

for Imperial Russia. Constantinople may emerge a "republic" like the Panaman, but since the most peaceful of nations finds it necessary to fortify Panama, is it likely that Russia will find less need to defend the door to Odessa and Sebastopol? And

would the world suffer if the Eastern question were at last relegated to the limbo of forgotten "questions," of pragmatic sanctions and family compacts?

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Cotton and Wool

UNLESS present indications are misleading, cotton is likely to profit more from developments arising out of the war than any other commodity, with the possible exception of wheat.

This, of course, is not the popular view. It is only a matter of a month or so since the pitiable plight of the cotton grower received such wide advertisement through the columns of the press and fervid Congressional rhetoric. Philanthropic bankers undertook the formation of a pool for \$135,000,000 to consummate a valorization plan which it was considered unwise to effect through governmental aid. Southern Senators and members of Congress threatened to hold up appropriation bills and other pending legislation unless their agricultural constituents were afforded relief through governmental aid. The suggestions contained in these proposals smacked strongly of the hustings, and economic objections were denounced as spiteful manifestations of sectional animosity.

All this clamor has died away. Cotton has advanced. Since December eleventh, the day after the Department of Agriculture estimated the yield at 15,966,000 bales exclusive of "linters" (the short fibre obtained from the treatment of cotton seed at the oil mills), there has been an advance of approximately a hundred and eighty points, or about nine dollars per bale. The Southern grower, instead of obtaining a grudging bid of six cents per pound for his cotton, can now get eight cents. The South is paying its debts, and conditions are rapidly approaching normal.

This improvement has been in the nature of a perfectly natural recovery from panic. Europe has bought a little more than was expected, and exports, while still largely below the average of recent years, have shown such a surprising increase that confidence is returning. Germany, while unable to import freely, at any rate has bought an enormous quantity of cotton and stored it at warehouses in port and interior towns.

Close students of the textile situation are beginning to take the view that cotton, to a greater extent than ever before in history, will be forced to take the place of wool and flax. This is a development proceeding directly out of the war. In this great conflict which has broken so many precedents,

involving changes of incalculable magnitude, the element of waste in clothing runs into staggering figures. In making calculations of the destruction of fabrics, one is almost inclined to doubt the verity of cold mathematical computations. Statisticians in the wool trade, for example, refuse to work out the multiplication of needs to logical conclusions. They cannot even admit the truth of their own figures.

There are 10,000,000 men on the firing lines, to say nothing of approximately that many more held in reserve. The troops on the firing lines wear out a uniform in only a little more than a month. According to British army specifications, which are, if anything, lighter than those of German and Russian military authorities, it requires six and a half pounds of clean wool to make a uniform, and ten pounds of clean wool for an overcoat. This is equivalent to a little more than thirty pounds of unscoured wool. For the 10,000,000 men on the firing lines, one uniform and overcoat per month would call for 300,000,000 pounds of unscoured wool. These garments, which have to be renewed once a month for seven months, would call for 2,100,000,000 pounds of unscoured wool. This calculation does not take into consideration demands for woolen underclothing, mufflers, sweaters, and woolen or fleece-lined gloves. Neither does it make allowance for the clothing necessities of probably 10,000,000 men held in reserve.

As a result of a recent ruling of the British Army Medical Corps, each soldier on the firing line is to be given a complete new clothing outfit, including underwear, socks, uniform, and overcoat each month. The old outfit is burned for sanitary reasons. This expedient was adopted in an experimental way during the Boer War. The results were so satisfactory that its general operation has been considered necessary for the health of the troops. Such information as has reached this country does not disclose similar practice by Germany, although the uniforms, owing to the hard usage given in the trenches, are said to be rendered practically useless in a month or so. The discarded garments, or what is left of them, are subjected to chemical treatment and then made into shoddy.

Authorities in the wool trade, making conces-

sions for a certain proportion of cotton which goes into "all-wool" garments, estimate that the needs of the war alone—for uniforms, overcoats, underclothing, socks, etc. as well as blankets for horses and men—will call for the wool-clip of 1,000,000,000 sheep per year. According to the most recent estimates, there are only about 603,000,000 sheep in the world. The output of unscoured wool for commerce is a little less than 3,000,000,000 pounds.

