

has not been freely adopted. These people want a metal currency which they have been accustomed to for centuries, which they can feel, which they can hoard, bury, if necessary, and which will not deteriorate. Take the case of India and the ornaments which are possessed by the women of that country. It is only in the personal form that the women of India are allowed to hold anything. Prior to 1893 when the British government closed the mints of India to the free coinage of silver, in times of stress these ornaments, which amount to an enormous sum, could be turned into the mint, and they would get value in coin for them; with the low price of silver to-day, they are practically worthless, and it is thought that the low price of silver is responsible for a lot of the unrest in India at the present time. The people of India are in somewhat the same position as the farmers in western Canada, who have millions and millions of bushels of wheat which are of little value. Restore the value of wheat and a lot of the farmer's troubles will disappear. And if the value of silver is restored you will restore the purchasing power of approximately one-half the population of the world and if this were done, in my opinion, a lot of the unrest in India would also disappear. Everyone recognizes to-day that one of our great problems is the question of markets. The western world is so industrialized that each country has a surplus, and as a result we find each country trying to retain its home markets through tariffs while at the same time trying to dump its surplus on the other fellow's market. In the oriental world, which represents half the population of the world, we find possibilities for unlimited markets if only their purchasing power were increased. In this connection I would quote Mr. A. W. Palmer, writing in the *Empire Review* of London. He says in part:

It has been worked out that in India alone, if the standard of living there increased by a penny per day, it would mean an annual additional purchasing power of approximately 400 millions sterling. Imagine what that means when the same principle is applied to Burma, Siam and Malaya, and to that country destined to become one of the greatest countries of the world—China. A market totalling another 2,000 millions sterling annually awaits development.

I should also like to call the attention of hon. members of this house to a speech delivered in Vancouver on August 26, 1931, by the Hon. Herbert M. Marler, the Canadian Minister to Japan. A study of that speech will show the tremendous possibilities for the development of trade in that vast country, the orient. If our currency to-day is issued

[Mr. Lucas.]

on the basis of the supply of gold, and if you double the base, which is what would happen if we adopted the bimetallic standard, you would double the amount of currency and thus it would be inflation to that extent and would without doubt increase the price of commodities. I know that the Minister of Trade and Commerce has given a great deal of study to this question, and I hope he will see that it is brought before the coming conference for a decision.

I know there is a feeling amongst the members of both the old parties that the members in this corner of the house are visionary, and that, being chiefly farmers, they are not competent to deal with financial questions. But I would point out, Mr. Speaker, that there is now almost a complete disillusionment amongst the people, as to our bankers and big financiers being the omniscient supermen heretofore believed. At this point, let me quote what I consider a gem from the lips of the Right Hon. Arthur Meighen. This is from the same speech from which I quoted a short time ago:

There are some who hold up their hands in fear at any suggestion which affects fundamentally the vital arteries of currency. Everything in the mind of these people is radical which tends to improve values, and everything is sane and conservative which tends to bring them down. From this mentality—call it what you will, the gold mentality or any other—it is surely time we were rescued. If other remedies can be proposed, let their protagonists come forward, but do not let us sit idly by and proclaim ourselves helpless in the face of a dilemma which we ourselves have created. Do not let us conclude it to be natural and inevitable that men, women and children the world over should be suffering from peculiar and worrying deprivations in the midst of an abundance of all those things of which no worker by brain or hand should be deprived.

Someone said not long ago that the world's great bankers had always been right. The world's great bankers are not always right any more than the world's great statesmen or great warriors; but whoever has been right and whoever has been wrong, there has been error, and momentous error, somewhere, or we would not be in the morass we are in to-day. Why should we sit in eternal adulation at the feet of those who have brought us where we are? It seems to me more practical and sensible to clear our minds of predispositions, to analyze our problems at their roots, knowing that something helpful can be done and to find out what it is.

The group in this corner of the house recognize, as does every thinking man to-day, that the old system is not functioning properly, and we are prepared to cast old beliefs and prejudices aside and face the issue squarely. It is only in this way that progress will be made.