

## A Christmas Message

HON. JAS. S. DUFF, MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE.

For the first time in our experience Christmas comes to us this year after a full year of war. Looking back, Christmas of 1914 seems but in the initial stages of the conflict which now has developed into such titanic proportions. The passing of the year, however, a year at once the most tragic and most glorious in our history, finds our enthusiasm unabated, our conviction as to the justice of our cause deepened, our determination to press forward untill ultimate victory is secured on terms which will be in the interests of humanity even more grim. Christmas 1915 therefore must partake a significance and call up thoughts appropriate to this most unusual setting of the great festival of good-will and home. Christmas is essentially a festival of the home. The home is the unit and basis of the community, of the nation, of civilization itself. While there are many home reunions which will not take place this year, it nevertheless should be remembered with gratitude that through the Providence of God and the might of the British Navy, our homes are still serene and secure. While this thought should fill us with gratitude, it should not make us forgetful of the fact that homes in the countries of our kinsmen and our allies are not so fortunate and that we owe an obligation to them to drive out the invader and punish the oppressor.

The students of the Ontario Agricultural College I heartily congratulate on the fact that they are at the present time so fortunately situated in enjoying a rare opportunity to prepare themselves for the demands of the future, both in times of war and peace. The inauguration of military training at the college presents a splendid chance to every young man to equip himself with a knowledge which may in the future enable him to render distinguished service to his country on the field of battle, and which in any event will make him a better and more usefull citizen at home. Along with this you are enjoying the opportunity of receiving a training which will enable you to render the highest good to yourself and to you country in the development of our agricultural resources after the war is over. I wish you every success in the discharge of the responsibilities which these opportunities involve, and even at this hallowed season we cannot forget that the main business of the country is still war and to that end every service and sacrifice must be consecrated.