

It is not necessary in this day and hour to defend or justify generous assistance to agriculture. We all recognize the soundness of such a doctrine. To increase the farmers' output; to improve the conditions of rural life; to swell the numbers of those who till the fields,—to do these things, even in the very attempting of them, we are doing something to solve the greatest problems and avert many of the manifest evils that face us in modern life.

Two Problems.

Two problems especially confront us to-day, as they confront other nations: the ever-increasing cost of living, with its heavy burdens, and the increase of urban as against rural population. To analyze their cause is not less difficult than to provide their remedy. Free trade England is not less afflicted in this respect than countries with protective tariffs. The two things are intimately related. Congestion in cities is both an economic and a social menace. The swelling of urban population with a diminution in the ranks of the producers has its sequence in the added cost of living, in the increase of squalor, hunger and crime, and,—in a country to which thousands of immigrants come—in the concentration of large masses of the foreign born, who, when unassimilated and unrelated to our national life, constitute both a political and social difficulty.

In the United States prior to the civil war the urban population was twelve per cent. In 1900 it rose to 31 per cent. To-day it stands at the ominous figure of 46 per cent. In Canada we take a natural pride in our great and growing cities, but we should be poor citizens if we did not try to mitigate and avert the attendant evils which follow undesirable expansion in this direction, and it should be noted that in 1901 Canada's urban population was 37.6 per cent, and in 1911 it had risen to 45.5 per cent.

As this question is so intimately related to the purposes and objects of the Bill, I shall venture to give the House the facts and figures as they relate to Canada.

Total population—

1901	5,371,315
1911	7,204,838
Increase, 34.13 per cent.	

	*Eastern Canada.	†Western Canada.
Total population—		
1901	4,725,798	645,517
1911	5,463,941	1,740,897
Increase	738,143	1,095,380
Per cent.	16.	170.

Urban population—

1901	1,813,832	207,967
1911	2,599,228	681,216
Increase	785,396	473,249
Per cent	43.3	227.

Rural population—

1901	2,911,966	437,550
1911	2,864,713	1,059,681
Decrease	47,253	622,131 Iner'se.
Per cent	1.6	149.

* Ontario, Quebec, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island.
† Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, British Columbia, etc.