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Finance Minister Reviews Provincial Production

Notable Increases in Natural Resource Production for British Columbia Last Year—Lumbering and Mining Particularly Active.

The Hon. John Hart, Minister of Finance, Victoria, in his budget speech delivered on March 24th, presented some interesting and valuable figures with regard to Provincial production of our natural resources, as derived from activities of the several departments of the Government. Reviewing production in natural resources of the Province, he said:

"Recognizing that the high cost of living can only be met by increased production, the efforts of the Department of Agriculture have been directed during the year to increasing the production of food stuffs.

"Under the provisions of the Land Settlement and Development Act large areas of wild land are being brought under cultivation, and in connection with this development work soldiers are being employed, many of whom will become actual settlers upon the ready-made farms resulting from these operations.

"Settlement areas have been established in the interior of the Province, taking in lightly-timbered lands which have been cruised and title to which has been secured. The policy followed in establishing these areas has been to create closely settled communities. This is the only possible way to give settlers conveniences in the way of churches, schools, roads, etc., in the most economical manner, as well as to facilitate efficient and cheap marketing of produce.

"Agricultural production for the year 1919 amounted to \$661,749,719, being an increase of 24.6 per cent. over the year 1918. Exports are estimated at \$6,500,000 which, although showing an increase in value, does not indicate a corresponding increase in quantity shipped, owing to the increased value of the commodities. Imports from foreign points amounted to \$4,314,313, and from other Provinces of the Dominion \$16,898,409, making total imports to the value of \$21,212,722, a decrease from the year 1918 of \$692,724.

"Inspection records show that whilst in 1918 there were 100,213 boxes of apples imported into the Province,

there were only 24,710 boxes imported in 1919, about 25% of the previous year's imports. This falling off was largely due to the record crop of apples produced in British Columbia during the year.

"A number of agricultural fairs which had suspended operation during the war were resumed in 1919, fifty-five exhibitions being held as compared with forty-one during the previous year.

"The Household Science Branch of the Department has served a very useful purpose in connection with the work of the women's institutes and 109 lectures and demonstrations were given, largely to institute members, but also to boys' and girls' clubs and at agricultural fairs.

"Live stock sales were held during the year with the view of improving the grade of cattle and sheep in the Province, and the introduction of pure-bred sires for that purpose. Cattle clubs were formed for the encouragement of settlers in outlying and sparsely settled districts. Eight of these organizations were formed and 750 head of cattle, principally dairy stock, were purchased and distributed at cost.

"With an increase of veterinary inspectors it has been possible to administer the tuberculosis test to 14,403 head of cattle, located upon 2,068 premises, and it is gratifying to note that of the number tested only 573 reacted. This work has been chiefly carried on in the more thickly settled districts of the Province.

"The revenue of the Department of Lands for the nine months ended December 31st, was \$2,232,674.27, as against \$2,201,452 for the same period in 1918, and an estimated revenue for the fiscal year of \$2,184,000.

"The largest item in the total is forest revenue, which amounted to \$1,927,852.35, while the revenue from lands, including land sales, was \$296,809.85. It is expected that the total revenue from the Lands Department for the fiscal year will exceed the estimated total by about \$600,000.

"The total value of forest products for the year 1919 is placed at \$70,285,094, as against \$54,162,523 in 1918. Lumber shows an increase of \$5,000,000; pulp and paper \$2,000,000; and shingles \$7,000,000 over the previous year. A

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