

CHAPTER VIII.—AGRICULTURE

CONSPECTUS

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Agriculture, including stock raising and horticulture, is the most important single industry of the Canadian people, employing, according to the Census of 1931, 28.7 p.c. of the total gainfully occupied population and 33.9 p.c. or over one-third of the gainfully occupied males. In addition, it provides the raw material for many Canadian manufactures, and its products in raw or manufactured form constitute a very large percentage of Canadian exports. For a statement of the occupied and the available agricultural lands in Canada, see pp. 15-16 of this volume.

An introductory outline of the historical background of Canadian agriculture is given at pp. 187-190 of the 1939 Year Book. As now presented this chapter treats of current governmental activities—Dominion, in as much detail as space will permit (to utilize such space to the best advantage, the system of special articles not repeated from year to year has been adopted) and Provincial, by outlines and references to provincial sources of information. Comprehensive statistics of agriculture, collected and compiled by the Agricultural Branch of the Dominion Bureau of Statistics and covering Canada as a whole, close the chapter. These include data on values of agricultural production and farm capital, field crops, farm live stock and poultry, dairying, fruit, special crops, prices and miscellaneous statistics. The usual review of world statistics, compiled from the publications of the International Institute of Agriculture, has not been included in the two latest editions of the Year Book, owing to the fact that these statistics are not available because of war conditions.

THE WAR AND CANADIAN AGRICULTURE*

During the early days of the War it appeared that so far as Canadian agriculture was concerned the danger of scarcity was less than that of having to deal with large surpluses of farm products. Consequently there was no immediate demand to increase production. On the other hand, machinery was set up by the Government to give direction to the war-time agricultural program and to guide production efforts into the channels that would bring them as closely as possible in line with the immediate needs.

With Canada well into the third year of the War, the situation has now changed and production programs have been stepped-up appreciably. Much of the uncertainty that characterized the early months of the War and that led to disappoint-

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