

most fully equipped statistical department in the world. It is practically a clearing-house for all the statistics of the Empire, other Departments publishing only administrative records, and these being in charge of officers trained in and appointed from the Central Office. Its chief function is the advising of the government on matters of economic policy. The Austrian system follows close behind. France and Italy are less centralized, but both have Statistical Commissions charged with broad powers of co-ordination. Russia is less advanced but has a Commission.

3. In Great Britain, the census and vital statistics stand by themselves, but the general statistical system largely centers under the Board of Trade. Further consolidation, it may be said, is backed by weighty opinion\* but the argument from economy is, of course, less powerful where large offices are involved. In the United States, though centralization has made greater strides than in Canada, it has had to meet the fact that appointments to the higher positions are matters of patronage.

4. But perhaps the most interesting example is that of Australia, which may be placed in a class by itself. The confederation of the Australian colonies a few years ago threw the original statistical system into the melting pot, making it necessary to create a Commonwealth system and leaving the Government free to adopt the plan which was adjudged the most efficient. The system adopted was that of centralization. In Australia the Central Statistical Office has since 1906 controlled and published all the statistics of the Commonwealth.

As remarked at the outset, the future will make demands of a new and heavy kind upon the administrative equipment of the Dominion, and especially upon the equipment which is required for successful economic competition. Of such equipment statistics are the corner stone—the basic organization without which the endeavour to meet new situations will be very seriously handicapped. Unquestionably one of the greatest lessons of the war is that organized co-ordinated effort is essential to progress, if not to national existence itself.

It may be of interest therefore in conclusion to note what in Germany—the country whose experience of the methods herein advocated has been the most ample and who is the rival with whom our strength is chiefly to be measured—is regarded as the main weapon for the coming contest. "In these days," says an eminent economist and parliamentarian in a book which has just appeared (*Mittel-europa*, by Frederick Naumann), "every Government office, every party and every society is pulling out its notebook and putting down ideas for improvements after the war. I would wager that three-quarters of these notebooks contain the words *Better Organization*. Fichte and Hegel nod approval from the walls. The German ideal is and remains organization, not random impulse; reason, not a blind struggle. It is with this that we shall have our great period of history, like other people in other times with other arts and excellences. It is our period that is dawning."

R. H. COATS,

*Dominion Statistician and Controller of Census.*

CENSUS AND STATISTICS OFFICE,  
OTTAWA, October 1, 1916.

\* As, for example, that of the late Sir Charles Dilke who said (1907): "The most pressing need is that we should hand over to a Statistical Department those statistics which are collected by various Departments in the course of administrative work, and of which the publication is not necessary for the purposes of administration. This Statistical Department should arrange such statistics (except those purely administrative) as are collected by the other departments."