

buyers of the world take advantage of the situation.

We believe, Sir, that a voluntary pool is not sufficient to overcome these conditions, and it is a very strong man who would attempt to attack the old conditions as they have existed during the past three or four hundred years. But when these conditions, under the stress and strain following a great war, have broken down, then it is time for us to come forward with a scheme that has proved itself satisfactory to the men who grow grain; I have reference to the re-constitution of the Canada Wheat Board. I can only emphasize this fact, that so far as the western farmer is concerned he desires it. The western farmers are almost unanimous upon that question. We believe that the board is a vital necessity and that the Government, doubting nothing and without any procrastination, should act immediately, because the prosperity of the Dominion depends upon the farmers as a whole. We need to inspire the farmer with confidence and give him fresh courage to go forward once again into that great country, to delve in the soil and bring out the wealth that lies there so that he may get for himself that return that will enable him to live in the state of life which he desires.

Do you know, Sir, that in Western Canada to-day, as a result of the drop in the prices of the commodities which the farmer produces, we are expecting in a great many sections to close the schools?—a thing that would be a national calamity. When we have to economize in such a way that even the children, owing to the lack of money, are not able to secure an education, things have certainly come to a pitiable pass. And yet we pride ourselves in being a democracy, although education is the salvation of democracy to-day. If the eastern people are wise, if the great manufacturing interests are wise, they will realize that it is to their advantage and to the advantage of the whole of Canada that the Wheat Board be immediately reinstated, prior to the farmer putting any seed into the ground, so that he may feel that he has the support of the Canadian people in his demand to get what is coming to him. In the past the Canadian farmer has been the butt of profiteers and other people who have made money, not from the soil but because they have—shall I say?—taxed the farmer, or taken his commodities and speculated with them on the world's markets. Any one who has observed the

[Mr. Lewis.]

conditions of the market during the last four or five months will see that the demand for the Canada Wheat Board is based upon an economic fact. There was no reason in the wide world why the farmer should get \$1.64 at Fort William as soon as the grain was threshed, and then, immediately following Christmas, \$1.06. To-day, the price has gone up to \$1.40. We do not believe that the Wheat Board is a panacea for all the ills that afflict the Canadian farmer, but we are convinced that it is a step in the right direction towards restoring prosperity to that western land.

I desire, of course, to deal with the tariff. This is a subject upon which I could speak for a long time to-night, but I do not wish to tire the House with my address. I remember hearing the right hon. leader of the Opposition (Mr. Meighen) giving expression to feelings which almost depressed the hon. gentlemen in this assembly, when he said that my hon. friend from Winnipeg (Mr. McMurray) was too optimistic, and that before this session was over he would possibly share the feelings of the right hon. gentleman himself. My right hon. friend then went on to accuse the Liberal party of enunciating almost the same doctrine as he had propounded himself. If that were true, then, instead of being depressed, he should have rejoiced, because that was the very thing he advocated as the harbinger of prosperity in Canada. But I was wondering in my own mind whether he believed that the Liberal party were going to enact legislation founded upon the manifesto in their platform of 1919, and show to the world that by lowering the tariff they would once more usher in prosperity and demonstrate the fallacy of the right hon. gentleman's arguments regarding protection.

I do not wish to go very deeply into the question of protection to-night, but I heard one hon. member—I think my hon. friend from St. John (Mr. Baxter)—twitting the Government in a certain respect. He read an extract from the Prime Minister's speech and went on in a humorous vein. He said that if there were a tariff for revenue, shoes that cost \$5.50 would be reduced to \$5.20, and he treated this reduction as a light matter, declaring that it was only a difference of 30 cents. Well, it may seem a light matter when you buy only one pair of shoes, but if you have a family like mine and have to buy shoes for a family of nine, 30 cents of a difference on