

# INCREASED DEMAND FOR SHEET STEEL PLATE

## STEEL INDUSTRY STEADILY GETTING BACK TO NORMAL

Since Middle of July Mills Have Gradually Been Resuming.

BEST IN SEPTEMBER Sheet and Tin-Plate Plants Show Most Marked Increase.

Since the middle of July dispatches from steel centers have borne frequent announcements of resumption of activity at various plants. Prior to that time, each week for many months had added its quota to the sum total of furnaces blown out and closed down.

The increase in activity over the past two and a half months has been steady, but in one respect at least it has been fundamental. Pig iron furnaces have been blowing in.

Net gain for August was only one furnace, bringing the total in blast on September 1 to seventy. But since the latter date announcements of furnace resumptions have been fairly frequent, and at the moment there are three or four idle stacks which will probably resume in the course of the next two weeks.

Many Plants Resume. It is impossible to state the exact number of furnaces now in blast, and it would be unwise to hazard a guess as to the probable iron output in September, compared with the 354,193 tons in August. Complete figures are not yet available.

The record of furnaces blown in during the month includes one furnace of Central Iron and Coal Company in Alabama, the Mattie stack at Girard of A. M. Byers Company, two blast furnaces at the Newcastle works of Carnegie Steel, one at the Woodland plant of Jones and Laughlin, one of Rogers Brown Iron Company in Buffalo; stack No. 3 of Shenango Furnace Company, Leontia furnace of United Iron and Steel, Valley Mould and Iron plant and the Cherry Valley furnace of Hanna Furnace Company.

Steel plant resumptions have been most marked in the case of mills producing sheets and tin plate. The record of sheet mill activity in the Mahoning Valley is especially significant. On September 3, only 4 of the 105 sheet mills in this region were in operation. Within three weeks this number was almost doubled, mounting to 71 September 20, and to 86 September 28.

Others Increase Output. From the last week in August to the last week in September Republic Iron and Steel plant operation was increased by the addition of two open hearth furnaces, one tube mill, two skelp and three sheet mills.

Youngstown Sheet and Tube added in the same period two open hearth furnaces, one tube mill, fifteen sheet mills and increased the output of rod, wire and conduit departments.

Brier Hill Steel added five sheet mills, three open hearth and plate mill output are less today than a month ago. Operations of Mahoning Valley Steel increased during the period by the addition of two sheet mills, one tube mill, one hoop added three and Trumbull Steel five sheet mills, and the latter also placed in operation three tin mills.

Plattsburgh American Sheet and Tin Plate were at various times during the month increased by the addition of eight tin plate mills at the La Belle plant, ten hot mills at the Carroll works and five hot mills at the New Philadelphia (Ohio) plant.

