of labor instead of a surplus. But this shortage has been scaled down daily. On December 21 Pennsylvania had 11,600 opportunities for laborers. In the week ending December 28 this number went down to 10,700. For the week of January 7 the number fell to 6,082. The week ending January 14 showed the number still decreased, to 4,282, while this week the figures have reached 1,200. At this rate next week will show a labor surplus in Pennsylvania, making the iron ring of unemployment around the United States complete.

New England States are in the foreground, with conditions especially bad in Connecticut. Further west, Ohio is in a thoroughly alarming condition, with its industrial centers filled with the unemployed.

Next Few Months Crucial

Conclusions reached by officials of the unemployment service, government officials and members of Congress generally are:

That the increase of unemployment is dangerous and must be stopped to avoid disaster.

The next few months are crucial and capital must be employed to furnish employment during these months or face disastrous conditions in the months following.

The government must devote itself to the problem of reconstruction and make up for the absence of preparedness for peace and for the lapse of time, since the armistice during which time the problem of reconstruction has been ignored.

A ministry of reconstruction, or the organization of a congressional or executive commission whose business it shall be to study and solve the problem which confronts the country must be established.

Demobilization of the army must be conducted on an industrial rather than on a unit basis, so that men needed in industry may go first and those without jobs may be retained in the service.

Active encouragement should be given to the erection of public buildings and the construction of public works.

Business men must be forced to a realization of the fact that the

solution of the problem rests with them, and patriotism and intelligent self-interest should prompt the active use of every available dollar in industry.

Natural Labor Shortage

Officials of the United States Employment service, acknowledging the imminent danger of a situation which may become overwhelming if not checked, believe that efforts properly directed will avert a disaster. They say that the situation is largely in the hands of business and of capital and rests upon the decision when it shall be wise to embark upon the reconstruction enterprises that will follow the war.

In spite of the fact there is a constantly increasing army of unemployed, there is a natural labor shortage in the country which is found to assert itself as soon as the country is readjusted. During the last four years immigrants to the United States were fewer by 2,225,000 than in the preceding four years. Half a million men have been diverted into shipbuilding from other industries. Conditions in Europe and the speed of demobilization probably will retain more than a million men in the tain more than a million men in the shortage of 4,000,000 men compared with the period preceding the European war.

With the natural shortage of labor it is believed there will be no difficulty in placing the country on a peace basis, provided the next few months can be bridged over.

The reason for the present crisis are clearly evident. The long delay in establishing peace in Europe has had a tendency to increase the feeling of doubt in the minds of business men. There will be no sure adjustment of America on a peace basis until the rest of the world has taken its part in the world of commerce. Further, until peace is signed there is always the possibility, remote though it may be, of a resumption of hostilities.

Business Men Holding Back

With these elements of uncertainty before them government officials and business men are holding back until they can forecast the future more accurately. The general public is holding back from buying because of a hope that prices will go down, and jobbers and retailers are holding back for fear that exactly this will happen. Private building construction is being held back because of the same reasons of uncertainty. The result is uncertainty and indecision which is keeping the wheels of industry still while the army of peace is becoming constantly larger.

When the armistice was signed no general program of reconstruction had been outlined, and President Wilson's trip to Europe, where he is engaged with the tremendous responsibilities of the peace conference, has delayed the elaboration of any reconstruction program with the exception of the presentation of that of Franklin K. Lane, secretary of the interior, for a return-to-the-land movement.

The result of this has been that while the United States employment service has been doing its best to find jobs for the jobless, legislative assistance or the application of any policy of reconstruction has been lacking. As the number of men seeking jobs increases over the number of jobs available, the activities of the employment service or any of the numerous State agencies that are at work, while remedial, will not solve the problem.

Labor Surplus Growing

The general increase of the area of unemployment by States is shown in the chart of the employment service. On December 21 only six States in the Union showed a surplus of labor. Today there are twenty such States. In States where there is still a shortage it is constantly decreasing. On January 7 the State of New York had a labor shortage of 1,599. In two weeks that shortage has changed to a surplus which is constantly growing.

The States which show a surplus of labor and a shortage of jobs, as now reported, are Arizona, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Georgia, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Louisiana, Massachusetts, Michigan, Montana, Nebraska, New Mexico, New York, Oregon, Utah, Vermont.

The number of cities showing a surplus of labor is rapidly increasing. During the present week fifty new cities have been added to the list. At the same time those centers reporting a labor shortage have been rapidly diminishing. December 3 twenty-eight cities reported a labor shortage. On January 28 this number had decreased to fifteen.

Many returning soldiers, even with jobs open for them in their home cities, refuse to return there, preferring to establish themselves in the larger and more attractive cities. The result is a congestion in these cities, which increases the problems of the government. Another group is finding its way to Florida, attracted by

the climate, and still more refuse to accept the wages for which they are accustomed to work upon their enlistment.

