

as to the condition of wheat in Europe, and knowing that the crop was a failure there, bought up nearly the whole supply of wheat in the United States—the fall wheat—at 90 cents a bushel, and almost immediately afterwards it rose to \$1.20. A similar attempt was made in 1881, but it was foiled through the efforts of State Bureaux, several of which had in the meantime been established—in Illinois, Ohio, Michigan and several other States. Through the information which those reports were able to give to the public, the farmers were induced to hold their grain, and they sold it at the highest price. The Secretary of the Ohio State Board of Agriculture, who was at the head of the Bureau of Crop Reports there, estimates that in this way the farmers of the State got an increased value on their wheat crop, amounting to not less than \$10,000,000. Of course, if this information had not been communicated to the people—if it had been collected and held by the large grain dealers for their own special use—that profit would have gone into their profits. As it was, it was distributed among the farmers, and it enabled them to carry on improvements on their farms, to put up buildings, and drain their lands, and so improve their condition. I remember—I think it was in the same year, 1881—that there was a failure in the bean crop in our own country, in the County of Essex especially, where the bulk of the bean crop in Ontario is grown. The grain dealers knew this. There was also a failure in the same crop in Michigan and New York. They set to work and bought up nearly the whole of the bean crop that year before it was harvested, at prices ranging from \$1.25 to \$1.75 per bushel, and in less than a month beans were quoted in the Detroit market at \$3 per bushel. Those dealers made a profit and the farmers lost it. We seek to give to the public the information which only grain dealers and speculators generally are able to procure for themselves, and which they do procure at a very large cost. Then there are other ways in which we hold that agricultural statistics are of value to the country generally—they encourage the keeping of farm accounts, for if farmers are to make proper returns to the Bureau, they will be obliged to keep some kind of accounts. That itself is a very important thing. Then they direct dealers where to procure supplies, of store cattle for instance, or any kind of grain or root crops; they give a basis of certainty on which to compute the country's surplus produce, and they serve to prevent panic or unnecessary fluctuations in prices, by making known exactly what the extent of the supply is in the country. By showing the probable extent of employment in the carrying trade, shipping and railway interests are enabled to make timely provision for it. They mark the tendency to overcrop and impoverish the soil, and demonstrate the value of fertilizers and improvements and reform in tillage. In recording the resources of the country, its capabilities and progress in material wealth, they serve to attract population and capital from other lands. They enable us to compare different places at the same time, and the same place at different times. I may say that our country has suffered very considerably in its reputation in the past, through the want of such a system as this, for we have had no other means of collecting such information than the Census, taken every ten years. Now the Census of 1871 gave the returns for a very bad harvest. The average production of fall and spring wheat for the Province of Ontario in that year was about ten and a-half bushels. That fact was used to our detriment in the old world, by the immigration agents of the United States. They showed how small our average was, compared with their own, and the inference was that our country must be a very poor one for agricultural purposes, and that it was a country to be shunned rather than a country to emigrate to. Now the same thing may happen at the taking of every Census. It may be a poor harvest each time, and it is only by the collection of such statistics annually that you can really show what the capabilities of the country are. According to the statistics which we collected in 1882 and in 1883, it is clear that in its agricultural resources, our Province of Ontario compares very favorably with the best State in the American Union. It may perhaps interest the Committee if I read you a table which I have prepared of the average produce of the leading grain crops in those three years. Our estimates of the yield of grain and root crops are collected