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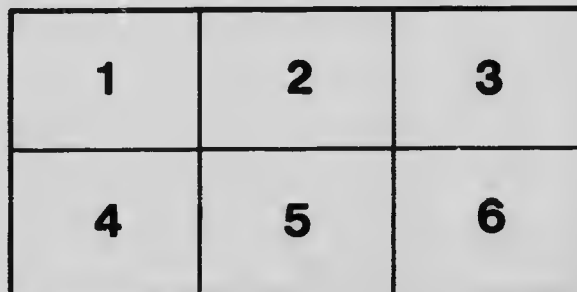
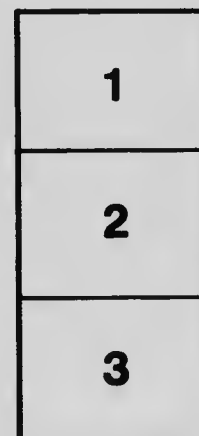
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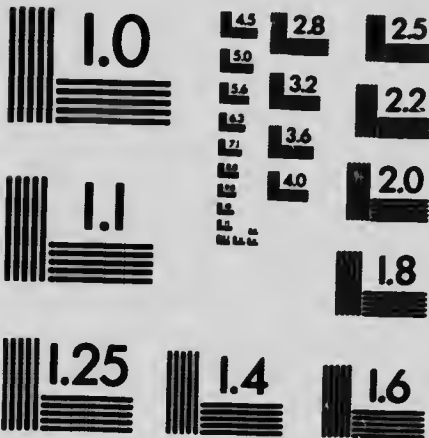
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The Extension
... OF ...
Agricultural Production



ADDRESS

BY

DR. T. A. BRISSON

AT THE

Chambre de Commerce du District de Montréal

18th and 25th November 1914

Voir le texte français au verso

The Extension
... OF ...
Agricultural Production



ADDRESS

BY

DR. T.-A. BRISSON

AT THE

Chambre de Commerce du District de Montreal
18th and 25th November 1914

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The Extension of Agricultural Production.

Mr. Chairman,
Gentlemen,

At the outbreak of the present war, His Royal Highness the Duke of Connaught declared at Toronto that these troubled and critical times nations have to go through offer, on the other hand, splendid occasions for happy initiatives and useful developments; that they bring to light astonishing possibilities of promoting general and individual welfare.

Preceding the businessmen of Old England, whose motto is "Business as usual", our Governor General was appealing to the spirit of enterprise and action of the Canadians for the reason that, in time of war, the country that is in a position to keep on operating its agricultural areas and its industries can, if it so wills, develop the volume of its exports, in other words, of its wealth. What a magnificent scope is given to our young country, whose natural resources are practically boundless!

In time of war, certain economic facts are easier to understand, as for instance, the necessity of increasing the alimentary production, when Famine is at the door, as also the pressing need of finding work for the unemployed, when thousands of them threaten to become a menace to public order and property.

Moreover, political passions have declared a truce before a common danger; the minds, stimulated by the instinct of conservation, stand more closely united for a common

purpose; in short, the time is favorable for a fruitful and durable action. Now, to obtain important results, a program and some organization are needed in order to meet the requirements of the war and to enable us, to-day as well as to-morrow, to make the best of the situation.

When one thinks of the tremendous destruction of lives, of various riches, of incomparable monuments erected in the course of many centuries, which will be the result of the present struggle, one is astounded and inclined to discouragement. However, as past experience has proved, we dispose of the great force which has enabled Adam and Eve to survive after their downfall; a creative force capable of reviving almost everything, the cultivation of the land. If the present war gives Canada the occasion of reestablishing the balance between production and consumption, it will not have been, for us, after all, so great a disaster.

You will not be surprised, Gentlemen, that if at such a critical time, I treat before you of the question of the increase of our agricultural output by intensive cultivation; and this with the object of strengthening in a general way the standing of Canadians by the conquest of the soil; of enabling us to help feeding the allied troops; and also of widening and making more generous the hospitality we are eager to give to the heroic victims of the war.

Were there need to further justify me treating, before this Chambre, of a problem of economics, I would add, Mr. Chairman, that not only did you invite me to do so, but that you have yourself put the question at the order of the day in January last, in your opening speech, when you gave a statement of the status of our country, of our province and of our city, and made an eloquent appeal for a strenuous agricultural development, as a mean of lowering the high cost of living.

On the other hand, I wish to state that it is as a member

of this Chamber, to which I am proud to belong, that I will make the following remarks, and not as a representative of other interests of whatever nature.