Many munition workers have been employed and paid at the rating of skilled mechanics, although they did purely mechanical jobs which required no particular skill. These men refuse to accept a lower wage than they received as "skilled mechanics," and their lack of skill makes it difficult for them to find employment except as common laborers.

Alter Demobilization Methods

Methods used by the General Staff in demobilizing by units has had a tendency to dump into the industrial centers many men from whom no jobs are waiting. There is evident a general tendency toward a changed method of demobilization, which will have the effect of releasing men as they are needed.

Much of the difficulty of the General Staff in this respect is due to the pressure brought to bear on Congress and through Congress. Men who are retained in the army believe those released will have the pick of the jobs, while the contrary is probably true, as the "pick of the jobs" will not come until industry has been generally renewed.

THOSE "REDUCED" TOLLS

(Greensboro News.)

"There are still states in the United States," remarks the New York Tribune referring to the action of certain states to prevent Postmaster General Burleson from putting into effect his alleged "reduced" telephone toll rates, which, it is claimed, are really advances. Continuing the Tribune says: "This fact Mr. Burleson has chosen to ignore, and it has been necessary for some 10 or 12 of these component and somewhat independent parts of the Union to remind him of it. They have refused to sanction the new telephone rates fixed by Mr. Burleson's department. It will be recalled that a few weeks ago a communique from that department advised the country that a "sweeping reduction" in toll line charges was to be made. The mathematics of the the order were too complicated for immediate comprehension and great was the astonishment of the telephone using public to find that the Burleson "adjustment" in many cases actually advanced toll rates. The public utilities commissions of New Jersey, Michigan and other states have stepped in to postpone the "adjustment."

"The whole Burleson procedure has worn a curious and elusive aspect. The seizure of the telephones may have been needful and wise, though the fact was never clear. But no one has yet been able to understand the mystery of the cables, seized surreptitiously when the war was virtually at an end.

"Seeming defects of candor, added to a certain distrust of Mr. Burleson's ways, have nurtured a suspicion of the whole performance. Here, as in the case of the railways, the great economies hoped for have seemed almost equally illusory, and the net result appears to be an increase instead of a lowering of the cost to the public."

The further the country goes into control and operation of public utilities the greater the cost to the people and more inferior the service. If the Republican Congress which comes into being on March 4 does nothing more than to disentangle the rail and wire muddle and put an effective stop to the romancing and experimenting of the Postmaster General it will have been worth while.

BIG PROFITS OF PACKERS

Packers' profits in the first three years of the war were from three to five times as large as their profits in the three years preceding the war.

In 1917, the first year of American participation in the war, the profits of the "Big Five," including the Armour, Swift, Morris, Cudahy and Wilson interests, ranged from 19.3 per cent for Armour to 33.4 per cent for Swift.

The total profits of the "Big Five" grew from \$22,108,000 in 1914 to \$95,639,000 in 1917.

These are some of the developments in the Senate agriculture committee hearings on the Kendrick Meat Control bill, as a result of investigations made by Stuart Chase, of Chicago, expert accountant for the federal trade commission and the food administration.

During his testimony Chase declared that neither he, the commission nor the packers themselves know what the profits of the packers really are because of their method of handling subsidiary companies, the addition of profits to capital expenditures, charging them to profit and loss, and so on. Chase commented that, even under food administration regulations, the packers made as much money as before, though these regulations may have prevented them

from boosting their profits above former records.

Some Interesting Figures

Chase, during the course of his testimony, offered some interesting figures. He showed that, during 1914, Armour profits amounted to \$7,640,000, as against \$27,137,847. Swift in 1914 made \$9,661,000, against \$47,236,000 in 1917. Morris in 1914 made \$2,208,000 and \$8,012,000 in 1917. Cudahy in 1914 made \$1,402,000 and in 1917 \$4,935,000. Wilson and company made \$8,319,000 in 1917.

Mr. Chase further reported that presidents and vice presidents of packing concerns receive salaries ranging from \$50,000 to \$125,000 and have sources of income as officers of subsidiary companies. He estimated that in a single year the packers expended more than \$50,000 to influence legislation and many thousands of dollars to obtain favorable publicity.

GERMANY TRIES POPULAR ELECTION

(Greensboro News.)

It is interesting to note with what energy the German voters entered into their first election after an untrammelled franchise became theirs. Until the overthrow of the Hohenzollerns the German voter was a rather negligible creature. In the first place the vote was denied to a great number of persons entitled to it, and then many in the upper classes were the possessors of from three to five votes. There was plenty of plural voting, not enough of popular voting. But this time millions crowded to the polls, men and women.

