

whether or not that is the cause for the sudden drop in prices will be ascertained further from investigations that are being carried on by the American farm board and its officers as well as by others, and to the extent that we may be able to contribute to the ascertaining of those causes, this country will do so. I need hardly say that every human effort that can be made will be made by those of us who for the moment are the representatives of the people of this country to ensure better prices being obtained by the agrarian population for their products. When one considers this situation in the light of what it means in dollars and cents, he will realize the serious results of these falling prices, a result which involves hardly an adequate return for the actual money expended.

The gentlemen I have named, who are specialists in their lines of business, will be able to speak with some definite authority in connection with these matters, not only in London but on the continent of Europe. May I say that it will be the earnest endeavour of those of us who are entrusted with the confidence of the people to secure improved distribution facilities and by cheapening transport enable the Canadian farmer, as a producer and distributor of his product, to meet the competition which may come from any part of the world. As my hon. friends opposite would say, this will involve the cheapening of the instruments of production, and with that we heartily agree. The methods by which that end may be effected differ, but we all have that earnest purpose and desire. The means suggested by us are not those suggested by my hon. friends opposite, but we believe that by the methods we have adopted we will secure for the Canadian producer his instruments of production at prices which will be equal to those paid by other people. We know that the quality of our soil is second to none so far as productivity is concerned, and its fertility is equal to if not better than that of any other country.

So far as artificial means may be used for the purpose of stimulating production, every effort will be made to improve those conditions. The great undertaking at Trail, which has recently entered upon the production of fertilizers on a large scale, will we believe improve conditions in western Canada. I take it that almost every member of the house has knowledge of what is being done there. It is hoped that by the use of fertilizers the level of our production can be brought up to that of Germany and other parts of continental Europe, including Great Britain, and if that

result can be obtained at a reasonable cost to the farmer, as we believe it can be by the utilization of the great natural resources which are being developed at Trail, we believe that great benefit will accrue to agriculture in the three western provinces.

The problem of transport is one of first importance, and in order that the western farmer may meet the competition of the world, he must have cheap instruments of production and have every possible avenue explored for the purpose of seeing to what extent science may be able to improve the conditions under which he sells and reaps his harvest. When the crop is reaped there must be cheap and effective methods of transportation, and to those ends we are directing our attention and the accomplishment of that purpose is the supreme idea which guides and governs our policies.

There remains still another problem, one of the greatest magnitude, and that is the distribution of the product after it has been harvested and after it has been transported. That problem is one which neither the wisdom nor ingenuity of man can solve if the people supply within themselves all their own requirements and are not compelled to buy elsewhere. The bonuses and bounties that have been lavished by other countries to stimulate the production and cultivation of their soil during the last few years have resulted in conditions which perhaps have not been equalled for many generations. Under these conditions we are endeavouring and will endeavour, and we trust that we will be able to report to this house that we have successfully endeavoured, to induce those who are vitally concerned in the use of our cereals to buy them because of their quality and because of the fact that they can be sold at a profit to the producer at prices equal to those paid by any other people in the world.

Knowing this country as I do and realizing and understanding some of its problems, knowing that the greatest annual contribution to our national wealth comes from agriculture, especially that branch of agriculture which produces and harvests our cereals, I shall not rest content until every effort has been made which I or those associated with me may be able to make so to improve conditions as to ensure to those who till the soil an adequate return for their effort commensurate with and, if I have my way, greater than the returns received by those who risk their capital in other ventures in this country.