

## PRICE RANGE HIGHER IN FOREIGN TRADE

### Advances at Home and Abroad Marked Both Imports and Exports in 1923.

Higher prices at home and abroad characterized the 1923 import and export trade of this country, according to figures compiled by the National City Bank. While the advance is less striking than in many earlier years, the monthly average prices in considerably more than half of the representative articles entering and leaving the country were higher in December, 1923, than in the corresponding month of 1922. It is noted that about 58 per cent. of the chief articles imported in 1923 showed higher prices in December of that year than in the corresponding month of 1922, and that 56 per cent. of the principal exports also showed higher prices in December, 1923, than in the same month of the preceding year. This statement is based on the average import price named by the Department of Commerce in the list of seventy-seven articles for which it gives the monthly average export price, and sixty-one named in its list of prices.

Of the articles in the import list, thirty-five show higher prices in December, 1923, than in the same month of the year before, and of the export list, forty-three show advances and thirty-four declines.

"These records of advance or decline," says the bank, "are especially interesting in the opportunity they afford to study world conditions in prices of the leading articles forming the import and export trade. The laws of the United States require the statement of the value of imported articles to show their 'actual market value or wholesale price in the country from which exported, and our export prices represent the value 'in the ports of the United States, whence they are exported.'

"This comparison of the December, 1923, prices with those of the corresponding month of one year earlier indicates that the chief advances in the prices of the articles which we bring from abroad have occurred in manufacturing materials, while in foodstuffs the number of enumerated articles showing advances is no greater than the number showing reductions. Out of the thirty-four articles of manufacturing material included in the list above named, twenty-three showed higher prices in the country from which shipped, while eleven showed a reduction.

"This valuation of prices abroad is distinctly a 'world average' by reason that the average import price of each article is determined by combining the total figures of quantities and value of the respective articles reaching our ports, and thus represent the average value in the group of countries from which brought. India rubber, for example, reaches us from more than a dozen countries, and the average value per pound obtained by dividing total number of pounds imported into the total number of dollars value represents the world average price in the countries whence exported to the United States, and the fact that the average import price of rubber in December, 1923, was 25.5 cents per pound against only 15.2 cents per pound in December, 1922, shows clearly a world advance in price, chiefly in the countries in which it was produced. In hides, coming from all parts of the world, all classes except those of cattle show higher prices in December, 1923, than in the same month of 1922. In all grades of wool the prices of 1923 exceed those of 1922, and this is true also of silk, cotton, hemp, sisal, lumber, tin, bar iron and crude petroleum.

"On the export side 19 enumerated articles of foodstuffs show higher prices and 15 show a reduction, while 20 enumerated articles of manufacture show higher prices, and 15 a reduction. Fresh and pickled beef show advances when compared with December, 1922, while pork in the various forms shows a reduction. Of the grains, corn, barley and rice show higher prices, while wheat and rye show declines. Fruits exported show in most cases a decline, butter, cheese and vegetables an advance. Cotton and practically all of the manufactures of cotton show advances, so do all grades of leather; men's boots and shoes, silk manufactures, wool clothes, lumber, cement, tin plate, steel rails, iron and steel billets, and manufactures of tobacco, while petroleum in all forms, whether crude or as illuminating oil, lubricating oil, gasoline and naphtha, shows a reduction."

## LOST BANANA TRADE.

### Fiji Islanders Are Now Looking After Some Other Kind.

Due to the loss of the banana market in Australia, conditions in the Fiji Islands have been tending toward depression during the past year, Grade Commissioner E. C. Pauly, Melbourne, informs the Department of Commerce. In former years, he points out, Australia was the Fiji group's best customer for this commodity, taking about half a million dollars' worth annually. Since Australia increased the duty on bananas to 1 pence per pound at the instance of the Queensland growers, imports of that commodity from Fiji dropped to almost nothing. It is reliably stated, the Trade Commissioner says, that none of the merchants and planters of Fiji, with the possible exception of sugar interests, is realizing any profit on his investments.

The Governor of the islands has just appointed a committee of business men to devise ways and means for negotiating a loan of £2,000,000, which is to be allocated to such interests as are thought to be capable of development. It is expected that most of this loan will be used to stimulate pineapple growing and canning. Aside from sugar, the shipment of bananas, copra and butter are the only other items in which Fiji can hope to develop an export trade.

## PHONOGRAPHS IN CHILE.

### American Ones, Though Dearer, Sell Better Than Other Makes.

Phonographs and talking machines have now reached a point of popularity in Chile where homes of the better class, especially those in which there are young people, are not considered complete without them as a means of entertainment, reports Rollo S. Smith, Secretary to the Commercial Attaché at Santiago in a report to the Department of Commerce. The Chileans are great lovers of music, and the modern craze for dancing has taken so strong a hold on them that it is not surprising that the popularity of these instruments is so marked.

The Chilean people, even in the metropolis of Santiago, are not given to frequenting public places of amusements in the evening. They prefer to limit their public social activities to promenades in the parks and plazas, attending theatres, concerts and receptions before dinner and dedicating the later hours to home life.

The United States has never had any strong rivals in the phonograph trade in Chile, in spite of the fact that American machines and records are the most expensive. They sell, according to models desired, for from 470 paper pesos up to 2,600 pesos.

## WANT WELL-GROOMED MEN.

### Plea for the Use of Correct Attire for Every Occasion.

The disappearance of the well-groomed man of a decade ago and the replacing of this type by the rather slouchy dresser of today is a real loss to America, Alfred G. Kaeshan, a director of the National Association of Men's Straw Hat Manufacturers, said yesterday.

"This lack of regard for proper attire for every occasion, whether business, professional or social, affects our spirituality.

"American men ought to take pride in their dress now as they were accustomed to a quarter of a century ago, when men like Ward McAllister and E. Berry Wall were regarded by their fellows as models after whom to pattern. Men in business and in the professional spheres of life ought to get the habit of wearing clothes suitable for every occasion. They would discover that it indeed has a tonic effect on their spirituality and on their conduct. It certainly is something to think about in any event."