

in January to 207.4 in December. Similarly, the Department of Labour's weekly family budget of staple foods, fuel and lighting and rent showed an increase from \$14.143 in January to \$16.328 in December, the average for the year 1916 being \$14.78 as against \$13.844 in 1915.

Throughout the winter of 1916-17 the "Production and Thrift" campaign was once more carried on, and in the prevailing scarcity of labour it appeared necessary to resort to extensive rather than intensive agriculture. More particularly in the Prairie Provinces, large areas of new land were ploughed up for the growth of wheat and other vital crops, the total area sown to farm crops reaching the unprecedented figure of 42,602,288 acres—in spite of the backwardness of the spring and the consequent shortness of the seeding season. As a consequence of frosts at the end of May and droughts in the summer, the western grain yields were below the average, while the crops in Quebec and the Maritime Provinces were injured in September by early frosts. Though Ontario experienced one of the best seasons on record, the general results were unsatisfactory, the wheat production reaching a total of 232,742,850 bushels. This led to a rise in food prices as well as to restrictions on the use of wheat and wheat flour, a Food Controller being appointed on June 21, 1917, with power to inquire into the supply and price of food commodities, and, subject to the approval of the Governor in Council, to make regulations governing the prices and providing for the conservation of food commodities. The average index number for the year reached the unprecedented figure of 237, ranging from 212.7 in January to 257.1 in December, while the weekly family budget increased from \$16.46 to \$19.38 during the same period, averaging \$18.15 for the year.

At the close of 1917 the campaign for increased food production was at its height. As a result of the submarine campaign, great stocks of food urgently needed by the United Kingdom were destroyed in transit and had to be replaced from North America, as the scarcity of shipping made it impossible to spare the ships for bringing Argentinian and Australian wheat to Europe. The urgency of the situation induced the Dominion Government to pass on February 8, 1918, an Order in Council authorizing for one year the free importation of tractors costing not more than \$1,400 in the country of production—a decision which was partly responsible for the great increase to 51,427,190 acres in the area of farm crops, though a part of this reported increase may have been due to improved statistics. The area returned as sown to wheat in 1918 was the largest on record, 17,353,902 acres.

In the west, however, the weather was again unfavourable. May was cold, while June and July were characterized by drought and high winds and frosts occurred towards the end of July. Though Ontario again had an excellent season, the result of the harvest was unfavourable, the yield of wheat being 189,075,350 bushels, or only 11 bushels to the acre. Naturally prices again advanced, the average index number of wholesale prices for the year being 278.3, rising from 258.7 in