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British Columbia Business and Autumn Trends

Satisfactory conditions save labor considerations are present and the immediate outlook is favorable—Business is sound and prosperous and our principal industries are active.

Any attempt to express business conditions and outlook in British Columbia must take under notice considerations of the past. Future trends can only be gauged by review and ascertaining present conditions. If present and future outlook is to be stated in a word it is "good and looks to be better." The brakes on business are scarcity and high prices of materials and scarcity of labor, but the chief factor is labor. If labor were plentiful and efficient it would be difficult to overstate the prosperity of British Columbia. Labor is scarce, independent and inefficient, and as long as the war lasts will tend to become scarcer and perhaps more unreasonable. The progress of any trade, industry and business or development of natural resource is retarded by labor conditions. The only thing that appears to be able to alleviate the present labor situation is the further impression of female labor into the work of industry and trade. This we believe can be done and should be undertaken more energetically than hitherto.

The agricultural year, so far as results are obtainable, has been generally favorable. The regrettable crops have had remarkably successful yields. The weather has been excellent as has been the growing conditions. Canning and evaporating establishments have packed larger amounts than ever before. The fruit and berry crops are moderate in yield, high in quality and profitable in price. Farmers were in doubt as to harvesting until the women took hold. Their labor was satisfactory and the experiment may prove to be a permanent condition. No figures are available as to grain production but it would appear to be on a par with last year, which was the banner year. Potato production will be smaller and at lower prices, yet not out of line with pre-war results. Back yard gardening was extensively tried with the result that local demand will be smaller. The livestock industry tends to grow despite the prohibitive cost of feeders and young stock. With the more extensive use of ranges, cattle and sheep raising must advance with the years.

Despite the loss through enlistment, agriculture has had a normal year with abnormal prices, and progress is being made. Importation of food products to feed our population is growing smaller year by year.

It is hoped that the mining industry will make a production equal to the one last year. On account of the prolonged strike in the coal fields of the Crows Nest, the production of coal, coke and metals is below what it was last year at this time. The customs smelter at Trail is nearly

100,000 tons behind last year's treatment at this date, and other smelters supplied with coke from the same district show similar declines. However, the industry is now working under high pressure. Due to the large coal production on the Vancouver Island field the total production may surpass last year's if no further labor trouble develops. Metalliferous production, however, will be hard put to it to equal the previous years, with perhaps the exception of silver. Yet, new shippers have been added during the year and the older mines have a larger production of ore and it is possible that the metallic yield may be as heavy or slightly surpass last year's production. The development and exploration work being carried on is extensive and is being carried on by skillful, capable and wealthy mining interests. The future of mining is bright. In fact it is true to say that mining in British Columbia is on the threshold of a remarkable advance.

The lumber industry is in almost a similar position to mining. The domestic demand is good and sustained, the export market would be enormous if the ships were available.

It is difficult to see how other than steadily expanding business will result whether peace returns soon or not. The coming of peace will undoubtedly benefit the industry.

The log output is increasing with each month. Last year scaling returns broke records and this year they will surpass last year, and still logs are scarce and high in price. Manufacturers are generally working to capacity with interior mills well sold ahead. Prices are high, but so are wages and supplies. The net profits are only moderate. Just at the moment the prairie demand is slack, due to local conditions, crop handling and financing. The outlook is bright for a heavy demand during the early winter

War Duties Made Easier

It is easier to perform a patriotic duty when the duty is universally recognized and performed. This is the opinion of many keen observers who have recently come into contact with war-time life in Great Britain and France.

A celebrated Canadian business man whose services have been availed of several times in recent years by the British Government said recently: "I was greatly impressed both in France and Great Britain with the cheerful endurance of conditions such as we Canadians will not have to live under to the end of the war. It seemed to me that the public mind had become made up and set with the concentrated will power of millions of people, so that war duties did not produce the reactions one might have expected from a naturally peace-loving people."

To explain the popular war service which, in Great Britain and France, has astonished the world, this gentleman quotes the familiar phrase, "Everybody's doing it."