

US AND US Working Out the Trade Pact

DIFFICULTIES TO BE SOLVED

Official negotiations for a Trade Pact between Britain and the United States, in which the whole British Empire is necessarily involved, are about to begin, and our representatives have gone to America for the purpose.

The main difficulties in the way of the pact are plain, and may be stated in a few sentences.

1. The American customs duties are very high while ours are very low.

2. The American duties are highest on manufactured articles, the very goods we mainly export.

3. American imports of British goods from the United Kingdom are worth only £27,600,000 a year, whereas British imports from America are worth £93,300,000.

4. As to the British Empire, we give a preference to the Dominions by taxing (not very highly) produce imported from foreign countries, including the United States. Thus, if we lower our tariff for America we reduce the tariff preference arranged with the Dominions.

America, on her side, also has difficulties. She is now suffering from severe unemployment, ten million of her workers being idle. If she offers to reduce her tariff duties to let in British goods the American manufacturers will make a fresh complaint against Mr Roosevelt; they are already doing so.

But difficulties are made to be solved, and we may hope that no difficulty will be allowed to block the way to this stupendous opportunity for both nations.

A ROOM FOR OLD CRONIES

Three Cheers for the Rotarians

Everybody knows the good the Rotarians do. More and more they spread happiness about the world.

At Dartford they have had a capital idea which we imagine must have sprung up in the kindly heart of the town's librarian, Mr Edward Wood. The idea is a Veteran's Club, which has just been housed in a fine room of the block of buildings occupied by the library and the museum, both of which have lately grown and demanded extra space.

The new buildings giving an opportunity for an extra room, the room has been furnished with 48 chairs, eight tables, and a piano, with central heating and an electric fire, and set aside for the Veterans. They are men who have retired from active daily work and are glad to have a place where they can come together and chat with one another on a rainy day—or on a fine day, as far as that goes, for the Veterans Room at Dartford is bright enough for any day, and we are not surprised to know that it has 90 members over 60, whose lives are made happier by the kindly thought of these Rotarians.

The £3 Windmill

Many a smallholder and poultry farmer has wished for a windmill which would grind his grain while he carried out other tasks.

Mr George Court, of Sutton Valence, Kent, has solved the problem by building a windmill of his own at a cost of about £3. He used old car parts and scrap metal in building the mill, which stands nine feet high and has a sail-span of five feet six inches. It drives an old hand machine and can be adapted for other tasks, such as sawing logs.

Mr Court has farmed in Kent for many years, and has made many other ingenious labour-saving appliances, one of which (a wood-drier) was manufactured from an old kitchen range.

The Story of the White Stick

THANKS to the enthusiasm of the Boy Scouts and other members of Youth organisations, white sticks are being collected in hundreds for the use of the blind. As recorded in the C N not long ago, at least 10,000 are to be acquired.

Many a collector has been asked about the origin of this excellent idea, and, like all ideas of the kind, it is very simple, yet so helpful that credit should be given to its pioneers.

Early in 1931 Mr E. J. Johnson, the Borough Treasurer of West Ham, was visiting Paris when his wife called his attention to the fact that blind people wore white armlets. There are over 400 blind people in West Ham, and Mr Johnson began to think out a way of distinguishing them in highways which were growing more dangerous year by year. He is a Rotarian, and in discussing the matter with his fellow members a scheme for presenting white sticks to the blind of West Ham was suggested. Alderman Thomas Groves, M.P., is Secretary of the National League of the Blind in this town, and he supported the scheme with enthusiasm.

The Rotary Club immediately launched a campaign to make the White Stick idea widely known, and within six months 28 Rotarian Clubs had adopted it. Today the number in the British Isles is 171, and about half the total of our registered blind have

been equipped, free of charge, with a white stick.

The Rotary Movement, however, is international, and so the West Ham pioneers have made sure that its advantages have been pointed out far and wide, with the result that nearly 2000 towns in America have adopted the White Stick, as well as many parts of the Dominions and European countries.

The movement was barely a year old when it was the means of saving two men from drowning. These men had fallen over Newcastle Quay, and strangers, not knowing that they were blind, threw lifebelts to support them. The unfortunate men took no notice of the lifebelts, and those on the quay then saw two white sticks floating, and realised that the men were blind in time to plunge into the water and save them.

Like all true pioneers, the West Ham Rotarians are not satisfied, and are still engaged on a publicity campaign. The latest plan is for a film which will show those who have sight how they can help the carriers of the White Stick when they encounter them in a street or a public building. Kinema slides have already been exhibited.

The C N hopes its readers will do all they can to give to the bearers of this simple symbol the little extra consideration which will make so much difference to their safety and comfort.

Roads in the Air

THE year opened badly with the R A F. Serious damage occurred to eight costly aeroplanes in Scotland through neglect to house them firmly against winter gales.

That was bad enough, for it meant the loss of much costly material. Worse it is to observe the continued heavy loss of lives in aeroplane crashes. On a single day planes fell in the Solent and in a street at Brighton. It would be interesting to know the value of the machines destroyed in the crashes of 1937 which killed about 150 young men.