Election day and the days just preceding it were great days for the bill posters. Berlin was plastered with signs, extolling the merits of the different candidates and parties; the streets were covered with dodgers, pamphlets and handbills. The newspapers were considerably put out because all the available paper stocks were used up for that purpose. The election was quite a public affair. The voters had plenty of parties to tie to; Centrists, German Nationalists, German Democrats, Majority Socialists, Independent Socialists, Peoples Party, Citizens League.

The women seem to have shown great zest. Unlike the women of America they did not have to beg or threaten for the vote; it was thrust upon them, and they seized it with great zest. It was a bad day for voting, the weather being out of tune—which somehow is characteristic of the weather on election days—but this was a small thing to these husky German women after what they had gone through in the last few years, things like loading freight cars and the like. It is true that some of them showed a little too much zeal. Some ladies took the inmates of an idiot asylum to the polls and voted them en bloc, but things like that are somehow a concomitant of democracy and the yearning for uplift via the ballot box. The German women are learning fast.

Besides indicating the interest of the Germans in a republican form of government, the election is an indication of the extreme thoroughness with which they go at anything. Here was something new, and like a child with a new toy they take it up wholeheartedly, with a complete outfit of parties and creeds.

And if there is any comfort to be derived from any German doing it is in the fact that the Spartans, those Teutonic Bolsheviks, were completely flattened out. An admitted minority, they will not be allowed to run wild in Germany, which makes the problem of the peace makers at Versailles that much easier.

Pluck, promptness and perseverance are three essentials of success.

A definite, logical plan is what brings results, big results, too, when put into operation. Remember this.

NOTICE OF SALE OF LAND FOR PARTITION

Under and by virtue of the authority conferred upon me by a decree of the Superior Court of Henderson County, North Carolina, in the case of H. D. Hyder and L. S. Hyder against W. D. Brock and wife — Brock; Virginia Ferguson and husband, Eugene Ferguson; Janie Kenoley and husband, James Kenoley; Laura Clark and husband, J. M. Clark; Sallie Townsend and husband, M. W. Townsend; Clio Haskins and husband, F. H. Haskins; Bettie Clark and husband, J. W. Clark; Neoma Pace and husband, J. M. Pace; T. J. Brock and wife, Lillian Brock; and J. J. Justice and wife, Violet Justice, I will sell at the court house door in Hendersonville, N. C., at 1 o'clock p. m., on the 3rd day of March, 1919, it being the first Monday in said month, at public auction to the highest bidder for cash, for the purpose of making partition among the tenants in common, the following described pieces or parcels of land, lying and being in Blue Ridge Township, Henderson County, North Carolina, bounded and more particularly described as follows, to-wit:

1st Tract: All those 82 acres in Henderson County aforesaid part of patent 250, on the waters of Tumble Bug Creek, and being the land conveyed by deed from Wm. Redmond, Jr., et al to P. J. Brock, said deed

being dated April 1, 1876 and recorded in Book 30 at page 433 of the records of deeds for Henderson County, which land is described by metes and bounds as follows: Beginning on a dogwood, Hicks' N. W. corner, and runs west 63 poles to a chestnut oak, Brock and Jones corner; then south 50 degrees west 113 poles to a hickory stump, originally J. M. Justice's corner; thence south 52 degrees east 158 poles passing corner, and Justice's bluckgum corner, to a spanish oak in the old Hicks, now R. Fortune line; then north 98 poles with a marked line to a chestnut; then with a marked line north 8 degrees east to the beginning. Containing 82 acres. Excepting, however, from this boundary, 25 acres sold and conveyed by P. J. Brock and wife M. A. Brock, to J. B. Phillips, by deed recorded in Book 43 at page 382 of the records of deeds for Henderson County, North Carolina.

2nd Tract: All that tract of land described in a deed from J. H. Justice to P. J. Brock, dated 11th day of March 1874 and recorded in Book 75 at page 141 of the records of deeds for Henderson County; said land lying and being in the county

aforesaid bounded as follows: viz: Beginning on a stone in J. J. Justice's corner; thence west with a conditional line to a hickory, Justice's corner; then with Justice's line to a black oak and pine; then west with a conditional marked line to Monroe Brock's line; then northeast to a stone on or near the top of the ridge; thence with P. J. Brock's line to the beginning. Containing 3 acres, more or less, lying on the waters of Tumble Bug Creek.

3rd Tract: Joining the lands of John H. Justice and others. Beginning at a stone on the north side of the road and bears south 85 degrees east 12 8-11 poles to a stone in the original line; thence with the same north 5 degrees east 12 8-11 poles to a stone and pointers; thence north 85 degrees west 12 8-11 poles to a stone and pointers; thence south 5 degrees west 12 8-11 poles to the beginning. Containing one acre, more or less.

Said land will be offered for sale in separate tracts and then as a whole, and the manner of sale in which it brings the most money it will be sold by.

This January 27, 1919.

W. C. RECTOR Commissioner.

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