The Chronicle

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scheme could not be worked, but on moderate and large incomes it should be possible to devise means which will make it practicable without it becoming too complicated.

The present period of adjustment is reflected in exceptionally quiet conditions in the investment markets, many otherwise prospective purchasers being nervous of committing themselves under present conditions, while others are waiting for lower prices. We are inclined to think that the attitude on the part of the investors, as distinct from speculators, can be easily overdone. The outlook for industry and commerce is unsettled without a doubt, but the fact remains that many securities, which have proved their capacity to weather storms of this character before, are now selling at levels which can now only be considered as decidedly attractive for permanent investment. So far as unproved securities are concerned, the present is a time for abstention. But in regard to standard stocks and bonds, the opportunity for profitable permanent investment clearly exists, and it is doubtful whether in the long run, the real investor will gain very much by waiting.

The fall in silver last week to about 60 cents an ounce, the 1913 price level and less than one half of the high price which it reached last winter, is a matter of great importance to the Ontario silver mining industry, where the fall in the white metal has already been reflected in discontinued dividends by a number of the mines. This break is not the result of over production, the metal having been coming on to the market during the last six months at less than one half the pre-war amount, about one third of the present world production, that of the United States being automatically taken out of the market, so long as the price is below one dollar, by the provisions of the Pittman Act. The real cause of the slump in silver is that as a result of the financial crisis some months ago, in the Orient, the countries which normally are the very large purchasers of silver, are not able to buy the metal, and are in fact reported to be selling what they possess in order to obtain funds in Europe. It is pointed out by the New York Evening Post, which summarises these facts, that for years the Occident has been paying the Orient for its goods in silver, but now the Orient's goods are drugs on the market. Post armistice speculation in the east, it is said, was pushed to a much rasher point than in the West, the end came more abruptly, and the period of depression promises to last longer than on this side of the Pacific.

So far as the facts of the present situation in regard to newsprint can be sifted out from the multitude of conflicting rumours, it appears to be the case that a certain amount of competition from European sources is now being experienced in the United States markets by the Canadian pulp and paper interests, but that the quality of these European imports is not up to the level of the Canadian article. The Canadian producers, while securing the very satisfactory price of 6½ cents per pound for new contracts are, however, apparently finding it worth their while to do something to meet their customers, it being reported that some producers who had fixed their prices at 7 cents having been finally persuaded to agree to 6½ cents. It is evident that pulp and newsprint must eventually share in the all round adjustment of prices which is now taking place, although it is probable enough that they will be among the last commodities to be affected. As things are, on the new contract price of 6½ cents, the Canadian producers are getting a considerably better figure than they hitherto received. Evidently also the older mills, whose operating costs are quite low in comparison with those of new competitors, can stand reductions from 6½ cents and still make very handsome profits. The probabilities are that the price of newsprint has now reached its maximum, but there are as yet no indications that the industry will not continue to have relatively great prosperity and yield handsome returns to investors.

TRAFFIC RETURNS

Canadian Pacific Railway

Year to date	1918	1919	1920	Increase
Nov. 30	$138,420,000	$156,400,000	$192,334,000	$35,934,000
Week ending	1918	1919	1920	Increase
Dec. 7	$3,480,000	$3,797,000	$5,215,000	$1,418,000

Grand Trunk Railway

Year to date	1918	1919	1920	Increase
Nov. 30 ...	....	$68,128,850	$80,883,227	$12,754,377
Week ending	1918	1919	1920	Increase
Dec. 7	....	....	....	....

Canadian National Railways

Year to date	1918	1919	1920	Increase
Nov. 30	$72,809,715	$85,134,539	$98,985,159	$13,850,620
Week ending	1918	1919	1920	Increase
Dec. 7	$1,714,173	$2,050,134	$2,678,306	$628,172