

## Some Occurrences and Conditions Overseas which Affect the Production and Marketing of Canadian Agricultural Products.

I have a very simple duty, but not an easy task. I am to serve you as best I can by trying to help you to understand some of the occurrences and conditions resulting from the war which have a direct bearing upon the production and marketing of agricultural products in this country. I am not to make an entertaining speech, or try to persuade you to accept any ready-made opinions. I am to try and help you to understand and again to understand, leaving you to draw your own conclusions.

I was overseas three times during the war with exceptional opportunities for observing and learning, although not with very grave responsibilities on some occasions.

I will not speak of my visit to France in 1916 except to say that I saw some of the Canadians at the Somme. I do not need to go to Dore's picture of "The Mount of Transfiguration" to learn how men look when under the exalting influence of supreme devotion to a great cause. I have seen better than pictures, I have seen the men themselves. It is a memory worth cherishing that these men were fairly aglow with confidence in their cause and devotion to it, although some of them might die—but not perish—in upholding it.

In the early summer of 1918, I was asked by the Government to go overseas as Representative of the Department of Agriculture and the Canada Food Board in order to observe in Great Britain, France and Italy the conditions in respect to food supplies, to learn all I could, and to interpret to Canada the conditions and

needs for the purpose of helping Canada to play her full part, in the very best way, in providing foodstuffs as one of her contributions towards winning the war. Every facility was given by the authorities concerned in England, France and Italy, and I came back to Canada in August. Later it was decided that I should return to Europe as Representative of the Department of Agriculture to be on the spot to obtain and give information in connection with Canadian food supplies. In November, before the armistice was signed, the Prime Minister invited me to accompany the Canadian Peace Conference delegation to London and Paris as Representative of the Department of Agriculture. I appreciated profoundly the honour and responsibility of serving the Government and the agricultural interests of Canada in connection with the Peace Conference and the disposal in Europe of the balances of the exportable surpluses of food commodities provided in response to the war production campaigns.

The following is taken from the report of Sir William Goode, British Director of Relief, to His Majesty's Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs:

"Invaluable advice was received from the Premiers and representatives of the Dominions at the Peace Conference in Paris, particularly from Dr. J. W. Robertson, C.M.G., who, on the unanimous invitation of Mr. Hoover and his allied colleagues, attended the meetings of the Relief Section on behalf of the Canadian Government."