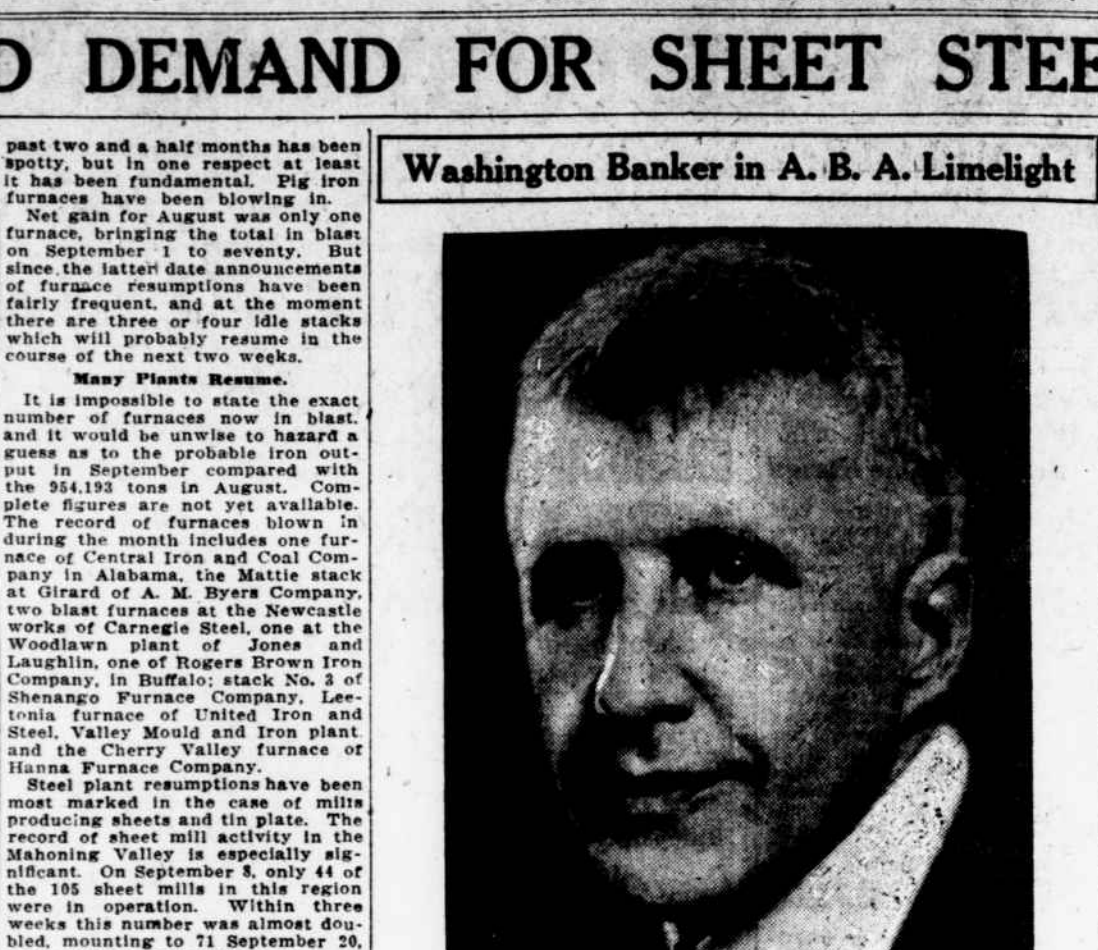
Other resumptions of the month include six hot mills of McKeesport Tin Plate Company, four mills of Standard Tin Plate Company, of Cannonsburg; six hot mills of the Stark-Berger plant, four sheet mills at Nile works of Falcon Steel, structural mill, and Chicago Heights hard steel bar mill of Inland Steel, and an addition of 2,000 men to the working force at the Newmarket plant of Wheeling Steel and Iron.

Marked Decrease in Curb Activity. NEW YORK, Oct. 3.—There was a marked decrease in activity and outside interest shown in the trading on the New York curb market today, about the only groups which displayed any vigor being the mining stocks and the low-priced oil shares. Individual issues generally were in supply at moderate declines after the opening, although some stocks attracted attention because of persistent buying at moderate gains.

Burns Brothers, New York stock, was traded in at 37 1/2, and Parrell Coal ranged from 15 1/2 to 17 1/2 during the first half of the day. Glen Alden Coal was quiet, only a small amount of business being transacted in the morning. Durant Motors was in moderate demand, ranging from 24 to 24 1/2, and Peerless Motors was steady at 38 1/2.

Tobacco stocks were firm. Philip Morris selling at 5 1/2 to 6, and R. J. Reynolds, R. J. was traded in at 37 1/2 to 37 3/4. United Retail Candy was firm, with sales at 6 to 6 1/2, while Sweets Company was heavy, ranging from 2 1/2 to 3 1/4. Radio common continued to be expected from the consolidation of the wireless interest and was in demand, selling at 2 1/2 and 2 3/4.

