

What a fine argument, sir, for a person who contends that he is in earnest and what a consolation for farmers who are obliged to practically give away their products now! The scope of such an argument is unbounded, the hon. Postmaster General might just as well have gone back to 1832 and stated: "A hundred years ago the price of farm products was less than to-day." He might have gone as far back as the deluge! However, what does it prove, and especially, what relief can this afford to farmers? I trust that the hon. Postmaster does not look upon farmers as idiots; I hope that he is aware that farmers realize that 27 or 28 years ago, if the price of farm products was about the same as that of to-day, the purchasing power of the Canadian dollar was greater than at present. The farmers are aware also that the taxes they paid 27 or 28 years ago, were ten, fifteen or perhaps twenty fold less than now. The farmers equally know that in 1905 labour was cheaper, that the price of necessities such as farm implements was much less than to-day, in 1905 or 1896, the rate of interest on farm loans was lower than now. Therefore, I think it is childish to say to farmers, as a small compensation: "Cheer up, do not complain, the prices of commodities are about the same this year as they were in 1905 or 1896."

Instead, sir, of having to resort to such arguments and discuss Quebec's provincial affairs in this house, our friend, the hon. Postmaster General, who likes to pose as an expert in farm matters, would be well advised, with the help of his Quebec colleague, the hon. Minister of Marine (Mr. Duranleau), to formulate an agricultural policy, one agreed upon and definite, thus brushing aside the hon. Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Weir) who, to my mind, seems helpless to devise one himself. While our Quebec cabinet members busy themselves in petty and insignificant political squabbles, while they waste their time in ordering dismissals or discussing party questions with reference to political favours, our western friends who are organized and well represented in the house, help themselves to the treasury funds.

Mr. LAFLECHE (Translation): They have been doing so for a long time.

Mr. BOULANGER (Translation): Let me point out to an incident which recently happened in my county and which proves that our western friends, thanks to their excellent organization and the fighting spirit their worthy representatives display in the house, have practically emptied the treasury; there does not even remain a paltry \$1,000 for the Quebec farmers. A few days ago, the

municipal council of the small settlement of Ste. Sabine, in the upper part of my county, along the Maine border, wrote to me to inquire whether it would be possible to obtain \$1,000 to purchase seed grain for the poor settlers of the parish. This parish was settled about ten or fifteen years ago; the farms are not yet in an advanced state of cultivation and the returns are not sufficient to afford a livelihood to those on the land. Previously, these settlers worked in the lumber camps, across the border, however, within the last few years, the United States government has closed the frontier to Canadian woodcutters; the result is that farmers from Ste. Sabine, as well as those from the surrounding country, are now destitute. The municipal council forwarded to me a resolution requesting a grant of \$1,000. This is not a large amount, \$1,000 only, to relieve these poor settlers, at Ste. Sabine, when compared with the ten or eleven million dollars paid as a bonus on the western wheat or again with the fifty million dollars or thereabouts expended in the west to relieve the farmers and guarantee the bonds of the western provinces, which are practically bankrupt. I referred this matter to the Minister of Agriculture and the director of unemployment. The following is my letter to the latter:

Ottawa, April 12, 1932.

Mr. Harry Hereford,
Director of Unemployment,
Ottawa.

Dear Sir,—

I have the honour to enclose a copy of a resolution from the Municipal Council of Ste-Sabine which was forwarded to me by Mr. Edmond Mercier, secretary-treasurer of the council.

As you will note by this resolution, the farmers of that parish request a grant of \$1,000, in order to purchase seed grains.

I suppose that such a request can be granted pursuant to the special Unemployment and Farm Relief Act (ch. 58, 1931).

The parish of Ste-Sabine is a settlement where the land has not yet been sufficiently improved to afford a livelihood to the settlers. Formerly the farmers of Ste-Sabine worked, in winter, in the lumber camps of the state of Maine, they earned enough to purchase their seed grain. For the last two years, the United States have completely closed their frontier and, owing to this, distress prevails now among the Quebec parishes along the frontier.

I wish to strongly support the request of the settlers of Ste-Sabine, and let me assure you that by granting this request you will be performing a good deed.

Yours faithfully,

Oscar L. Boulanger, M.P.

My letter to the hon. Minister of Agriculture being similarly worded, there is no need of reading it. I shall now read the answers.