

# Conservation

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## Handicap in the Nation's Trade

### Heavy Charge for Replacement of Fire Losses Must be Provided For

In the competition of nations for the trade of the world, any condition which would prove a handicap must be carefully considered, the causes investigated and every possible endeavour made to secure either their absolute removal or a reduction to the minimum.

Canada, in her present efforts toward obtaining a share of the export trade of Germany, suffers from one of the most serious difficulties with which a nation can contend, namely, that of heavy fire loss.

In the commercial world three items make up the cost of every article, viz., raw material, labour and overhead charges. Raw material is governed in price by market conditions. Overhead charges, however, are a factor of expense which is always open to investigation. The charge against the output of a nation consists of a great many individual items of expense prominent among these is the cost of replacing property destroyed by fire. Canada had a fire loss in 1913 of \$26,346,618 or \$3.20 per capita. The Census Branch allows approximately five persons to a family, and, on this basis, the head of every family in Canada must provide \$16.45 to pay his share of this expense. Using the Census figures of 575,203 as the number of employees engaged in manufacturing in Canada, and assuming that each of these represents a family of five persons, Canadian manufacturers paid out, in 1913, no less than \$8,475,089.00 to provide for replacement of property destroyed by fire.

Germany, on the other hand, has a per capita fire loss of .33, with a family unit loss of \$1.65, and, on the basis of the number of Canadian manufacturing employees, she pays out \$651,075. In other words, Canada and Germany working side by side, and with the same number of employees, Canadian manufacturers must provide, in wages alone, for an additional overhead expense of \$7,824,014.00 to cover fire loss before Canada can compete with her opposition on an equal footing, all other conditions being approximately the same.—D.

## Conservation of the Individual Unit

With respect to the general progress of conservation ideas, it must be remembered that, in the last resort, the highest degree of conservation depends upon the efficiency of the human unit. . . . The greatest need of Canada to-day from the standpoint of its material development, is a higher degree of agricultural and technical education—From address of Hon. Clifford Sifton, at fifth annual meeting of Commission of Conservation

Within a generation of living men, Germany's sun has risen above the horizon, and has blazoned forth, as it is rising toward the zenith, with a splendour that compels our admiration, even though it may fill us with alarm. . . . It was to education, thorough and far-reaching, that their wise counsellors looked for the means whereby their nation should regain and enhance its position in the world, and the faith and hope which inspired them have, as we all know too well, been more than justified.—Dr. Reynolds, at Imperial Education Conference.

The breaking out of the European war, with the consequent disruption of international trade and almost total cessation of imports from Germany, has called attention to the marvellous development of that country within the past generation. Coming out of the struggle with France at the close of 1870 with a disorganized condition of business generally, she yet possessed one valuable asset, viz., that of big men, far-seeing men, men capable of discerning opportunities and of grasping them. Germany's leaders realized that to make their country great, to increase her foreign trade, and to hold her own markets against foreign competition, it was necessary to produce goods of an equal or better quality and to sell them at an equal or lower price.

One of the requisites for this purpose, and probably the most important, was that German artisans and experts should be thoroughly trained for their work. Investigations, analyses and experiments were necessary, and qualified men were required. To meet this need, Germany instituted and developed a system of practical and technical education which has made her schools an example to the world.

Germany is now at war and will no doubt emerge badly crippled industrially. The attention of Canadian manufacturers is therefore being called to the opportunities presented for capturing a share of Germany's export trade as well as for supplying the home market with our own goods.

In June, 1910, the Canadian Government appointed a royal commission on technical schools, for the purpose of investigating and reporting on the needs of Canada in the matter of technical education. The report of the committee of the Privy Council instituting the Commission stated that "industrial efficiency is all-important to the development of the Dominion and the promotion of the home and foreign trade of Canada in competition with other nations, and can be best promoted by the adoption in Canada of the most advanced systems and methods of industrial training and technical education."

Canada to-day faces a golden opportunity for trade expansion. There is immediate need for the public laboratory and experiment station, for the technically-trained and expert analyst, engineer and tradesman, in order that manufacturing processes may be discovered and applied. This requirement is not for the present only, but will be a continuous demand. The royal commission has made its report and recommendations, strongly advocating the establishment of industrial training as a public policy and suggesting the appropriation of a large sum for the purpose by the Dominion Government.

As the key to securing and holding her share of Germany's export trade, will Canada, through her governments, give to her rising generation the industrial and technical training necessary for them to win?—D.

## The World's Wheat Supplies

### The Canadian Producer's Opportunity in a Situation of Universal Crop Shortage

Public officials have been exhorting the Canadian farmer to sow more wheat this year. But it is doubtful if, even yet, the North American wheat-producer realizes fully what an opportunity confronts him. The farmer, of all men, should not share the exaggerated idea of the importance of Canada and the United States as contributors to the world's food supply, which leads many persons to feel that there can be little pinch or shortage as long as the production of these countries continues unhampered. It is rather the actual predominance of Europe as a food producer that renders the situation serious and places a premium on American supplies. The following facts are significant:

Europe leads the continents in annual wheat production and, normally, raises twice as much as North America, her nearest competitor. She grew over one-half of the record-breaking world's wheat crop of 1913, doubling the combined contribution of Canada, United States and Mexico. European nations now in arms alone grew 42 per cent of the total yield, while the whole of North America produced only slightly over 25 per cent. On the reasonable supposition that shortage of labour, poor tillage, decreased acreage and other adverse conditions will reduce the 1914 wheat crops of European combatants by one-third, over half of North America's entire yield would be required to meet the deficiency.

Europe probably carried over into 1914 a fair surplus from her banner wheat crop of 1913. But what of this year's production? Russia's rosier prospects before the war never promised within 150,000,000 bushels of last year's total, and the war must have caused further huge decreases. Hungary and Italy, great wheat nations, will show a combined shortage of 75,000,000 bushels, while India and Canada fall behind by 50,000,000 and 70,000,000 bushels respectively, as compared with the 1913 harvest. How will the deficiency be met? Canada's exportable surplus has been cut in two. The bumper crop of the