Belgian People Show Appreciation of America's Aid

THEY Have Lately Taken to Decorating Empty Flour Sacks—Their Feeling Is Deep and Real, Writes Correspondent in London—Proof of Gratitude Comes From People Who Are Directly Benefited—Children Shower London Office of Relief Commission With Postal Cards Bearing Photographs of Their King and Queen—Belgian Streets, Squares and Boulevards Getting American Names.

Special Correspondence of The Star.

LONDON, January 13, 1916.

THERE isn't much that the people of Belgium, war stricken, sad and lorn, can do to show their appreciation of what has been done for them during all these long months of war, but there rests in the soul of the nation—a nation still, despite all that has happened—a feeling of the most profound gratitude toward those from the outer world who have fed them when there was nothing to eat, who have clothed them when there was naught to wear.

In many ways has the appreciation of the Belgians been shown. By spoken word from the king, from the queen and from all the ministers of state an effort has been made to express Belgium's feelings, to make the world know that the kindly aid has touched the heartstrings and sounded a note of gratitude.

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What the king has said and what the queen has said, off in that little corner of the royal domain that was once theirs, but which is now in the hands of the enemy, has made the thing perfectly clear, but the most touching evidence comes from elsewhere, from the women and children and the old men, who remain in their invaded country and who are direct beneficiaries of the benefactions of the kind-hearted outer world. Their efforts to show what they feel, to make others know how they are touched, is pathetic.

EMPTY FLOUR SACK RETURNED FROM BELGIUM. THE INSCRIPTION, IN ENGLISH, IS EMBROIDERED IN COLORED SILK.

THE LETTERING AND PICTURE OF SHIP ON THIS SACK ARE EMBROIDERED IN BRILLIANT COLORS

Americans who have been working in Belgium, distributing food and clothing, find their task arduous, not physically, for the stimulus is great, but wearing on their powers of self-control. It isn't scenes of poverty and hungry women and children, for every one in Belgium gets enough to eat now, that fill the eyes and make speech difficult; it is rather the poor, yet the best, efforts of the people to demonstrate their appreciation.

Some months ago a motor car belonging to the commission for relief in Belgium, through which has been distributed that vast quantity of food and provisions which America sent across the seas to the stricken nation, drove slowly through the streets of Louvain. The car flew the American flag, this being before the Germans prohibited such a thing, on the theory, perhaps, that one flag, the German, was enough for a country. A woman, evidently of goodly station, well dressed and refined, stepped in front of the machine, holding up her hand in signal to the American driver to stop. He did so, and the woman advanced toward the car.

Paying not the slightest attention to either driver or his companions, who looked curiously on, she approached the forward part of the car, from the engine hood of which rose the American flag. Simply she lifted one of the folds of the tiny emblem, bent over and kissed it. Then she turned without a word and walked on. And as the car resumed its journey there wasn't much conversation there, either.

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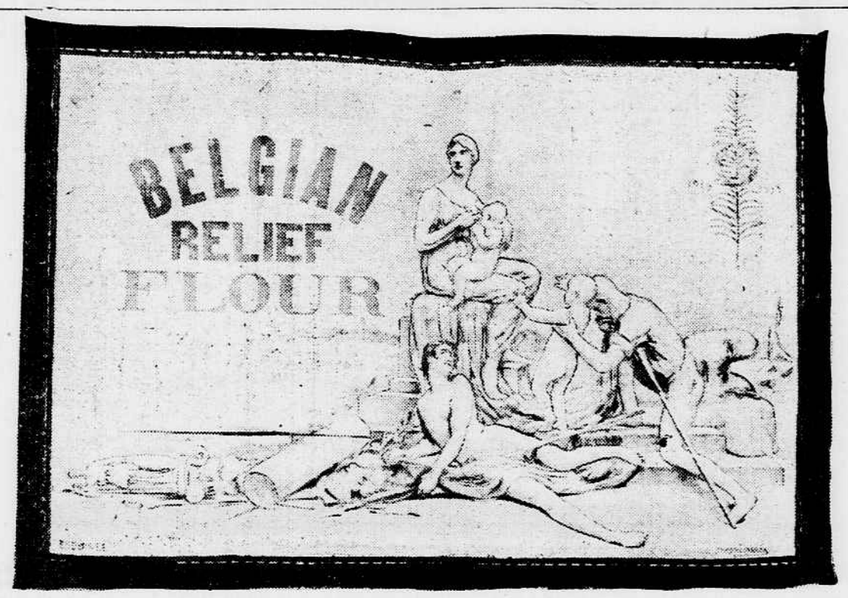
The American flag flies no more on motor cars distributing food in Belgium—the Germans won't have it. But the initials "C. R. B."—commission for relief in Belgium—are known in every hamlet and village, at every crossing of the roads. One of these cars, whether it be laden with grain or occupied only by officials traveling from one point to another, is speedily surrounded whenever it stops. Sometimes there are outward manifestations of welcome, men making speech with the travelers, and maybe a cheer as the car moves on. But often the people stand simply silent, gazing, while the children hover about and touch the hems of the coats of these foreign benefactors.

