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FRENCH CARRYING SYSTEM IS FAULTY Need of Better Interior Lines of Commerce Felt.

Paris, Dec. 20.—(Correspondence of the Associated Press.)—Nothing has availed to check the increase of the cost of living in France. Bread only has escaped the tendency. Everything else considered, it costs at least 75 per cent more to live in France today than it did three years ago. War, of course, is the first explanation, but economic experts declare that difficulties of transportation and high freights form the chief factors and that these difficulties are due largely to the failure of the government to have ever carried out the projects for interior navigation which were urged by de Freycinet Baudin and Audiffred, years ago. In the opinion of these same economic authorities the failure of France to realize these canal projects has been responsible for her anomalous position in the world-carrying trade.

Although some 200 to 500 miles nearer America and from two hundred to two thousand miles nearer the extreme Oriental markets than Antwerp or Hamburg, the French port, of Marseilles before the war was surpassed by those Belgian and German ports in Central European trade to the Orient, while Bordeaux, Havre and other French Atlantic ports were far behind them in trade with the two Americas. The marvellous internal organization of navigation and transportation in Belgium and Germany enabled them to drain toward their ports nearly all the foreign bound traffic of Central Europe though lengthening the route and increasing the time of delivery.

Geneva, for instance, is further from Antwerp than it is from Bordeaux, yet in 1912 Bordeaux received almost nothing from Switzerland while Antwerp received 31,000 tons to be shipped by its longer route to European ports. In the same year Bordeaux received and forwarded to Geneva only 4,500 tons while Antwerp was a way station for 44,000 tons going into Switzerland.

The new necessities created by the war, however, made Bordeaux the port for 35,000 tons of cotton and grain and other commodities en route for Switzerland in 1915. Economic authorities argue that with proper facilities four years ago Bordeaux would have received a lion's share of the 75,000 tons of ingoing and outgoing Swiss traffic in 1912.

The question is one of the Rhine against the Rhone so far as concerns Central European traffic for which Switzerland acts as a sort of "turntable" and with it are connected intimately the long discussed projects of the Rhone canal, the canal from Marseilles to the Rhone, and the canal from the Rhone to the Gironde with Marseilles and Bordeaux as the termini.

De Freycinet and other far-seeing statesmen who elaborated these canal projects tell from power before they were realized but economic authorities believe that the era of reconstruction after the war will see France

turning first of all, in the matter of public improvement, to the question of transportation.

Two of the most important projects waterways remain to be built; one of them lateral to the Rhone will continue the system from Havre and Paris to Marseilles by way of Lyons and will enable the Rhone to compete with the Rhine for Swiss trade to the Mediterranean; another connecting the Rhone with the Dordogne—that is to say connecting Lyons and Marseilles with Bordeaux—will give Switzerland a shorter route to American ports than that by the Rhine.

Ill-conceived rivalry of the stronger railroad interests is accused of retarding these projects as well as a shorter line, but of comparatively greater importance, in the North and East connecting the canals of the Escaut, the Meuse, and the Chiers, and serving as connecting link between the iron and coal districts.

Had the canals built and projected been in efficient operation at the beginning of the war, it is probable that they would have eased transportation difficulties so as to have kept the cost of living much nearer normal; they would at least have kept coal from going from 40 francs to 130 francs a ton.

Cough Medicine for Children.

Mrs. Hugh Cook, Scottsville, N. Y., says: "About five years ago when we were living in Garbutt, N. Y., I doctor two of my children suffering from colds with Chamberlain's Cough Remedy and found it just as represented in every way. It promptly checked their coughing and cured their colds quicker than anything I ever used." Obtainable everywhere.—Adv.

MERCHANTS SHOULD GIVE LOWER PRICES IN COLLECTIVE ORDERS.

Merchants should cooperate with the organized farmers by securing for them the lowest possible prices when they buy collectively, and thus encourage the spirit of community organization.

There is now much more prejudice among merchants against organized farmers who buy and sell cooperatively than exists among organized farmers against local mercantile interests. Since there can be no notable rural community development without community organization, the merchant who really wants to see the wealth-creating power of farmers increased should encourage and aid members of the Farmers' Union in making the organization render better service.—J. Z. Green, in The Progressive Farmer.

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