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Canada Must Plan and Work For Future

PEACE Period to Follow the War May Find Us Unprepared for the Commercial Struggle Then to be Waged—Sir George Foster Says in that Regard that "There is not a Great Country so Sound Asleep as Canada."

BY the time this war is over, whether it be in 1917 or 1918 or 1919—and no man living can tell in which year it will be—500,000 adult men will have been abstracted from the fields, the forests, the mines, the farms of this country; taken away from previous beneficent productive work and drafted into the great phalanx which day and night, month after month, year after year, are trying to destroy as much of the accumulated wealth of the world as they can, and to destroy as many units of humanity as they possibly can. Do you think that 500,000 adult men can be taken out of the productive industries of Canada and leave no after effects? Put that down on your note-book. But put another thing alongside of it—war at the front has got to be sustained by war service at the base, and for every soldier that fights in the trenches and at the front it is calculated that the whole time of one or two persons must be given to provide the equipments, the supplies, the services which are necessary to make the front line effective in carrying on the war.

In these words, Sir George Foster, minister of trade and commerce, commenced an analysis of probable trade conditions after the war, in an address last week to the Empire Club, Toronto, the following special report of which has been prepared for *The Monetary Times*:—

"Then put as a second point on your note-book the fact that at least 500,000 men and women, and probably nearer 750,000, are abstracted and will be abstracted from the beneficent productive work of Canada in making supplies, equipments, doing subsidiary services of a thousand different kinds, all to aid the processes of destruction and demolition which are being carried on by the advanced 500,000 men. Do you think it is possible to abstract, in addition to the first, this other force of 500,000 or 750,000 men, and yet there shall be no after consequences, no effects? But you have not the whole account yet. Put down on your note-book the tremendous daily expenditures for war; the colossal debts that are being accumulated; the increased taxation which is necessary in order to keep up this burden; and you will tot up a sum of money so vast that you will scarcely be able to adequately understand exactly what it means. But it is a burden which is rolled in as one of the consequences of the war, which is laid upon your shoulders, and which will bear heavily upon your shoulders for your lives and for the lives of your sons, if it does not go farther than that.

"Put down on your note-book as well another item—the trail of war, the consequences of war outside of those financial and unit abstractions that I have spoken of, in the men who will never come back, in the men who will come back, but different from what they were when they went over; in the men who will come back, who will be our proud burden—and we will not think of them as burdens; lovingly we will care for them; government, municipality, association, home, the individual; but none the less they will be a drag and an abstraction, a drag upon the prosperity of the future, an abstraction from the work of the world, and the value of what might have been their contribution if they had never gone to the war.

"Then you can let your imagination go just a little further as to what it means for this Dominion of Canada to have had these, the virile men, the strong men, the men of fibre physically, the men of fibre mentally, the men of big souls and of large visions and of strong feelings, and sensitiveness to the obligations of duty and right, to those ideals which were ours, pass out from us in these days, turning their backs upon the west and facing the east till they came to the base line and the trench and met destiny face to face. There are factors which are being abstracted from the fertile soil of this country which it will take generations to replace, the loss of which we cannot but deplore, and the loss of which it will take long to make up.

"Do you think that all these things can take place and that something is not doing, working out of our sight partly, in our sight as well—working, working in this country of ours, in every branch of its life and its enterprise? Is there not something in all that which makes it necessary for us, if we will face our duties, to spare a little from our busy work, to let our thoughts have some play when activities are not so strong, and to face the conditions and the situations as they appear to us—face them with thought, face them afterwards with plans as to meeting the conditions when they come? Is it best for us or not, to wait till these conditions are upon us? Or is it best for us to anticipate them as much as we can, and prepare for them as best we may?

"Suppose that to-morrow the bells of peace ring and war is declared off. There are some things that we know will take place. One thing that will take place is this: with that very red-hot moment the doors of your munition factories will shut, the wheels of your munition industries