Streets, squares, boulevards and parks have been named after America. There are places named after President Wilson and Brand Whitlock, the American minister to Belgium. Thus will their names be remembered in Belgium long after they and all others concerned are dead. In Liege there is an Avenue Sperry, after one of the Americans who superintended the distribution of food in that district.

In hundreds of ways do the people make those who are working among them feel that their efforts are appreciated. This is done in its greatest measure when some worker is about to depart, as many of them after months of labor have had to do in order to look after their own affairs.



PAINTING DONE ON AN EMPTY FLOUR SACK AND RETURNED TO COMMISSION FOR RELIEF IN BELGIUM. THE SKILLED ARTIST SHOWS "AMERICA FEEDING BELGIAN CHILDREN." THE CHILDREN ARE BEING PASSED UP BY A FIGURE DEPICTING BROKEN BELGIUM, AND THE MAN IS ALSO RAISING THE AMERICAN FLAG TO HIS LIPS.

Again, many college students from America who have been employed in Belgium have had to return to their books, either at Oxford or Cambridge or in the United States. The announced departure of one of these C. R. B. men causes a commotion in the district where he has been engaged. The good-hearted people arrange for a proper farewell. There are luncheons and dinners, speeches and farewell prayers. Nothing is left undone to make the departing one know beyond all doubt that his work has not passed unnoticed. The municipal fathers get together. Sometimes a watch is purchased and formally presented; some of these have been most beautiful.

Then there are cigarette cases, medals of bronze, commemorating the work that has been done, and illuminated addresses, done on parchment—of these there are always a few, extolling the work of the individual, praising to the highest the country across the water whence he came. These are the finer, intrinsically, things. The finer still, in another way, are the offerings of the poor—bits of embroidery or lace, sometimes atrocious things artistically, perhaps, but all the more valued and valuable because of it.

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Lately the Belgians have struck upon a new idea of showing their appreciation. Thousands upon thousands of sacks of flour have been sent into the country, from America, from Canada, from all parts of the earth, except that lying immediately eastward. The sacks have been found useful. They have been made into underclothes for the children, but now some are being turned to a more picturesque use.

Belgium is a nation of artistry, painters, embroiderers and workers in lace. These have now taken these flour sacks and made use of them to set forth appreciations of their gratitude. Scores are pouring into the head offices of the relief commission in London. Sometimes the brands of the American millers are embroidered with silk, in brilliant blues, greens and reds. Often a genuine artist sets to work, making the poor texture of the sacking his canvas, and there with his brush interprets the feelings of his people. Many—most, in fact—have little artistic merit, which doesn't matter in the least, but others have decided class.

Quite recently, Mr. Hoover, chairman of the commission, received a beautiful model of a small sailing vessel, with sails of silk and with decks laden with small silk sacks, labelled "flour." The ship flew the American flag. And there was an enormous wooden shoe, useful as a jardiniere, patterned after the sabot of the peasant. It came from some commune in Belgium and was genuinely a work of art, with painted scenes and with scallops and beading of brass.

One scene depicted a Belgian family standing on the seashore, with two children dancing their delight at the approach of two steamers from the setting sun, which formed the background for a shadowy Statue of Liberty.