That military necessities will call for the wool output of 1,000,000,000 sheep when there are only about 600,000,000 in the world is unthinkable. Nevertheless, the needs are likely to prove so exigent that the problem of obtaining enough raw material for the clothing of the world's civil population will be sufficiently serious to occasion anxiety. The figures cannot be altogether misleading. Most of the men fighting in the armies of Europe are peasants who in peaceful pursuits would probably be satisfied with one suit of clothes in five years and an overcoat every ten years. On the basis of a new uniform every month, the European fighting men in one year are wearing out more clothes than they ordinarily would wear out in sixty years of peaceful existence.

The only fibre to which the textile world can turn to make substitution for its clothing necessities is cotton. Flax is practically out of the question. The Russian flax crop this season was forty per cent short of normal. The output of Ireland is too small to be of commercial importance in such a crisis. Belgium and northeastern France produce the finest flax known to commerce. The River Lys in peaceful times is lined for a hundred miles on both banks with the flax floats which have been sunk in its sluggish waters for the purpose of "retting." This year and next the Lys will yield none of its matchless fibre to the linen consumers of the world. Moreover, the loss of Belgium flax seed will be severely felt, as this is considered more desirable for planting than any other variety. The best authorities in the linen trade both in this country and Europe take the view that there would be a great shortage of linen until 1917 even if the war should stop immediately.

On these premises, therefore, it looks as if the cotton crop of the South would be forced to fill the gap made by an almost unbelievable shortage in woolen and linen fabrics. It makes no difference whether the increased use of cotton comes from the adulteration of "all-wool" fabrics, or by way of complete substitution. It may even be doubted whether the increase will be wholly temporary. Cotton has a habit of extending its uses and holding most of the gain. By the time this war is over the world may find that it has lost nothing through the partial substitution of cotton for wool and linen.

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Emerson's Feeling Toward Reform

"**M**ADMEN, madwomen, men with beards, Dunkers, Muggletonians, Come-outers, Groaners, Agrarians, Seventh-day-Baptists, Quakers, Abolitionists, Calvinists, Unitarians, and Philosophers"—were the sorts of participants in the Chardon Street Convention in Boston, 1840, who stirred Emerson and all his fellows of that day to gentle cynicism, if not to open satire. The youthful Lowell took his fling at the miscellaneous reformer, first in his Commencement Poem and later, very happily, in the essay on Thoreau. Thoreau believed that the profession of doing good was overcrowded; moreover, he had tried it, and found that it didn't agree with his constitution. Hawthorne made Hollingsworth, the prison-reformer of the "Blithedale Romance," stride over the bodies of his worshippers. Higginson indulged in the usual epigrams in his life of George Ripley. And Emerson, though playful on the subject at times, gave as his conclusion of the matter that "The reforms whose fame now fills the land with Temperance, Anti-Slavery, Non-Resistance, No Government, Equal Labor, fair and generous as each appears, are poor bitter things when prosecuted for themselves as an end."

For the very reason that he distrusted any scheme of reform as a finality, he was averse to laying down a universal rule for joining in social movements or refraining from them. The best single recipe he ever invented left everything to the judgment of the cook: "Solitude is impracticable, and society fatal. We must keep our head in the one and our hands in the other. The conditions are met if we keep our independence yet do not lose our sympathy." But in the matter of proportions he was as vague as Miss Parloa with her "spoonfuls."

His own course was perfectly clear to him. Sympathy with a good cause need not, and often should not, invoke partnership in it. He was of all men independent. Too much association would dull his faculties and thwart his usefulness. So he held off even from Brook Farm, and whimsically deplored the pathetic failure at Fruitlands. He was in the earliest councils on Brook Farm. He even would have been glad to be swept in, but without any choice of his own he stood unmoved as Minot's Ledge while the tide surged beyond him. When the Ripleys and Alcott and Margaret Fuller came to his house to talk things over, "not once could I be inflamed, but sat aloof and thoughtless; . . . I do not wish to remove from my present prison to a prison a little larger. I wish to break all prisons. I have not yet conquered my own house. It irks and repents me. Shall I raise the siege of this hen-