

condition had entirely changed, and instead of purchasing apples by the box they would purchase them in twenty-five cent or fifty cent lots to take home for the kiddies, perhaps, but buying in large quantities immediately ceased. The result was this merchant found himself in this position that he had placed orders for certain quantities which he had believed he would be able to dispose of, and was not able to do so, and his financial condition was thereby rendered embarrassing. I just mention that as an illustration of the effect the fall in the market had on the purchasing power of the western farmer. That condition gradually works back until it affects the manufacturer and also the producer of raw material. There was another point I wanted to mention with regard to the unanimity of opinion of the West on the re-establishment of the Wheat Board. At the last session of the Saskatchewan legislature a unanimous resolution was passed and subsequently forwarded to the different departments at Ottawa requesting the re-establishment of the Wheat Board along exactly the same lines as has been asked for by the farmers' associations. I just mention this fact in order to indicate that it is practically a unanimous desire in so far as the West is concerned. The point has been raised about the permanency of the Board. It came up in a rather peculiar form yesterday, but I think it was satisfactorily disposed of and that this committee is now fully convinced that the board is not being asked for as a permanent method of doing business. Further, I think it has been clearly shown that it is not expected that it will in any way whatever cost the people of Canada a single cent. We do not wish that, and we do not expect it. In fact, I think it has been admitted by prominent members of this committee yesterday that that is beyond expectation. We might follow it on all the way through from British Columbia to the East, but possibly I might give you one illustration to show its effect on the Maritime Provinces. They may think they are not interested to any great extent in the purchasing power of the western farmer by reason of their remoteness. I am of opinion that the Maritime Provinces are very large producers of iron products. That has been stated on the floor of the House, and I believe it is quite true. It may therefore be interesting to some hon. members who have not followed agriculture to know that the farmers of Canada are the largest purchasers of iron products, very many of which are in a fine state of manufacture. In support of this statement I would like to refer to the steel and iron products that are used on the average farm. I have made a careful calculation of the amount of iron products actually employed on an average half-section farm, and it varies from 10,000 pounds to 15,000 pounds. That may seem a considerable quantity, but hon. members who are also agriculturists will be able to calculate the amount for themselves. Of course, many farmers do not own their own threshing machines. Let us place the average at 12,000 pounds, which is an exceedingly conservative estimate of the amount of iron products used on the average western farm, the average life is generally admitted to be from eight to twelve years. If you place the average life of these products at twelve years, you have an actual purchase by the average western farmer farming a half-section farm—that is what we consider one of the smallest units in the West—of 1,000 pounds per year. In view of this calculation it is quite apparent that the Maritime Provinces are not exempt from any effect on the purchasing power on the western agriculturists. Other provinces are similarly affected. Ontario and Quebec realize that fact. There is one other feature which is probably of as much importance to Eastern Canada, particularly the financial interests, as it is to the West: During last fall by reason of the conditions under which the agriculturists were labouring there was an almost universal demand by business men and farmers constituting large representative gatherings, representing one-eighth of the population of the entire province, a unanimous resolution was passed asking the Saskatchewan Government to put into effect the Moratorium powers with which they invested themselves some years ago. I was a member of the Saskatchewan Government at that time and am therefore aware of the pressure that was brought to

[Mr. J. A. Maharg.]