A sort of museum has been started for all these things at the commission headquarters here. With many other things are several volumes, each containing illuminated memorials of thanks and gratitude, or perhaps some painting, etching or other work of the artist. Some of these things are most beautiful. Each mail from Belgium also brings hundreds of post cards, all from school children in Belgium. Each contains some expression of sentiment, written in childlike characters. The children often attempt to do the thing in English and their effort is frequently sadly amusing. It is noticed that almost invariably the post cards bear the pictures of King Albert, or his queen.

FLOUR SACK BEARING PORTRAIT IN OIL OF MINISTER BRAND WHITLOCK. THE INSCRIPTION INDICATES THAT MINISTER WHITLOCK IS THE BAKER FOR GRATEFUL BELGIUM.

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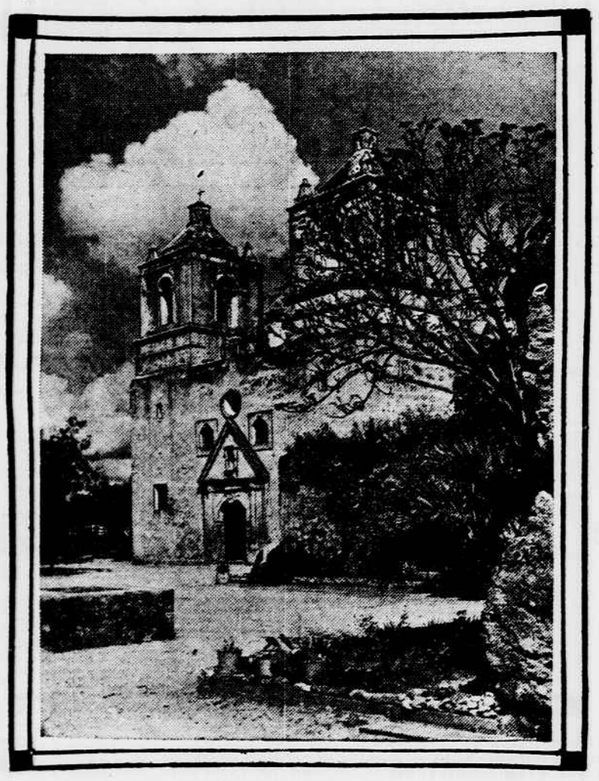
Nation-Wide Movement to Rehabilitate Old Missions Around San Antonio

INTERNATIONAL Exposition in 1918 to the Memory of Franciscans, Who Established Missions in the Southwest—The Five Missions of San Antonio Have All Been Allowed to Crumble Into Dust, Except the Alamo—The Early Mission Work in Texas—The Historic Alamo and Its Defenders.



MISSION CONCEPCION, BUILT IN 1731. THE FRONT OF THE BUILDING WAS FORMERLY FRESCOED IN BRILLIANT RED AND BLUE DESIGNS, BUT TIME AND THE DESECRATING HANDS OF SIGHTSEERS HAVE LEFT FEW OF THESE DECORATIONS.

WITH the approval of Cardinal Gibbons and other officials of the Catholic Church, a nation-wide movement is being launched in San Antonio to rehabilitate the historic missions in and around that city to prevent their crumbling into the dust.

With the exception of the battle-scarred Alamo, which, too, was originally a monastery, the five missions in San Antonio have almost been allowed to crumble into the dust, and today they stand as beautiful, pathetic ruins to remind the chance passerby of their grandeur when the Franciscan fathers were battling against heavy odds to establish Christian civilization in the wilderness of what was, 200 years ago, the northern part of Mexico.

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The complete rehabilitation of these sacred monasteries is a part of the program of the San Antonians who are in charge of the celebration of San Antonio's 200th birthday with a pan-American exposition. Assisting them will be all the resources of an active and energetic group of Texans, who realize that they must delay no longer if these relics are to be preserved. Then, too, the Catholic Church with its many allied organizations, like the Knights of Columbus, will assist materially.

The Texans plan to have the missions completely rebuilt by the close of next year, and to assist them in this work students of early American and Spanish history and eminent architects will be consulted.

There are no pages of American history richer in romance than those which tell of the early development of the southwest by the Franciscan monks, who carried a sword in one hand and a Bible in the other, and came first with Columbus and planted the cross along with the flag of Spain.

