

In the dairy industry, our country is a great producer, but it can increase its output. In 1943-44, Canada produced more than 8,000,000 tons of milk, distributed as follows: 1,678,000 tons of fluid milk, 776,000 tons consumed on the farm, 354,000 tons fed to animals, 4,533,740 tons used in the production of butter and cheese, 275,740 tons processed into condensed, evaporated or powdered milk.

There is no doubt that the output of powdered milk can be largely increased. Aside from whole milk, skim milk, with its high nutritional value, can also be powdered; in that form it will be greatly appreciated by starving countries. May I suggest that the government and particularly the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Gardiner) promote the dairy industry by every means in their power. The numerous farms in operation can boost to a greater extent our production of milk.

But there is another angle to consider. Numerous farms already under cultivation, which had shown good yields, are now abandoned. In the province of Quebec, alone, there are at least 5,000 such farms. It is also estimated that approximately thirty million acres of arable land in northern Abitibi, in the province of Ontario, could be brought into production. Must I mention the possibilities offered in New Brunswick, in the way of land clearing and settlement? In that part of Quebec known as the lower St. Lawrence and around Chicoutimi and in many other regions near the elder settlements, there are at least one million acres of uncleared land, which could be subdivided into no less than ten thousand farming establishments. Do I have to mention that, according to experts, the districts of Abitibi and Temiskaming hold 15,760,000 acres of tillable land, which represent at least 100,000 farming establishments, or 500 parishes of 200 families each?

We are now faced with the problem of reconstruction. Our war industries are being reconverted to civilian production rapidly enough, but industry alone cannot survive unless we encourage in every way the production of agricultural commodities. Development of agriculture is the answer to unemployment. By increasing production on land already under cultivation and by encouraging the bringing into cultivation of those millions of acres which have never been cleared, we could easily create work for everyone. Those who are employed on farms can earn their own living, as well as that of their families, without becoming public charges. Besides, they can thus bring about a greater industrial development and are in a position to supply the needs of our urban population. We would

[Mr. Marquis.]

thus help our trade, by marketing at home part of that production which must otherwise be exported. There would still be jurisdictional difficulties, as between the federal and provincial governments; but I am inclined to believe that, in a matter of such importance, a suitable plan could be worked out to facilitate our country's normal development along the path intended by Divine Providence.

We are an agricultural country and I believe we must encourage agriculture in every possible way. The greater the number of veterans, farmers' sons and men of good will set up on farming establishments, the better stabilized will be our national economy. In war time it is a guarantee of survival and in peace time a guarantee of progress.

May I point out that it is not necessary to bring in immigrants in large numbers from other countries in order to develop our arable lands? If agriculture is given more encouragement and if prices of farm products are maintained at a high level, that is, in keeping with wages and prices of manufactured products, I am firmly convinced that most of our young men will be happy to live peacefully on farms which they will clear themselves or which they will improve with their own hands.

It is absolutely necessary to employ Canadians rather than foreigners. Further, in most European countries there is a tremendous amount of reconstruction work to be done. In England and in France, it seems obvious that every able-bodied individual is needed to restore the economic stability of those countries. It does not behoove us to request much outside help. It is preferable to see that every able-bodied man is given employment, first on farms, and then in some of the industries which have been set up in Canada and which have developed tremendously since the beginning of the war.

In the Canadian scheme of things there is room for the scientific and progressive development of agriculture and for the normal advancement of related and other industries which may help the consumption of our products and the development of our export trade.

If I have supported the agreement between the United Kingdom and Canada, it is because I was convinced that it would help to maintain prices of agricultural products and the economic stability of our country. Indeed, it was difficult at the end of the recent war to maintain our exports and retain our foreign markets without making some kind of contribution, but we must not depend only on such a scheme. If prices of agricultural products should fall off, a depression would certainly follow. We would then witness the exodus of farmers to