

a period of curtailment—I do not like to use the word “depression”—the inevitable aftermath of the greatest struggle in the world’s history. But, in comparison with other nations who were engaged in the war, I am sure it must be a source of gratification to us to know that Canada has weathered the storm so well. This is due, no doubt, in a great measure, to the wise policy of re-establishment adopted by the Government.

Our financial institutions are on a sound basis, as shown by the statements of our banks. An evidence of the prosperity of the people is also shown by the increase in the savings deposits in our chartered banks. On the 31st of December, 1920, the amount of such deposits was \$1,293,007,488, as compared with \$1,138,086,691 on the same date in the previous year. This shows, as you will see, an increase of \$154,920,797, equivalent to 13.6 per cent.

In a Review of the Banking Situation in Canada for the year 1920, Mr. Clarence A. Bogert, President of the Canadian Bankers’ Association, says:

An outstanding feature in Canadian banking for the past year has been the marked increase in current loans and discounts in Canada, the total between the end of October, 1919, and the end of October, 1920, increasing from \$1,105,000,000 to over \$1,405,000,000, \$300,000,000 (approximately 27 per cent.), an amount without precedent in the history of Canadian banking.

Mr. Bogert points out that this great increase is accounted for in part by the higher prices of some commodities, such as coal, iron, and steel, which greatly increased in price, and in part by the greater volume of importations of raw materials and consequent greater production of manufactured articles. He also states that the various classes of loans made in the three Prairie Provinces of Canada, which are almost wholly agricultural, showed an increase during the period of approximately \$90,000,000. All combined, therefore, brought about the result mentioned.

Mr. Bogert also draws attention to the cash position of the Canadian banks in these words:

The cash position of the Canadian banks has remained strong. At the end of October, 1920, the banks had in gold and subsidiary coin, Dominion notes, deposits in the Central Gold Reserves, and in notes of other banks, \$433,000,000 as against approximately \$402,000,000 a year before.

In an examination of the trade returns of the country for the period ending December 31, 1920, there unfortun-

ately is indicated an unfavourable trade balance, as compared with the favourable trade balance during the two previous years. This is due, no doubt, in a measure at least, to conditions arising out of the cessation of hostilities. Another notable feature is the marked increase in the imports from the United States during the year just ended. But, on the other hand, it is satisfactory to note that our imports from the United Kingdom have increased from \$87,659,198 in 1919 to \$231,479,294 for the twelve months ending December 31, 1920.

My honourable friend (Hon. Mr. Webster) has alluded to the bountiful harvest with which we were blessed during the past year.

A matter which is mentioned in the Speech from the Throne, and one which, no doubt, is of vital interest to the people of Canada, as it is to the people of all other sections of the world, is the present industrial situation. The industrial situation is in a more or less disturbed condition the world over, and it is only natural that its effects should be reflected in certain sections of this country and among certain industries. By the end of October last year unemployment amongst members of certain trade unions had increased somewhat, owing chiefly to lack of work in the clothing, boot and shoe, and rubber industries of Ontario and Quebec, and in shipbuilding and lumbering in British Columbia, and to general slackness among carpenters and joiners. By the end of December the percentage of unemployment had increased somewhat, particularly among workers in the clothing, metals, food, and leather industries. Notwithstanding the fact that there has been a certain amount of unemployment in Canada, it is a source of congratulation that the unemployment has been much less than in any other country in the world which is affected by its industrials. No doubt, if the workman is willing, in some cases at least, to change his vocation and accept a readjustment, not necessarily a reduction, in wages, the unemployment problem can be satisfactorily dealt with. In addition to this, by the adoption of the relief measures outlined in the Speech from the Throne, the Government will be able, no doubt, to cope successfully with the unemployment situation, and the people of this country may look forward with hope to an early resumption of the prosperous condition which prevailed throughout the country prior to the war.