



WEDNESDAY JANUARY 4 1939

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Weather Forecast

ENGLAND, S.E.—Freshening south-east to south winds, strong or gale at times, veering west; local morning fog; a period of sleet, turning to rain, becoming fairer later; temperature rising to the average for the season after morning frost.

Further Outlook.—Temperature probably falling again in the South. (p. 12)

TO-DAY'S NEWS

HOME

On their visit to Canada this summer the King and Queen will be absent from this country for over six weeks—from May 8 to June 22. They will cross the Dominion to the Pacific Coast. Four days, June 8 to 11, will be spent in the United States, and on the return voyage a visit will be paid to Newfoundland.

FINANCE AND COMMERCE

Stimulated by the strength of Wall Street, the stock markets yesterday reopened after the New Year holiday with a bright tone. Rather easier conditions prevailed at the close, however, following a late setback in dollar securities. (p. 17)

Dollars and francs again appreciated against sterling, the New York exchange falling to \$4.62 9-16 and the French exchange to 176 37-64. (p. 18)

Gold rose to the record fixed price of 150s. 04d. per oz., and subsequently the price reached 150s. 3d. The turnover was £97,000. Silver was 1 l. 16d. higher for cash at 21½d. per oz. in consequence of a "bear squeeze." (p. 18)

Barclays Bank is maintaining its dividend for the past year at 14 per cent., and Martins Bank is increasing its dividend from 14 to 14½ per cent. (p. 17)

The Bank of the Republic of Uruguay has increased the official selling rate for sterling from 8.58 pesos to the pound to 9.50 pesos. The buying rate remains at 7.60 pesos to the pound. (p. 17)

The "Shell" Transport and Royal Dutch Petroleum companies are maintaining their interim dividends for 1938. (p. 18)

Deliveries of tin last month fell from 7,460 tons to 5,837 tons. (p. 17)

M. DALADIER'S JOURNEY

THE FRENCH PRIME MINISTER'S journey to Corsica and North Africa, though not officially regarded in Paris as a reply to recent demonstrations in Italy, was in fact bound to be something in the nature of a counter-demonstration; and in the event it is becoming even more than that, for the applauding and enthusiastic multitudes of Corsicans and North Africans have made it a popular vindication of French rule. Tunis and Bizerta yesterday equalled if they did not surpass Ajaccio and Bastia in their crowds and their demonstrative loyalty. The visit of the head of the French Government is in itself a rare, and, in some of the places M. DALADIER is now visiting, an unprecedented event, and it would in any circumstances and at any time have attracted the interest and delight of the local inhabitants; but there can be no mistaking the significance of the present demonstrations of loyalty to France. The welcome given to the PRIME MINISTER by the islanders at Ajaccio, our Special Correspondent reported, was one of "unmistakable warmth and sincerity," while the speeches exchanged between their leaders and the PRIME MINISTER, both there and at Bastia, expressed on the one hand the unshakable resolution of Corsica to remain a part of France and on the other the firm assurance that France would always know how to defend her own. In Tunisia yesterday there was the same enthusiasm and the same fervent mutual affirmation of loyalties. Since Tunisia enjoys a certain autonomy and is ruled by its Bey under the general direction of the Quai d'Orsay, and since the Italian population is there as numerous as the French, the manifest enthusiasm of the mixed European, Arab, and other native inhabitants is convincing evidence that there is no popular desire for a change of rule. The crowd in Tunis broke through the cordon and almost overwhelmed the PRIME MINISTER in its prolonged and tumultuous welcome. The BEY, himself invested M.

they now regard the Franco-Italian Agreement of 1935 as null and void. The Agreement, which, on account of events in Abyssinia, was never ratified, accorded Italy certain cessions of African territory in fulfilment of the Treaty of 1915 that brought Italy into the War. It is accordingly suggested by the Palazzo Chigi that it is for France to make new suggestions. France may not quite see the matter in that light, but at least the Italian Government's second thought have been better than their first, and a case can be made for negotiating in a friendly and orderly way a general resettlement of the relations of the two countries in Africa.

