

Pacific mileage, which is stated in the latest Dominion blue-book to hand as 2,369.

To fill to the brim the cup of satisfaction before referred to, Premier Borden will have to be in a position to announce to the Canadian people that all the railway mileage in Canada between the two oceans has been brought under public ownership and operation.

### Britain's Food Production

From one of the leading Canadian correspondents in London came, within the past week, the following cable despatch:—

"What do your Canadian farmers and ship-  
pers think of this bumper British harvest?  
We may grow four out of every five loaves  
we eat, instead of only two, as before the  
war. What of Canada then as Britain's  
wheat granary?"

The speaker was a well-known British  
farming expert, whom I met when traversing  
this week seven typical English agricultural  
counties. This tour confirmed the official  
estimate that only once in the annals of  
British agriculture, namely 1864, has a  
British harvest been better.

Government control gives the Englishman  
his four-pound loaf for nine pence, but the  
government minimum ensures the farmers  
55 shillings per quarter for home-grown  
wheat, while prices on other farm produce  
soared so high that the farmer coined money.  
He got into a mid-summer panic over the  
army comb-out of farm labor, but saw  
thousands of acres of wheat, barley and oats  
being stocked and carted quickly enough,  
with help allotted by soldiers.

German prisoners, organized groups of  
school boys and corps of land girls are  
doing efficiently.

The policy of the food production depart-  
ment, under the direction of Sir Charles  
Fielding, based on production from plowed  
land, yields three times the amount of food  
obtainable from grass land, and if grass is  
devoted to raising beef the proportion will  
be still higher.

It is a big question how far Britain's  
march toward self-sufficiency in foodstuffs,  
if continued, will affect Canada's place in the  
market.

Under the stress  
and pressure of the  
war, the people of  
Great Britain have  
wisely increased the  
amount of produc-  
tion from their own  
soil. In addition to  
"carrying on" with  
such superb fortitude  
in every other  
way essential to the  
winning of the war,  
they have made them-  
selves a nation of  
food producers. Will  
they continue after  
the war is ended to  
produce food as they  
are doing now, and  
as they have never  
done before; save  
once only, since the  
industrial revolution—  
which began about  
the middle of the  
eighteenth century  
and ended by making  
Great Britain the  
workshop of the  
world?

In normal condi-  
tions, its manufac-  
turing industries  
must be Britain's  
supreme concern. At  
the same time, it  
may well be believed  
that never hereafter  
will British agricul-  
tural production be  
allowed to fall so low  
as it fell in the era  
which ended with  
the rushing of the  
German hordes into

Belgium. If, in the time to come after  
the restoration of world-peace, Great Brit-  
ain is going to maintain itself in a position  
of not requiring as much food from over-  
seas as before the war, the food producers  
of Canada will have to seek other markets;  
and the necessity of freer trade intercourse  
with the vast and populous country to the  
south of us will force itself more than ever  
upon the people of this country.

### Inefficiency at Ottawa

Complaints are being made in many parts  
of the Dominion in regard to the slowness  
and, in some cases, mistakes of the Depart-  
ment of Finance at Ottawa in regard to Vic-  
tory Bonds and the Business Profit Tax and  
Income Tax systems. Many cases are re-  
ported of persons whose payments on Vic-  
tory Bonds were completed several months  
ago, but who have not yet received a bond.  
In the matter of the business profits taxa-  
tion, there have been delays which it is diffi-  
cult to excuse, even when every due allow-  
ance is made for the immense amount of work  
made necessary at Ottawa by the introduc-  
tion of these new methods of direct taxation  
and by the issues of Victory Bonds.

The organization of staffs and systems for  
the doing of this work with all the speed  
consistent with thorough accuracy is what  
the Minister of Finance, who has enjoyed the  
reputation of an able administrator, is there  
for. Unfortunately there appears to be rea-  
son to believe that the Department of Fi-  
nance is giving evidence of a deplorable lack  
of effective organization and system in the  
doing of the work referred to. Would it  
not be well for Sir Thomas White to secure,  
from wherever they are to be found, the  
ablest men procurable to handle the work of  
organizing these activities of the Depart-  
ment of Finance into thorough efficiency?

And should not the working of the Business  
Profits' Tax system and the Income Tax sys-  
tem each have a special, separate depart-  
ment, or sub-department for itself, under  
the charge of such a man of proved ability  
and experience fitting him for a position of  
such responsibility? The cost of establish-  
ing such departments, or sub-departments,  
would be an excellent investment for the  
Dominion government to make. A large  
proportion of the Dominion's revenues,  
which is bound to become a continuously  
larger proportion, is going to be derived  
from these systems of direct taxation.

### Taxing Luxuries

After some 70 meetings, at which more  
than 150 experts gave testimony, a  
special committee of the British House of  
Commons has completed its task of deciding  
what articles are to be classed as luxuries  
and made to bear a special tax of twopence  
on each shilling of their cost, and what arti-  
cles are to remain on the list of necessities,  
on which there is to be no addition to the  
present rate of taxation.

The total revenue of the British govern-  
ment for the past fiscal year was \$3,535,-  
000,000, of which all but \$485,000,000 was  
derived from direct taxation. The \$3,050,-  
000,000 realized from direct taxation repre-  
sents an average of about \$65 per head of  
the population. The total revenue did not  
suffice to meet the requirements of the gov-  
ernment's policy of providing for the in-  
terest charges on the debt and paying as  
large a proportion of the cost of the war  
from current revenue as had been judged  
advisable. It was not considered a wise  
course to impose higher taxation on  
articles of necessity than they already  
bear, adding materially to the cost of  
of living; but there was a general agree-

ment in parliament  
that luxuries should  
be made to pay more.  
Hence the appoint-  
ment of the special  
committee to deter-  
mine the articles to be  
classed as luxuries.

Among the arti-  
cles so scheduled are  
yachts, motor cars,  
furs, silks, perfumes,  
fans, servants' liver-  
ies, billiard tables,  
musical instruments,  
curios and antiques,  
liqueurs and cock-  
tails. In regard to  
these and many other  
articles the commit-  
tee's task was fairly  
easy. It became more  
difficult when the  
question to be de-  
cided was when cer-  
tain articles of neces-  
sity crossed the line  
and became articles  
of luxury on account  
of their extra quali-  
ty and cost.

Men's clothing has  
been fixed at \$40;  
women's suits be-  
come taxable at \$35.  
No statement has  
been made of the  
amount expected to  
be derived from this  
taxation of luxuries;  
but it is likely to be  
considerable. And it  
is more than likely  
that in other coun-  
tries than Great Brit-  
ain there will be  
more and more of  
direct taxation.



If the Reports prove true that John Bull, unlike Oliver Twist, is not going to keep on asking for more after the War, the Western Farmer will have to Look to Another Market.

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