The Franciscans were zealous in their missionary work among the natives, and when a Spanish settlement was made they would, after founding their mission, work there, expand their field of operations and establish another mission dedicated to an honored saint. This made what was then a good fortification and protection from tribes of Indians hostile to the religious converts, and gave the means of safe religious and secular instructions.

Because the climate around San Antonio, then known as "the valley of the heart's delight," was so similar to the mild weather they were accustomed to in Mexico, the friars determined to make San Antonio their headquarters, and soon more of the brothers came from Mexico. The first mission was the Alamo, at Mission San Antonio de Valero, which, because of its bath in the blood of patriotic Texans, has made a place for itself in history, and which, on this account, is today in an excellent state of preservation. But not so at the Missions San Jose, Concepcion, San Francisco and San Juan. There were no loving hands to stay these monasteries and prevent their return to the dust.

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Cardinal Gibbons is delighted with the idea of celebrating the 200th anniversary of the coming of the Franciscan fathers, the construction of the famous monasteries and the honoring of the memory of these brave pioneers. A few days ago when he was visited at Baltimore by a committee of San Antonians, who came to get his indorsement of the project and his co-operation, he said:

"To those brave men and women who worked so hard to bring about a better and wider civilization, with no reward other than the blessing of the Almighty, I have only the highest words of praise and regard in my power. To be with you at the 200th celebration of the settlement of San Antonio by the Franciscan friars would be a bright spot in my life. If my life is spared and my strength is equal to the task, I will be with you actually and always in heart and spirit."

Describing the monks at their work, Mrs. Percy V. Pennybacker of Austin, Tex., president of the National Federation of Women's Clubs, in her history of Texas, says:

"Most of the mission work in Texas was done by the Franciscan monks, who on entering the order took vows 'to go barefoot, to wear coarse woolen gowns fastened only by strings, to wear a knotted rope suspended from the waist, to fast often, to deny themselves all social intercourse and to claim for their own no earthly possessions.' Among the most famous of these men was Father Antonio Margil de Jesu, who is said to have preached with such wonderful eloquence as to move every listener to lead a purer and nobler life."

Describing the building of the missions, Mrs. Pennybacker writes:

"When the Franciscans came to found the missions, they did not at first erect the stone buildings. Until the Indians were trained to do the labor, this was impossible. The priests, assisted by soldiers, put up simple structures of wood, with roofs of twigs, leaves and grass. Led by curiosity, and with the gentle demeanor of the holy fathers, the Indians came in crowds to watch the strange work. Soon after they offered their assistance. A bright picture, a bit of red cloth or a string of beads was sufficient for a day's work.

"The lighted candles, the incense, the altar with its handsome fixtures—all the ritual of the church—charmed and thrilled these simple children of the forest. As the priests taught them day by day, some of them began to comprehend what it all meant, and a few of them became true Christians. These were anxious to stay near their sacred teachers, whom they learned to love and were delighted to obey. Many, however, understood only enough of what the priests said to be frightened at what would happen to them in the next world. Moved by fear, they, too, remained near the fathers, having a vague idea that this might save them. In this way quite a number came completely under the control of the priests.

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"Early each morning all Indians in the missions were assembled for prayers; next they heard a mass and a lecture. Each one then went to his task, some toiling in the field, others working on the massive stone chapels which were to take the place of the wooden structures. In the afternoon they had religious services and at night services again. On going to their huts to sleep, they were locked in to prevent their escape.

"In return for this labor they were well fed and clothed, cared for in sickness and old age, besides being carefully instructed in religious doctrines. As the supply of converts came in too slowly for the work the priests wished to accompish, the most trusty Indians were sent out to bring in others of the tribe. In this way a sufficient force was obtained to irrigate the land for miles about the mission, to till the soil until the country smiled like a garden, and to erect the great buildings which are still the pride of every Texan's heart."

On the right bank of the San Antonio river, about four miles from the heart of the city, stands San Jose, the most beautiful of all the missions. This mission was founded about 1720 by Father Margil, who, dying before its completion, was buried, amid the tears and sobs of the people, in the City of Mexico. The carvings and statuary which ornament the front of San Jose are the work of a Spanish artist, Huicar, who devoted many of the best years of his life to this work. The south window of the baptistry is considered by good judges the "finest gem of architectural ornamentation existing in America today; its curves and proportions are a continual delight to the eye." Records show that down to 1762 there had been baptized at San Jose 1,054 Indians.

