

the parliament of Great Britain, that whatever has been accomplished in relation to that embargo, whatever has been acceded to by the British parliament and the British government, is the direct and sole result of the obligation of honour felt by that parliament and that government in relation to the promise made by Great Britain in 1917 to the government of Canada then in power. No one can read the debates of the House of Commons of Britain; no one can read the debates of the House of Lords of Britain in particular; yes, no one can read the speeches of members of the government, in those debates, and not agree that had it not been for the word of Britain passed at the Imperial Conference of 1921, that after the war that embargo would be removed, had it not been for the feeling there that the word of Britain having been given, whatever the consequences, must be redeemed, there would have been not even a promise of a removal of the embargo in 1923. Moreover, is the embargo even yet removed? The Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Motherwell) is here; he shakes his head in the negative. That does not seem to me precisely in harmony with the words of the Speech from the Throne. But what the Minister of Agriculture tacitly admits is true; the embargo has not yet been removed. There is not an animal in this country to-day that could horn itself into the British Isles. All that this government has obtained—or rather all that has come to it, because it has not obtained it in any way whatever—is the promise of the British parliament that it will implement the pledge given in 1917 to Sir Robert Borden at the Imperial Conference of that year. The execution of that promise is still to take effect, and I believe the time at which it is to take effect is still very much in doubt. More than that, I express some apprehension—of course, it is difficult for anyone to know until the test of experience is applied—that the conditions agreed to by the representatives of this government will, in the actual working out of the trade following the removal of the embargo, prove onerous if not serious. I hope not. I earnestly hope that the flow of trade, particularly in the product of the farms of this country, over to Great Britain will receive a stimulus as a consequence of the removal of the embargo. I hope that all the blessings of trade will follow and that by this means something in the way of relief may come for what is at present a rather unfortunate condition of agriculture in many parts of this country.

Let the government not lull itself into any illusory belief that this Do-

[Mr. Meighen.]

minion enjoys to-day the measure of prosperity which, on this continent and relative to the United States, it ought to enjoy at this time. I do not believe it does. There is too much emigration; there is too much idleness, even if unemployment may have diminished somewhat. There is too much hardship, too much increase of debt, particularly on the part of those engaged in agriculture in this country. The condition of the farmer in the West demands attention, and I venture to suggest that the grievances against which the western farmer complains can receive no adequate investigation at the hands of such a committee as is foreshadowed to-day in the Speech from the Throne. The government says that the western farmer has been complaining of the mixing of grain and, as well, of the way in which his products are shipped; and it therefore proposes a special committee of the House of Commons to inquire into and report upon these complaints. Why, for fifty years we have had a committee of this House which has been empowered to inquire into every one of these subjects year by year, with all the powers that any committee wants. And still we have these complaints abroad to-day. Now, Sir, these complaints call for investigation at the hands of a body who will have no other duties to perform until it completes its task. Let this government launch such an investigation and it will be welcomed by the farmer of western Canada. These complaints to-day have reached an acuteness far past any stage that has been reached in the years that are gone, and naturally the cry for remedy is louder, because of the distressed condition of the country generally. The government, therefore, would do well to launch an investigation by competent men, whom, of course, they have power to choose, who should have full authority, and whose sole duty it should be to go into these complicated, difficult questions that harass the mind of the western farmer to-day. That is the suggestion I make to the administration. I see no value at all in merely appointing a committee of this House to do what has been the duty year by year for fifty years of the Committee on Agriculture of the House of Commons.

I pass no further comment on the Speech from the Throne at this moment, save the following: A revision of the Bank Act is promised. Of that I am glad. I think it is the duty of this parliament at this session to complete the task of the Bank Act revision. I trust that that task will be approached in a spirit of liberality, in a spirit of determination that whatever can be done in the way of making more secure the savings of the