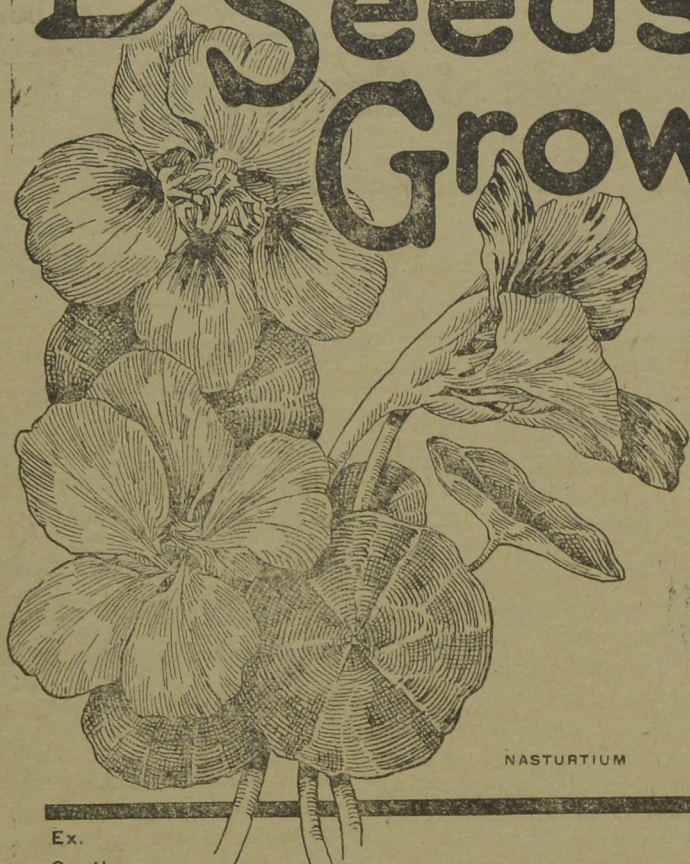


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Says Building Will Lead in a Revival of Trade

(McLean Building Reports)

It was once an accepted doctrine that the steel trade constituted the most reliable barometer of business conditions. Economists are recognizing more and more, however, that steel is itself merely an indicator of the whole building situation, and that the building trades are better viewed as a whole for the purpose of obtaining a conception of the rise and fall of the tide of industry. Steel is perhaps the most representative single commodity; but building, touching as it does, so many phases of the nation's activity at so many different points, is the most representative group in commercial life. The actual volume of new construction undertaken, together with the trend of building costs, therefore afford the key to the economic complexities of the coming year.

What, then, is the present position and the outlook for building in Canada. The course of construction operations in recent months suggests that an era of gradual expansion is at last in prospect. For the year 1921 the value of construction contracts awarded throughout Canada, according to statistics compiled by McLean Building Reports, Limited was \$249,133,300 compared with \$255,605,500 in 1920, \$190,028,300 in 1919, and only \$99,842,100 during 1918. In monetary value the figures for the year just ended, represent, it must be conceded, a decrease of six per cent from the total of the preceding year. But in view of the 20 per cent decline in material costs during the twelve month under review, it is safe to assert that the actual volume of new erections has increased to quite the largest amount since the beginning of the war. Indeed, if building costs were dependent on material costs

alone, it would be possible to estimate last year's building as some 13 per cent in excess of the volume of 1920 construction. But labor costs enter largely into the calculation; and these, while having declined nominally little, have in reality declined, owing to the increased efficiency of laborers, an amount which it is difficult to determine. A conservative estimate of the actual expansion in the volume of last year's building may, however, be placed at probably not under 13 per cent.

It is when the figures are compared month by month, however, that recent developments are seen to advantage. Building operations in December 1921 amounting to \$19,118,500 according to MacLean Building Reports as above quoted, ad constituted the largest December total on record since 1912. Indeed the tendency towards larger construction has been evident since last August, when contracts valued at \$36,307,200 represented the largest monthly aggregate since August 1914. During the last five months the statistics, viewed from whatever angle, have been most encouraging.

At the present moment Canada is recognized as having passed through the worst of her period of post-war depression. One of the first industries in which the return of more normal conditions will assert itself is building. With building costs now approaching something more like stability than they have known for many months, and with the immense accumulated arrears of building, postponed during the war and subsequent inflation phase, to catch up with, it will require but the leaven of a little confidence on the part of the public to institute the most expansive epoch in building that Canada has yet witnessed.