A Premature Attack

An offshoot of that prolific organization the International Peace Campaign has blossomed into a bitter criticism of the shelter policy outlined by SIR JOHN ANDERSON in the House of Commons on December 21. It is a little sad that a sub-Committee which declares itself to be composed of a number of leading technicians and scientists should show, when they want to deliver an attack, such unscientific neglect of the true character of the proposals they are attacking. Their case is founded upon an assumption that the plans announced on December 21 for the construction of splint-proof and blast-proof shelters on a large scale are the only plans on which the Government are busy. But SIR JOHN ANDERSON made quite clear that these plans constitute only a short-term policy, such as could be some protection to many people within a very short time, and he repeatedly asserted that consideration would be given to the very possibility of deep bomb-proof shelters which his critics advocate to-day. These critics have also omitted to notice that MR. HELSBY, some of whose conclusions on the experiences of Barcelona they quote with approval, specifically stated in an interview on December 22 that the Government's scheme, "considered as a transitional measure, was a very good one indeed." Nor would it be possible to infer from their remarks that as shown during the recent meeting between Ministers and local authorities, a comprehensive scheme of evacuation is being rapidly worked out.

The sub-Committee's pronouncements therefore suffer from political selectivity; nor do they seem wholly sound on the technical side. No doubt it would be foolish to neglect any lessons which may be drawn from the experience of Barcelona, where the policy of constructing deep shelters has materially lowered the casualties inflicted during air raids. But it must be remembered that nearly eighteen months elapsed before Barcelona was able to provide such shelters for about half its population; and if the time factor is important, as it undoubtedly is, swifter, even if less effective, measures require to be taken at once. In the War of 1914-18 trenches were certainly not shell proof, but there could only be one answer to the question whether the troops were safer and felt safer in trenches even of the most hurried construction than in the open. And in the matter of A.R.P. feelings are of the highest importance, for the effect of air raids is to be measured not only by the casualties and the material damage which they inflict, but also by the reactions of the population. Their chief danger is the danger of producing a panic and consequently of disorganizing. Any scheme which promises to

the statements made by others at the plenary meetings under LORD ONSLOW'S chairmanship give satisfactory evidence of the increase of public interest in game preservation. The Belgian Government have now three national parks in their huge colony of the Congo and are forming a fourth in the Katanga region. The Mandatory Administration of Tanganyika is establishing a national park, 4,000 square miles in area, on the Serengeti plains. The Egyptian Government have taken measures to restrict the hunting of their larger desert fauna, have formed two reserves, and hope to establish a national park before long. Additions have been made to the game reserves of the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan and South Africa, and the Governments of Kenya, Nigeria, and Nyasaland are investigating the possibility of forming national parks.

One of the other decisions of the Conference was of great economic importance. The delegates agreed to recommend their Governments to study the possibility of incorporating in the Convention provisions for the exchange of information relating to epidemic diseases of importance to men and animals, on the lines on which they now exchange information as to the movements of locusts. It is to be hoped that this excellent recommendation will be accepted by the Powers in question and that they will also agree to the proposal for the exchange of information concerning persons guilty of persistent infringements of game regulations. The European elephant poacher is rarer than he was, but he is by no means extinct yet.

"Please Queue"

The ineffectual bus-boarder will welcome the news that the queue signs of the London Passenger Transport Board now have behind them the sanction of a by-law. The stopping-points of buses and other varieties of public transport are no place for the weak or the diffident in the morning and evening rush hours. It is not that travellers by bus are as a class selfish and careless of the rights of others. But most of them are, at those hours, travelling under a sense of strain. At the beginning of the day they are striving to get to work at an hour for which they have probably left themselves a very narrow margin. At the end of the day, tired and leg-weary, they are hurrying back to make the most of the little leisure that the evening may still have to offer. Those are conditions in which the fine flower of courtesy and consideration may for a time need some artificial aid if it is to reach perfection. It is not to be doubted that the vast majority of bus users will welcome a small measure of authoritative regulation. It may not be palatable to the husky go-getter who is used to smashing his way into a bus regardless of age or sex. But there are very few of him about. The waiting masses consist of decent, kindly folk who are only too glad to observe the etiquette of the queue when they know that self-restraint is not going to leave them stranded indefinitely on the departure pavement. The occasional penalizing of the unconscionable hustler will hardly be needed to secure the observance of the rule, but it is all to the good that the power to penalize should be in reserve.

Admirers of totalitarian methods will be mistaken if they try to detect in the new by-law a change of heart in British democracy and a disposition to adopt the authoritarian way of

JAPANESE AIMS IN CHINA

THE EXCLUSION OF THE WEST

RECENT TRADE FIGURES

TO THE EDITOR OF THE TIMES

Sir,—In your leading article on Prince Kono's statement of policy you question "Whether our Far Eastern policy during the past 18 months need have been as consistently long-suffering as in fact it has been." This is a question which must have exercised the minds of many in this country, especially of those who read the recent letter from Mr. J. W. Nicolson, with its long list of Japanese encroachments on British trade in China (a list which might easily be extended) published in *The Times* of December 21.

