

497  
272

BRITISH COLUMBIA

# FINANCIAL TIMES

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

Vol. IV. No. 2

VANCOUVER, JANUARY 20, 1917

SINGLE COPY 10c  
THE YEAR \$2.00

## Problems that Face the People of Canada

Requirements for Increased Financing During 1917 on Account of the War Necessitate Increased Thrift and Elimination of Extravagance—Remarks of Sir Edmund Walker.

Our leading business men, bankers, and economists are constantly sounding a note in unison. The note has many variations, according to the point of view or the placing of emphasis; but it chiefly is sounded on the themes of conservation, production, thrift, increased individual and social energy for the purpose of winning the War and maintenance of national solvency and sound industrial conditions, both throughout its duration and what will come after.

The annual meeting of shareholders of our chartered banks has been the occasion for taking stock of the situation and its problems, reviewing the past, forecasting the future, and tendering the solutions which are of necessity to be applied for the continuance of our economic well-being.

Early in December, Sir Vincent Meredith and Sir Frederick Williams-Taylor, respectively president and general manager of the Bank of Montreal, pointed out the necessities of the situation in very able manner at the annual meeting of that prominent institution. During the first half of the present month several prominent chartered banks held their annual meetings. In practically every case the leading theme of the addresses presented was increased production, necessity of thrift, maintenance of high industrial activity and co-operation of effort.

None speak more interestingly, nor whose words are deserving of closer scrutiny and study, than Sir Edmund Walker, president of the Canadian Bank of Commerce, whose annual address to the shareholders has been given to the press. His remarks have chiefly to do with the situation of Canada as a whole, and very little had to do with the affairs of the bank. How far thrift, economy, extravagance, production dominate his address is shown in a few excerpts taken from it, which command the attention of business interests and the people as a whole.

Speaking of the remarkable turn in our foreign trade, Sir Edmund points out a phase of our imports which should be improved:—

"If we are really to exercise an effective economy, we

should be very jealous as to the nature of any imports not necessary for the production of war supplies or for our national existence. There is some improvement in this respect, but it is not pleasant to see about 10 millions sent abroad for motors and about as much more for silk goods and velvets. The chief increases are in iron and steel bars and goods, and in iron ores, in machinery, in wool, cotton and jute and goods made therefrom, in raw rubber, in various chemicals, oils, explosives, etc., needed for making munitions, in various articles for the army and navy, and to a considerable extent in food-stuffs, so that apparently the chief increases are in necessary articles, although we regret that many of them were not made in Canada. There is a large increase in our exports under every general heading, especially under manufacturing, mining, agriculture and animals and their products. The total of our imports and exports of merchandise in the fiscal year ending March, 1916, was \$1,309,511,866, against \$241,025,360 in 1896, that being also a period of excess exports. This enormous foreign trade is, of course, coincident with a great decline in all domestic trade not connected with the war, and is swollen largely by purchases of steel and other material imported from the United States to be used here in making munitions; the money result is abnormal because of the high price of almost every known commodity. I am not putting forward the figures, however, as a guide to what may be possible after the war. I am putting them forward as an indication of what may be accomplished

when we are spurred by great events. The financial ideal for us at the moment is to pay interest on our foreign indebtedness, to provide our share of the cost of the war, and to lend as much as possible to Great Britain to pay for munitions made for her by Canada. We are apparently accomplishing this, but in the absence of figures we can not estimate what amount of profit from our home trade is eventually invested in war securities. We are, however, being helped to accomplish this result, in a manner which may deceive us, by the large market in the United States for our securities, and also by the many subscriptions received from our XXXXXXXXXX when issues of our own war loans are made in Canada."

After taking up the financing of the war through do-

PROBLEMS THAT FACE THE PEOPLE OF CANADA.
—
GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT OF CONSOLIDATED SMELTER.
—
IMPORTANT ECONOMIC POSITION OF LIFE INSURANCE.
—
PROVINCIAL FORESTRY RETURNS FOR NOVEMBER.
—
RECENT ANNUAL REPORTS.
—
MINING THROUGHOUT BRITISH COLUMBIA.
—
TRUST COMPANY NOTES, COMPANY NOTES, INSURANCE, MUNICIPAL, LUMBER, MINING, AND OTHER INFORMATION.