

In other words, the business men of Western Canada are down to business. Ask any if trade is brisk. He will reply, "Not very, but—." And the spirit of hope finishes the sentence. This absence of the art of telling the gilded truth is a pleasing sign. That it is better to lie a little than to be unhappy a lot, is no longer a recognized axiom. Exaggeration of our western country's possibilities is unwise. The truth only need be told—the truth without trimmings or embroidery. The upholstered inspirations of the diplomat are unnecessary.

Capital does not seek gaudily illuminated channels. Money seeks investment where the chance of being strangled looks remote. Capital worth the having will not answer the appeal of the liar. At the land of real opportunity it will stop off. Such a land have we in this Dominion. What optimism is in the West has good reason for being. That was not quite the situation in the past? No, but the past appears to have passed.

As for the crops—the prophet whose Canadian wheat bushels this year were to make adding machines weary with work, is lost. His millions and billions were the work of a sensitive imagination. Imagination is all very fine and large when one has in reserve a piece of rope to haul in the flights when occasion occurs. If we get out of the three prairie Provinces one hundred millions of bushels of wheat, the country will have done well. The quantity can scarcely be less. The extraordinary crop prophesied last spring is left for rumination by a sorry prophet.

King Frost has accomplished his hurt in many districts. Some wheat consequently gave up the ghost or took its railroad journey an invalid. But the average yield has been satisfactory. In many districts it is about eighteen bushels to the acre. This may be found later to be about the year's average for the wheat areas of the West, but naturally this can be but guesswork. In several instances, where hard work has been on the job continuously and the gods have been kind, large yields have resulted.

Until within a week of September's demise, weather conditions had been ideal. For cutting, stooking, and threshing, the farmers and the harvesters had a radiant sun as constant companion. Such warm fall weather had not been experienced for at least twenty years back. Then came a short spell of frost and cold, as a sort of appetizing bitters to the Indian summer, and later a health-giving winter.

Good prices are being obtained for the crop. Its movement, all circumstances considered, is satisfactory. The railroads harbor no desire to see long strings of cars strung up in sidings like so many idle beads. Directors' salaries come out of the results of business acumen. Some will argue that our western wheat should be moved in, at the most, three months' time. Another side there is to that. Suppose for a moment it were possible to paralyze our railroad system except in relation to the crop movement. For the sake of your extremists, suppose such an absolutely impracticable scheme were made possible. The movement, which usually for many months burns up coal, keeps locomotives and cars in motion, circulates money, and employs divers train crews, would last but a few weeks. That is, it would, if congestion and business paralysis did not interfere. The more one fairly inquires the more one learns that the railroads are doing their best, and that they best know their own business.

With the many heartsome circumstances, of which an outline has been drawn, it must be obvious that the Dominion has firm steps turned towards an era of prosperity. The country is becoming year by year recognized as an investment Mecca. It is our duty to see to it that this recognition is fostered but not abused. Unless some capricious prank bobs up unexpectedly, the commercial and financial foundation of the Dominion of Canada should, in a few years, excite universal admiration and pay good dividends. The only warning necessary is:

Be ye heedful of the lessons taught by the pitfalls of the past.

LOW PRICES AND CREDIT.

Much depends upon the appreciation or depreciation of individual credits. Collectively, they are the credits of the nation at large. A study of the stock markets in Canada for the past year or two gives an excellent demonstration of this fact. In 1906, the Dominion was seething in a foam of prosperity. Since then, have come a trade depression and financial stringency. At first glance it might appear that stock market securities had little bearing upon the prevailing state of assets. On the other hand, both directly and indirectly, the business man's financial position is frequently made more or less substantial according to the marketable value of securities.

A glance at the immediately available assets in various bank statements shows little fluctuation in the securities held. Broadly speaking, their value is a fixed value. In the case of the ordinary scrip of the stock exchanges, it is different. This includes the industrial bonds that stand as a first mortgage on the property of the company.

Standard stocks of sterling worth necessarily possess a commercial status. They have a wide market, which is influenced by investment demand, and not infrequently by manipulation. As is well known to stock market followers, the worth of an industrial or railroad security is greater from a credit point of view when selling at a premium. If the market price is below par, or even of normal investment value, it is naturally of less worth. In 1906, 500 shares of Twin City were worth \$61,000, while three months from the end of the year only \$34,500 could be secured for a similar block of the stock. Canadian Pacific is cited frequently in all manner of calculations. It will be interesting to take 500 shares of this security. At the periods mentioned above the stock had respectively a market value of \$100,000, while later it declined to \$70,000. Such instances may be multiplied a score of times.

The following table gives an idea of the extent Canadian credit was impaired during the dull times in the industrial and financial world.

	High. 1906.	Low. 1907.	Decline since 1906.	Approximate present Price.	Advance since 1907.
Tor. Railway	126	82½	43½	104	21½
Mont. Street	284	157	127	188	31
Detroit	102	28½	73½	40½	12
Twin	122¼	69	53¼	90	21
Halifax	108¼	87¼	21	105	17¾
Toledo	36¼	9	27¼	6¾	1¼
Winnipeg	190	124¾	65½	162¾	62¾
Havana	52	21	31	32½	11½
Illinois	101¼	70	31¼	88	18
Sao Paulo	146	94	52	151	57
C.P.R.	201	140	61	176	36
Soo	164	65	99	124	59
Mont. Power	99¾	79	20¾	105¾	26½
Rich. and Ont.	88¼	48½	39¾	74	25½
Scotia Steel	73½	45	28½	51	6
Dom. Coal	84½	37	47½	53	16
Dom. Coal, pfd.	122	85	37	100	15
Iron bonds	87	64½	22½	75½	11
Iron bonds, pfd.	83½	36	47½	65	20
Iron bonds, com.	34¼	12½	21¾	17	4½
Mackay	77¾	41	36¾	69	28
Mackay, pfd.	76	50	26	69	19
Mont. Cot.	133	103¼	29¾	106	2¾
Mont. Tel.	171	130	41	142	12
Bell Tel.	158½	115	43½	133¼	18¼
Laur. Pulp	107½	80	27½	103	23
Lake Woods	100	65	35	90	25
Lake Woods, pfd.	115	99¼	15¾	112	12¾
Textile, pfd.	109¾	75	34¾	83¾	8¾
Ogilvie, pfd.	130	100	30	113	13

It is apparent, therefore, that such depressions, spread over the whole list of market securities necessarily have a decided effect upon the marketable resources of the stockholders. Many arguments may be