

MERCHANTS OF ENGLAND SEEK RUSSIAN TRADE

Scheme Devised by Board of Trade Based on Government Insurance; Ask Federal Aid.

London, June 28.—(Correspondence of The Associated Press.)—British merchants have devised a far-reaching scheme, based to a great extent on government insurance, for capturing the trade of non-bolshevik Russia. They want to put their goods into "White" Russia before the Germans have a chance to do so but, apart from agricultural machinery on which the United States already has the call, England, by this plan, could be far ahead of any other nation.

The department of overseas trade of the board of trade which is a government institution with a cabinet member at the head, has prepared a bill for submission to Parliament set aside a fund of \$125,000,000 to finance the insurance on the transportation of British goods into Russia. Sir Arthur Steel-Maitland, head of the overseas trade board, has been selected to pilot the bill through the Commons.

The bill provides that merchants shall be furnished with commercial information regarding Russia; that regular sailings shall be arranged; that goods shall be insured and that banks shall be enabled to make ordinary advances to traders. Banks could also issue warrants against collateral security of insured goods and the warrants would be valid for purchase of British goods. They would have a fixed value in British money.

Sponsors of the scheme point out that the government probably would make a profit as was done through the war risk insurance scheme. That netted the government \$85,000,000 profit.

Big Apple and Pear Crop.
North Adams, Mass.—Farmers in this section predict an unusually heavy yield of apples and pears this year.

Last Vestige of Kearney's Boom Days Vanishes With Wrecking of Cotton Mill

Dream of Eastern Financiers to Make "Half Way City" Manufacturing Metropolis Nearly Forgotten as Landmark is Replaced by Corn Fields—Tourists Will Miss Pleasing Rambles Through Show Place of Lincoln Highway.

By BESS FURMAN.

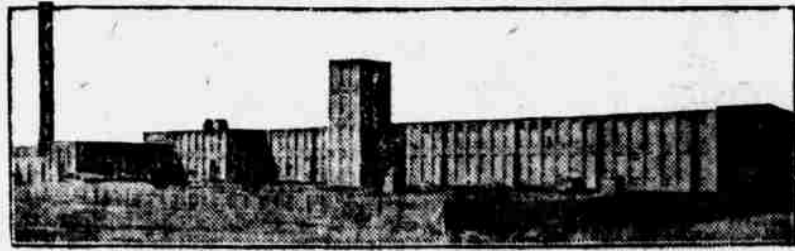
Every tourist, who, feeling the lure of the road and the call of Colorado's cooling breezes, has followed the Lincoln Highway westward, remembers the old cotton mill, two miles west of Kearney. Every coast-to-coast wanderer has wondered at the huge, dilapidated factory, oddly incongruous in its surrounding corn and alfalfa fields, and has carefully stored its decrepit lineaments in kodak book or memory archives as a memento of the Half-Way-Place, 1,733 miles from Boston, 1,733 miles from Frisco.

Wary tourists will no longer dine in the shade of the old cotton mill, no longer climb its rotting staircases to its queer old tower to view the surrounding landscape, no longer explore its donjon depths. The old mill is being wrecked for salvage, and when it is tourist time again, not vestige of it will remain to tell the story of its final succumbing to the long-encroaching cornfields.

Long Dead Dream.

To nocturnal travelers the old cotton mill is a thing of enchantment, a thing of cavernous openings and gloomy shadow, ghostly looking in the summer moonlight which flickers in reflection from a tiny window pane here and there (miraculously preserved from sling-shooting small boys) like a phosphorous glow from the face of a Hallowe'en goblin. And indeed, the long-abandoned building is a ghost, the ghost of a dream long dead, yet preserving in its huge outlines the dignity of that dream.

Some 30 years ago, a group of men saw a vision. Easterners all, they would build an eastern metropolis on the plains of Nebraska. That vision, insofar as it ever materialized, was known as the Kearney boom, a never-to-be-forgotten experiment in high finance, when hearts beat



The old cotton mill as it appeared during the time it was in operation.

high with enthusiasm at the near-realization of the dream.

Huge business enterprises were launched daily, and many of them carried to completion. Paper mills, oatmeal mills, factories, civic buildings, public utilities of every sort, even to a street railway system, were in operation in an incredibly short time. Real estate changed hands hourly at fabulous prices. And the most stupendous and longest-enduring of all the boom day enterprises was the cotton mill.

Some idea of the size of this adventure in high finance may be gained from the fact that over 4,000,000 brick were used in its construction, not to mention 100 carloads of stone. And the floor space amounted to 89,387 square feet.

The Cummocks Arrive.

It was a gala day in boom times. There were many such. The crowds which thronged the sidewalks were in a furore of excitement. A jubilant procession, bearing a banner triumphantly aloft, marched down the city street, a banner announcing to the wildly cheering populace, "The Cummocks Have Come."

