

of Canada may be equal to the high and important duties which have thus been cast upon them.

It will no doubt be of interest to hon. gentlemen who are particularly interested in developing our great agricultural resources that the government has given consideration to the subject of increasing the appropriations made during the last session of parliament with a view of assisting the provinces in their carrying out a wider and more continuous scheme of instruction in agriculture than has heretofore been entered upon. Hon. gentlemen will be gratified in knowing that the appropriation which was last year voted for agricultural purposes not only gave satisfaction to the different provinces of Canada, but was distributed in a way that will meet with satisfaction from every province which received the share to which it was entitled.

I think I may be justified in saying that in Canada where agriculture is pre-eminently the basis of our prosperity, no subject has been so sadly neglected in all the provinces of the Dominion as a thorough and scientific instruction in agriculture. We have reached a point in our civilization when public and individual effort seem to be concentrated upon inducing the youth of our country to abandon the cultivation of the soil and also the mechanical and productive pursuits of life and to give their whole attention to the acquirement of a classical or scholastic education. This seems to be the trend of the present age. Society periodically throws up its hands in despair at not having the question answered satisfactorily as to how to keep the boys on the farm and how to fill the mechanical pursuits of life while at the same time the great effort of society seems to be to cram a classical education into the rising youth of to-day. Society is seriously discussing the question of high living, the increase of food prices while it fails to take into consideration that the sum of human effort is along the line of inducing the rising generation to abandon the lines of the productive and mechanical arts. There is arable land sufficient west of Lake Superior to almost supply with flour the millions of Europe and to grow beef sufficient to fur-

nish the empire with meat, and yet labour cannot be found to till the soil for the food which it will produce and to furnish the hungry millions with the meat which they require. Yet our universities and our higher scholastic institutions are overflowing with students, turning out candidates for the learned professions by the tens of thousands, the great majority of whom should be engaged in the industrial pursuits of life. Notwithstanding the millions and millions of acres of arable lands in Canada capable of producing untold millions of wealth in food products to meet the growing demands of the unfed millions, yet go through Canada and you can almost count on your ten fingers the agricultural institutions to be found for educating the youth in agriculture which, as I have stated, is the basis of Canada's wealth and importance. At the same time you will scarcely find any community so small where you will not find an institution or academy of learning where the trend of the education given is calculated to divert the rising youth from the cultivation of the soil and the productive activities of industrial life. It is, therefore, high time that public attention should be called to this great infirmity in our educational system and that the best attention we can give should be riveted upon promoting our best interests along the lines of agricultural instruction. The proposed assistance, the amount of which will afterwards be ascertainable from the Bill to be introduced by the government, should be of the greatest possible impetus to the provinces of the Dominion in entering upon a large programme for the instruction of the rising generation in the development of the great agricultural wealth with which Canada has been blessed. It is to be hoped that it will not be long distant when the public mind will be seized with the thought that it is just as necessary for the rising generation to be grounded in the principles of science and practice of agriculture, of industry and of commerce as in the dead languages, the classics and the professional arts, which for so long have seemingly been the conception which our educators have of a liberal education.