After having been admitted member of the *Chambre de Commerce du district de Montréal*, I quickly realized that this Chamber was not my debtor; on the contrary, the advantage was all on my side, given the important questions which are being taken up by this Chamber or unfolded by able experts. I also noticed that this institution — Canadian in the fullest sense of the word — was a splendid platform where speakers always found thoughtful listeners. I was not without observing that the *Chambre de Commerce*, through the authority of its *Bulletin* and the competence of its members, is in a position to spread sane principles as well as to fight for just and worthy causes. In short, I can affirm that its work has been beneficent to the community at large.

The agricultural development of our country by the diffusion of intensive cultivation and the operation of industries connected with agriculture, are, in my opinion, which is shared by many others, the effective lever, the powerful spring that will boost agriculture and give it back the place it deserves, the first one. This idea is forging its way ahead; and it is comforting to note to what extent of late people all over Canada have become interested in the development of agriculture. It is the question of the day, the favorite topic of all competent Canadians. A bulky literature has accumulated on that subject of late, and it is ever on the increase. Everyone is doing his best to throw light on a question so closely connected with our daily life. This will allow me to shorten my own remarks and to be content with explaining what is meant by intensive cultivation, also to point out the ways and means by which we could diffuse it.

INTENSIVE CULTIVATION

Agriculturists generally define it as that which has for object to allow extracting with the least possible expenditure, the maximum yield out of a limited area. The tilling of our gardens exemplifies what it ought to be. La Fontaine, in his fable *Le Laboureur et ses fils*, describes as follows the main phases:

“Remuez votre champ dès qu'on aura fait l'ouât:
“Creusez, fouillez, bêchez; ne laissez nulle place
“Où la main ne passe et repasse”.

The result will be that, with a little more work, the land will produce much more.

Who doubts nowadays that intensive cultivation largely increases the volume of farm produce, specially of food-stuffs, and enhances their market value in the same proportion? It is generally admitted that intensive cultivation yields

from \$100. to \$150. per acre for tobacco, tomatoes;
“ 200. “ 300. “ “ for potatoes, sweet corn,
butter beans;
“ 300. “ 400. “ “ for celery, asparagus, straw-
berries;
“ 500. “ 1000. “ “ for green peas, melons,
apples and other products
of the orchard.

I need not dwell on bee keeping, poultry business and the breeding of rabbits, in which such big profits can be made.

A COMMENDABLE EXAMPLE

What is being done on 30 acres of land

La Semaine, of Grand'Mère, admits that agricultural exhibitions are excellent, but asks that practical lessons be given to our farmers.

La Semaine shows what knowledge and hard work can make out of a land of inferior quality; and it quotes the example of the farm of the Laurentide Co., of Grand'Mère, situated North of Petite Rivière. This farm, which is under the supervision of a gardener graduated from the School of Grignon (France) contains thirty acres, given up to intensive cultivation.

The yield was as follows:

Lettuce.—From May to October, there are always 3,000 heads of lettuce growing. These are picked up and replaced in about seven weeks.

The total yield is thus 10,000 heads, on half an acre of land.

The gardener puts 30,000 heads more in the cellar for the winter. The summer lettuce sells 10 cents in the spring and 5 cents later on, an average price of 7 cents. The winter lettuce is worth 15 cents.

Average value of this half acre: \$1,780.80.

Cabbage.—Three acres of the Laurentide farm are covered by 11,000 summer cabbages, worth \$1.25 a dozen. Three acres and a half bear winter cabbages, worth 18 cents a piece. We have to add to that nearly an acre of 3,000 cauliflowers at 15 cents a piece and 2,000 Brussels sprouts, at 20 cents, covering half an acre.

Peas.—Five species "Not Excelsior", "Little Marvel", "Stratagème", "Telephone", "Gradus", cover nearly three acres and, at 8 cents a quart, bring from \$150 to \$160.

Carrots.—Two acres, yielding nearly \$400.

Beets.—Half an acre, yielding about as much.

Butter Beans.—One half acre, at 10 cents a quart, will bring \$70.

Celery.—12,000 sticks in six trenches covering one half acre, at 12 and 15 cents a piece, are worth around \$1,400.

Cucumber.—50 plants, representing nearly \$100, can be found on one tenth of an acre.

Pumpkins & Gourds.—One third of an acre, \$100.

Radishes.—Sown every eight day on one half acre, which yields \$150.

Potatoes.—150 bushels on 11 acres are supposed to bring about \$1,000.

