

abrogation of the reciprocity treaty. The high prices of the Crimean War period had long since disappeared, the market to the south had been narrowed, and the Western States were pouring into the East the cheap grain products of a rich virgin soil. Agricultural depression hung over the province for years. Gradually, however, through the early eighties the farmers began to recover their former prosperous condition, sending increasing shipments of barley, sheep, horses, eggs, and other commodities to the cities of the Eastern States, so that at the close of the period to which we are referring agricultural conditions were of a favourable and prosperous nature.

THE MODERN PERIOD, 1888-1912

In 1888 a new period in Ontario's agricultural history begins. The working forces of agriculture were being linked together in the new department of Agriculture. Charles Drury, the first minister of Agriculture, held office until 1890, being succeeded by John Dryden, who continued in charge of the department until 1905, when a conservative government took the place of the liberal government that had been in power since 1871.

Two factors immediately began to play a most important part in the agricultural situation: the opening up of the north-western lands by the completion of the Canadian Pacific Railway in 1886, and the enactment, on October 6, 1890, of the M^cKinley high tariff by the United States. The former attracted Ontario's surplus population, and made it no longer profitable or desirable to grow wheat in the province for export; the latter closed the doors to the export of barley, live stock, butter, and eggs. The situation was desperate; agriculture was passing through a period of most trying experience. Any other industry than that of agriculture would have been bankrupted. The only hope of the Ontario farmer now was in the British market. The sales of one Ontario product, factory cheese, had been steadily increasing in the great consuming districts of England and Scotland, and there was reason to believe that other products