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Co-operative Principle in Provincial Development

**Initiation of Board of Trade Movement Promises Much—
Good that Will Result from Co-operative Effort of
Business Interests—Idea Should Be Extended to Em-
brace Whole Province.**

The plan of the Vancouver Board of Trade for an affiliation of all commercial and industrial public bodies in Vancouver for public development is a well-merited plan, and worthy of the hearty co-operation of all such bodies and business men. It is a scheme, however, that should be made to embrace the entire Province. However, for practical purposes it perhaps should first be carried out in the chief city of the Province, and then let it leaven every district of British Columbia.

British Columbia has suffered more from the disparate tendency of its business affairs than perhaps from any other cause. The reasons for this in our business life need not be gone into. The chief, however, appears to be due to the fact that new communities lack cohesiveness, because of the fact that the average business man in them is more apt to be individual than communal in his undertakings. It takes time for a community to see the advantage of working together for mutual development.

In the case of Vancouver some five years ago, when the boom was on, the lack of co-operation among the business men for port development, for increasing business by joint effort, for bringing industrial establishments to the city to ensure its permanent prosperity, etc., was chiefly noted by its absence. This was an early impression a visitor or newcomer got.

Instances were many where a business man refused to interest himself in something which would benefit the city, although in which he received no immediate, tangible, direct benefit. In fact, there was quite a tendency to caste aspersions, except when a direct interest was involved. There was a strong tendency for a business man to say his competitor's goods were no good; therefore, buy of me. There was also a tendency to treat a purchaser as if no further dealings were to be expected with him; therefore, take advantage of him. When Britain seemed to have lost her head over British Columbia land, numerous proposed purchases were prevented because of the senseless "knocking"

on the part of one broker of another's offering. All through the business community there was a strong spirit of antagonism, pique, jealousy and indifference. It must be confessed, too, that this condition of affairs bred a low order of business morality. When the boom broke, and real estate and business speculative profits disappeared, then the flimsy nature of the city's prosperity enforced itself on the community. In the effort for the individual to save himself, many wrong things were done. Then war broke out, and that intensified the situation.

In the resultant stagnation of business in Vancouver, and through the fact that all lines of business were suffering, the idea of co-operation received its largest impetus from business interest. Perhaps a common anguish and suffering through the loss of relatives and friends in the war intensified the community spirit. In small ways, business competitors began to devise ways of mutually increasing business. War orders proved a valuable field to exploit in co-operative ways. The rapid increase of this business helped to fix permanently the idea of co-operation in the business mind. Since that time the worth of working together for mutual benefit has become a more or less fixed principle of business operation. There is, however, a great deal of room for the extension of this principle in the community life of Vancouver. It is becoming more clearly fixed in the general mind that the prosperity of one must be shared in some way, large or small, direct or indirect, by all. The interdependence of business one line with another, one manu-

facturer with another, etc., is such that not one can long experience prolonged activity without a response in many other directions which at first sight may not appear to have the slightest connection.

The movement of the Vancouver Board of Trade to create a common meeting ground, where all organizations having for their basis business co-operation can come together and work for the good of the entire business community, is one of happy augury. If affiliation can be made on any sensible basis, it will soon become evident that the objects of the Manufacturers' Association are not in conflict with the interests or objects of the Board of Trade, or the Lumber Manufacturers' Association, or the Chamber of Mines; but that all can, and should, work together for the

THRIFT AND ECONOMY MUST BE PRACTISED THROUGHOUT THE DOMINION.

Ten nations of the world are on rations. Food conditions in Canada are becoming serious. The necessity for careful examination of every expenditure is imperative upon every man and woman in the country. Thrift must be exercised by all. The need of the hour is well expressed by Stephen Leacock, who writes that:—"The key to the situation, as far as we can unlock it, lies in individual thrift and individual sacrifice. Every man, today, who consumes any article or employs any service not absolutely necessary, aims a blow at his country. Save every cent. Live plainly. Do without everything. Rise early, work hard, and content yourself with a bare living. The man who does this—if he uses the saved money properly—is doing war work for his country. But he must use his savings properly. That is the whole essence of the matter." As it is with men, so it is with women. The motto of all should be to serve by saving and to invest in War Savings Certificates.