

Artificial Silk Makes Great Advance In U.S.A.

Remarkable Activity In The Manufacture Of "Rayon"

(From the American Silk Journal)

The probability of an advance in the price of rayon artificial silk in consequence of the heavy demand for it, and the fact that producers here and abroad are sold several months ahead, are indications of the marvelous development the fiber has achieved in the past year. Manufacturers in the broad silk, cotton and tapestry industries are using large quantities, so large in fact, that together with the big consumption of the hostery, ple fabric and other industries, a shortage of rayon has resulted that creates the belief in some quarters that prices may be advanced forthwith. Europe cannot make up the shortage as the spinners over there are disposing of their out-put as readily as the factories here and all seem to be running at capacity. With your mills thus heavily over-sold, it is not surprising that buyers are purchasing from jobbers, dealers and throwsters and offering premiums of from ten to twenty-five cents a pound for needed quantities.

The remarkable activity of rayon in the markets of the world is being studied and closely watched by the raw silk producers and dealers. Even the Japanese raw silk people have not before shown as much concern over the artificial silk situation as they are now manifesting. They have not yet begun to view the situation with alarm. It is said that the consensus of opinion in Yokohama seems to view the present heavy movement of rayon as but the natural outcome of the raising of raw silk prices. However, with the knitting and weaving mills here vying on record consumption the situation does not seem to augur well for the high prices for raw silk which it is said the Japanese seek in expectation of relieving their losses caused by the recent earthquake.

When November sales of rayon reached a record mark the trade thought this heavy business might be due to delayed purchases coming in volume. But with the high-water mark of business maintained for December, the consumption for 1924 has run away ahead of last year.

The present situation is gratifying encouragement to those producers who have been expanding their growing business. The expansion in Europe is on a larger scale than here and it is because of the more extensive development abroad that well informed consumers are of the opinion that any price advances by domestic spinners now may prove the key that will open wider the door to European factories.

According to estimates presented by statisticians here and abroad, production is made that the out-put of rayon for 1925 may exceed 150,000,000 pounds. Estimates are computed upon available records of the 1924 production of established plants, augmented by what may be turned out by new plants and additions to established ones. It has previously been stated in these columns that experts have estimated the United States' out-put for 1924 as 40,000,000 pounds, which it is now estimated will approximate 50,000,000 pounds for 1925, leaving to Europe about 100,000,000 pounds for the new year.

An estimate of the world's production, as given for 1923, compared with the probable production for 1925, follows:

| | 1923 |
|---------------------|--------------------|
| United States | 35,000,000 |
| Great Britain | 17,000,000 |
| Italy | 10,000,000 |
| Germany | 13,000,000 |
| France | 8,000,000 |
| Switzerland | 6,000,000 |
| Holland | 2,000,000 |
| Belgium | 6,000,000 |
| All other countries | 7,000,000 |
| Total | 104,000,000 |

| | 1925 |
|---------------------|--------------------|
| United States | 50,000,000 |
| Great Britain | 30,000,000 |
| Italy | 20,000,000 |
| Germany | 20,000,000 |
| France | 10,000,000 |
| Switzerland | 6,000,000 |
| Holland | 5,000,000 |
| Belgium | 7,000,000 |
| All other countries | 7,000,000 |
| Total | 155,000,000 |

It is computed that the out-put for the United States' plants for 1924 was as follows:

| | pounds |
|------------------------|-------------------|
| Viscose Co. | 32,000,000 |
| Tubize Art. Silk Co. | 3,500,000 |
| DuPont Fibersilk Co. | 3,500,000 |
| Industrial Fibre Corp. | 1,500,000 |
| Cupra, Inc. | 500,000 |
| Lustron Co. | 500,000 |
| Total | 41,500,000 |

The Viscose Co. will have a materially increased production for 1925 as a result of starting the third unit of their Lewistown plant in Pennsylvania. This unit will be running on its 50,000,000 per annum capacity in a short time. The fourth unit, at the same plant, is erected and as soon as the third plant is in full operation it will also be put into operation. It also has a capacity of 5,000,000 pounds a year. It is, however, safe to say that the Viscose Company's production for 1925 will show an increase of 5,000,000 pounds over that of 1924, or approximately 40,000,000 pounds.

The Buffalo plant of the DuPont Fibersilk Co., has been steadily enlarged since it was first started, and for 1925 will have capacity of approximately 5,000,000 pounds, which will show a very material increase over last year's output. Their new plant at Nashville, Tenn., has been completed and is now partly in operation. It will have a capacity of 2,000,000 pounds and is operated on the so-called Viscose process, that is, the same process as that carried on at the Buffalo plant.

According to President L. A. Yerkes, the company expects during the present year to increase their capacity for super extra yarns. These yarns were first put on the market last year and met with such pronounced success that it was found necessary to increase the plant capacity for them. These yarns are at present made in 80, 100 and 150 denier, and contain a high number of filaments, 30, 40 and 60 respectively, which gives them entirely different characteristics from any other artificial silk heretofore on the market. The softness particularly in many fabrics being greater than that of raw silk. He expects to push the production of these super extra yarns as rapidly as possible.

New plant whose out-put for 1924 was not of sufficient volume to be represented are the extensive works at Cumberland, Md., of the American Cellulose and Chemical Co., with a capacity of 6,000,000 pounds per annum, and which are now nearly in full operation.

The Belamose Corp., which has erected a million dollar plant at Rocky Hill, Conn., will shortly begin operations. A group of thirty-five women are expected from abroad to act as instructors for learners. It is said that a combination of New England textile interest and Belgium silk mills are behind the corporation, of which Theophile Guerin, head of the Guerin Mills, Inc., Woonsocket, R. I., is president. Leon Ibs, of Brussels has been overseeing the installation of the machinery. The authorized capitalization of the company is \$2,000,000, with \$1,000,000 already paid in.

the sales, causing anxiety as to over production.

250% INCREASE OVER 1923

In fact, the monthly average of foreign paper production from June, 1924, to October, 1924, was 67,666,000 pounds, which shows an increase of about 7 million pounds, over the equivalent period of the preceding year, and an increase of 250 percent in comparison with the average production in 1913. The paper-making machines in operation amounted to 96 sets in total at the end of the year 1923, and at present it was increased to 102 sets in total.

The main reason for this expansion is attributable to the increased demand due to the reconstruction work after the earthquake.