In 1731 Concepcion, next to the Alamo the best preserved of the missions, was founded two miles below San Antonio. Its twin towers, its picturesque dome, its front gateway, so curiously decorated; its quaint legends, all make this mission one of peculiar interest. The front of this building was formerly frescoed in brilliant red and blue designs, making a dazzling effect; but time and the desecrating hands of ruthless sightseers have left few of these decorations.

A CLOSE VIEW OF THE HISTORIC ALAMO, THE "CRADLE OF TEXAS LIBERTY," SHOWING CARVINGS ON THE DOORWAY. TO THE LEFT IS DOORWAY LEADING INTO WHAT FORMERLY WAS AN INNER COURT OF THE FORTRESS. THE ALAMO ORIGINALLY WAS A MISSION.

Around the Alamo, as the ancient mission San Antonio de Valero is called, the early San Antonio was built, and still today the Alamo is the heart of modern San Antonio, and around its glorious traditions a great city is building.

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In the long history of San Antonio that up to 1850 was filled with romance, bloodshed and tragedy, the defense of the Alamo is a culmination, greater than local or state confines. This historic episode is national in its greatness and international in its fame.

Here, in the grim old chapel-fortress, 183 Anglo-Saxons, Americans in the truest sense of the word, died to a man fighting for their liberty and that of their state against the Mexican despot, Santa Anna.

From February 22, 1836, until March 6, Lieut. Col. William Barrett Travis, aided by the daring frontiersman, James Bowie, and the backwoods philosopher, statesman and soldier, "Davy" Crockett, and the devoted little garrison, held at bay a Mexican army variously estimated at from four to six thousand.

And, their numbers depleted, their ammunition gone, they put their backs to the wall in the grim, old chapel-fortress called the Alamo, and, fighting desperately against overwhelming odds, died to a man for Texas liberty.

Their valor and patriotism is part of the glorious record of our common country, a heritage dear to every true American. Their heroism has been ranked with that shown at Thermopylae and the charge at Balaklava, and will live in the memory of men as long as courage, self-sacrifice and patriotism have any worth in the world.

The mission of San Juan de Capistrano, on the outskirts of San Antonio, was founded in 1731 and was named for Capistrano, a Franciscan friar. The outline of the original plan followed in the building of missions is clearly to be seen in the ruins of San Juan, which stands today as a majestic monument to the patience of the Spanish priests. It, however, was plainer and simpler in its architecture than the other missions. The tower consisted of three open arches and in the middle arch a bell was hung.

The fourth mission is ecclesiastically styled the Mission San Francisco de la Espada. It was established about 1730 on its present site, nine miles from San Antonio. It was named for St. Francis, founder of the Franciscans; called Espada, or sword, from the shape of its chapel tower. The massve tower at the southeast corner, with its cannon and musket holes, carries one back to the days of brave knights and fair ladies, to the stories of feudal times and baronial struggles.

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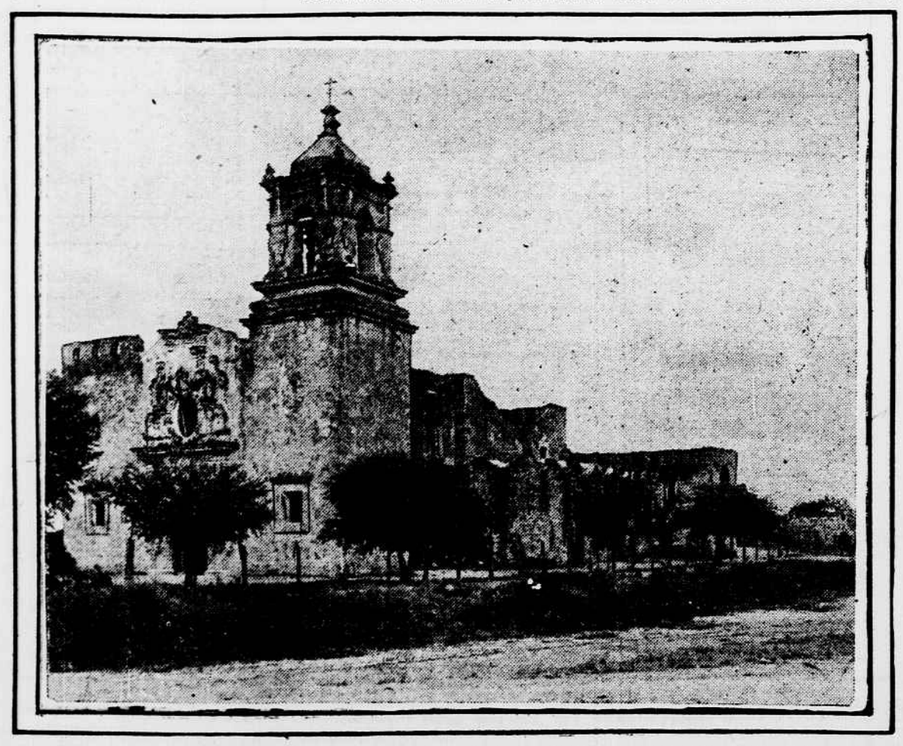
Corner, a Texas historian, in his book, "San Antonio de Bexar," says:

