

STUDY QUESTION OF MORE PRODUCTION

Dominion Commission to be Appointed—Will Investigate Immigration, Agriculture, Borrowing and Marketing

A commission to enquire into immigration, agriculture, transportation, the borrowing of capital, and the marketing of food products, all in relation to the question of stimulating greater production in Canada to meet conditions arising out of the war is to be appointed by the Dominion government.

In his recommendation for the appointment of such a commission Sir Robert Borden observed that the need was everywhere recognized of stimulating greater production in Canada, and especially greater agricultural production, the immense importance of which has been emphasized by reason of war conditions. In this connection the importance is emphasized of improved methods of production with a view to a better return to the producer; proper instruction and demonstration, increased acreage under production, attracting a permanent class of agricultural immigrants; stimulating co-operation among producers and providing cold-storage and abattoir facilities.

Agricultural Areas Need Cultivators.

The great area of agricultural land in the Dominion emphasizes the need of particular methods of production to meet local conditions, and creates unusual problems affecting distribution of products in home markets and the trade thus created, the transport of products to Canadian ports and their transport to the foreign market.

The report states: "It has been represented to the government that large numbers of persons who before emigrating to Canada have been engaged in agricultural pursuits, have not settled upon the land in Canada, but have been attracted by the opportunities for obtaining high wages in cities and towns and in the construction of railways and other works. The opportunities for thus obtaining work have recently become considerably restricted, and this result has brought about a greater degree of unemployment than usually prevails. It further appears that very large areas of land for which homesteaders have secured patents are not under cultivation, and it is considered that the causes which have led to these results are a proper subject for thorough enquiry.

Selected Immigrants Wanted.

"In connection with the subjects above alluded to, consideration should be given to the conditions which will arise upon the conclusion of the present war and to the resulting opportunities for a vigorous and effective policy of immigration which should have as its object the purpose of attracting to our shores immigration of a suitable type and of inducing the settlement of an agricultural population upon the fertile uncultivated lands which are abundant both in western and in eastern Canada, whether upon the government's sole initiative or in co-operation with provincial governments, which can best carry out an effective scheme of colonization.

"The return to Canada after the conclusion of the war of the Canadian troops now gallantly fighting beyond the seas for our Empire, and for the probable immigration into Canada of other British soldiers and of men from the allied armies after peace shall have been established, should also engage the attention of the proposed commission as regards affording employment.

"The prime minister further observes that the question of transportation, whether by land or water carriage, and the permanent improvement of highways are closely connected with the problems under consideration.

Must Protect Capital.

"The approaching completion of two additional trans-continental railways is a very important element in transportation problems. It has been represented to the government that the construction has considerably anticipated the present capacity of the Dominion to provide traffic for trunk lines, while on the other hand important portions of newly settled territory are without facilities which would be afforded by branch lines incident to a more carefully considered system of railway development. The condition thus created invites the careful attention of the commission.

"As Canada has been and will for many years be a borrowing country requiring capital for extending and developing its agriculture and manufacturing industries, the securing of capital at reasonable rates of interest is essential. This subject should also be taken into consideration. It is to be observed that no proposal which would deter capital from seeking investment in this country, or which would unfairly affect that already invested under established conditions, would in the final result assist Canadian producers in any branch of industry."

SMELTERS AND CANNERIES TO BE ACTIVE

(Staff Correspondence.)

Vancouver, July 3rd.

The smelter of the British Columbia Copper Company at Greenwood has been blown in after an inactive period of a year and a half. This is an indication of the impetus given to mining by the demand for copper. There is a smelter at the Granby property in the northern part of the coast district, but the Britannia mine has to send its concentrates to Tacoma, as do producing mines on Texada island. There are low-grade properties along the coast on which something may be done if the market continues strong. In times when the price goes down, for it is high now, the smaller propositions could still be worked if the recently proposed copper refinery was established on the coast.

The operation of mines means much subsidiary business. At Grand Forks, for instance, the Boundary Iron Works has resumed operations with a full force, following receipt of orders received because of work on mining properties.

Conditions are good in the Kootenay and Boundary districts. None of the towns there depend on the lumbering industry, and in every one the effects of the mining activity is apparent. The operation of the recently opened Kettle Valley Railway will help in the matter of transportation, the cost of freight being a material item to mining companies.

On the coast, machine shops in New Westminster, Vancouver and Victoria have been getting ready for the production of shells on the arrival of the necessary steel billets.

Salmon canneries are anticipated to be active this season, many having already started. Local fish experts say this is the big year for "pinks," and, as financial conditions are in a somewhat more settled condition than last year, canneries look forward to a big pack, though this is not regarded as the quadrennial year. It is expected the canneries will be in operation until well into the autumn.

CANADIAN TRADE WITH WEST INDIES

A memorandum recently prepared by the Comptroller of Customs of St. Lucia for the purpose of showing the effect of the reciprocity agreement on the trade of that colony with Canada sets out some facts in regard to the usual trade with Canada, together with the total imports and exports for 1914, and concludes with the following statement: "The import trade (from Canada) at least has undoubtedly increased, and is still increasing, and it is not more than can be reasonably expected that the closer connection with Canada will eventually bring in its train advantages that will more than compensate for the loss of revenue by the lower tariff rates accorded under the agreement."

During the five years preceding the reciprocity agreement there had been gradual increases in the imports from Canada. In 1908, the first year of this period, the imports were valued at £6,077 and in 1912 £12,094. On June 2nd, 1913, the reciprocity agreement went into effect, but for some time afterwards the benefit to be derived from the preference was not fully realized nor taken advantage of. The imports from Canada amounted to £12,150—about the same as in 1912—£5,516 of which came in under the preference. In 1914, the first complete year to show the working of the new tariff, the imports from Canada rose to £17,892, which was the largest value ever shown for Canada in the imports of the colony. Of this, £16,998 received the benefit of the lower tariff rates. The imports from Newfoundland, which also receive the benefit of the agreement, increased about £1,000 in value.