

order, and as hard as an iron casting. He comes to a hefty job with the certainty that if any man can personally wrestle with its difficulties, he can. And that counts. This is a job where it counts tremendously. The power to drive and to execute is necessary. The courage that carries conviction into action is needed. H. B. Thomson has it. He has a hand the size of a small ham. When that hand comes down—!

His appointment is a sound one for many reasons. He has the experience, not merely in some other kind of business, but in food control. He has served under Mr. Hanna. He knows how the department was organized, what it is capable of doing, what it may have failed to do.

He was in food service before that. He was a member of the Commission which recently investigated the salmon fisheries of the Pacific. He is a westerner. He knows the measure of the land which produces most according to its population.

H. B. Thomson has all the qualities of a big man for a big job if any one man could have them. He will never get a knighthood out of it. No man can make food control popular enough for a title. The present British Food Controller, Baron Rhondda, got his before he became Controller. H. B. Thomson will never need a title. He is already entitled to the biggest support Canada can give to a big man with a big job. And he will get it.

WE are within two months of seeding. Isn't it about time several thousand townspeople—with more or less negligible jobs—made up their minds to go on the land just as soon as the country needs them? If factories can be closed for the lack of fuel in the homes, why can't offices be closed on account of labor-scarcity where labor will soon be most needed? A nation under certain conditions is just so many hands and feet and lifting capacities. There are probably 100,000 men in Canada who can learn to put in and take off a crop, provided they have some experts on the land to show them how. Canada is only a shirt-sleeves away from the farm. We are a farming nation. Let us act from now on as though in the main we were also a nation of farmers. Organizing for a 1918 harvest will be too late in April. A lot of the organizing must begin with the people. Ministers of Agriculture are not Moseses. If we are to put in and take off a good crop in 1918 it's the people who must do it. And if the people don't meet the authorities at least half way, Government may conscript until the crack of doom and the crop won't be pro-

duced. A township is not a military camp. Farming by the people is no more difficult than fighting by the people, so long as the people are willing to do it. But a lot of us will need to get rid of our stiff-collar ethics if we are to be of any use to the nation except as consumers who have the cash.

**H**ON. W. S. FIELDING has never been regarded as a Quebecophile, except that he loves Quebec as an integral and necessary part of Canada, as the rest of us do. But Mr. Fielding has a very sane and absolutely hopeful view of what may be called the Quebec situation, and he sets it forth at some length in an article of which the following is an extract:

What then can be done with the Quebec problem? The best thing is, so far as any formal action is concerned, to let it alone, wait until the present clouds roll by, and trust to the healing power of time to bring happier conditions as it has done in the past. In the meantime, since the problem is to be always with us, the English majority might well endeavor to make a more careful survey of the attitude of their fellow-citizens of French origin, to ascertain the causes of it, and be ready to do whatever is possible to bring about better relations. Questionings of the loyalty of the French are both mischievous and unwarranted in fact. There is no national flag other than the Union Jack to which they bow. They have a sentimental regard for the tri-color of France, but never as a rival to the British flag. They have no thought of union with any other nation. In almost everything that the English majority regard as the elements of good citizenship the French Canadians are admittedly their equal. If the Canadianism of the French is more intense and their Imperialism less evident, the fact should not be surprising. Let it be remembered that though they possess so many virtues in common with the majority, they are still French and not English.

**S**HUTTING down factories under orders is no new thing in Canada. In years gone by we have shut down scores of factories at once under General Hard Times. In other years, as prosperous as these, we have shut down factories at full blast under order of General Strike. There's nothing new in the principle. The novelty is all in the way we come at the thing. For a long while we have been so accustomed to industry at high pressure that a brief shut-down even for lack of fuel seems a sort of calamity. What used to trouble us in the hard times period was abundance of goods and low demand. What troubles us now is high demand and scarcity of almost everything but hard work. We are into a new era of political economy and the sooner we get rid of a lot of the old-time bogeys about our economics the better we shall be able to realize that a nation's factories shut down

in the midst of a peak load for a day or two is not a drop in the bucket compared to the widespread suspension of industry caused either by hard times or a big general strike.

