

The East and the West---Real Co-operation Wanted

SIR JOHN WILLISON.

As the West has problems which we in the East do not clearly understand, so the East has problems for which one greatly desires the sympathetic consideration of Western Canada. Many great factories until recently engaged in the manufacture of munitions and war supplies have had to readapt themselves to peace conditions. For example, the Imperial Munitions Board built seven great National plants at a cost of \$15,000,000. So, many firms and companies expended millions to meet the needs of war. We must all desire that these investments should be of permanent value to the nation. We are establishing a great shipbuilding industry in the East and on the Pacific, and we must all hope that this commercial fleet will be busy now peace is restored, in carrying the products and manufactures of Canada to world markets. But if that is to be, the fields and the factories must produce to the utmost, the raw material of Canada must be manufactured within the country, industries natural to the West must be established and land policies must be devised which will bring millions of selected settlers to these Western plains, and make available for their habitation, lands which now give no adequate return either in crops or in taxes. One would like the West to remember also that in the Eastern regiments overseas there were many thousands of industrial workers, that at best the first months, and it may be the first years of peace, will provide a hard problem of readjustment for Eastern industries, and that unless there is adequate and continuous industrial activity these workers who offered their lives for Canada may look in vain for work in Canada. Moreover, such countries as the United States and Japan have great commercial fleets and organization for export trade and command of home markets such as they never possessed before, all natural and legitimate developments of national policy, but not to be lost upon Canada as example and inspiration.

In face of these facts and considerations, there is, I submit, overwhelming reasons for co-operation instead

of conflict in Canada, for co-operation between East and West, between farmers and manufacturers, and between employers and workers. There may be necessity for mutual concessions, for accommodation, for compromise. One does not need to go West to know that among the leaders in Western agriculture and Western commerce there are men of equal stature with any that we have in the East, as devoted to Canada, as unaffected by class or sectional consideration. In the West, however, one does see this more clearly and feel it more strongly, and in proportion as one understands he has the stronger assurance that the general interests of Canada will govern every vital decision of the Canadian people. All the East can ask from the West is that its people shall understand Eastern conditions and problems. A like obligation lies upon the Eastern people. Surely such understanding would be vitally assisted by periodical conferences between representatives of agriculture, commerce and industry in the two great sections of Canada. Surely the difficult and perplexing problems of reconstruction make such conferences peculiarly desirable and necessary. We are at the close of an era in Canada. War has regrouped the nations. In the great conflict in the old world the unity of the race to which we belong has been re-established. In the new relation between Great Britain and the United States, we shall have a mighty power to keep the world's peace if we interpret the British Empire aright, and by our example help to bind the English speaking peoples in enduring amity and unity. We have had to cast some of our international jealousies and prejudices upon the rubbish heap of time, and perhaps we shall see our own problems more clearly in the future because our vision will not be obscured by inherited prejudices and ancient enmities. In the West one gets the vision of what Canada may be, and feels to the full how poor and insignificant are all other considerations in comparison with the unity and stability of the commonwealth.

TOWN PLANNING INSTITUTE.

That Town Planning is becoming a factor in Canada is indicated by the formation of the Town Planning Institute whose membership is made up of a number of architects, surveyors and engineers interested in the subject. The object of the institute is to advance the study of town planning and the development of urban and rural land along sane and hygienic lines. Each member in addition to being a qualified member of one of the above professions must study town planning for a year and then pass an examination on the subject before becoming a full member. In addition there will be legal members and associate members the latter made up of medical men and journalists who take an interest in town planning. In wishing the new institute every success we hope that the educational work that it proposes doing will be along practical lines. Many of the town planning scheme that we have examined are of so elaborate and costly a nature as to scare the municipal councils without whose good will very little can be done, even though Town Planning legislation may have been passed by the province.

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PROVISION FOR PERIOD OF READJUSTMENT.

Now that the war is won, the foremost thought in every serious Canadian mind to-day is directed toward the future. Every business in the country, large and small, from our great railways to the small shops, is concerned and involved. As the business of our banks is with the whole community, we are specially and vitally interested. War prices have brought great prosperity to land and water transportation companies, to merchants, to manufacturers, to farm-

ers, and to the laboring class. Only the salaried class and those whose incomes are fixed have suffered. Not only are prices of all commodities unprecedentedly high, with a liberal margin of profit, but the demand for the staples of life and many luxuries is unlimited.

Two contingencies in which we are vitally concerned are the respective rates of speed with which prices and demand will decline. It is not for me to assume the role of a prophet, but I can at least go the length of stating that the policy of this bank has been and is to conduct its business on the probability that both may decline rapidly, that values are certain to fall away presently, and that there may at the same time be a diminution in demand. Either of these conditions would be serious. A combination of the two would be disastrous to unprepared merchants and manufacturers carrying heavy stocks. Our great industrial companies are practically all in an immensely stronger financial position than before the war. In some cases the improvement seems almost magical. In general terms, my belief is that the trading and manufacturing community of Canada is prepared for the slump as it comes. Meanwhile, public pronouncements are made by those who have given the subject special study that food prices, particularly for meat, will remain extremely high for many months to come.

After passing through the inevitable period of economic confusion which all countries must endure, that country of boundless wealth and virility, the United States, the only great power, by the way, to emerge from the war better off financially may probably enter upon an era of unprecedented expansion and development. Canada must share in such prosperity independently of the part we hope to take in supplying Europe's reconstruction and regular demands. Meanwhile, there never was a time when our country was more in need of sound economic thinking and sane financial policy.—Sir Frederick Williams-Taylor.—From Bank of Montreal Annual Statement.