

for animals and other goods required, to the farmers of Alberta and Saskatchewan. The result of all these measures was that the area placed under field crops in Canada reached in 1915, in spite of the depletion of the agricultural labour force by enlistment, 39,140,460 acres, as compared with a previous maximum of 35,575,550 acres in 1912. The increase in acreage was, however, small as compared with the increase in production. As a result of remarkably favourable weather during the growing period, the average yields per acre of the principal cereals in Canada were higher than in any previous year on record, the average yield of wheat reaching 26.05 bushels per acre as compared with a previous record figure in 1913 of 21.04 bushels. The total wheat crop of the year amounted to 393,542,600 bushels, while the oat crop was 464,954,400 bushels. One important result of this enormous yield was that the advent of high war prices in Canada was delayed by at least a year. The Department of Labour's average index number of wholesale prices for the year 1915 was only 148.0 as against 136.1 for 1914 and 135.5 for 1913—a very moderate increase under the extraordinary circumstances of the time. The average cost per week of a family budget of staple foods was \$7.866 in 1915 as compared with \$7.731 in 1914, a small increase which was more than offset for most urban consumers of the labouring class by the drop in average rents from \$4.75 per week in 1914 to \$4.122 in 1915. The total weekly cost of foods, fuel and lighting and rent, came to \$13.844 on the average in 1915 as against \$14.308 in 1914—an actual decline of 46 cents, or more than 3 per cent. Meanwhile the manufacturing industries of the country were stimulated to renewed activity by munition contracts which aggregated about \$300,000,000 by November, 1915, and the surplus of unemployed was absorbed either by enlistment or by the rising munitions industry.

The educational "Production and Thrift" campaign was again actively carried on by the Dominion Government throughout the winter of 1915-16, by means both of the issue of publications and by advertising. In spite of the steadily decreasing labour supply, due to enlistment and to the growing absorption of labour in the munitions industry, the area placed under field crops, 38,930,333 acres, was almost equal to that of 1915. The results, unfortunately, were no means so satisfactory. The western wheat crop, in particular, was badly damaged by rust and hot winds, and in Quebec and Ontario serious damage was caused by August droughts. The net result was that the wheat crop harvested was only two-thirds as large as in the previous year, though the acreage sown to wheat had somewhat increased. From 15,369,709 acres, the crop was 262,781,000 bushels, or 17 bushels to the acre as against 26.05 in 1915. The crops of the United States were affected by the same unfavourable weather as those of Canada, and the Russian export surplus being no longer available on account of the closing of the Black Sea ports, world prices for wheat and other food commodities began to soar rapidly, carrying all other prices in their train. The Canadian index number for 1916 was 182 on the average, increasing from 172.1