New High Commissioner to Have Enlarged Powers

Ottawa, Feb. 9.—The appointment of Mr. P. C. Larkin of Toronto as High Commissioner for Canada in London was officially announced tonight. The position carries with it several important changes in the administration of Canadian matters overseas. Hereafter the High Commissioner will be responsible for all Canadian Government affairs in Britain.

All separate departments and offices in the Old Country will be under his supervision. For instance, he will have oversight of immigration, Trade Commissioners, Board of Pensions,

Soldiers' Civil Re-establishment and other departments. Never has a Canadian High Commissioner in London been given such an important position or so much responsibility.

Economy and Efficiency.

Mr. Larkin will be responsible primarily to the Prime Minister, but also with regard to repatriation matters to the various Ministers. Under the former regime there were several Canadian officials in London who had nothing to do with the High Commissioner and who reported direct to Ottawa. Such a procedure resulted in considerable overlapping and was not consistent with economy. It is believed that much good Canadian money was wasted under the old system, to say nothing of delays and inefficiency.

Under the conditions attending Mr. Larkin's appointment, Hon. Mr. King believes, the Government is returning to the original purpose of Canada's representative abroad. The new order of things is calculated to get back to Mr. King's ideas of responsible government, by which all Canadian officials in Britain are responsible to one man, and this man responsible to the Prime Minister in Ottawa.

Hon. Mr. King is believed to be looking farther ahead. He has achieved co-ordination and orderly procedure under his present arrangement, but he is also anxious that all Canadian activities in Britain shall be housed in an appropriate Canadian building in London.

It is interesting to know that Sir George Perley, who was Commissioner when the new Government came into power, asked that he be allowed personally to present his resignation. He arrived in Ottawa a day or so ago and handed the Premier the necessary formal papers.

He wished that this resignation take effect on March 1. This was quite agreeable to the Government. In the meantime, Sir George and Mr. Larkin will confer as to various details in connection with the administration of office under the new arrangements. Mr. W. L. Griffith, Secretary to the High Commissioner, sailed from England yesterday and will participate in these conferences. Though the Government has greatly increased the duties of High Commissioner, the greatest confidence is expressed here in Mr. Larkin's ability to represent Canada in an able manner, whether in business, in diplomacy, or socially.

An original man is one who does not talk about the weather. An exceptional man is one who hasn't a bad cold. An interesting man is one who doesn't advise you to try "the best cold cure."

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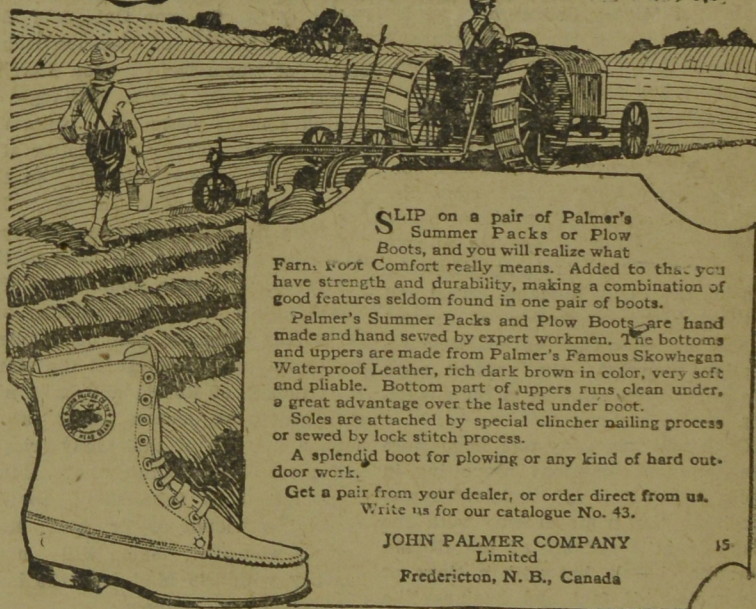
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WANTED—Smart young men of good character and education. We train you for the work. Apply in person to C. G. Pincombe, 83 York St.

FARM WANTED—Want to hear from owner having farm for sale; give particulars and lowest price. John Black, Canada Street, Chippewa Falls, Wisconsin.

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TO LET—A barn to rent the first of May, located at 171 Westmorland St. Also a chance for a car separate from the barn. R. H. Boone.

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