

cent to 265 per cent. more than the farmer receives; or New York City consumers pay \$645,000,000 for food which at the railway terminal cost only \$350,000,000; or the people pay some \$200,000,000 for cartage and delivery costs and in retailers' profits. What seems an elementary fact in economics is that it would seem infinitely better, if a very large number of these wage-earners in cities (so absolutely helpless and dependent on the one hand on what capital is prepared to allow them in wages, when rent, interest, and profits have been satisfied and on the other forced to pay, so to speak, at the contractor's store whatever price he chooses to charge for life's necessities) were living in the country where they could produce at least the necessities of life for themselves and become in some measure the possessors of physical, mental and moral independence, while at the same time bettering the conditions of life for the dependent toilers of the city. The social isolation of rural life and its initial hardships have long been set down as the chief causes for the depopulation of the country districts; but there is abundant evidence that with the migration of the more ambitious and energetic to the cities to engage in commercial or professional pursuits, the rural communities have suffered so seriously in mental equipment, scientific advancement and business experience, that organized finance, commanding the railroads and other modes of transport and of distribution to which have often been added the control of coal and other minerals, today dominates absolutely every step from the producer to the consumer.

Remembering the enormous displacement in population where in Canada during the last decade urban population increased 62.5 per cent. and the rural only 17 per cent. with an immigration in ten years equal to one third of the previous population, I have frequently spoken to prominent business men and Boards of Trade regarding the possibility of reversing the process by employing capital now in the hands of individuals or companies in purchasing areas of land and by utilizing business methods make a modern industry of agriculture. I do not remember to have met a single important urban investor or taxpayer, who was prepared to lessen by one individual, the taxpaying consumers of his own city through transferring such bodily to engage in agriculture—an industry, indeed, which he was by no means assured would prove a success. He would, on the other hand, be quite prepared to finance half a dozen *tied* stores in the suburbs, because he was confident that his "man Friday" to save his own dollars would be sure to extract enough from the consumer to at least pay the interest on notes, while the stock would guarantee the principal.

I do not come with any ready-to-hand panacea for a world-wide evil, worse perhaps in undeveloped India or China, where the money-leader in the small villages is even more powerful and paralyzing than our capitalists and financial institutions; but two or three outstanding facts seem to m