"Let a traveler from the east or north be set down before the gateway of San Jose. In his journeyings he has seen nothing like this before. The mission must be to him an enigma. He hears that it is nearly two centuries since its foundatons were laid by Catholic missionaries, aided by their converts, half, or more than half, savage Indians, all under constant peril of their lives from the outside from the cruelest of hostile tribes, that were uncompromising in their enmity. If he is practical, the traveler will wonder whence the stone came where no quarries were; from where the lime with no kilns; who was the architect, the superintendent of works, the artist stonecutter, the engineer, for he may be told that this old mission was once fortified.

"An intelligent man is bound to ask these things, and if he merely remembers that the mission is on the outside edge of his own territory and civilization he will fail to understand and realize how it was all done; he is even in the dark as to the spirit and design of its founders, much less comprehending the hard, practical fact of the presence of these great masses of masonry and beautiful sculpture in a lone, wide, wild prairie, as he knows the spot must have been in the days of the erection of these missions."

To the brothers—Franciscans—who had the acquirements, resources, energy, devotion and courage to plan, design and build these wonderful missions and to give their lives to establish a Christian civilization around which the history of all Texas and the southwest is linked, San Antonio and the state of Texas is planning an international exposition in 1918 in their memory, which will be a practical form of "constructive pan-Americanism," and which, it is hoped, will show to the world the resources of the Americas, to which the Franciscam monks brought the word of God and the civilization of the east.



MISSION SAN JOSE, SAID TO BE THE MOST BEAUTIFUL OF ALL MISSIONS, WAS FOUNDED ABOUT 1720 BY FATHER MARGIL, WHO DIED BEFORE ITS COMPLETION.

ONION INDUSTRY OF COUNTRY

THERE are many onions consumed in the United States, and it is safe to say that by far the greater portion of these are called "Bermuda," though they come from almost every other place than that colony. They have even, in the event of a shortage in the Texas crop, been brought from Egypt.

As a matter of fact, Texas supplies a large part of the onions which Americans eat. Around Laredo, on the Mexican border, and within a radius of fifty miles north, east and west thereof, is the onion center of Texas. Laredo is the onion capital.

Something like 10,000 acres are planted to onions in this district. The returns are large when the seasons are good and the farmer is experienced. On rare occasions they will net as high as $300 an acre. But that is about the maximum. There are few other crops that require such careful nursing from helpless infancy to robust maturity as that of Bermuda onions.

First of all, the seed must be imported. This seed is a very fragile product, subject to quick deterioration. The seed derived from one Texas crop is useless for planting the next. Only 10 per cent of it will germinate. Therefore, for each crop thousands of pounds of seed are brought each year from the Island of Tenerife, one of the Canary group, off the west coast of Africa. It ripens there just at the proper time to allow fresh seed to be brought to Texas in time for planting. It comes in hermetically sealed packages and begins to pass through New York in August in order to reach Texas in time for the September planting.

