

the time when machinery was introduced in the seventies?—A. Approximately twice as many, because the number of workers per farm has not changed very much, and there are twice as many farms to-day.

Q. Then nobody has been displaced? (No response).

Mr. MITCHELL: There are twice as many farms.

Mr. THORSON: It is a matter of economic inference.

*By Hon. Mr. Gardiner:*

Q. Had it not been for the introduction of machinery you could not have extended agriculture into many of the areas in Canada?—A. That is true.

Q. Through the introduction of machinery we have been able to double the number of farms, and by doubling the number of farms the number of persons employed in agriculture was doubled? (No response).

*By Mr. Mitchell:*

Q. Has there been any increase in production?—A. A six-fold increase in field crops since 1870.

Q. Do you attribute that increase largely to the introduction of machinery?—A. I think it is fair to attribute a large part of it to the introduction of machinery.

Hon. Mr. GARDINER: Leaving out of consideration the number of people employed in producing the machinery.

*By Mr. McLean:*

Q. So that the people who are employed have six times as much wealth as they formerly had as the result of the introduction of machinery?—A. Yes, six times as much has been produced but this has not meant six times as much wealth to the individual.

The CHAIRMAN: I think Dr. Booth should be allowed to conclude the reading of his statement before he is questioned further.

The WITNESS: Then:—

This has been the experience of agriculture for generations and will always continue to be so. What has been said of machinery applies, of course, to land as well. The introduction of new equipment makes possible the use of new land. Expenditures for equipment mean expenditures for more land. The Homestead Act provided for the granting of 160 acres of land to anyone who cared to settle in certain portions of the country and undertake certain minimum requirements. The acreage decided upon was in keeping with the agriculture of the time and probably was sufficient under existing conditions to provide a comfortable living for a farm family. Some years later it became evident that the acreage of the original homestead in Western Canada was not sufficient to meet the needs of a changing agriculture—a half section then became the standard for a family farm. Within the past two decades, with the introduction of the tractor and combine-harvester, and other machinery suitable for use with the tractor, acreage requirements have increased accordingly. The half section farm, although suitable in many areas where the type of agriculture is not so dependent upon the purchase of such equipment, is too small in those areas where the most advanced methods of grain production can be adopted.

The contribution to the development of the nation made possible by the evolution of machinery has come only with the acceptance of financial obligations on the part of farmers, which, though possible of settlement under price conditions prevailing at the time the purchases were made, could not be disposed of under price levels prevailing in recent years.