

30,000 a month. In addition to that, many convalescents have been brought back. Many thousands have been treated in our hospitals. The problem is a great one, complicated by after-war conditions, but I submit, Mr. Speaker, to this House and to the country, that it is proceeding quickly and satisfactorily. Then, consider the question of reconstruction. Canada had engaged in munitions and in other war industries some 200,000 men and women. Immediately after the armistice was declared 120,000 or 130,000 of those immediately lost their positions, and became unemployed. They were engaged in munition industries and in other war industries, which necessarily ceased as soon as the war came to an end. The problem for the Government was to find business to replace business represented by the output of the munitions and war industries which had come to an abrupt cessation. In addition to the 120,000 or 130,000 out of employment there were returning, as I have said, some 25,000 or 30,000 soldiers per month. It was winter. The problem which the Government has had to deal with has been to find, so far as possible, employment for all those men and women who lost their positions and for the soldiers who are returning home. That is the problem to which we had to address ourselves. I appeal, Mr. Speaker, to the verdict of results. I do not know of any country to-day, whether it is Great Britain, France, the United States or any other country, that is in a better position, or has less industrial unrest within its borders, than Canada to-day. The hon. gentleman who preceded me referred to the labour situation in Canada, and I desire to say this, not only as showing the efforts which the Government has made, but the attitude and loyalty of labour, that there have been, I believe, less labour disputes in this country since war broke out in 1914 than in any other country in the world. Take the situation in Great Britain to-day, take the situation in Belgium, the situation in France and the situation in the United States—there is great industrial unrest. We have, Mr. Speaker, considerable unemployment in this country, but I believe that when the measures of which I shall now inform the House are in full effect and operation, as they will be within the next few weeks, all the slack of unemployment will be taken up, and that there will within the next two or three months be an actual shortage of labour in many parts of Canada.

[Sir Thomas White.]

What are the measures which the Government have taken in its reconstruction problem. Let me mention a few of them. When the munition industries ceased our steel plants found themselves without a market for their product. We at once took up with the railways of Canada the question of placing orders for steel rails, and within a short time after the conclusion of the armistice, orders had been given by the Government of Canada, on behalf of the Canadian National Railways, on behalf of the Canadian Pacific and on behalf of the Grand Trunk system, for 200,000 tons of steel rails at a cost of \$13,000,000, as the Minister of Railways (Hon J. D. Reid) informs me. We took up also with them the question of placing as many orders as they could for rolling stock and locomotives, irrespective of the question of expense, because it was an immediate and urgent matter, having regard to the labour conditions. The Grand Trunk railway and the Canadian Pacific railway are manufacturing their equipment in their own shops. The Government railways have given orders for 2,500 cars and 25 locomotives. That will keep our car equipment industries, with those businesses that are allied and associated with them, very busy. In addition to that, the Government will present to this House within the next few days, estimates providing for an extensive programme of railway betterments and improvements and the construction of branch lines, especially in the West.

To give an idea of the amount of money which will be involved in the programme which I have outlined, it will be sufficient to say that it is estimated that there will be required \$35,000,000 for rolling stock and material such as steel rails. In addition to that a sum exceeding \$20,000,000 will be needed for railway extensions and more than \$10,000,000 for betterments and improvements. The Government lost no time in taking up these important plans which are useful and advantageous from the national standpoint in adding to our national railway plant and equipment and which will, at the same time, provide employment for thousands of men.

In addition to that, Mr. Speaker, the Government provided by an Order in Council, for a loan of \$25,000,000 to the provincial governments for the purpose of promoting better housing conditions throughout the Dominion, and this action Parliament will be asked to approve. I am happy to say that the loan will be taken advantage of by all, or nearly all, of the provincial governments.