

pendents of the enlisted soldiers provided for the essential wants of many who would otherwise have been in distress by reason of the head of the household being wholly or partially out of employment. When these allowances to the dependents were speedily supplemented, in all necessary cases, by payments from the Patriotic Fund, derived from voluntary subscriptions, the general distress due to unemployment was almost at an end and cannot recur before the close of the war at least.

Naturally those native Canadians who felt most strongly the responsibility to respond to the call of their country, whether having at the time of the outbreak of the war permanent occupations or not, were among the first to offer their services and swelled the numbers of those presenting themselves for enlistment in the early months of the war. In fact, at this stage of the conflict the military authorities had many more offers of enlistment than they could possibly provide for. Evidently impressed by the readiness of so many citizens to enlist, the government estimated that there would be little difficulty in securing as volunteers all the troops required and perhaps more than the civil requirements of the country could spare. As the gravity and duration of the war began to be more fully realized the offers of troops by the Canadian government rapidly expanded. Immediately on the outbreak of the war 30,000 men and supplies were offered. Then in July, 1915, 150,000 troops were promised. In October, 1915, the number was increased to 250,000. Finally, on January 1, 1916, the numbers promised were raised to 500,000.¹ As we shall have occasion to observe, this larger number proved more difficult to find on the voluntary principle than was at all anticipated in the early stages of the war.

The rapid enlistment during the first year of the war would itself have prevented the unemployment problem

¹ Unrevised Hansard, Jan. 17, 1916, p. 25.