

# The Chronicle

## Banking, Insurance and Finance

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### THE GENERAL FINANCIAL SITUATION.

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manner, the prospects of development by Canadian industry and trade, under the new "post bellum" conditions. Frankly, it means that in some stocks at least, the rise has been quite sufficient to discount any prospect, however rosy, within a reasonable period. Some junior stocks also are obviously getting altogether out of line in comparison with some securities, and while it would be foolish to prophesy at a time like the present when the public is intent on buying stocks, good, bad and indifferent, that these junior stocks will not go higher, purchasers should realize that on any untoward developments, these stocks, which have little behind them to justify present quotations, will be apt to find their real level with a bump that will be decidedly discomfoting to those on board.

While the labour situation showed some improvement in the early days of this week, there is no blinking the fact that the outlook is by no means assured, and that further trouble is to be expected in both the east and the west. Critical and widespread movements of this kind are not likely to settle down in a week or two. It is to be noted that in England, where the peck of labour trouble seems to have been surmounted, and a state of comparative industrial peace secured, that an acute condition of industrial unrest lasted many months. It is accordingly not to be expected that in Canada, where the movement has only just developed, that a final settlement will be more quickly arrived at. It will be the part of wisdom, therefore, to be prepared for unfavourable developments in the labour situation for at least some little time to come. Among the mass of conflicting views presented to the Royal Commission on Industrial Relations, at its various sittings, there seems at least an unanimity of opinion that the current high prices of foodstuffs have much to do with the existing unrest. The harvesting of plentiful crops this summer should have some effect upon the existing level of prices, and if these are somewhat reduced by the fall, as appears may be anticipated with some confidence, the effect upon industrial conditions should be distinctly good.

One reason why, in spite of the fact that several of the lines of industry which have been most active during the war period are now, per force, absolutely idle, retail trade continues good, and entertainment and the newer luxury trades are doing exceptionally well, is apt to be overlooked—the return of many thousands of soldiers. Many returned men have quite tidy sums at their disposal as the result of accumulated pay, sums which are being substantially added to by the gratuities they are now receiving. This outfitting in "civics" entails what must be in the aggregate an enormous demand in the clothing, boot and men's furnishing trades, and there is no doubt that as a result of these demands, these lines are enjoying at present exceptionally prosperous conditions. Similarly, the very natural desire to give the returned men a "good time" before they settle down to civil life is benefiting the entertaining and newer luxury trades. Other economic results of this return of Canada's army are the concentration of the housing problems which, in Montreal at all events, is becoming an extremely serious matter, and the shortage of help for various purposes, in spite of the release of many thousands of workers from the munition factories. Some of these, with facilities for travel again available, are going "home," and others are having a "good time" on savings accumulated during the war-time period of prosperity. The last is an unpatriotic development but inevitable, and the probabilities are that there will be no easing-up in the present acute situation regarding factory and domestic help until the "blowing-in" process now going on has been completed, and necessity compels a resumption of work. The same phenomena is in evidence in England, where it seems the direct result of a system of government out-of-work payments to munition workers and other classes is to offer a strong encouragement to idleness, with the consequence that industry is badly handicapped by a shortage of labour.

### TRAFFIC RETURNS

Canadian Pacific Railway				
Year to date	1917	1918	1919	Increase
April 30, . . . . .	\$42,501,000	\$45,161,000	\$ 48,550,000	\$3,389,000
Week ending	1917	1918	1919	Increase
May 7, . . . . .	3,065,000	2,033,000	2,856,000	*177,000
" 14, . . . . .	3,123,000	3,109,000	2,959,000	*150,000
" 21, . . . . .	3,074,000	2,847,000	2,957,000	110,000
" 31, . . . . .	4,806,000	4,035,000	4,505,000	470,000
Grand Trunk Railway				
Year to date	1917	1918	1919	Increase
April 30, . . . . .	\$18,417,842	\$ 14,046,123	\$19,361,387	\$5,315,264
Week ending	1917	1918	1919	Increase
May 7, . . . . .	1,135,091	1,069,908	1,130,352	60,354
" 14, . . . . .	1,356,646	1,118,634	1,181,138	62,504
" 21, . . . . .	1,425,554	1,167,270	1,214,465	47,195
" 31, . . . . .	1,939,312	1,507,723	1,746,105	238,382
Canadian National Railways				
Year to date	1917	1918	1919	Increase
April 30, . . . . .	\$22,015,621	\$20,481,483	\$4,465,862	\$1,465,862
Week ending	1917	1918	1919	Increase
May 7, . . . . .	1,393,791	1,543,413	1,49,622	149,622
" 14, . . . . .	1,463,167	1,727,076	1,727,076	263,909
" 21, . . . . .	1,543,062	1,770,271	1,727,076	227,209
" 31, . . . . .	2,180,725	2,477,484	2,477,484	296,759

\*Decrease.