

AGRICULTURE IN WAR-TIME.

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EDUCATION.

The war has many lessons for those who will learn them, sad lessons many of them certainly, but valuable lessons for the most part for the peoples and the nations involved in this great conflict in which we of the British Empire with our Allies are battling for righteousness, justice and honour. Our view point on many matters has been shifted, but what is perhaps of greater importance I think we have a clearer and better estimate of the things that in the long run really matter in this life, a truer conception and more intense realization of the inherent rightness and wrongness in those qualities and characteristics which determine our attitude and actions towards one another, whether as individuals or as nations.

It is not, however, our purpose to consider these matters, important as they are to us as a people, but what I have said may serve as an introduction, or indeed explanation of the statement that the estimate and conception of the people at large as regards agriculture has greatly changed in these later, let us hope, latter days of the war. We have I think awakened or at least are awakening to the realization that the food supply, which means agriculture, is playing a vitally important part, not merely in the welfare, but the very existence, of the nations at war. The food supply may be the factor that will turn the scale in the final winning out of the war, certainly it is only second in importance to the supply of ammunition and the successful prosecution of arms on the field of battle. We at least know that it is mainly the shortage of food in Germany that prompted the recent overtures for peace from that country.

And this matter of the importance of agriculture as an industry affecting the welfare of a country has touched us nearer home. In the recent advances in the price of our food stuffs, more especially pronounced since the outbreak of the war, we of the towns and cities—consumers and not producers—are learning the stern lesson of how dependent we are on the output of agriculture. Until a few years ago, living in this land of plenty and of cheap food, we never gave a thought as to how this food was produced or where it came from. The inter-