For weeks the metropolitan daily had been publishing the rather depressing information, "The Cummocks come not," but those eastern capitalists had actually arrived and were riding in state behind the banner-bearing citizens in a coach

and four, if you please, and the establishment of the cotton mill was assured.

Within 90 days, the citizens of Kearney raised by popular subscription the subsidy of \$250,000 requested by the company, a sum which represented the donation of a sum equal to \$50 from every man, woman and child then residing in the city, this in spite of the fact that other enterprises were demanding subsidies. But what did the townspeople care for expenses? The boom was on!

The Bubble Bursts.

In a few years, the bubble burst, but in those few years the cotton mill phantasm had been wrought in brick and cast iron and heavy timbers. And, perforce, it continued to operate. Strangely enough, when

madness and suicide were stalking through the streets of the stricken city, in the gloomy days which followed the collapse of the boom, the cotton mill was doing a prosperous business. Its 500 employees were producing a muslin equal in quality to "Lawrence Double L," or "Fruit of the Loom." Its entire product found a ready market in China. Had it not been for the labor situation the old cotton mill would in all probability be operating yet. As it was, it enjoyed ten halcyon years of usefulness.

No doubt the mulatto girls from

Wallingford in Real Life Avenged Pal Murdered in Sinking of the Lusitania

London, May 28.—Behind the grim, gray walls of the Ohio state penitentiary the correspondent last saw him, a convict skull cap partly covering his prematurely gray hair, cheap prison steel-rimmed glasses shading his keen flashing brown eyes, and a gaudy prison gray jacket falling clumsily from his massive square shoulders.

"One of the smoothest forgers and cleverest 'con' men in the world." That was his reputation among the convicts and penitentiary guards. "He's a college graduate." Bob Miles, penitentiary Bertillon expert, told me when I was making one of my daily rounds as penitentiary reporter for a Columbus (O.) newspaper. "He's swung big deals that have often run up into five figures, and he can out-Wallingford J. Rufus himself."

Gradually I learned to know him (Earl Wright we'll call him, because that isn't his real name), but it was a long time before I could break through that barrier of reserve he built around himself. He wouldn't talk shop.

Outcrooked Two Crooks.

One day, though, he let slip the name of a pal. His face lightened up. "Hes a real partner and pal," he said. "We've swung many a deal, he and I." Then he waxed reminiscent and smiled. "I have to laugh the way we turned the tables on a couple of crook Chicago lawyers who tried to trim us two 'poor boob' out of our 'western gold mine.'" Then he closed up.

"Tell us about it." "None, nothing doing. I might want to use that stunt again with Harry. That's my pal's name. It's never been worked before nor since, and you can bet we had it fixed so that the Chicago lawyers won't say any more about it. Boy, how we

got to those babies for \$25,000. I don't mind telling you, but further than that I won't go." Again he laughed aloud. "But that's not as funny as the one Harry and I had all framed for kidding an Ohio county out of the land on which the court house was built. I can't tell you about that either, but it fell through though not because of any fault of ours. "However, I will tell you how Harry and I plucked a wealthy old village wise guy for \$10,000 and got away with it. "He was the village Rockefeller, who passed around the collection box on Sunday and spent the rest of the week foreclosing mortgages on widows and orphans and generally trimming the poor under-dogs of the community. "Showed 'Tightwad' Something. "One of the most vaunted boasts of this gray-whiskered old porch climber was, 'None of them city slickers nor confidence men could ever put anything over on me.' "Our mouths watered when we heard of this bewiskered village Croesus and Harry grinned. 'Boy, prepare the cleaners for this bird.' "I wrapped adhesive tape tightly around the finger joints and elbow of my right hand and arm, and with a leather glove over the hand you'd have sworn it was an artificial arm. A few specks of gray rabbit fur sprinkled in my eyebrows and a change of glasses was all the disguise I had. "As soon as we blew into this small Ohio town I breezed around to the office of the 'czar' with an attractive real estate proposition in a nearby town and a spiel about paying all his expenses if he would meet me the next day in that town to look over the proposition. "When I said free expenses the old boy's eyes gleamed with visions of a good hotel and fine feeds for nothing, and he snapped at it. While handing him this line of gab I took careful notice to see where he kept his check book. "That night we saw him from our hotel window hopping down to the railroad station for his 'appointment' with me. Next day about noon, when his stenographer was out at lunch, we jimmied our way

into his office and I got to his check book. "Harry stayed in the office while I went over to the bank. There, in full view of the cashier, I endorsed the check very laboriously with my 'artificial arm.' "The cashier looked at the size of the check and smiled an apology: 'There's no question but what this is all right, but we don't know you, and—'

Calls Up "Whiskers" Office.

"Oh, that's all right. I know you must be careful of all these forgers and crooks." I came back at him amiably. "But just call up his office. I know it's a large amount and one must be careful." Again I smiled, and the long-beaked, lopsided cashier grinned with me as he politely excused himself to call up Old Whiskers' office.

