

efforts that they will make will bring to them sufficient benefits to repay them.

Consequently I will ask the hon. Minister of Agriculture to put aside on the amount that will be voted, a sufficient sum to enable him to continue to give encouragement to the farmers of the province of Quebec.

Mr. FISHER. I sincerely congratulate the hon. member for Joliette (Mr. Dubeau) for the practical speech which he has just delivered. No doubt that the question of hog-raising is most important and that the farmers of the province of Quebec will give to it their best attention. I thank my hon. friend for the kind words he had towards myself and for the policy followed by the department, at the head of which I have the honour to be. I can assure him that this policy will be followed with all possible vigour and energy, and that nothing will be neglected to improve the conditions of this industry in the province of Quebec.

I am happy to be able to say that the situation of this province has been recently improved, but there is no doubt that as to the hog industry there is room for a large increase in the production of hogs. The best market for the exportation of that product is England. Now the exportations of the province of Quebec on that market are not unfortunately what they should be. Ontario is at the head of this industry, and as the hon. member for Joliette said, the province of Quebec last year has exported only for a million of dollars of hogs while the province of Ontario exported for \$12,000,000 worth. It is thus easy to see that the province of Quebec could increase a great deal the exportation of hogs.

I can assure the hon. member and the House that I will be always willing and glad to do all what will be in my power to develop this industry. The House may rest assured that the same policy which brought upon the congratulations of the hon. member for Joliette, will be continued in the future. Nothing will be spared to encourage and improve as much as possible the agricultural industry of the province of Quebec.

Mr. LAKE. Before the item passes I wish to say a few words in regard to the grain trade of the Northwest. I understand that the government intend to appoint a royal commission to inquire into this matter, and that a vote is to be taken for the purpose in the estimates of the Department of Trade and Commerce. It seems to me that this is a matter which should be discussed in connection with the estimates of the Department of Agriculture, to which the grain business belongs just as much as the fruit and dairy industries. Besides, it is more convenient to deal with the matter under that Department, seeing that the Minister of Agriculture is in the House, while the Minister of Trade and Commerce cannot be here when his estimates are under review. I am very glad to hear that a

commission has been decided upon, and I hope that the instructions to that commission will be very carefully prepared and that a very wide scope will be given to its inquiries. It has been proved that the wheat grown in the Northwest, if it is harvested in the best condition of which it is capable, is as valuable, if not more valuable, than the wheat of any other country in the world for milling purposes, which is the ultimate destination of our wheat. If that wheat with regularity can reach the markets of the world in complete purity, if it can be placed in the hands of the miller in that state, it will command a higher value than the wheat of any other portion of the world; and that is the most important problem with which the commission should deal—the insuring that the wheat shall come into the hands of the consumer, whether it be in Ontario or in Great Britain, in the same condition as it leaves the hand of the producer at the initial point of shipment. It will be one of the duties of the commission to make such arrangements that there will be no opportunity for any one to tamper with the wheat in transit in such a way as to reduce its commercial value. One object the commission should have in view is to trace the course of the wheat from the farmer to the consumer step by step all the way through, and it should have power to take evidence in regard to that matter. The instructions of the commission should also include the taking of evidence in regard to the shipping conveniences and facilities at the initial point of shipment. The shortage of cars during the short wheat shipping season has been one of the most burning questions throughout the whole of the Northwest. The railway companies have been making a strenuous effort in the last two or three years to overcome this difficulty, and they have done so with a certain degree of success; but there is still a shortage and a blockade, especially at the more remote points where there is little competition, and the arrangements at the present time are certainly not altogether satisfactory. That is a question which should be inquired into. Then, there is another class of question. Complaints are constantly heard from some of the minor railway points that large amounts of grain which are growing contiguous to railway sidings have to be taken to stations at more remote points owing to the fact that agents are not placed at those minor points for the whole season or in some cases even for a portion of the season. That is a question which should also be looked into. It is altogether wrong that the producer should have to team wheat a distance of eight or nine miles beyond what there is any necessity for his doing. Of course, one can thoroughly understand that it is impossible to provide full facilities for every individual producer; but where there is a community raising a considerable quantity of wheat, some arrangement should