Tomatoes.—One acre on which there are 2,000 plants bearing an average of 10 pounds of tomatoes, should be worth \$150.

The balance of the 20 acres is used for the cultivation of other vegetables, such as leeks, onions, asparagus (not yet productive), parsley, chervil, sage, rhubarb, savory water, etc., having an approximate value of \$300.

If all these yields be summed up, they are found to reach a grand total of \$7,640.

Divided by 32 acres, the revenue of the Laurentide farm is found to be as high as \$283. per acre, which is 10 times more than what hay or oats can bring in.

La Semaine recommends that the Government spend less money on agricultural exhibitions and more in the purchase of land where the Government could induce French, Scotch or other capable gardeners to settle. Their work would be for our own people more interesting than any lecture on agriculture.

Moreover, the Grand'Mère weekly claims that this would be one of the best means of reducing the cost of living,

placing as it does on the market more farm products, vegetables, fruits, etc.

Last year, the *Toronto Globe* reported a very interesting fact. At the Agricultural and Experimental Union of Guelph, it has been established that on a small farm of two acres and a half, intensively cultivated, without waste, a farmer made a net profit of \$2,700. a year. Besides, he furnished his family with vegetables, milk, butter, eggs, honey and other necessities.

Touching on the same topic, *The Telegraph*, of St. John, N.B., said one day: "The farmers of Canada and of the United States should study European methods, if they want to make their fields really productive. The English and the Belgians find profit in the tiniest piece of land".

The *Philadelphia Ledger* explains the situation as follows: "While we boast of our agricultural progress, we would do well to glance at the *Crop Reporter*. By consulting its figures, we will see that, as far as fertility of the soil is concerned, the United States hold but the eighteenth place, and Belgium the first. We could, with enlightened and patient labor, reach the same result, and we would thus add ten billion dollars to the public coffers".

Intensive cultivation is even more necessary than anywhere else in the district of Montreal, where production has been disorganized by real estate speculations. In the last ten years, it is calculated that some three hundred farms have been divided into building lots on the island of Montreal alone, with an equal number of others in the neighboring parishes. As a result, there has been a considerable shortage in the production of vegetables; so much so that the population of our city has been forced to import these. Unfortunately little has been done to replace the abandoned cultivation.

Intensive cultivation possesses another quality, fully as

precious, it ties to the land a far greater population, who find their living on it, and keep alive other classes of society.

If our city and other congested centres have, for some years back, had to face a regular food crisis, the main cause of it is precisely in the rupture of that balance which should exist between the number of people tilling the soil and the other classes, the consumers.

There is a standing joke about a certain army whose every soldier was a colonel. The way things go in our country, there will soon be only consumers. Which goes to say that desertion of the land, by its depressing influence on the volume of production, has become a plague.

More dishes are set on the table than the land can fill, because cities are overcrowded and farms deserted.

Such is the situation we have to face.

CONGESTED CITIES

He would surely be wrong who would dwell exclusively on the bad effects of the influx of country people to the cities. One should always take good care not to have extreme opinions; they mostly lead to false conclusions. For instance, the affluence to Montreal of certain parts of the professional, commercial and industrial classes of the community is sometimes very useful and desirable. You can see at a glance able men who have lifted themselves from the rural classes, and who are to-day very prominent in various branches.

Our main industries must also be developed; and he would be blind who would not acknowledge to what an extent our great metropolis has expanded and what great future lies before her. 'Tis excess that makes a bad thing out of a good one; 'tis excess that should be feared and

prevented. Thus have we in our city, an excess of population which causes us annoyance. The exodus of farmers towards urban centres and, in an opposite direction, the influx of foreigners, is prejudicial both to the city and the hamlet. Such a situation leads to pauperism with its cortege of starving individuals who, sooner or later, become a danger to the community. This is what we may reasonably expect in the present conditions, aggravated as they are by the most terrible war the world has ever known. Truly, the problem we have to face is an arduous one.

Some say that the development of large cities has always the same effect in attracting a great number of people and that the mark is soon overreached, but they rely exclusively on local authorities to see that everything goes smoothly. This opinion is disputable.

Why not admit that there is another element partly responsible for the acute congestion we are suffering from, viz, the baneful tendency of our immigration system to gather in the large centres, in too many instances, the scum of foreign populations. Our city has had the saddest experience in this respect. There is not, in Montreal, a single organization whose object would be to attract and cause to settle in this district really desirable immigrants; but, on the other hand, our federal immigration bureau is splendidly efficient in the admittance of the sick and the undesirable. In fact, it is hardly anything but a hospital and a jail. Is there a profit?