The petroleum stocks did not make a substantial response to the further advance in crude oil announced since Saturday. Some of the lower priced issues were firm, Simms Petroleum selling at 6 1/2 to 7, and Skelly Oil was bought in moderate amounts at 4 1/2 to 5. Cities Service was strong, selling at 13 1/2 to 13 3/4, the preferred sold at 4 1/2 to 4 3/4.



Washington Banker in A. B. A. Limelight

Manager of the Washington branch of the Fidelity and Deposit Company, of Maryland, who is a delegate to the annual American Bankers' Association convention now in session in Los Angeles, has announced at the convention that his firm is now issuing blanket protection against forgery to American banks. The inauguration of this policy was decided upon only after careful study of the subject and a compilation of data covering the past ten years.

In discussing the subject, Mr. Grant said: "In 1907-8 some of the surety companies of this country made the first effort to write what is known as blanket forgery protection for banks. Circumstances compelled the companies to withdraw the policy from the market in 1910 because of the enormous losses. The weakness of their position lay in the insufficient data collected prior to the issuance of the policy, nor had sufficient study been given the subject to enable the companies to handle properly the character of the risk."

"There has been a constant and growing demand, however, on the part of the banks for this protection. The question has been before the Surety Association of America several times each year since 1910, and on each occasion the companies have declined to issue the policy."

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Exchange differences between countries would have relatively little effect in trade if these differences could be known in advance for certain periods. It is the unforeseen fluctuation that causes trade uneasiness.

These changes in exchange have been noticed about two years ago when, in the spring of 1919, foreign governments ceased "pegging" their currencies. The following table gives the record since 1913:

Foreign Exchange Rates 1913-1921.	1913	1914	1915	1916	1917	1918	1919	1920	1921
Per 100 francs	187.10	183.10	180.00	228.32	215.10	215.10	215.10	215.10	215.10
1913 monthly av.	187.10	183.10	180.00	228.32	215.10	215.10	215.10	215.10	215.10
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1916 monthly av.	187.10	183.10	180.00	228.32	215.10	215.10	215.10	215.10	215.10
1917 monthly av.	187.10	183.10	180.00	228.32	215.10	215.10	215.10	215.10	215.10
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1921 monthly av.	187.10	183.10	180.00	228.32	215.10	215.10	215.10	215.10	215.10

The decline, which began in 1919, was not the sharp decline that the last part of 1920, when the bottom was reached. Sterling was lowest in February, 1920, but recovered only to drop again in November almost as low. French and Italian exchange showed the same fluctuation but reached their lowest point in December, 1920.

This year there was a steady gain until the middle of the year but since then another decline. This repeats the history of last year. French, Italian and German exchange have struck new low points. Will the decline continue toward the end of the year as it did last year? Foreign traders would like to know.

The conditions that have brought about this wide difference in money is not the wide difference alone, but largely the trade balance. The Federal Reserve Board estimated the unfunded balance at the end of July, 1920, created since the armistice at \$2,000,000,000. The balance sheet for the last year is somewhat as follows:

Exports to July, 1921	Imports to July, 1921	Balance
6,719,000,000	3,967,000,000	2,752,000,000
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Increased unfunded balance—\$1,500,000,000. Total to July, 1921, \$1,500,000,000. While this is necessarily a very rough estimate in some details it is not enough to show the chief factor causing a reduced value of foreign money in terms of our money. The imports of gold have continued large all through 1921 and no doubt helped the situation to some degree, but this cannot be expected to adjust the large balance since this would require more gold than is now in the hands of all the European governments combined.

An estimate, about April last, spring placed the gold reserves in all the central banks and government agencies at \$4,326,000,000, of which \$2,525,571,000 or 58 per cent was in the United States. The imports of gold were very small from the armistice to March, 1920. From November, 1918, to April, 1921, the net gain was only about \$14,000,000. The exports had been so heavy in 1919. As our trade balance began to grow in 1920, however, imports began, as foreign nations tried to correct the difference in the balance of trade.

