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PROSPERITY OR DEPRESSION

Fundamental Qualities Which Will Help Canada Through Time of Stress
— Great Need is for Commodities Such as We Can Produce — Many
Authorities View Future With Optimism—Relations of Labor More Hopeful.

BY HENRY DETCHON,

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EVERY business man is asking himself the question—
What is going to happen now that peace has arrived?

An era of prosperity has been sweeping over Canada, brought about by abnormal conditions. Are these abnormal conditions going to adjust themselves immediately? Hardly. From a state of depression in 1913, when a high record was made so far as commercial failures were concerned, the commercial community has ascended to a state of prosperity which likewise forms a record in Canadian commercial history. It has taken four years for this change to take place. A decline of this prosperity is going to be even less rapid than the transformation from the depression of 1913.

Mr. B. M. Baruch, chairman of the War Industries Board of the United States, declares there is absolutely no justification whatever for the pessimism which seems to have attached itself in certain quarters. On the contrary, while he did not wish to appear to be in the position of predicting a boom era, he was convinced that for a long and continued period there would be such demand for the products of American industry (and this will apply equally to Canada) as would maintain prosperity and insure employment. For years, he emphasized, industry has been dammed up, and unlimited opportunities lie ahead.

How the Victory Loan Will Help

The marvellous success of the last Victory Loan in Canada is going to play an important part in helping Canada to be prosperous. The Canadian minister of finance has recently arranged with the British government credits aggregating about two hundred million dollars for 1919. Of this amount fifty million dollars will be required for completing the programme of the Imperial Munitions Board in Canada. Fifty millions in addition to what has already been arranged, will be required for the purchase of grain of the 1918 crop. The remaining one hundred millions will cover purchases of food-stuffs, including meats, lard, dairy produce and miscellaneous Canadian commodities.

105,000 Soldiers to Farm

The census taken in the trenches in 1917 shows that of 230,000 Canadian soldiers interviewed, 105,000 have intimated their desire to farm after the war. Of this number, 78,000 have had previous experience. One of the questions asked was the amount of money expected to be at their disposal on return to Canada, and the census disclosed the large sum of \$14,000,000. In Western Canada alone, during 1918, the officers of the Dominion government have sold no less than \$14,000,000 worth of Dominion school lands; these lands being sold almost exclusively to farmers adjoining the land purchased. The United Grain Growers report that they have sold many farms this fall. Up to November 1st, from amongst the men returned from the front at that time, no fewer than 1,460 applications for land had been received, of which 975 cases had been approved, with loans aggregating one million and a quarter. These had all been settled as follows: in Alberta 538, in Saskatchewan 215, in Manitoba 178, in Ontario 23, in

British Columbia 10, in New Brunswick 5, in Nova Scotia 3, in Prince Edward Island 2, in Quebec 1, and these are from amongst the returned soldiers previous to the signing of the armistice. It can be imagined what is going to happen when the rest of the boys come home.

Soldiers Will Have Twenty Millions to Spend

According to the Department of Militia, there is in the hands of the receiver-general to the credit of the soldiers overseas approximately \$15,000,000 deferred pay, money actually earned but not drawn, being the deposits left with the government in accordance with the policy adopted with all men sent overseas. In addition, every man will receive a further sum by way of free grant equivalent to three months pay and allowances, payable in three monthly instalments, including separation allowance to the soldier's dependent entitled to receive it. In addition, on discharge, every soldier who has donned uniform will also receive \$35, which is intended to provide for civilian clothing.

One of the planks in the platform of the Union government, as announced by Premier Borden in October of 1917, was "a strong and progressive policy of immigration and colonization, accompanied by suitable provisions to induce settlement upon the land," and with this object in view a new portfolio, that of immigration and colonization, was established.

The policy of immigration for Canada in future is to be to confine immigrants as far as possible to those who will develop the land, instead of the type which tends to create a surplus of labor in the cities.

Agriculture Dominating Industry?

One of the prominent financial journals of Eastern Canada says: "The fact that a continued high market for wheat is assured should be the great stabilizing factor in Canada. Agriculture is the country's dominating industry."

It is comforting to know that if anything is receiving attention at the hands of the government it is the question of agricultural production and the bringing into being of conditions making for the prosperity and the happiness of the farmer.

Following the lead of the United States, no doubt the price of wheat in Canada will be guaranteed until 1920. When our basic industry is prosperous the rest of Canada is prosperous.

Will Demand for Farm Products Continue?

But will the demand for agricultural products continue? Mr. Hoover (no doubt the greatest expert in the world on food conditions) recently stated that Europe was almost bare of food; owing to the difficulties of transportation, distribution, finance and fear of German seizure, the amount of food-stuffs furnished had been the very minimum upon which human life could be maintained.

For the year ending July 1st, 1919, it is expected that the American continent will ship for the allies alone 17,-