

only for limited trading. Bank clearings declined and consumers refused to purchase goods which they did not immediately require. As a consequence, factories closed their doors and serious unemployment ensued. In spite of the enlistment of large numbers of men in the first and second contingents, thousands of unemployed remained to walk the streets of Canadian cities during the winter of 1914-1915. Statistics compiled by the Ontario Commission on Unemployment at this time showed that 651 Ontario factories, which had employed on the average 80,020 workers in the first half of 1913, employed only 60,524 on the average in the latter half of 1914, indicating an average unemployment in the manufacturing industries of Ontario—the chief manufacturing province—of about 25 per cent. Throughout the winter this distressing situation was aggravated by the seasonal unemployment in the country's basic industry—agriculture.

This "winter of our discontent" was, however, to be followed by better times. "To many of our industries, notably to agriculture", Sir Thomas White had said on August 20, 1914, "there should be pronounced stimulation and quickening of activity". This stimulation and quickening were now to take place.

War, as the whole course of history goes to prove, has always implied high prices, more especially for food commodities. War both withdraws men from the cultivation of the soil, thereby diminishing food supply, and also brings about the wastage of the food supplies that already exist. The scarcity of food leads to high prices, stimulating food production and incidentally bringing great gains to the individuals and nations which, like Canada and Canadians, are chiefly employed in agriculture. Thus the American Civil War had been an era of prosperity for the farmers of Canada, the nearest neutral country, and the agriculturists of the present were now to have a similar opportunity of profit. Altogether apart from such selfish considerations, the Mother Country and her neighbouring European allies were in urgent need of the food products which Canada, the chief granary of the Empire as well as the nearest oversea Dominion, could most readily and conveniently supply.

FOOD PRODUCTION AND CONSERVATION.

The prospects at the opening of the spring of 1915 were favourable. An unusual amount of fall ploughing had been done in the West, while a mild winter and spring had favoured the fall wheat crop of the Eastern provinces. Moreover, the Dominion Government, realizing the urgency of the situation, undertook a "Patriotism and Production" campaign, publishing an Agricultural War Book, printing and distributing numerous bulletins, and advertising extensively in the public press, reaching, it was estimated, about 3,000,000 readers. Agricultural production was also stimulated by legislation. The Bank Act was amended by providing that "the bank may lend money to the owner, tenant or occupier of land for the purchase of seed grain", (5 Geo. V., chap. 1). Power was also given to the Governor General in Council to buy, sell and distribute seed grain, fodder