

Agriculture

The progressive policy of the Hearst Government toward agriculture has been maintained in fulfilment of the announcement by Sir William Hearst on assuming the leadership in October, 1914. During the years of the war that policy has aimed first to achieve a maximum of production, second, to better in every way the conditions under which the industry is carried on, and, third, to improve the standard and quality of farm products in Ontario as would insure for the Province continued leadership in agriculture in this country.

Agriculture has received more representation in the Hearst Cabinet than in any other Ministry in the history of the Province. There has always been one farmer in the Cabinet, and for the most part there have been two, which is the case at the present time.

In 1904 the expenditure on agriculture was \$475,000. For 1918 the expenditure by the Hearst Government was \$1,508,000. According to the Bureau of Industries statistics the total value of the agricultural assets of the Province in 1904 was \$1,127,515,338. In 1917 these assets amounted to \$1,572,069,071, an increase of \$444,154,733. For 1918 the value of the farm products of Ontario was:

Field Crops	\$364,037,617
Live Stock	100,000,000
Dairy Produce	80,000,000
Total.....	\$544,037,617

Food Production

In reviewing the agricultural policy of the Government it is important to go back to the commencement of the war in 1914. Following the outbreak of hostilities and the consequent dislocation of trade, Great Britain was compelled to look to the North American continent—and especially Canada—for her supplies of foodstuffs.

A series of patriotic and production meetings were held, with a view to laying before the farmers the situation in the matter of food production and to disseminate information which would be helpful. In addition to these meetings, the regular meetings of the Department as well as the Departmental publicity work emphasized the need.