

ducts to the city of Toronto than it would cost him to send them a thousand miles miles from Toronto. One disadvantage of the farmer is the fact that he is isolated and has not the means of communication which the man in the city has. He has not the advantage of those various inventions and improvements that are so handy in an industry. We must improve his conditions, increase our mail accommodation, give him a free letter delivery within reasonable limits. I am glad to know that the Hydro-electric Commission in Ontario is doing a great thing in spreading electric currents all over, so that a great many farmers in a few years will be able to drive their machinery by electricity, as well as in lighting and heating their houses, and thus increasing their comfort and happiness, and at the same time reduce the cost of living in that respect. Then another way we can do it is by improving the highways. That was attempted last year, but the government of the country defeated the Bill, and I hope that when the Bill comes forward this year they will not again defeat it. This House is ready to grant an almost unlimited amount of money for improvement of highways throughout the various provinces of the Dominion. That is a subject in regard to which no one province exceeds another. Good roads are required in every province and are just as much needed in Prince Edward Island as in Ontario, just as much needed in Alberta as in Quebec. The proposition which this House made last year was that the money appropriated for good roads should be divided equally according to the population. That was right. It was a wise decision, but the government defeated the Bill, refused to accept it, and so we lost the benefit of that expenditure. In these various ways we can improve the condition of the farmer. Reference is made to the excellent returns of the agriculturists throughout the country. I doubt that statement very much. I do not think the agriculturists of this Dominion have made as good returns as they ought to have made. The vast amount of money that is raised in the production of the crops of the Northwest is referred to—some five or six hundred million—but no account is taken of the large amount of money that is spent in

raising that crop. A tremendous amount is spent in producing it. Speaking for Ontario, I do not think the farmers have made as much as they should have nor as much as they could make if the conditions which I have attempted to enumerate are carried out, and which I think it is the duty of the government in this House and this country to bring into effect. So that, while I approve of the establishment of agricultural colleges and schools to educate the farmers, yet there are other practical ways such as improving the highways, increasing the comforts and conveniences of the people by giving them free rural delivery, by disseminating all over the country the hydro-electric power, so that they can take advantage of that means of driving their machinery and doing their work on the farm. Then, again, there is a great deal of further development. You will find sections of the country where the land is low. It is fertile but requires draining. It costs a large amount of money to drain that land. How could the money of this country be better spent than in cutting great canals at the expense of the government, so that the farmers at a comparatively small expense can drain into that canal? They cannot do it themselves. They will work away without means of drainage and only raise about one third as much on the acre as they should have raised. I am bound to say that the Ontario government, through their experimental farm at Guelph, have in many ways been doing good work for the people. In regard to the question of fruit, I am told that in some counties of Ontario they have sent experienced men and taken two or three rows of trees in the farmer's orchard, and by taking care of those trees they have demonstrated to the farmer what can be done by an immense increase in the volume and quality of the fruit. That is a practical demonstration that the people require, far better in my opinion than some theoretical agricultural colleges. One goes with the other, but the latter is the more practical and if some means could be devised whereby the lands of the farmers could be better drained, and the latest and most improved methods of taking care of the orchards of the country could be demonstrated, so that the farmer could take advantage of