

Business In Northwest Normal

Babson Completes Business Survey of United States

By ROGER W. BABSON

Business in the Northwest averages about even with that of the United States as a whole, according to Roger W. Babson, the statistician who today issued the last section of his findings on current business conditions for the United States. Mr. Babson's report on Canadian conditions will be completed in about one week.

"I like the Pacific Northwest," says the statistician. "It is a good sound country inhabited by good and sound people. The climate is attractive yet this district has not been infested by pleasure seekers. Natural resources are great yet the people are inclined to work rather than to exploit and speculate."

"Compared with last year the value of city business for this section is running as follows: Oregon leads with a gain of 18 per cent.; Washington shows a gain of 5 per cent.; Wyoming a loss of 16 per cent.; Idaho a loss of 19 per cent.; and Montana a loss of 26 per cent. Crop conditions in Montana and Wyoming, however, indicate an increase in trade during the current year. Of this group of states both fundamental statistics and mercantile reports indicate that the business trend is decidedly favorable in Washington and Oregon.

"Railway shop employment in Wyoming is reported as distinctly curtailed with expectation of approaching improvement. An extensive program of highway construction is also counted upon to relieve unemployment. Expansion is anticipated in oil field and refinery operations, building and construction. There is probability of improvement in these lines; but it is still hard to find, as yet, any promise of a strong upward movement.

"For the near future, then, the best business opportunities in this general region will undoubtedly be found toward the West. However, do not lay so much stress on the present and near future, that you shut your eyes to the inherent possibilities that will eventually be developed in Idaho, Montana and Wyoming.

"All of these states should bene-

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fit from the great change which is coming in world commerce which change will transfer the center of trade from the Atlantic to the Pacific Ocean. Few people realize the great significance of this transformation. It will be truly revolutionary in character. New York City, now the financial center of the western world, must give up its supremacy as has each of the great cities of Europe in its turn. The cities of the Pacific Coast are to become the great cities of America. California, Washington and Oregon are to become the richest and busiest of our forty-eight states. These Pacific Coast centers are destined to be the clearing houses between the wealth of America and the teeming millions of China, India and the Far East. For centuries these Eastern people have been asleep; but when they once awake, the result will be greater than the wildest imagination can visualize."

Mr. Babson was asked if the Pacific Coast has such a future why are the Northwestern railroads now so depressed? He replied:

"Railroads are primarily made by their managements—not by the territories which they serve. Men make values—and vision, courage and energy make men. Great Northern and Northern Pacific

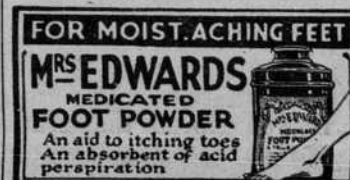
are suffering from the death of James J. Hill. The St. Paul road is an orphan without any father. This condition will, however, not always continue. Some one connected with these properties will rise out of the management and again assume leadership. New generals are born as the old ones die. These new leaders will again vitalize these systems and their future will again be bright. The only question is whether or not conditions are yet ripe for the change. These great Northwestern railroad systems are only temporarily slumbering pending a change in generals, and men not only make railroads, but they make cities and states. Hence the importance of giving more thought to men and less to material things. Money, machinery and buildings are mere tools. They are valueless except as used for worth while purposes by men fired with a desire to blaze the trail for new methods, new industries and new communities."



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