The imports of gold in May yielded a net balance of \$8,000,000. June, \$15,000,000 and July, \$34,200,000. Altogether this is a gain of \$57,200,000 in our balance since November, 1918. This should not be confused with the net gain of \$512,000,000 in gold for the last fiscal year mentioned above. A large part of which merely offset previous losses by excessive exports.

Gold movement as a corrective of exchange differences is therefore inadequate to balance the situation. The checking of the short-time fluctuation is another matter, probably within the possibility of control by international bankers with the assistance of government Treasury offices. Perhaps some method of fixing exchange rates for given periods, with definite relation to certain other trade factors might be worked out. This problem is largely one growing out of the war and cannot be met by any immediate adjustment of trade. A new par for foreign currencies has been established in effect, but not yet recognized by the market.

# UNSTABLE EXCHANGE HANDICAPS FOREIGN TRADE

## Growing Trade Balance Against Europe Not Offset by Gold Movement—Speculation Delays Business.

(By The Washington Herald Economist)

The important effect of foreign exchange rates on foreign trade has only come to the public attention within the last two years. The great depression of foreign money in terms of our money and the rapid fluctuation in exchange at New York has been an after-war development, so serious as to bring suggestions that an international conference will be held in London in the near future to discuss the ways and means of stabilizing exchange.

Two important factors stand out: First—The unfunded balance of indebtedness of Europe has increased from about \$3,000,000,000 to \$4,500,000,000 at the end of June and gold imports of a half billion dollars have not preserved the balance.

Second—Speculative activities in the exchange market appear to have caused many short-time fluctuations, which is a bad influence on trade.

The chief trouble resulting is the uncertainty and is the element most feared by the American shipper. High and low exchange in themselves offer no disadvantages; the trader who is interested in stable relations of money values so that contracts may be made and completed without too great changes of exchange in the meantime.

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The extent of these short-time changes is indicated by the following cases: Sterling dropped 7.5 per cent in two days. French francs fell 10 per cent in three days. Italian lire dropped 22 per cent in one week and Germany marks fell 50 per cent during one month, only to gain 55 per cent in two days.

These fluctuations were due to the rapidly varying need by traders to settle accounts for exports or imports combined with a certain amount of speculative buying by others.

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# Profit Taking Appears in Bond Transactions

NEW YORK, Oct. 3.—Following the higher finish of the market last week, considerable profit-taking appeared in the industrial and rail list, and prices turned irregular, but changes for the most part were confined to small fractions. Demand for bonds continues good, but the market is still showing some effects of the comparatively heavy offerings of the past week or two. A feature of the industrials was the action of Cuba Cane Sugar 7s. Opening at 54 1/2 point above Saturday's close, the bonds dropped to 53 1/2, and then quickly reacted further to 54 1/2. The movement coincided with that of sugar stocks on the exchange. International Mercantile Marine 6s were also heavy, while the copper issues were irregular. American Smelting 5s holding strong and Chile Copper 6s again making 1 1/2.

There was little change in the rails, with the trend uncertain. Chicago Great Western 4s were particularly strong, while the "Prisco" issues, including Northern Pacific and Great Northern bonds were firm. Traction issues were irregular, with Interborough 5s unsteady.

# BALTIMORE GRAIN.

BALTIMORE, Oct. 3.—Wheat—Receipts, 48,467 bus by car and 100 bus by boat; shipments from elevators, 13,264 bus; stock in elevators, 3,895,559 bus. A small sample lot of nearby wheat sold at \$1 per bush. Carlot sales: No. 2 red winter, spot, \$1.23 1/2; No. 2 white, spot, \$1.24 1/2; No. 2 hard winter, spot, \$1.25; No. 2 garlicky, spot, \$1.15 1/2; No. 2 red winter, spot, \$1.18 1/2; No. 2 red winter, spot, \$1.14 1/2. Closing prices: No. 2 red winter, spot, \$1.2