"Of course Harry answered the phone, and not only O. K.'d the check, but gave a complete description of me, laying particular emphasis on my artificial arm.

"The cashier came back smiling and asked me how I wanted the money. Of course we had our get-away fixed and blew with the money. I was then about 25. For weeks after we saw and laughed over police advertisements for a forger, about 40, with gray hair and an artificial arm. "They never got on to us on that, and nobody to this day knows the inside of it but you, Harry and myself."

Wright then told me of other stunts in many of which the money run up into five figures that he and his pal had worked. "Harry is outside working hard now to get me out," he said once. "He'd do anything for me. He's a real partner and pal and I'd go through hell for him."

He often dwelt on his great love and friendship for his pal. Then came the sinking of the Lusitania. That day on my rounds through the penitentiary I saw Wright in his cell, his head bowed, his eyes dim, and a newspaper crumpled in his hand. He pointed to the story, and in the bold face type list of dead was the name of his pal.

"I'm going to France to kill Ger-

mans as soon as I get out," he said. "I'm going to make good to Harry in this, so help me God. I'm going to avenge my pal. I'm going to kill Germans."

That was four years ago. Today he came into my office here in London.

"I've made good to Harry," was his first greeting. And as proof of this there, shown from his British sergeant major's tunic were the ribbons of the Distinguished Conduct Medal and the Military Medal—two of Britain's highest military honors.

Worst Conditions in Poor District Veiled, Queen Mary Thinks

London.—The queen's concern for the welfare of her people was exemplified in a striking manner when she summoned Lieut. Col. W. J. Lewis, mayor of Bethnal Green, to Buckingham palace to obtain first-hand knowledge of the housing conditions in the poorer districts of his borough.

He told the queen that over a long series of years the Bethnal Green authorities had been endeavoring to act. He quoted the death rate in one part of the Bethnal Green area as being three times higher than the average mortality for London, while as to the density of population the borough had 417 inhabitants to the acre, as against the acknowledged health standard of 85.

The London county council had prepared a scheme of which Bethnal Green did not approve. The Brady street area, as he had explained, was the worst, and the council's scheme did not deal with the worst part of it.

The queen examined the plans carefully and with interest, and asked many questions about the properties and the people who have to live in them. At one point in the mayor's story her majesty exclaimed indignantly: "It is pretty clear to me that when I have visited the poorer districts I have been taken mainly to the highways and not to the by-ways."

The mayor described another set of properties known as "back-to-back" houses. Only the front of each cottage was open to the air.

WORK STARTS ON BIG NEW PRODUCE BUILDING



The above view shows the activity that is taking place at Twelfth and Douglas streets. Chambers-O'Neill, wrecking contractors for the Skinner Packing company, are nearing the end of their work in wrecking the old Metropolitan hotel and the building formerly occupied by the Skinner produce department, as shown

above. The architects of the building are H. C. Christensen company, Chicago, Ill., and Harry Lawrie, Omaha, Neb. The ground is 99x132 and is all enclosed in a most convenient way to protect the public during the construction of the new Skinner Produce building, which will be nine floors, the building covering the entire ground area. This produce building will be

pushed to completion and will be the most modern and efficient that has ever been constructed. The produce department of the Skinner Packing company has been moved temporarily to the old Kirschbraun creamery on Howard street, during the construction of this new project. The first floor of this new building will house the up-town wholesale

market of the Skinner Packing company and the offices of the produce department. The two top floors will be used in feeding poultry, picking poultry and candling eggs. The intervening floors will be cold storage and the large basement will be used for dry cold storage and will contain the ice machines. The produce department of the Skinner Packing company was est-

ablished less than one year ago and it has met with a phenomenal success. It is hard for one to realize the great volume of business and monetary value that the produce business amounts to in this section. In this department alone the Skinner Packing company will do a volume of business of many million dollars per annum in poultry, butter and eggs. This building will contain over

two and three-fourths acres of floor space and the plant of the Skinner Packing company on the South Side contains over 11 acres of floor space. Both are owned by the Skinner Packing company, and it gives the company a great combination to do business efficiently and profitably and give superior service to the trade. Partridge-Thomson Company have

the contract for the excavating and will start at once. Work on the building will be pushed and the building completed as soon as possible. Other buildings going up in this section are as follows: Simon Bros., wholesale grocers, northeast corner Eleventh and Dodge streets, 132x156. Gordon Van & Storage, Ninth

and Davenport streets, four story addition, 66x132. Farrell & Co., northwest corner Ninth and Dodge streets, six stories, 66x132 for first unit. Goodyear Rubber company, six floors, 126x132, being erected for them by Gordon-Lawless company. New addition just completed on the Gordon-Lawless building. Iten Biscuit company going to build a six story addition, 132x156.