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The South American Opportunity

AMONG the rights reserved to the federal government are "to coin money and declare the value thereof," "to make treaties," "to declare war," etc. But there is nothing to inhibit any state from furthering trade with foreign states.

South America is halting just now in her progress because her people cannot sell her products, cannot purchase what they need because there are no ships to carry away her products or carry to her what she needs.

The state of New York is an empire by herself, with vastly more people and wealth than the whole republic possessed when the war of the Revolution was fought through. Why does not that state take the necessary steps to make a peaceful conquest of South America?

Not to interfere with their governments, but to capture their trade. Why does it not by law agree to back any ship company that will put on the needed ships, provided her merchants, manufacturers and financiers will first agree to provide and equip the needed trade stations in the respective states?

The mere matter of international trade is not the most important consideration, great as that is. There is yet a vast field for work in our country, but educated young men will soon want opportunities for full scope in accumulating fortunes and high names. All Spanish-America is waiting for them and no other countries are. There a continent is yet to be subdued and its fields brought under cultivation; the rivers are to be bridged; new cities are to be built and old ones are to be restored and lighted; railroads are to be constructed and mines opened—there must be a transformation in the coming fifty years and young United States should have full share in directing and carrying on the work.

With the close of the European war thousands of impoverished immigrants will seek our shores. A part of that host should be turned south, and must be or we shall have serious labor troubles here at home.

To accomplish this a great new merchant fleet will be needed. Despite what we have seen in the past thirty years, and especially in the past year, the party in power will refuse to take any steps to insure the building and continued sailing of those ships. It may agree to put on a few government-owned and navigated ships until the old European lines can be restored. That will not even begin to accomplish what is needed.

Why cannot the Empire state for her own trade's sake show what is needed?

Once started, Pennsylvania, Massachusetts and Connecticut would quickly follow. They have the money; they dare not use it in the ordinary trade channels for fear that with the coming of peace will come a collapse and panic on our side

of the Atlantic. Why not make the needed diversion?

Galveston

THE people of Galveston are certainly to be pitied; not only for the losses they have suffered, but for the hopes that the storm must have broken. Fifteen years ago, after having been smitten by the great storm, they gathered up their courage and their energies and said: "We must defend ourselves against any future repetition of such a disaster. They built a seawall which engineers believed would be impregnable against any future assaults of seas angered under the lashings of the hurricane.

But this last storm carried away a thousand feet of that wall and leaping over the portion that still held, played smash in the inner harbor and city. They had grown to feel secure behind their defenses. Will they ever again feel quite safe?

In Spanish-American towns at the first shudder of an earthquake the inhabitants rush from their houses and flock to the public square. The fear of the monster which they are sure is sleeping near, and which, when it really awakens and starts on its march, churns cities to dust and crushes the lives out of all in its path; is always upon them.

Will the people of Galveston learn to sleep on a like uneasy pillow? That insidious, constant fear is not good for a race. It breaks down the nerves of a people, causes them to become easily excited and affects their steady judgment.

This fear of the next storm will have its effect on Galveston, worse in the end than the present losses, for it will keep men from investing and settling there.

At least we fear it will have that effect and for that there is a deeper pity than for the losses already sustained.

The calamity ought to draw new attention to Arenas pass, two hundred miles southwest of Galveston, on the coast.

It is said that a safe harbor can be made there. In commerce two hundred miles is a long way, but the world is made and man must adjust himself to it. At the beginning, had Houston been selected for the permanent city and work upon a ship canal been started, that would have been the chief port today. It may be necessary to adopt that plan after all, but to build the thirty miles of canal and make a basin for ships will be a gigantic work. We believe the general government would bear half the expense were it to be decided to construct it, for Texas is one of the greatest of states and her future commerce cannot be estimated.

The Shame Of It

WHEN the war broke out in Europe, all the world saw that the storm awakened would involve all Europe, and that international commercial relations would at once become most complicated.

The United States was helpless on the sea so far as merchant ships were concerned; we had for fifty years watched supinely and seen Germany build a great merchant marine and by it,

and by her factories and an enlightened protective tariff not only grew rich, but so rich that she was ready to engage all Europe in a war through which to extend her empire north and south until her ships would control the North sea, a part of the Baltic, the Adriatic and be a compelling force in the Mediterranean.

But even the war and the danger that menaced our commerce and our peace could not awaken those in control of our government to attention. The constitution of the Southern Confederacy was still in force in Washington.

President Wilson did propose to buy and for a short time run some foreign ships under our flag, but he would not promise that they should run for a day after the war closed and the old rule should be restored to carry our commerce in foreign ships, and England and France protested against our purchase of German ships interned in our harbors, as it would give aid and comfort to a power with which they were at war. And congress adjourned without doing a thing, and now our people are being killed in foreign ships and another harvest waits to be moved and not one new ship is ready, or has been ordered to fill the need. The only thing that has been done by the government regarding our foreign commerce has been to impose tolls upon American coast shipping that seeks to pass through the Panama canal.

Had the order been made by congress for the immediate construction of fifteen first-class merchant steamers, they would have been ready two months ago and there would have been no Americans on the Arabic, and we would have been unloading our wheat and flour and salted meats upon Brazil and receiving from her the sugar and coffee and rubber which she has, and upon which her prosperity rests. And Argentine wants American agricultural implements, automobiles and pianos, and threshing machines and electrical devices and a thousand other American articles and has ample means to pay for them. But we have no ships, no prospect of any ships for those in power have ceased to comprehend that a great nation that must sell her products to foreigners in order to make any profit from them, must also have the express wagons to deliver the goods.

A Lesson From The Lawyers

ONE of the best things about the meeting of the great lawyers here last week was the encouragement it gave or ought to have given the young men in the profession here and to young men generally. They saw represented here the highest in the land, and the truth must have flashed upon them that all that they saw above the average must have come from persistent study and experience, the first of which is within the grasp of all who reach for it faithfully and the last which the former makes possible. So far as we could discern, there was not a real genius in the bunch. Described in army parlance, J. Ham Lewis represented the cavalry, lots of flags, no end of trumpet calls, and the noise of innumerable hoof-beats—splendid to cut communications; to raid for plunder and not lacking in a real fight.