Mr. Nicolson rightly said that British interests in China are worthy of a great deal more public attention than they have received. It is, indeed, astounding that this country should permit one of its largest potential markets to be made an exclusive Japanese trading preserve by the steady elimination of British and other foreign interests. Japan's policy in this respect is too well known to require comment. But whereas formerly she at least maintained the policy of the open door in principle while driving British and American interests out of Manchukuo in practice, now she no longer even pays lip-service to the open door and the Nine-Power Treaty. Instead, Prince Kono refers us to the "New Asia" and tells us to "grasp its meaning." If the Government's "long-suffering" policy is not soon stiffened by something more than diplomatic protests which only earn Japanese contempt and Continental derision, the British trader might as well be told that his extinction is all he can look for since our prestige is to be allowed to decline.

What are the facts? British investments in China are estimated at £300,000,000 and exceed those of Japan and of all other countries put together. In 1936, the last year before the outbreak of hostilities, British exports to China amounted to 12 per cent. of her total imports, while British steamships handled over 40 per cent. of China's open port trade, including a large share of her domestic trade. During the first 10 months of 1938, on the other hand, Britain's share of China's imports declined to 8 per cent. of the total, the United States' from 19 per cent. to 17 per cent., while Japan's share rose from 16 per cent. to over 20 per cent. Significant figures! These, however, seem less surprising when it is remembered that the total British trade with those countries which Japan has annexed from the Chinese Empire since 1895 averages less than 1 per cent. of the total. What has happened in Formosa, Korea, and Manchukuo will happen also in the five Northern Provinces of China, if not in Central China as well, unless Japanese aggression is resisted.

Our visible adverse balance of trade in 1937 was £443,000,000, and from figures so far available for 1938 it does not appear that the current year will show much improvement. We can only pay the colossal bill for rearmament as well as pay for our social services and the interest on loans issued during the Great War if we increase, let alone maintain, our export trade. Surely, therefore, China, with her magnificent possibilities, her natural genius for trade, and her desire for peace, deserves far more support than we have so far given her.

Yours faithfully,

VITAL SUPPLIES

THE LESSON OF A CHART

BRITISH SHIPPING AND ITS TASK

From Our Naval Correspondent

It is a commonplace that this country is dependent for its daily bread, life, and work, to an extent unique among the nations of the world, upon the free import of food and commodities from abroad. The Chart of British Shipping, to be seen on another page, has been published by the Admiralty at the price of 3s. 6d., and is designed to illustrate that dependence graphically. The general reader may be inclined at first sight to ask why such a draft should be prepared and issued by the Admiralty rather than the Board of Trade. The answer is that the importance of what it illustrates—the distribution of British shipping as well as the sources of British imports—is strategic as well as, if not more than, economic.

It is the Navy's task in war to ensure that the vital sea communications of the country are not materially interrupted. For the due performance of that task the Navy must obviously keep fully in touch with the location of the seaborne trade which it must defend; and not only with the distribution of the ships themselves, but with the principal sources of the supplies of various commodities, the distribution of which governs the relative importance of the different sea routes. All these details are to be found in official publications such as the Board of Trade Returns and *Lloyd's List*; they are collected and graphically summarized in the chart.

A DAY IN 1937

The intention of the chart is to show a typical distribution of shipping, and with that object a day has been selected more or less at random—in this case November 24, 1937—and the actual position of each ship on that day has been plotted. Only ships of 3,000 tons and over are shown, those over 10,000 tons being distinguished with a white band. Allowance must be made for this departure from accurate representation in interpreting the chart as it appears to the eye; but it gives an accurate idea of the relative densities of the various sea routes when compared with one another. The chart also gives, for various regions of the world, the principal commodities imported thence into the United Kingdom in 1937, and the proportion of British imports supplied from each region.

Enclosed with the chart is a tabular statement of imports, classified under commodities instead of areas, which indicates the principal sources of supply and the proportion derived from each source, distinguishing Empire sources in heavy type. Certain interesting features of British dependence upon foreign supplies, which are perhaps not fully appreciated by the general public, emerge from a study of this list. The