

SUGAR SURVEY IS MADE BY GEORGE NOX M'CAIN

Declares American Consumption Has Been Largely Increased by Prohibition and Consequent Demand for Luxuries Not Heretofore Used by Many Persons

By GEORGE NOX M'CAIN

The story of the present sugar shortage reveals one of the most interesting phases of American economic life that has ever been written.

Its genesis is a year old. Its field covers two hemispheres. Its details reach into the homes of millions.

For days past I have followed its trail from the counter of a chain store in Philadelphia, through restaurants and hotels where a meager portion is doled out in diminutive envelopes, as in war time, and into the offices of refiners, who declare that they are almost as much at their wits' end as the customer who traipses from grocery to department store and back again in a vain search for the elusive sweet.

To begin at the beginning.

The world war played havoc with the sugar beet fields and refineries of Belgium, France and Italy. The lack of ocean tonnage cut off the world's supply from the English and French colonies and the cane and beet sources of South America. Last year and while the war was still in progress the United States Government entered the field and purchased the entire sugar crop of Cuba.

But even then this government had an elephant on its hands. It had the sugar but no ships with which to bring it to our shores. At this point the royal British sugar commission came forward with a proposition that it would furnish sufficient tonnage to bring the crop to this country, provided the United States would sell it one-third of the amount for its people's use, which a limited supply would be furnished other European allies.

Then Refiners Stepped In

The offer was accepted and the sugar was delivered to refiners on the Atlantic seaboard in British bottoms. Then it was that a clever idea was suggested by three American refiners. Why not, instead of shipping England's share of the raw sugar across the sea, have it refined in this country, thus enabling American refiners to insure that their refineries could continue in operation during the dull times that threatened the industry? The United States Government accepted the suggestion, and it was also agreed to by England.

As opportunity afforded, and as the British situation demanded, the American mills refined and shipped to her England's share of the crop. Not all of its allotment was at once claimed by England, so that today the remainder of it is being refined and sent across the sea to its owners. It is these cargoes that are now leaving Philadelphia which have aroused such comment and have created the widespread suspicion that Europe was hoarding at the cost of the people of the United States.

In the meantime certain conditions were at work which tended to create a situation never before experienced in this and, perhaps in any other country on earth. It will explain why the per-capita consumption of sugar in the United States has leaped beyond bounds. While the normal amount per capita for the last year, including the already greatly increased consumption, should not have exceeded 112 pounds, it will reach, if not exceed, for the present twelve months 112 pounds. These figures, I am reliably informed, are based upon late and complete estimates of refiners.

The phenomenal increase in the use of sugar for all purposes began with our entrance into the war. The conservation of food, which took the form of canning and preserving, was the start. People preserved and canned in 1917-18 who had never done so before.

The world war in the United States inaugurated an era of industrial prosperity unknown in its history. The

dawdling, and delay, and indecision, until right under the nose of the American the royal British sugar commission stepped into the market and captured the bulk of the Cuban crop, leaving the United States to take what she could get in the market of the world. It was a lamentable end to a perfectly clear and safe proposition at the outset.

The necessity for securing a great crop of sugar at our very doors was apparent. It meant the continuous and speedy delivery of the raw material and at a minimum cost for ocean carriage.

The failure to take advantage of this opportunity has now left the refineries of the United States the alternative of purchasing raw sugar in the far East, along the borders of Asia, in South America, or wherever it can be obtained, with the addition of costly ocean freights to add to the burden of the ultimate victim—the American housewife.

Will Add to Cost

For the sugar refiners will only add this item to the cost of manufacturing, which in the end will be paid by the consumer.

Louisiana is the great cane producing state of the Union. Its crop is always figured in the matter of the country's supply. Upon whatever plea based, competition, increased cost of production or what not, the government decided that a special concession should be made in favor of the Louisiana sugar grower and a price of seventeen cents per pound was therefore placed upon the product.

This precedent, disturbing as it is to the country, has far wider effect. Cuban growers are now in a position to demand higher prices for their product, and simply on the basis that if the United States can pay seventeen cents for Louisiana sugar it can pay a higher price to Cuba than Cuba has ever before received for its crop.

The question of discrimination against the best sugar growers and refineries of the West and East apparently does not enter into consideration. It is a fact that the best sugar refineries are in a state of universal indignation over the situation, which is an anomaly in the industry in this country. Many of the refiners are already at daggers drawn over the situation.

With southern sugar at seventeen cents a pound and finer grades of cotton selling at almost any old price and ordinary stock commanding forty cents per pound, the sunny South, under the fostering care of the government, is in a position this year to recompense herself, as an interested manufacturer remarked, for the losses she sustained in the Civil War. The South is today, in the face of existing conditions of prosperity, a land flowing with milk and honey.

But what of the future? It is a subject, as to sugar, upon

which no ordinarily well-informed individual cases to be quoted. When large contracts which are compelled to purchase sugar at any price to keep their varied industries in operation are today importing their raw sugar to be refined for their own use, that is costing them, laid down in an Atlantic port, the tidy sum of fourteen and one-fifth cents per pound, the householder can make his own estimate as to what he is likely to pay for the sugar on his cereal and for his morning sip before the flowers bloom in the spring.

LIQUOR CASES DELAYED

Local Actions Transferred to Judge Thompson's Court

None of the liquor cases that were expected to come up today in the United States District Court in the Federal Building was called, and a large crowd of liquor men who had gathered to listen to the evidence against the "wets" were disappointed.

The cases had been listed before Judge Dickinson, but, owing to his indisposition, were transferred to Judge Thompson's court. The action filed Judge Thompson's calendar. The cases are not expected to come up before tomorrow. Most of the liquor men consumed in choosing a jury for the trial of Con S. Eagle, proprietor of the Eagle Hotel, Tenth street below Chestnut, who is charged with having kept a place of ill repute.

The first liquor case to be reached tomorrow is expected to be that against John McKenna, a saloonkeeper at Thirty-seventh and Market streets.

BEWARE OF MUSTACHES!

25 Hairs in London Man's Appendix, but Physicians Here Skeptical

Are mustaches dangerous? London doctors say so. Physicians here are skeptical, but barbers are quick to agree that mustaches are perilous.

Warfare against them began when a patient in a London hospital was found to have twenty-five hairs, said to have come from his mustache, in a clump in his appendix.

Dr. Howard S. Anders chuckled when he read the report from London. "I've worn a mustache since I went to Penn," he said, "and when I had my appendix removed I do not remember that any part of my mustache was found in it."

Girl Student Accidentally Shot Middlebury, N. Y., Dec. 9—Miss Grace, of Hudson Falls, N. Y., a sophomore at Middlebury College, was wounded in the head last night by the accidental discharge of a revolver which she was handling in her room. Early today she was unconscious.



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