

moted first and promoted by all our Governments. I notice that in another place a member of the Government discussing the question of free wheat claimed that we should manufacture all our wheat in Canada, take all the proceeds in Canada and live within ourselves. That cannot be done. If Canada is to progress she must have wider and freer relations with the outside world. It is now about forty years since Canada adopted the protective policy, and during that time the agriculturists of this country have, to my mind, been handicapped; they have not had a fair field or a fair show; and the agricultural interests have been handicapped at the expense of the manufacturers, who have been building up the industries of Canada under a protective tariff. To my mind that should be reversed. I think the first interest should be that of the agriculturists. Most of the small towns and larger cities have offered extra inducements to secure manufacturing industries; they are offered aid in the way of protection by the Government, while municipalities offer exemption from taxation, free sites and so on, which gives them an advantage over the farmer. They are therefore able to pay higher wages while paying less taxes, and the result is that young men are induced to go off the farm to the towns and cities and engage in manufacturing rather than stay on the land. Now, there is no question that the one who produces the most wealth in this country is the farmer. He takes it out of the ground—not necessarily “mining” it out of the ground—and the successful farmer produces more wealth, man for man, than any manufacturing industry we have in Canada. For that reason I am glad to see that the mover of this resolution placed agriculture before industrial and trade interests. I trust this committee will be appointed, and I have no doubt, from its membership, that they will do the work and do it well. As was stated by the leader of the House this afternoon, Governments are only moved by public sentiment. Public sentiment is strong enough to build the Hudson bay road. I hope those gentlemen who are to form the committee will get busy and be strong enough to represent to the Government that certain things should be done, and I trust that when they do make a report they will rather reverse the policy of the past and put agriculture first and industrial interests second.

Hon. Mr. BOSTOCK—The motion that my hon. friend from De Salaberry has

Hon. Mr. WATSON.

placed before the House is, I think, a very important one at the present time. The questions with which this committee will have to deal are very wide, and they affect the whole interests of the country. My hon. friend in moving his motion quoted the Order in Council drawn by the Government in appointing the Economic Commission of which the hon. the leader of the Government in this House is chairman. Any hon. gentleman who has studied that Order in Council will at once realize the wide scope of that commission and the enormous amount of work that they must have before them if they are going to deal with the questions referred to in that Order in Council. The whole scope of that commission is very wide, and I have no doubt my hon. friend the leader of the Government realizes the tremendous amount of work that has been placed on his shoulders and those of the members of the commission. Therefore I think that the motion made by my hon. friend from De Salaberry, that a committee of this House should be appointed to help consider one or two of those questions, is a very wise one, because we cannot pay too much attention to those very important questions that affect the country. It has been said that we ought to bend all our energies to the pushing forward of the war. Of course, everybody agrees with that statement, but at the same time if we were only to devote all our energies to that particular work, and not think about what we are going to do when the war is over, we should find that we were in a very bad and awkward position. We have to consider to-day what is going to happen to this country as soon as this war is over; and although we cannot tell what the position is going to be either in this country or in Europe when the war ends, as no one at the present moment can tell when it is going to finish or what the conditions are going to be when it is finished, at the same time, we can consider the conditions that exist at the present moment. In Canada for a long time we have been doing a great deal to encourage the agricultural industry of the country. Each Government in turn has done its best to develop the agricultural industry and to increase the production from the land as much as possible. First of all, they have established experimental farms, secondly, they have arranged lectures at farmers' meetings all through the country for the purpose of educating the farmer. They have helped the industry by further division of the Department of Agri-