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Special Articles

The Canadian Clearing House System.

By G. W. Morley.

The War Loan as a Money Market Factor.

By H. M. P. Eckardt.

An Educational Test for Immigrants.

By W. W. Swanson.

Conditions in the West.

By E. Cora Hind.

The Market Price of Mankind.

By J. W. Macmillan.

Canada's Foreign Trade in June.

(Staff Correspondence).

Thrft, an Unknown Commodity in Canada.

(Special Staff Correspondence).

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The Ottawa Parliament Buildings

A VERY sensible suggestion has come from the "Winnipeg Free Press" respecting contemplated arrangements for the reconstruction of the Parliament buildings at Ottawa. If it is thought necessary for the country to engage in controversy over rival methods of construction, all operations should be suspended, and the work of rebuilding should be postponed until after the war. The more this suggestion is considered, the more likely it is to find favor in the eyes of the people.

In this time of war it is necessary to observe carefully the distinction between the things that are urgent and those that may conveniently be laid aside for future consideration. In various parts of the country public expenditures have been suspended or curtailed, because the works to which they refer, while they may be important enough at another time, are not at present regarded as matters of urgency, and the reconstruction of the parliament buildings at Ottawa clearly comes within this class. There is really no urgency for the reconstruction of the buildings; nobody is suffering because the buildings have not been reconstructed, and the government fortunately had in the Victoria Memorial Museum a building which without much trouble or expense was converted into a temporary Parliament House that served its purpose very well. Both Senate and House of Commons were very comfortably housed indeed. On the important points of light and ventilation, the temporary parliament building is better than the building that was destroyed by fire. There is no reason why the affairs of parliament cannot be carried on in the Museum building until after the war. There is, of course, some inconvenience in having the Parliament House a considerable distance away from the Departmental Offices, but who expects public affairs, or for that matter, any affairs to be carried on these days without inconvenience. While in the hurry of the last session the work of parliament was quick, the public business was well carried on in the Museum building, and no doubt additional conveniences could be furnished and for a year or two the building would serve all urgent purposes.

The foregoing seem to be strong reasons in favor of suspending all operations upon the reconstruction on the buildings on Parliament Hill, but there are other reasons which should also have much weight. The rebuilding of such magnificent buildings at the time would be enormously expensive. Materials are expensive, labor is high and hard to obtain at any price. The class of man who is needed for the work of rebuilding, is the very class of man who is very much more needed in the trenches of France and Belgium. The work of recruiting is not making all the progress that can be desired. The undertaking of the reconstruction of the

parliament buildings will unquestionably increase the difficulty which is already expressed by those who have in hand the recruiting movement in the Ottawa district.

Still another reason may be forcibly urged in the favor of delay. The problem of unemployment after the war is likely to be one of the most serious that will engage the attention of the authorities. The reconstruction of the parliament buildings after the war would give employment to a very large number of men at a time when there will be much need for such work. There is no need of it now. Every man in Canada today who wants work can get it. Clearly then at such a time any public undertaking that is not of an urgent character should be diverted in order that it may be made valuable at a later day when it would be useful to help to solve the problem of unemployment.

For all these reasons we further concur in the proposal of the Winnipeg writer who advocates the suspension of the present building at Ottawa, and the postponement of the work of reconstruction until after the war.

Britain's Trade Federation

GREAT BRITAIN is not going to forget the lessons she learned during the war. As is well known, the outbreak of hostilities found Great Britain unprepared, except for her navy. Her army was composed of a handful of regulars, well trained and well equipped it is true, but entirely insufficient to cope with the huge land forces of the Teutonic powers. To even greater extent was she unprepared in an industrial sense. In the two years she has waged war against Germany, this has been changed and she has raised and equipped an army of five million men, has built, maintained and manned many new ships, as well as keeping her old fighting ships up to standard. To do this, she has found it necessary to take over and run as government plants over five thousand establishments. The marvel of it all is, that despite the fact that over five million men have been withdrawn from productive industries, and millions of others are engaged in the manufacture of munitions of war, her exports are attaining new high records. The secret of it has been organization and co-operation.

Today Great Britain has just formed a Federation of British Industries with a capital of five hundred million pounds, or two billion five hundred million dollars. This has been formed by the government, manufacturers, the labor class, the banks, the shipping companies, and all other factors entering into the business life of the nation. The Federation is non-partisan, but thoroughly national, only British firms being eligible for membership. Although details of the organization have not been made public, it is well known that this huge federation, backed by the largest capital of any