

The Address—Mr. Fair

return home with some of the top prizes as he has done on other occasions.

In this constituency also we have quite a sprinkling of that thing they call black gold—oil. We have oil wells in several sections of the territory and they are being rapidly developed. In some areas of course, as in the past, we do not have sufficient moisture, and that creates trouble not only for the farmers but for all the people who live in that territory. Because I have discussed Battle River on former occasions I do not intend to use any of my time on that subject today. I do feel, however, that because part of the old Camrose constituency is included in my territory now I should tell the house something about it.

The town of Camrose—and I shall deal with it only as a sample of the many other towns in that area—is a progressive one. It has fine buildings; it is well laid out, and there is a plentiful supply of churches and schools, as well as a home for retired people. It has a population of about 6,000. In that town they are on their toes all the year round. On any occasion when they see an opportunity to do something for the town or the district surrounding it, they are right on the job.

About three years ago they discovered that there was some oil in that territory. However, not wishing to be disillusioned as others have been, they did not do anything about the oil wells by way of celebration until June 6, 1952, on which date they celebrated the drilling of their one hundred and first well. There was a sparkling celebration to which were invited officials of the various oil companies operating in the field, as well as the former minister of lands and mines of the Alberta government, Mr. Tanner, who has done a wonderful job in the development of oil in my province. An interesting program was offered, and the occasion will go down as one of the bright spots in the life of the citizens of Camrose. Anyone who drives around the Camrose district at night can see the lights of the oil wells in every direction. I am not sure of the number of wells drilled at the moment, but I know they are making very rapid progress in the well-drilling operations.

I am not in a position to state the amounts received for farm products from that area, and shall not attempt to do so at the moment. I am sure, however, that this district is bringing in its fair share of money from those products. When the district is blessed with sufficient moisture it has good crops, and large numbers of livestock are produced.

The farmers in the Camrose area in the first seven months of 1953 invested no less than

\$790,259 in farm implements. This information is made available through a survey made by the editor of the *Camrose Canadian* and his associates, who went to the trouble of surveying the area and getting this information from the implement dealers. Included in this figure are 97 tractors. I am sure the amount would not be nearly as great were it not for the fact that the farmers have been charged exorbitant prices for their implements. I expect that some of the money being demanded today by the farmers as advances on wheat will be required to pay for that machinery. If the implement companies want to ease their consciences a little bit I suggest that they knock something off the amounts the farmers owe them, because the prices of implements are certainly far too high.

On three different occasions during the last two sessions of parliament I have brought to the attention of the house the matter of the exorbitant prices charged for farm implements. As a result of my last talk the president of one of the implement companies, who presumably spoke on behalf of all of them—but chiefly his own—checked up on the figures and statements I had made. However, in line with my usual procedure I had gone for my information to a source this gentleman was unable to question. I had gone to the bureau of statistics, and my statements still stand.

I intend before this session is over to press further for an investigation into the cost of farm implements, and perhaps to have a talk with the Minister of Justice (Mr. Garson) with a view to making more use of the combines legislation. I believe if this matter were properly investigated some good would flow from it. An investigation was made by a house committee in 1937 and 1938, and the implement companies saw fit to increase the prices of their implements on two occasions while the investigation was still proceeding, and nothing whatever was done about it by the government. I feel therefore that some reasonable and effective action should be taken in connection with this subject.

On June 12 the town of Camrose put on a program to show the farmers of that territory that their business is appreciated. June 12 is farmers' day in my province. The chamber of commerce and others in Camrose went around and collected enough money before that day to put on a fine celebration in honour of the farmers in the territory. A restatement of objectives is as follows:

To focus attention on agriculture as the original and continuing primary industry of Alberta.

To encourage a widespread and more intensive observance of "farmers' day" as an important