

obtained such a firm footing in the markets of the United Kingdom, that when at last the British Government awakened to the importance of being self-supporting and manufacturing their own machine tools, the enemy made a successful attempt to render the project unprofitable by severe undercutting of prices. A serious note of alarm was sounded during the war at the prospect of a general food shortage and of the insufficiency of wheat supplies, yet the possibilities of wheat production in Australia are unlimited. There are vast virgin territories still ready for cultivation, awaiting only the arrival of the settler and communication with the export markets. Research work has now produced a wheat seed that is more prolific and has greater powers of resisting drought than in past years. These discoveries, with improved methods of cultivation, have led to the occupation and profitable use of vast areas, which a comparatively few years ago were considered as being beyond the margin of productive agriculture.

Turning to the United Kingdom. We find the average consumption of wheat in the United Kingdom, taken over a period of five years, 1909-13, was 260,000,000 bushels. In 1918, which was a record year for the British Isles, the actual production of wheat was only 80,000,000 bushels—about one-third of our requirements, and the prospects of substantially increasing that yield are unduly remote. Take meat, such as beef, lamb, and mutton—seven-nineteenths of the annual consumption was imported. With regard to wool—we know of the enormous quantities which have come to this country from Australia. Further, we need only refer to the history of this war to realize how dependent we are for those minerals of which the Dominions enjoy an abundance. Self-interest, therefore, suggests that we should ensure a constant supply of those raw materials from our own kith and kin, on whose sympathies we may count, rather than be dependent on the changing goodwill of foreign countries.

Australia with a huge territory, alas! is held by a mere handful of people. If every man, woman, and child therein joined hands they could not reach round the coast-line. Yet