

Mr. SUTHERLAND: On the whole the reductions made are very slight, and I think by the time the supplementary estimates are brought down it will be found that those reductions have been more than offset. Now, we have a system that to my mind is rather disturbing; that is, we have a privileged class which is continually increasing in number. I refer to those engaged in the civil service of this country. I do not intend to cast the slightest reflection upon the ability of those people, because if there is any class in the Dominion which has my heartfelt sympathy it is the civil service. Many young people entertain the idea that if they can only become attached to the civil service they are going to be happy for the rest of their days, and immediately they succeed they find that their initiative is destroyed, there is but little opportunity for expansion, or development, and finally they become reconciled to the situation and say, "Oh, well, what's the use? We may just as well drift along with the crowd." The hours of labour for the civil service have been fixed within certain limits; the rate of wages has also been fixed. Since the Canadian National Railways came under this category there has been an enormous addition to the civil service. An increase of over 100,000 with this result. If you are living in the country and wish to do some business in shipping on a Saturday afternoon, you will find after one o'clock that the freight office is locked up and the agents and clerks are having a holiday while you may be desirous of shipping stock; it may be as is the custom—so it will be on the market early the following week. The fixation of the hours of labour and wages is only one of the difficulties with which we are confronted, difficulties that are having a depressing influence on agriculture. How can our farmers compete with other countries when they are so handicapped? And yet they have to compete against the surplus of the world in the home market. We hear the Minister of Labour (Mr. Murdoch) and others say, "Oh, we must keep up the rate of wages to the high standard at which it has been for a long time." Yet we are expected to compete with other countries where the scale of wages is very low indeed. This naturally necessitates our having some protection against outside competition, and it is the absence of adequate protection under which our manufacturers are labouring at the present time.

But this handicap is not confined to the manufacturers only. To my mind those engaged in agriculture are suffering just as much

[Mr. Robb.]

on this account as any other class. Consequently when the Minister of Immigration (Mr. Robb) states that his government are endeavouring to induce immigrants to go on the land, let me point out that the government ought to do something to enable those people to continue on the land after they settle there. It is only a few days ago in connection with the dumping clause in the tariff that the minister pointed out that, about a year ago, owing to a surplus of butter in the New York market the price dropped very low, and they dumped thirty or forty car-loads of that surplus on the Montreal market, with the result that the price immediately went up again in the United States. But did he point out the effect that had on the market in this Dominion? No, he stopped there. To make the story complete, he should have pointed out the depressing influence the export of that surplus from a country with a high protective tariff had on the Canadian market. In order that the price in the United States should be maintained it was disposed of in this country. That is a fair example of a practice which is doing more to injure this Dominion to-day than anything else that can be mentioned. The United States is a highly protected country. They endeavour to maintain and so regulate their markets as to afford a profitable price; if they have a surplus of any kind they get rid of it somewhere, and apparently the easiest way to get rid of it is to ship it to Canada. They are continually doing that; it has been going on for years. Let me give some figures with regard to our imports of some commodities grown on the farm during the years 1920 to 1924 inclusive. In pork products alone during those years we imported 293,292,716 pounds, largely from the United States.

Mr. JACOBS: I rise to a point of order—not because the hon. gentleman is giving the committee pork figures, but because his remarks are out of order on the immigration estimates.

The CHAIRMAN: I think the hon. member is discussing the question from the point of view of the agriculturist and is giving reasons why he thinks there is no need for more agriculturists in this country. At least I think that is what he is trying to bring out.

Mr. SUTHERLAND: I was endeavouring to show the folly of bringing people here and allowing imports to come in under such unfair conditions as to prevent them from making the livelihood that they can make in other countries where such practices are not permitted.