All too frequently we hear of crashes caused by slight collisions which would mean nothing to a motor-car on a road but mean death and destruction in the air. It will become necessary to plan air

roads, with appropriate day and night land beacons, to prevent air collisions. Planes arriving at A will have to arrive by one such road and leave by another. Even this will be ineffective with poor visibility, or in fog. We approach a future full of strange aerial accidents.

To meet the fog difficulty, the Air Ministry is arranging what are called Horizontal Road Spaces. Space above sea level is divided into four layers:

3300 feet to 6600
7000 feet to 10,600
11,000 feet to 14,600
15,000 feet to 18,000

Carrying height indicators, airmen will confine themselves as directed to allotted roads, and thus avoid collision.

Boring For the New Thames Tunnel

ANOTHER Thames tunnel will soon be taking shape, boring having begun under the river at Purfleet.

The new tunnel will link Purfleet in Essex with Dartford in Kent. On the Essex side a shaft 70 feet deep has been sunk and on the Kent side a shaft 90 feet deep is ready. First a small pilot tunnel is driven from the foot of each shaft under the river. This is what is happening at Purfleet. The pilot tunnel will later be enlarged to the size required, its roof becoming the roof of the big tunnel.

At Purfleet the tunnellers are finding Thames mud, which is excellent for holding the compressed air with which it is necessary to fill the workings. But

on the Kent side chalk is the material, and this does not hold the compressed air which blows away through fissures. So holes are bored in the chalk and liquid cement is forced in under a pressure of a hundred pounds to a square inch. This fills the fissures and so prevents the compressed air from escaping from the workings.

Tunnelling from the Kent side is thus a much slower operation; but it is expected that the tunnellers will meet somewhere beneath midstream by September. The tunnel, a thousand yards long at its deepest and about a mile with its approaches, is expected to be ready by 1941.

Spring Comes in January

WAKING up on a January morning and looking out to find your peach, apricot, and quince trees covered with masses of delicate pink and white blossoms, you would rub your eyes and look again.

That is how the children of the fruit-growing districts of Southern California must have felt last month when their trees burst into bloom. Even in warm California these trees do not usually bloom until March or April, but the long spell of warm weather, with temperatures in the high seventies, has made the trees behave as if it were Spring.

However, in spite of the lovely sight miles upon miles of the pink and white blossoms make against their background

of distant snow-capped mountains, the growers are not happy, for the temperature may take a sudden drop at any time and frost may ruin the crop at this stage.

The owners of the groves have their "smudge pots" ready to set alight at first sign of a frost. These squat, metal lamps are placed at intervals among the trees, and burn a sort of oil which makes a thick black smoke. The smoke cloud over the trees prevents the frost from settling upon them.

This Week's Book Token

This week's Book Token is awarded to Miss Olive Chisham for her letter asking for a book by Rudyard Kipling.

The King's England Volume for the Lake Counties

One quarter of the King's England volumes, in which the Editor is surveying the towns and villages of England and all that is in them, is now completed. The country's welcome to this vast enterprise has been remarkable, and we give below a few opinions of the volume for the Lake Counties. The books are published by Hodder and Stoughton.

A remarkable survey describing all Cumberland and Westmorland worth mentioning. This valuable book on a beautiful district of England will give pleasure to all who read it. The Field

Mr Mee manages to get in a small space facts that are to be found as a rule scattered through quite a big library of books. Evening Express

No descriptive writer can excel Mr Mee in putting much into little, and certainly this book, as the publishers claim, does offer a wider range than most of those on the Lakes. The Scotsman

A volume of many delights. Under Mr Mee's skilful guidance full justice has been done to the subject in all its aspects. Aberdeen Press

Tourist and native alike will find it a treasure house. West Cumberland News

The claim is justly made that this work is unique. The book is indispensable to the tourist and should be possessed by natives and lovers of the two counties, whether living in them or away. Cumberland News

It is not a dry catalogue of territorial assessments; it fills the stage with pictorial actors who played their part at any time within a thousand years, describes ancient and curious and beautiful things, and enthrals you with the drama that may be hidden behind the life of the most somnolent village. You have only to carry it in your car, turn up the village you are passing through, and heigh, presto! the past lives again. Cumberland and Westmorland Herald

Arthur Mee has done a great service to Cumberland and Westmorland in this book. It tells in a new way the story of almost every hill and dale and every lake and stream around. It is not the pedantic language of the historian or the archaeologist that is used, but that of the lover pure and simple. The charm of Lakeland prevails from first page to last; it is something which does for our Lakeland a task which had long awaited the touch of a worthy artist. If it could be made a textbook for the schools it would be one of the best ways imaginable of inculcating a love and knowledge of their native counties. Penrith Observer

All the places in alphabetical order, and a compact, informative chapter devoted to each. It is packed with curious information about Lakeland valleys and villages and ancient houses, and I for one hope to take it with me on my annual visit to the country it describes. Yorkshire Post

All that is of interest in each place is mentioned, and a very ample record it is of events and notable people, ancient and beautiful things, local lore and customs. The tourist desiring to leave the highroad and explore the byways, the old-world villages, and remote hamlets could not wish for a better guide. In get-up and quality the book is well entitled to take its place in Lakeland literature. Westmorland Gazette

It deserves to be found in the library of all who love the grey villages and green hills of Lakeland. Blackpool Gazette