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COAL AND WAR

The normal production of the collieries of Nova Scotia is 7,000,000 tons per year. The production in the year 1913 reached 7,250,000 tons, but this was a peak-point in the curve of outputs. The figure of 7,000,000 tons is a conservative and fair representation of what the collieries of Nova Scotia should be putting out at this time. The actual production for 1916 will not greatly exceed 6,000,000 tons. Unless some improvement takes place—and it is difficult to see where the improvement is possible—the production of 1917 will decline to about 5,250,000 tons.

There seems to be no good reason to anticipate a cessation of hostilities before the autumn of 1917, and there are many well-posted observers who think that hostilities will extend into 1918. In any case, demobilization after peace is declared will be a slow and delicate process, and no person can foresee the condition of industry and trade, when that much-desired time shall finally arrive. Some eminent men see great prosperity immediately following the war. Others again see trade depression, labor troubles, and many unpleasant things. The truth is that no one knows, and one man's guess is as good as another man's. Nevertheless, it seems in every way probable that during 1917 no great number of men will return from the colors to the mines, and it is not only probable, but very likely, that more men will leave the collieries to join the colors.

The year 1916 has seen a great trade revival in Canada, and what almost amounts to a saturnalia of prosperity in the United States. Notwithstanding stock-market rumors and the speculations on the length of the war that vary the antics of the "war-brides," does anyone seriously see any diminution in the manufacture of war munitions in the near future? The daily wastage of millions of men on the almost continuously active front that encircles the Central Powers in itself calls for more and more supplies, and this takes no account of reserves and stocks, of reconstruction, and of new and extending markets.

Canada plays no mean part in the resources of the Empire to-day. She has become a financial factor of importance. If the recent Canadian War Loan had been for \$250,000,000, instead of \$100,000,000, it would have been easily raised. Our own little army of approaching 400,000 men requires supplies that bulk quite largely in the industries of a population of under eight millions, to say nothing of the far larger bodies of men that we must assist in munitioning.

If it has taken three months to get Thiepval and Combles, is it not fair to assume that we are still a long way from the bridgehead of the Rhine? There are other and unknown factors in this war that may upset all calculations on the resistance of the Central Empires, but has the German so far shown any signs that he will not fight a stubborn and indefinitely prolonged rearguard action as he withdraws to German soil? The most responsible and best-informed military opinion at the front has seen no deterioration in the German