

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: The mere payment of interest is not a reduction of the mortgage; it is simply a payment for the privilege of postponing payment, and it is sheer stupidity or wilful refusal to see the facts which cause it to be represented in any other light. I repeat, the late government failed grievously in its duty during the war period in not making heavier demands upon the self-sacrifice of our people and raising additional taxation sufficient to meet during the war a fair proportion of the capital cost of the war, as was done, for example, in England. Whatever their reason may be, they failed to do it; they loaded the entire charge of the war on the shoulders of their successors, and now they talk glibly to us about our extravagance and taxation.

I thought of giving to the House some further statistics on evidences of increased prosperity, but I think I have spoken at sufficient length this evening.

Some hon. MEMBERS: Go on.

Mr. MARTELL: Give him some of his own medicine.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: I have no desire to delay the House unduly, but in view of the kind of propaganda to which the country has been subjected during the last year I think it would be to the advantage of all concerned to have the facts brought out in their true light. There are fortunately certain statistics which do tell the truth as to whether a country is prospering or not. We have the statistics of production and of trade, we have the statistics of transportation, and we have the statistics of employment and of business generally, also of public finance. Let my hon. friend take any one of these groups or take them all and he will find in every single division that there are irrefutable evidences of increased prosperity in this country during the past year, and that of a notable character. These are the facts which the country would do well to take to heart, because after all it is a good thing for a people to know when their country is prospering. There is nothing to be gained by belittling the country and making conditions out to be bad when as a matter of fact they are good and improving every day.

My hon. friend spoke this afternoon particularly of the record in agriculture. Fortunately, through the bounty of Providence, there has been a great record so far as the crops are concerned; indeed, it is the greatest in the history of Canada notwithstanding that the crop of last year was at that time also the greatest. Of agricultural crops for the

[Mr. Meighen.]

year 1923, wheat gave a total yield of 474,199,000 bushels as contrasted with 399,000,000 in the year previous. The yield in oats was 537,000,000 as against 491,000,000; hay and clover 14,845,000 tons as against 14,062,000 tons. In Canada there is certainly an abundance of food for man and beast, and of the wheat crop of nearly 475,000,000 bushels over 263,000,000 were marketed before the close of the year. That is a fact which the government is entitled to take some credit for. Providence undoubtedly gave a bountiful harvest, but it remained with the administration and others associated with it to see that the harvest was to some degree marketed in as profitable a way as possible. Never before in the history of Canada has as much grain been marketed up to the close of the year as was done last year. That was due in part to lowered transportation and other costs, the lowering of which was brought about in some measure at the instance of the government. As my hon. friends know, it was this government that restored the Crowsnest pass rates on grain in the West. This government also referred back to the Railway Commission the matter of rates on grain to the Pacific coast from Alberta. These reduced rates had a good deal to do with the extent to which crops were marketed at the time, and the prices that obtained. An interesting development is the extent to which the wheat crop was shipped this year in part through the port of Vancouver. In 1920 the shipments of wheat via Vancouver amounted to less than one million bushels. This year the shipments to January 31st total 27,800,000 bushels, and it is probable that in all there will have been shipped for the crop year, the very high total of 50,000,000 bushels via Vancouver. Indeed, Canada will this year, as last, take the first place amongst the world's wheat exporting countries. Take other branches of agriculture. My hon. friend referred to some agricultural figures this afternoon, and perhaps it is well that we should consider some further figures in this connection. For the year 1922 the total value of our agricultural production, that is for field crops, animal products, dairy products and miscellaneous items, was estimated at \$1,419,937,000, whilst the capital value or gross agricultural wealth of Canada was placed at \$6,773,942,000. These figures shew the important place which the agricultural industry holds in our national life.

Let us take mining, in regard to which there has been a very distinct revival. The figures for 1923 show a mineral production of \$214,102,000; those for 1922 show a production of \$184,297,000; whilst in 1921 the production was \$171,923,000. In reference to coal con-