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The onion beds must be prepared most carefully—plowed, harrowed, disked, pulverized with hand rakes and generally "fixed." The seed is put in a quarter of an inch deep, and the land is flooded two inches deep with water from the irrigation ditches. The onion belongs to the lily family, and requires a great deal of water. The onions are plowed and watered alternately until they are as large around as lead pencils, when they must be transplanted. Here enters work of the "backbreaking" sort. In Texas it is performed by Mexicans, who are paid from 50 to 75 cents a day. If it were not for the ample supply of this cheap labor, the onion industry would not flourish as it does in the Lone Star state. Transplanting onions consists in pulling each separate plant out of the seed bed, clipping the roots and top, carrying the plants to the onion field proper and setting them anew in rows sixteen inches apart with a space of three or four inches between each plant.

The transplanter works on his knees. In his right hand he carries a stick, with which he makes a hole in the ground two and one-half inches deep, in which he places the young onion. Then he knees his way painfully to the next hole. There are about 80,000 onion plants to the acre. This means that number of jabs with the stick, the same number of planting motions with the left hand and considerable travel on the knees. Then comes the long season of weeding, cultivating and irrigating. At last the onions are so ripe that nine-tenths of the tops have fallen and withered under the ardent sun. Then they are plowed up and laid out carefully in windrows, so as not to bruise them. The tops and roots are cut off with sheep shears, and the onions are then packed in crates that have been distributed along the rows.

About ten years ago the Southern Texas Truck Growers' Association was organized at San Antonio, and about 70 per cent of the onion growers joined it, agreeing to consign all their crops through the sales department of the association. From the beginning all the officers of the association have been practical onion men.

The Texas onions used to be shipped to New York by rail. Now most of them come by water from Galveston. A plan of ventilating the boats so that the onions are kept in good condition has been worked out. The water route is cheaper than the rail rate, and a saving was obtained in this way.

The marketing is done through an extensive organization. There is a permanent office in New York and another in St. Louis. In each there is a highly experienced manager, who has several traveling salesmen under him. They control so much of the onion crop that they are able to keep particular markets from being overstocked, which is the great trouble that the individual grower used to experience.

America Becoming Industrially Independent

A NUMBER of American industries have been lamed if not crippled during the great war by reason of their dependence on foreign countries for certain and sundry essentials to those industries. On the other hand a number of industries have been given a tremendous impulse by the war. There is coming about an industrial readjustment which is to make the United States far richer, stronger and more nearly industrially independent than it was before the war.

When peace returns there will be a slump in gun making, powder making and the armament industries, but the United States will be nearly in a position of independence in war munitions manufacture and as far as concerns ability to turn out field, fort and ship ordnance of all kinds, small arms and all varieties of ammunition the United States will be a world power.

While the textile and paper industries have been beset with difficulties due to a shortage of dyestuffs and chemicals, strong efforts are making to so increase the domestic production of dyes and chemicals that the United States will be independent in these things, and from an importer of these commodities will become an exporter. In the production of dyes the United States is making famous progress.

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The bureau of foreign and domestic commerce, in a recent report, gave out the information that American dye works are now turning out coal tar colors at the rate of 15,000 tons annually and that these colors are being manufactured wholly from American raw material. Before the war the United States manufactured only 3,000 tons of coal tar colors, made mostly from imported intermediates. The total import of artificial colors before the war was something like 25,000 tons. This development in the dye industry has been in the face of unusual difficulties, for owing to the great demand for such products in the manufacture of explosives, the dye works have not had the supplies they needed. Nevertheless there are now seventeen firms engaged in manufacturing intermediates and twelve firms are turning out the finished dyes. The news has just come out that at Paterson, N. J., has been formed a million-dollar dyestuff company to produce aniline dyes to take the place of the supply which formerly came from Germany and Switzerland.

The American glass-making industry has been having a boom during the war, though the scarcity of potash and manganese has been a deterrent element. In most of the glass-making firms the bottom of their potash reserve supply has not been reached, but it is running low, while efforts are making to increase the production of American potash. It is reported in glass-trade circles that business in that industry is booming, the only cloud being a likely shortage of potash and manganese, formerly imported from Germany. Export trade in glassware, particularly bottle specialties and chemical ware, has developed in great strides since the outbreak of the war. The recent grip epidemic and consequent trebled demand for prescription bottles, is given as one of the important factors in the boom times now being experienced by glass factories in Pennsylvania, southern New Jersey and New York.