

272

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Peace and the Immediate Future of Business

While Future Demands Will Take All the Production of British Columbia at Profitable Prices the Immediate Outlook Is Uncertain and Needs Exercise of Prudence and Forethought.

The cessation of hostilities has come so quickly that it has left a business world entirely bewildered—joyfully bewildered however. When it is taken into consideration that up to July 18th last, four months ago, Germany was fighting like a victorious nation with advances and successes crowning every effort and today she lies prostrate as a people and as a military force. The change is so rapid, dramatic and overwhelming that the minds of men can hardly grasp the situation. The armistice that was signed on November 11th, to be ever remembered as one of the most joyful days in the history of civilization, imposes conditions on the defeated enemy that prevents any possibility of future hostilities.

To men engaged in business throughout the world, November 11th marks the beginning of peace. The economic financial and business situation of the world is so involved and so affected by cross currents and eddies that the immediate future is shrouded in complete mystery so that little can be vouchsafed as to their certain directions or trends.

In Canada the situation is so much less involved than in Britain, France, Italy, Belgium and even the United States, that something definite can be said. Canadian war business during the past twelve months has exhibited a strong tendency to decline in proportion to the total amount of business done in Canada. Except for the impetus given by the United States for war orders this decline would be even more marked. It seems likely that at the earliest practical moment the manufacture of shells, explosives, aeroplanes for war purposes, and all classes of munitions used actually in the war will cease. Whatever readjustment or recompense is needed to indemnify the manufacturers will be settled for by the British Government or the United States Government and to a smaller extent by the Canadian Government. All materials used except explosives can practically be turned

into peace purposes and in general the manufacturer of war munitions has a part of his plant engaged in manufacturing peace goods so that the change required is a matter of degree rather than the complete scrapping of one factory and the building of another.

The world is short of a great number of things. The outstanding shortage is that of food and food products. This much is definite and certain that whatever happens there will be a market for all the food that Canada can raise for the next two years at profitable prices. The agricultural demand and the impetus to the live-stock and allied pursuits are so great that Canada should rather expand than attempt to restrict its agricultural production. Not only is there a danger of 100,000,000 people facing either under-feeding or actual starvation conditions during the next twelve months but food reserves must be brought back to the normal pre-war basis. The tremendous stimulus given to agricultural production by this inadequate food supply will react very favourably on the normal demand for goods which is always the accompaniment of large crops and other food products. The activities of the Allies being turned from peace to war have been forced to suspend in great proportion peace activities except those connected with the actual necessities for maintaining their civilian populations. There are, therefore, very small supplies of a large number of commodities that go into industrial production and avenues of trade. This is apart from the huge demand

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While the war is over, the financial burdens remain. Help to keep Canada active and prosperous, so that our returning heroes may be absorbed into the business life of the nation without disturbance or unemployment, by buying more Victory Bonds.

On Saturday, midnight, November Sixteenth, the greatest opportunity of this generation to buy the best security in the world, to yield the attractive rate of 5½ per cent., will close. While the door is open, fill up; such attractive terms will not be offered again.

that will arise for replacement, reconstruction and extensions in industrial life that will be needed when the world moves forward again. The devastated areas of Belgium, Northern France, Poland will need to be rebuilt and the entire activities of those nations will be used in effacing the ravages of war.

In general the world is very short of food, goods and materials and will need all these in huge amounts to re-establish itself in its accustomed business stride. So far as the distant future is concerned business men may look with confidence and assurance. It is only during the next