

# CANADIAN CONTRACT RECORD

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larity in delivery of papers.

## Pessimism and Health.

As long as this old world holds together and business continues, there will be bright faced optimism to predict prosperity and happiness, and dark-browed pessimism to foresee ruin and disaster. It would be an interesting study to ascertain just to what extent the condition of an individual's health is responsible for his view of the business situation and the future of the race in general. That, for the optimist, the sun shines with a more glorious light and that the flowers are colored with more brilliant hues than for the pessimist is a well known psychological fact. Equally well known is it that the latter exercises himself greatly to have his neighbor regard the world from a like depreciatory standpoint. On the other hand, the optimist takes no undue pains to bring the world to see things from his point of view and the pessimist for a time has the greater following. The former, however, is possessed of a clearer vision and is the creature of brighter, higher, nobler and more progressive impulses than is the pessimist. The one by his example of inspiring hopefulness and cheerful courage is a positively progressive force in the world; the other, from his gloomy, suspicious, dispiriting speech and demeanor, is just as non-progressive and discouraging.

Here then is to the health of the optimist, the seeker for the best amid the discouragements of the worst! At

this time of trade discouragement and business quietude his cheerfulness is indispensable. Already, however, he is in control of the situation and views with satisfaction the return of confidence.

To the business world, optimism is as the sunshine to the western wheat field; pessimism as the frost. The former is akin to hope, the latter to despair. Regardless of whence they come, optimism is inspiring, pessimism depressing. The former must prevail. Therein rests the hope of the race.

## The Western Crops.

During the first week of March there has been a very heavy fall of snow in Manitoba, which has materially brightened the prospects of a good crop, for the prevailing impression among old pioneers is that a heavy snow fall is necessary to good crops in Western Canada. Much of the land in Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta has been prepared for seeding, the long open fall last year having enabled the farmers to do a great deal more fall ploughing than usual. The prospects are that a much larger area will be put under crop this spring. Thousands of new settlers will seed and others are increasing their cultivated areas. The wheat crop will likely be increased anywhere from ten to fifteen per cent., but it is likely that the oat crop will be reduced, owing to the fact that seed cannot be procured, and new settlers cannot afford to pay the price of \$1.05 to \$1.10 per bushel now demanded for good oats. If the season is at all favorable an unusually early seeding is expected. A little has been done in the chinook belt of Southern Alberta, and at one or two points in Saskatchewan, but it will not likely be general for some weeks.

## Building Homes.

One of the most noticeable and direct results of the recent financial disturbance is the manner in which real estate values in practically every part of the country have been beneficially affected. The increased interest manifested in real estate is not due

to any boom or false inflation of values, but rather to the fact that dwelling houses are being more and more regarded as a safe investment for funds that ordinarily would be placed on deposit with some financial institution.

Statistics thus far available show somewhat of a decrease in the aggregate outlay for construction work for which permits were issued in the first two months of the year, but this is attributable largely to the cessation of speculative building or the erection of large structures on borrowed capital. On the other hand, the work authorized shows many dwellings of a modest character undertaken by individuals and which, upon completion, will represent the savings of the owner. It is in these smaller operations, into which lumber, cement, brick, lime, etc., will enter that building activity will show first signs of reviving.

Perhaps no more opportune time for building than the present has been offered the man of moderate means who is anxious to build a home of his own. Not only are real estate values more satisfactory to investors than has been the case for several years past, but most items of building material are just now changing hands at more advantageous rates than will be the case a short time hence. This cannot last long. All material must presently assume an upward tendency. It is but a momentary lull in the roar of trade, and he is wise who grasps present opportunities.

## Georgian Bay Canal.

A bill extending the time for the commencement of the construction of the Montreal, Ottawa and Georgian Bay Canal to 1910 has been reported at Ottawa.

The Minister of Railways remarked that the committee should be careful to insert in this bill a clause of the bill of 1906, which provides that the government may on one week's notice take possession of the property on paying the company the cost of construction to date, the cost to be fixed by arbitration. The Ministerial suggestion was acted upon.