

CANADA'S BIG PROBLEM

Has Ontario and the eastern provinces of Canada enough men who can be spared to go into the great bread basket of the British Empire and put enough loaves on the shelf to provide for the coming winter? Will the western farmer be able to properly harvest his crops with the labor at his disposal? Can the railways, by inducement of cheap rates and comfortable travelling accommodation get enough men into the prairie provinces to give the farmer adequate assistance? It is very questionable. No doubt the railways can dump enough harvesters into the country if the harvesters can be found. Although the harvest is plentiful, the reapers seem to be comparatively few this year. Thus the labor problem of Canada at the present time is a most engrossing subject. The situation this year is a great contrast to that which existed some two years ago. Men were calling out for jobs; now jobs are calling out for men. Nearly all branches of trade and professions (even the clerical and professional) are wanting men and more men.

They Have No Regrets.

The war, for the past two years, has provided work for all those who wanted it, and now it is almost an impossibility to find one man who regrets the day he enlisted. On the other hand, all those who have responded to the call of duty feel a confidence and satisfaction far greater than those who have stayed at home.

But Canada is white with harvest now, and to gather it promptly is the absorbing question of the moment. The myriad fields of the great Northwest now stand laden with grain. Whether the yield will be large or small will be better known when the returns are made at threshing time. The crop is to harvest, whether it is large or small, and that requires men.

The countless armies on the battlefields must be fed and the wheat of the west will play an important part in the feeding of Great Britain's men. The harvest time is short and the suggestion has been made that if several thousand soldiers used to

farm life were conveyed there for two or three weeks they would be a decided help in bringing in the wheat crop. Other suggestions have been made that men in offices and like positions should spend their two weeks' vacation helping the farmers. No doubt this would be all very well but recently the Manitoba Free Press pointed out that by the time city men got used to the work, learned how to do it, and were hardened, the time would be expired and the farmer would be no better off.

Dearth of Help.

It is, however, an undeniable fact, that there is a dearth of men in the west this year, and although I would not like to speak authoritatively, yet I believe that there is not an idle man in Western Canada; that is, a man who has no work. In Toronto, Winnipeg, Saskatoon, Prince Albert, Vancouver and Victoria recently visited, I saw lots of men, young and old, and at first it would surprise one to find that there were thousands of able-bodied men in Canada, yet, but inquiries revealed the fact that they were all working and real hard. In Winnipeg one large firm (perhaps the largest in the city) had a placard at its front door advertising the fact that any returned soldiers were requested to apply to the management for work.

Although only a short time in Prince Albert I found that nobody need be idle in that city. While there a man asked me if I knew where he could get a man from the east. Again in Saskatoon I met one of the largest farmers in that part of the country. He has come some 70 miles in search for men to take off his crop. Discouragement was written in his face, for he had come to town in expectation of securing 30 men and had only got one. I saw him the next day, and the day after, and his luck had been no better. He only had his one man.

Foreign Labor.

To an easterner it is surprising to see the utility of Chinese and Japanese labor on the Pacific Coast. Something one never sees in Ontario is a Chinese or Japanese walking home from the sawmill with his dinner