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BRITISH COLUMBIA FINANCIAL TIMES

A Journal of Finance, Commerce, Insurance, Real Estate, Timber and Mining

Vol. IV. No. 18

VANCOUVER, SEPTEMBER 15, 1917

SINGLE COPY 10c
THE YEAR \$2.00

Bounteous Harvests and British Columbia Trade

Large Crops and High Prices Will Produce Wealth of at Least One-half Billion Dollars — Effect on Provincial Industry

While the fact of bounteous harvests on the prairies will not have the effect on British Columbia and her industries that it would have had under the normal conditions of peace, there is nevertheless a tremendous actual and potential value to our trade with incalculable benefit to Canada as a whole.

From rather disturbing reports in midsummer, due to drouth conditions, to ideal ripening conditions the last week in August, there has taken place a remarkable change in the crop yields. The Winnipeg correspondent of the New York Evening Post summarizes the crop situation as follows:

"Ideal crop weather, consisting of an alternation of sunny days and sufficient rains for the last three weeks, has so improved the grain of the western provinces that optimism now fairly generally prevails. While it is true that the present yield still suffers in comparison with the phenomenal crop of 1915, and still falls short of our hopes as a contribution to the food needs of England, France and Belgium, it nevertheless now proves itself to be at any rate rather above the normal average.

"Since the first week in August the grain has given at least three additional causes for congratulation. In the first place the wheat berry has filled out so well that the whole crop has been materially increased. In the rich Regina district especially, and in the famous old Portage plains of Manitoba the wheat ears are now as plump as if there had been no drought in July. In fact, wherever the land was properly prepared there is now a good yield, the five-to-ten-bushels-an-acre crops occurring chiefly where the seed was sown on stubble.

"Consequently, the estimates made by the managers of the various branches of the Bank of Commerce compute the whole yield west of Lake Superior at not less than 200,000,000 bushels, while the Canadian Northern Railway places it at a full quarter of a million bushels. Then, secondly, an unusually large quantity of the grain is grading No. 1 northern. Lastly, the rapid ripening of the wheat has resulted in a much earlier harvest than was expected.

As cutting is now general from the Lake of the Woods to the foothills of the Rockies, with most of the wheat of Southern Manitoba already in the stooks, the danger from early frost has therefore become practically negligible.

"In addition to the Western yield, the wheat of the Eastern provinces will probably run as high as 50,000,000 bushels. Hence, the estimate of the wheat crop for the whole Dominion varies from 250,000,000 to 300,000,000 bushels."

The Government has fixed the price of wheat at \$2.21

per bushel at Fort William for No. 1 northern, with three cents less for No. 2 and six cents less for No. 3. If the crop be estimated at 250,000,000 bushels, which we think will prove less than the actual yield when the season is over, something like \$500,000,000 will be poured into the farmers' pockets or received at primary points for the crop. The need to reserve seeding stock will prevent the whole crop being marketed, but oats, barley and flax will make a total equalling or exceeding the above estimated amount.

Any estimate of the benefit not only to the affected districts, but to the commerce and industry of Canada as a whole, will suffer rather from an understatement than an overstatement of fact. Viewed in its international relation, the shipment of grain will pay for a year of Canada's war expenses, if not longer. It will practically wipe out the debts of large numbers of farmers and merchants. It would start the factories of Canada on peace goods if every munition order were cancelled today. It will establish a reservoir of credit for the entire country to

draw on against the occurrence of some adverse circumstance.

The direct benefit to British Columbia for the time being is in the lumber industry. The high cost of deep-sea tonnage precludes the possibility of shipping lumber foreign except, perhaps, on admiralty orders. The industry has had to depend on the prairie or the United States trade. Because of the extraordinary crop of 1915 and the high prices paid for the 1916 crop, the prairie lumber demand has been large and growing. The 1917 crop will greatly expand this trade and it appears to be a question of keeping up with orders rather than of seeking the best market in which to sell. This domestic demand, except for conditions that cannot seem possible of occurring at this time, it is

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The present war is a battle of peoples. Every home in Canada is a cog in the Allied machine. Waste in the home means inefficient belligerent machinery of which the enemy will take advantage. A home conducted with patriotic and self-respecting thoroughness and economy, on the other hand, is helping to grind out results at the front. These results, sooner than most people believe, will emerge as a glorious victory if every home does its part, or if the right course is taken in any fair number of homes.

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