

is done for one part of the country should be done for other parts. If it is good for one section of the country it must be good for the other; that is their point of view. May I repeat something that you, Mr. Speaker, know very well; it is that the farmers of eastern Canada deserve as much help as those of the west. And the situation is not always agreeable for them. They strive hard, they have difficulty, and they expect someone to come to their assistance.

Of course under the British North America Act agriculture and immigration are, in the first place, provincial matters. The dominion and the provinces have joint jurisdiction in those two fields only. As time went on, there were many changes, and little by little the dominion has been doing more with regard to agriculture by way of experimental farms and by assisting farmers. I wonder what is the practical difference in the way the dominion and provincial departments of agriculture are operated. It must be very slight. Would it not be better to keep the experimental farms and illustration stations throughout the country under the administration of the dominion government and then give the provinces a subsidy, in proportion to their population, which subsidy would be under the control of the provincial governments? Then no one could complain that more was done for one section of the country than for another.

Further, I wonder if the creation of the provinces of Alberta and Saskatchewan was in fact a good thing. There is no doubt that Sir Wilfrid Laurier meant very well; he wanted to see this country larger and more populous, but now that the western provinces are costing Canada so much by way of loans, grants and guarantees I wonder if in regard to the dominion these western provinces do not occupy the same position that Newfoundland occupied with regard to England, and if it would not be better to return those provinces to the territories they once were, with a commissioner in charge. That would be a simple way of managing the business of those provinces. A petition could be addressed to the imperial parliament requesting the repeal of the Westminster statutes that were passed thirty-three years ago. Then those provinces would be in the same position as Newfoundland, until their prosperity was restored. I wonder if that would not be a good thing. They would have a fine territory; they would be happy and contented and they could try their own experiments.

Mr. HAYHURST: Would you take over their debt?

Mr. POULIOT: I do not know, but I do know the west is pretty costly to the east. The farmers of the east want the same degree of assistance from the dominion government that the farmers of the west are given. That is the position; of course it may be pretty costly, but it should be done in order that there may be no difficulty in our part of the country. I am sure that those who take time to consider the matter will realize that this is only fair. Certainly the products of the mixed farming of the east should receive consideration equal to that given the wheat of the west.

Mr. M. J. COLDWELL (Rosetown-Biggar): I was going to remark that the east has as much need for consideration as the west in the marketing of its products; and I was also going to add that if western farmers took the advice of the hon. member for Dufferin-Simcoe (Mr. Rowe) and forgot to any extent the wheat about which we talk so much in this house and diverted our activities to the production of dairy and other farm products, I am not sure what would happen to the dairy interests of eastern Canada. So I would say that anything that can be done to maintain the wheat industry of western Canada, and to prevent the farmers of the west from being forced into some other line of endeavour, is in the interests of eastern agriculture.

While the hon. member for Dufferin-Simcoe was speaking, I looked up the figures in regard to the production of one commodity in which Ontario and Quebec are interested, namely, butter. I found that in 1937 Saskatchewan produced 23,000,000 pounds of butter, with a home consumption of between 6,000,000 and 7,000,000 pounds. Manitoba produced 24,000,000 pounds and consumed from 13,000,000 to 14,000,000 pounds. So these two provinces had a surplus of 28,000,000 pounds of butter in that year.

Mr. HARRIS: What did they do with that surplus?

Mr. COLDWELL: I will answer that question in a moment. Ontario showed a production of 81,500,000 pounds, with a consumption of 92,000,000 pounds; Quebec produced 74,000,000 pounds and consumed 88,000,000 pounds, while the three maritime provinces had a production of 11,500,000 pounds and a consumption of 20,250,000 pounds. So in 1937 the production of eastern Canada was 33,000,000 pounds short of the consumptive requirements. In 1938 production in the prairies was increased by 6,000,000 pounds; in Ontario, by 5,500,000; in Quebec, by 4,500,000