

*Wells Carter*

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# COMMERCIAL ACTIVITY GREAT

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## Prominent New York Business Man, in Portland, Sees Flood Tide of Prosperity — Portland Short-changed in Figures.

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That this country is on the threshold of an unparalleled period of prosperity, and that the activity in commerce, industry and other lines of endeavor is to surpass anything past generations have seen, is the confident belief of Irving J. Benjamin of New York, who is spending a few days in Portland.

Mr. Benjamin is probably in as good position as any other man in the country to reach an intelligent and well advised opinion on the subject. He is the head of the well known advertising firm of Benjamin & Kentnor of New York, and is part owner in a number of metropolitan newspapers in various parts of the country. He is in the closest business affiliations with leading newspapers in every city, and is on a business tour that is carrying him from the Atlantic to the Pacific and from the lakes to the gulf. Everywhere he has found business in a full tide of activity, and every omen eloquent of a period of wonderful prosperity.

### **Advertising Business Barometer.**

"I believe we are on the eve of a financial feast such as the country has never seen," said Mr. Benjamin. "A variety of indications seem to augur unusual activity in financial, commercial and industrial lines. There is, for instance, no activity in so intimate touch with the country's pulse as is the advertising field. It is a complete barometer of business conditions. In times of stress, the business man curtails his allowance for advertising, and in times of promise he increases it. By this test, there has been no time when conditions augured so much of prosperity. In the local field, not only are new advertisers appearing, but it is equally manifest in the case of the foreign advertiser. Any one who will take the trouble to make the comparison will find that in any standard magazine today, there is 25 to 30 per cent more advertising than there was at the same time a year ago. To men who are in touch with the heart beat of commercial and industrial life, these are infallible signs of a coming period of unequalled activity.

### **Mills Running Everywhere.**

"Another evidence of what we may expect appears in the conditions in the industrial centers. In Schenectady, Bridgeport, Pittsburg or any other of the great industrial cities two years ago there was stagnation, paralysis and multitudes of unemployed men. Some establishments were closed, while others were running on half time. Today, in all of them, the reverse is true. There has been a gradual revival until all the mills are running on full time, while many are overwhelmed and far behind on orders.

"But the activity is not confined to mills and factories. In my tour through the country I have everywhere found the building industry pushed to the limit. In Fort Worth, Texas, in many instances I found two families occupying a single house, and many who could not get houses at all. The building trades were crowded to the limit, and the whole air was surcharged with enterprise. In Oregon, in Washington, in California, in fact all over the country in an approximate degree the same status is observable.

### **Imports Large.**

"To these evidences is to be added the condition of bank balances in New York, and the extraordinary importations of merchandise during the month of August. The aggregate of imports for the country during the month of August was the second largest in history. This means that the business men after taking a look over the country and measuring the chances for and against trade, decided that prospects are most favorable, and brought in

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