been running from eight to ten per cent on first-class mortgages, the machinery notes were at nine per cent, the bank loans from eight to ten per cent, and the conditional sale agreements mostly at twelve per cent. The banks, in my opinion, are not altogether blameless for some things that have happened. When money was free, some fifteen years ago, they lent large sums. In fact, local managers were persuading farmers to borrow big amounts.

I know of one particular case—and there are many others of the same kind—where a farmer borrowed $7,000 about that time. He agreed to pay eight per cent interest. His crop was light that year, and when he went back in the fall to pay a small amount on account of principal and give a new note for the balance the bank manager demanded nine per cent interest. The farmer had to pay that, because he was threatened with suit. He had a lot of property, land and chattels, and he naturally signed the new note at nine per cent. The notes are usually for three months; so that four times a year this farmer would go back to the bank, pay something on account of principal if he could, and give a new note for the balance. As the notes were always discounted when made, the interest was paid in advance at the rate of nine per cent. That farmer has not paid back all the principal yet, although the total of his interest and principal payment is from $15,000 to $20,000. I have not the exact figure here, but the papers in connection with the case are on file now with the Debt Adjustment Bureau in Regina, where they are under consideration with a view to seeing if it is not possible to have some adjustment made. The amount he owes the bank at present is $500, and they are holding all his land and chattels as security for this small balance, refusing to release any of it. All this has been going on in spite of the fact that our federal Bank Act provides the rate of interest shall not exceed seven per cent. Of course, we all know that if a man agrees, as this farmer did, to pay eight or nine per cent, even if the agreement is made under stress, and the notes are discounted, he has no legal remedy.

I am afraid that I am painting a rather gloomy picture for honourable members, but I should like to say that, thanks to the Relief Commission of Saskatchewan and to our federal and provincial governments, there is no one to my knowledge starving in Western Canada. Some of our people in the dried-out areas, where there have been crop failures for five successive years, have had to tighten their belts, but they all have enough to eat, they have been furnished with a reasonable amount of clothing and with coal, and under the circumstances are not doing too badly. In fact, they are holding out wonderfully well and complaining but very little.

I also want to say that the country which I have been speaking about, around Rosetown, is not in the dried-out area. The farmers there have had only four crop failures in thirty years from drought,—one in 1910, one in 1914, one in 1924, and the last one in 1933. But while we have had only four crop failures through drought, in 1930 we lost practically all our crop as a result of soil drifting; and that applied not only to the Rosetown area, but to the southern part of Saskatchewan as well. The same thing happened in 1931, but I am glad to say that all the relief that was furnished in our district, after what crop we had was harvested, has been paid back with the exception of some $2,000. In 1932 we had a fair crop, but the price was only 25 cents a bushel.

Last year there was the biggest failure of all, because practically no crop was produced on a strip about four hundred miles wide extending practically from the North Saskatchewan river, in Alberta and Saskatchewan, south through Saskatchewan into the United States and almost as far south as the Gulf of Mexico. In many parts of that area the binders were not taken out—the crop was not high enough to be cut with a mower. This followed the other years of soil drifting, and as we had no rain we were helpless. We had always thought that on account of the heavy soil in that district we could grow a crop with one rain, and perhaps with no rain at all, but we could not avoid a complete crop failure when we had the cumulative effects of the other conditions to contend with. Not even enough crop for seed was grown in the area extending almost from the town of Rosetown to the city of Saskatoon, 100 miles to the east, and almost as far west as Drumheller and Calgary.

As a result of those conditions mortgage interest has been piling up, and is from two to four years in arrears, in many cases amounting to half as much as the principal. The taxes also are far behind, and store bills are unpaid. Perhaps I might be permitted to refer by way of illustration to my experience on one farm of my own. I have a farm of eight hundred acres, nine miles south of the town of Rosetown. It is all under cultivation, and we have adopted the method of strip farming to prevent the drifting of soil. That is, instead of having one huge field all summerfallowed, we break it up into smaller fields of twenty to forty acres, ploughed and worked