

BIG U. S. INCREASE IN MANUFACTURES

Annual Commerce Report Reveals Optimism on Business Growth

GENERAL TRADE IS BOOMED

By Associated Press

Washington, Dec. 29.—Stock-taking of the Nation's domestic business for the last year gives "a feeling of satisfaction" as to the progress made, the Department of Commerce declared today, in an end-of-the-year statement, and from this day's position, it added, "there are no serious obstacles in sight which should hinder further advances" in the early new year.

Optimism, borne of the accomplishments of the past months which many officials of the Government regard as a remarkable strengthening of the economic fabric, is evident throughout the statement, which noted that the production of manufactured commodities averaged 60 per cent larger than in 1921.

The farmer received approximately 17 per cent more for his products than in 1921, and the total volume of agricultural products was worth a much greater sum than was that of a year ago.

The unsettled conditions in foreign countries, particularly in Europe, however, still depressing our trade and, to some extent, have no doubt kept the prices of agricultural products below the level of other commodities. But within the last two months, this latter condition has been relieved to some extent.

While dealing only briefly with foreign trade, the review said that American exports had dropped 16 per cent, as compared with last year, but the comparison was on a basis of eleven months, and, in addition, represented a "long climb" from a poor start, according to officials.

Imports to September 22, when the new Tariff Law was effectively, were slightly above last year, and indications are, it was stated unofficially, that the year's total may exceed last year's imports by a small margin.

The total volume of building, ordinarily a measure of the country's business health, was 52 per cent larger in the first eleven months of this year than in the same period last year, and the prediction was made that the full year's record will exceed that of 1921.

The 1922 contracts for eleven months also represented a much greater expenditure of money than for the full year of 1921, it was said.

There was a genuine swell in the volume of general trade, according to the summary, which mentioned a 6 per

cent greater sale by mail order houses and a 13 per cent increase in business by chain stores as indicative of the business tide, declines appearing only in isolated lines.

The only declines of outstanding importance were 7 per cent in bituminous coal and 47 per cent in anthracite, both of which were due to the strike, and therefore were not regarded as indicative of a fundamental fault in the economic structure. They were more than offset, it was added, by the generally higher level of production in all other lines.

The final estimates of outstanding crop showed it to have been about 41,000,000 bushels, or 5 per cent, greater than last year. This was due, it was said, to expansion in winter wheat growing. Prices ranged generally higher. There was a decline of 34 per cent in wheat exports, a condition linked with the foreign situation, but exports of wheat flour were almost the same as in 1921. Savings bank deposits increased uniformly throughout the country, according to the survey, and increases over 1921 also were reported in the 1922 life insurance business.



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The Bootlegger's Bad Ways and Big Profits

The lazy and dreamy old Nassau that in other days traded in sponges and tropical fruits, is to-day a busy commercial center. The sponge-baths are now used as the small craft of the smugglers to reach the South Atlantic coast of the United States, while vessels of all sizes that range from sea-going tugs to a converted Spanish battle-cruiser, carry the cargoes of rum to New York and the New England coast. In the bar-rooms, at the dining-tables, in the lobbies and on the porches of the hotels and boarding-houses at Nassau, the capital city of the Bahama Islands, the bootleggers and whisky smugglers "talk of their plans, tell of their profits and laugh at Uncle Sam." There, according to Frank K. Dolan, who went to the Bahamas to study the rum-runners' methods for the New York Daily News, "a man is either 'right' or 'queer.'" If a stranger is suspected of being "queer"—thought to be a revenue officer, a detective or some one likely to interfere with the rum-smugglers' operations—"he is curtly told to leave town, and in some instances blackjacked and beaten."

In THE LITERARY DIGEST this week, December 30th, there is an informative and interesting account of the methods and operations of the whisky smugglers.

Among many other news-features of timely interest are:

- American Gold to Save Europe Again? Now Comes a "People's Bloc"
- American Blood and Oil
- England's Unemployment Plague
- Niagara Not So Valuable
- Death's Revelation of a New Author
- Baptists Enforcing the Golden Rule

- Our Transportation Strangling Snags in the Way of a Loan to Germany
- Austria's New Start in Life
- How Paper Barrels Are Made
- Radio Eliminating Sea Distances
- What Now Replaces Opera and Ballet in Russia
- Tim Healy and His Ready Tongue

Many Interesting Illustrations Including Humorous Cartoons

"Laughter Is the Sweetest Music in the World"

states the *Detroit Free Press*. Like the refrain of an enchanting melody it lingers in memory, a recollection of happy moments. More pleasing than the most delicate symphony is the spontaneous laughter of a crowd. It dulls care and creates joy. It tones the system. The urge to join is irresistible.

The Literary Digest gathers weekly from the world's press the brightest of the current laugh-provokers. The best of these are presented in the merry motion picture, "Fun from the Press." The funniest incidents, the most laughable jokes, and the pithiest patter on the serious questions of the hour are all included. It's sparkling new every week. Watch for it at your local theater. "Fun from the Press," produced by The Literary Digest, W. W. Hodkinson Corporation, Distributor.

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The Literary Digest

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