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LOOKING AHEAD.

From a financial and economic point of view, Canada has probably, thus far, been a considerable gainer as a result of the war. The fact is nothing to be proud of, but it remains. Up to the present, the aspects of that gain which have been chiefly in prominence are the transitory ones, the development of our munitions industry, the immense war growth of our export trade, the record prices for our staple commodities. There are now gradually emerging into sight other factors, permanent in character rather than transitory. While not yet prominent they constitute important reasons for hopefulness regarding the longer future, and some of them will in the long run be worth to Canada, in their effects, considerably more than an export trade artificially expanded for a few years.

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While the end of the war will find us perhaps with a National Debt quadrupled in comparison with its pre-war level, the mere size of the debt, expressed in terms of money, need not necessarily cause foreboding. The bulk of it will be held within the borders of the Dominion, and while the burden of debt is not lifted thereby, it is certainly minimized in the case of a country like Canada, where the matter of meeting annual charges on immense borrowings abroad is a financial consideration of primary importance. Besides this, interest due abroad is paid for in commodities and there are students outside Canada, whose opinions are entitled to respect, who have lately expressed the view that the rise in commodity prices will more than counter-balance any increase in terms of money in the amount of Canada's external obligations during the war. This appears a somewhat rosy outlook on possibilities, but it is certain that, to some extent, any increase in terms of money in our external obligations will be off-set after the war by the enhanced prices of our staple and exportable commodities over pre-war levels. Thus proportionately less effort will be required to meet our obligations abroad than in pre-war days. Whatever views may be entertained regarding the course of prices after the war, it appears reasonable to anticipate that grain and other staple foodstuffs will continue at a fairly high level, even if reduced below their present levels. The demand for some years will scarcely be less urgent than at the present time.

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Possibilities regarding the meeting of our external obligations are an important matter, but probably of even greater importance are the tendencies which come under the heading of increased production, efficiency and thrift. It is these tendencies that will eventually lead to the most far-reaching conse-

quences, and enable the longer future to be looked forward to with great hopefulness. In many lines, the war has brought about almost a revolution in industrial methods, to some extent in Canada, as well as in Europe. There has been a large increase in the productive capacity of our factories; our industrial plant has been considerably developed as regards machinery and equipment. Industrial research has received an immense stimulus, and there has doubtless been a decided gain in managerial skill and workmen's adaptability.

This movement extends to the primary industries of mine and forest, as well as to the secondary ones of factory processes. Lack of adequate labour has probably prevented agriculture from making the forward movement which, given that, it would have recorded. Nevertheless, it is apparent that a great stimulus has been given to agriculture, and it is only necessary to read a book like Mr. Thomas Adams' volume on "Rural Planning and Development" lately issued by the Commission of Conservation, to realise that an enormous impetus has been given to the careful consideration of possibilities of rural development and industry in Canada, on the best lines, which under other circumstances, would probably have been lacking.

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If there is one fact above all which this war has emphasized, it is the necessity for the use of trained brains, in preparation, in organisation, in administration of national affairs. It is in this fact that our real hope for the future lies. The lessons which have been learned by Canada during the last three years are not likely to be forgotten. There will be less "hustle" and more study; less idle boasting and greater efficiency in service; and fortified by a thrift that we are just beginning to learn, and a determination akin to that of those Canadians who are upholding the flag in Flanders, the work of building up Canada by scientific and truly efficient methods, adoption of which, perhaps, would not have been possible with a less bitter experience, will be steadily proceeded with. The success which has been achieved within the last year or two in bringing together commercial, financial, and agricultural interests in the West gives good ground for the hope that our future efforts will not be hindered by sectional divisions, whether of agriculturists, manufacturers and financiers, or of capital and labour. The problem of labour will probably be one of the most difficult of solution, but in view of the distinct widening of outlook which has been given both capital and labour during the last three years, the outlook in this connection is certainly hopeful that the production of wealth will not be hindered or prevented by endless and bitter disputes.