

more particularly representatives of the Progressive party, that agriculture is the outstanding basic industry of Canada. I would say to them with the utmost frankness that I agree with that statement. I would, however, take this opportunity of adding that while admitting that statement with frankness, cheerfulness and pride, I should like them to bear in mind that there are other forms of industry which, while perhaps not of the same magnitude, or not bearing exactly the same relation to the life of the country as a whole, yet do hold a very important place in our economic life. Those other industries cannot be recklessly or lightly dealt with any more than we can deal with the industry of agriculture in a reckless or careless spirit. As individuals and collectively we must constantly keep that fact in mind, otherwise we are in danger of taking a narrow or prejudiced view of this very important subject. Before, however, addressing myself to a brief discussion of our agricultural situation, I wish to direct the attention of the Minister of Finance (Mr. Fielding) particularly to this point: A number of years ago the late Parliament under the guidance of the then government, brought in a measure granting \$10,000,000 to the aid of agriculture. This money was distributed amongst the provinces and spent by them for the development of agriculture particularly along educational lines. It was divided between them. That measure will expire, I believe, this year, and I regret that in the Speech from the Throne there is no reference to its continuance. I should very much like to have seen expressed the intention of the Government to continue this co-operative effort on the part of the federal authorities with the provincial, because in that way the late Government saved a great deal of duplication that undoubtedly will occur again unless the same or a similar principle is applied. Therefore I submit this suggestion to my hon. friend the Minister of Finance for his consideration, and I trust to hear during the course of the session a declaration from the Government favouring it.

Let me turn for a moment to this question of agriculture which must command the attention of Parliament. It seems to me that you take a very distinct step towards the solution of a problem if you admit the problem. The difficulty very often is that we do not admit the problem; we debate whether or not the problem exists. But let us come to the point where

we admit the problem exists, and we have taken the first and most important step towards its solution. I admit that others not directly identified with the agricultural industry—I should like to say to my hon. friend that I have all my life been directly connected with it and take a very deep interest in my farm, although it might be considered small compared with some of the immense prairie farms—but as I say, some not directly connected with agriculture may decline to admit that the problem is as acute as is represented. I do admit frankly that it is acute, and from that position I start with my consideration of the problem.

One of the great difficulties to-day is that there has been a reduction of the prices of nearly all farm products to their pre-war basis, while on the other hand the prices of some, though not all, of the commodities which enter into their cost of production have not been reduced in proportion. That is, briefly stated, one of the economic problems with which my hon. friends immediately to my left are faced.

In this connection another question is raised: that of marketing and transportation. Now, I am not going to enter upon a discursive discussion of the various methods of marketing through co-operative organizations, and so on; we will leave that to these organizations to work out. But, Sir, in regard to one or two of the main products of the farm the question of marketing is important and has, indeed, in years gone by engaged the attention of this House. I refer particularly to wheat and cattle. So far as cattle are concerned I shall not go into the matter at length. We have a statement by one hon. gentleman—and here, Sir, I pause to compliment many of the new-comers in the House upon the clear and lucid manner in which they have presented their claims and their arguments—one hon. gentleman stated that it was necessary, when shipping cattle from distant points in Alberta to Winnipeg, to prepay the freight because it was doubtful whether they would bring at the end of the journey sufficient to pay the freight. I believe that is a statement of fact; it cannot but impress us with the seriousness of the problem.

But let me turn for a moment to the question of the marketing of wheat, which, after all, is the biggest item in connection with our farm products. Here an important problem presents itself. Simply stated, it is this: That between the amount received by the grower at the point of production or shipment, and the amount paid