**W**E beg to remark that two deceased English poets were in their day much misinformed as to the real character of climate. It was one Charles Kingsley who, having been a water baby in his youth, wrote, in a fit of blind enthusiasm worthy of a better cause,

"Welcome wild northeaster,  
Shame it is to see,  
Odes to every zephyr,  
Ne'er a breath to thee."

Charles never had real experience in northwesterners anyway. He never rose in his bedroom and saw an ode of breath in front of him like a small geyser in Iceland.

Again there was the Gulf-Stream-nurtured old dog Shakespeare who bade one of his characters say,  
"Blow, blow, thou winter wind, thou canst not bite

So nigh as benefits forgot."

William never stood on the corner of King and Yonge or Portage Avenue or Jasper Ave. or Notre Dame and felt that a coonskin coat down to his ankles was about the same relative texture as a night-gown of cheese-cloth.

**P**LACE: Burwash Hall, Toronto, refectory in peace times for hundreds of students in arts and theology from all over Canada.

Time: Luncheon with the faculty.

Scene: Hundreds of men in khaki at the tables. Royal Flying Corps men, Overseas Training Corps and Cadets.

Dialogue: "Oh it's three years now since this place was a barracks."

"Where do the men sleep?"

"Four in a room anywhere there's room."

"Any of the students in khaki down there?"

"Quite a number. But more—elsewhere. Gone. Overseas."

"Oh. Some of the faculty in khaki, too?"

"Some, yes. No reason why not."

"But tell me—who are these youths of sixteen filing in; that little corporal's guard in civies at the corner table—seventeen in all? Who are they?"

"My dear sir—you are now looking at all that is left of the male student corps of Victoria College."

And there are twenty colleges in Canada that might be the scene of such a playlet.

# HELP THE HALIFAX BLIND

(Concluded from page 3.)

distant from the scene of the accident, which was the northern end of our harbor.



the morning paper to me when suddenly it seemed that all our buildings were collapsing about our heads. We naturally supposed it was a German shell or bomb, and believed with what thought was left us that others would follow. With a promptitude that surprised me, and would indicate long and systematic drilling that staff and pupils, headed, by the way, by our own cut and bleeding and much frightened little boy, gathered in the basement, where all waited for some explanation of the terrible happening. Our little Fred had often heard us discussing the raids on London, and being frightened when off alone in his nursery by the flash of the explosion he fortunately turned and ran, thus saving his life or at least his eyes, for a second later the large window by which he had been standing was shattered into thousands of pieces, and the sashes blown across the room. Fortunately the cuts he received were slight. Our staff and pupils were likewise fortunate, only a few minor scratches having been experienced. One teacher had an artery cut in her neck! This record, in the face of 800 panes of glass having been instantaneously shattered to atoms and window cases and doors blown in, passes understanding. You can well understand that our escape is due entirely to our being two miles'

The explosion shattered doors and windows in my solidly-built summer home ten miles away, and was felt at a distance of 200 miles from Halifax. The only way that I can describe the effect of the explosion is to say that it caused a blizzard of splintered glass, and this, accompanied by flying shrapnel, probably accounts for many deaths as well as for the loss of eyesight. I am having a careful

investigation made with respect to the latter and hope that the estimate of 250 who have lost their sight may prove excessive, but I fear not.

Our own plans for the future are still in embryo. The school will be disbanded for at least one month, if not longer, but the problem of how to make both ends meet, serious as it was under war conditions, is made doubly serious by the expenses resultant from the explosion and the caring for the sick and homeless. To add to this we have to face a new problem, as to how we can best serve those who have become blind as a result of the terrible disaster. I feel, however, that this matter is in God's hands and that with His help something effective will be done.

The last instalment of What Happened to Hoag, intended for this issue, will appear in our next.