As we see a way in which to remedy to this situation, we will resume it further on.

RURAL EXODUS AND ITS REASONS

To show that, besides the congestion of cities, we suffer from a rural exodus, is a very simple task. The census of Canada for 1901-1911 officially unfolded the fact for twenty six counties of the Province of Quebec, some of which, in the course of the last generation, have had a decrease of fifty per cent of the number of their farmers.

Therefore the evil exists, and it is epidemic, which makes it worse. What is the remedy?

Many causes are being ascribed to the fact that fields are let run wild, and the fact itself is sometimes considered as unavoidable; but this opinion is too positive and really too accomodating for those who have the responsibility of government and leadership of the nation. Possessed with that dangerous fatalism, many well-meaning citizens have come to the conclusion that it is useless to open new lands to colonization, when so many old ones are deserted. Even if there were no known means of checking, or of lessening the desertion of farms, it would be the duty of public men to search for one. They should work at that with courage and steadiness. The learned have not given up, for instance, the search of a cure for tuberculosis; and, although they have not as yet found a sure remedy, they nevertheless succeeded in attenuating its ravages.

But it is in our power to efficiently fight against land desertion, and it is the duty of the leading classes to find the best means and to apply them as soon as possible. It is preposterous that a young and fertile land as is that of our Province, can be condemned to "die" in the way described in a book by René Bazin well known in Canada. Recently, on a Sunday paper, the new secretary of this Chamber was pointing out, over his signature, how the renovation of agriculture by the improvement of cultivation

would be an excellent means to put things in order again, specially as far as the cost of living is concerned. While disproving the claims of the *Bulletin* of the Commission of Conservation, he was unfolding a résumé of the the program and methods to follow in order to attain the end. The best I can do is to refer the members of this Chamber to the aforementioned article; and I will add that I sincerely hope Mr. Léon Lorrain will resume his study in economics, for the benefit of the public.

The favorite argument of those who proclaim the uselessness of all efforts made to keep farmers on their farms is that the reason of their departure is solely psychological; that Canadians who like to enjoy life, are irresistibly attracted to the city, where living is expected to be easy and pleasant. I admit that to a certain extent. But, what would the supporters of this opinion say if it were shown to them that a fair part of those who leave their farms take another road than that leading to the City? That they are found, for example, still in the farming business, in other places of the Province of Quebec, in colonization centres, in Ontario and in the West, and even in the faraway plains of the American Republic? Facing such a fact, of which nobody can dispute the accuracy, what becomes of the theory of the attraction of the City?

Yes, there are other causes, economic ones.

Living in an old district suffering from the evil of depopulation, on first sight I was surprised that such a situation could have prevailed among comparatively well-to-do farmers who owned good enough farms. According to the system recommended by Le Play, I undertook a local investigation, which immediately showed me the above mentioned fact and also the profound causes of the desertion of our oldest homesteads. My experience and study could

be summed up in the following sentence: Interest being the prime mover in human actions, and the farmers realizing that their occupation, as it is presently filled, is an inferior one, do their utmost to find a more profitable one.

As a rule, the system of cultivation is wrong. Taking into account the money invested on a farm, the expenditure for implements and wages at which the labor can be figured, the farmer finds out that these wages are not equal to those he could, in the city, make from industry. In short, the result not being proportionate to the effort and to the needs, leaving the farm becomes an economic necessity.

The farm laborers can be divided in three classes: 1° the owners of farms, the "habitants"; 2° the farm hands; 3° the laborers employed temporarily, at certain periods. We must add to these, although they are scarce in our country, the farm superintendants. Also belong to the same class of labor, professors of agricultural schools, lecturers, inspectors and other officers belonging to institutions and various industries connected with agriculture.

Given the owner of an average farm, who is worth some eight to ten thousand dollars in land (from 100 to 150 acres,) in buildings, live stock, implements, etc.; one having, according to custom, ten or twelve children, of which four or five sons who must be established as farmers and as many daughters to endow, let us see how he will succeed with antiquated methods of tilling the soil

With a little calculation and experience, the problem is an easy one to solve. Our man, were he a hero, will be unable to attain his end unless he squeezes out a few neighbors, which would have for effect to bring back things as they were, without eliminating the evil of the exodus.

Let us see, on the other hand, what will become of the farm hands.

In days gone by, on every farm of some importance, a servant could be found. He had his house, his kitchen-garden, his cow, his hog, a few fowls and other odd privileges; he was paid a small but permanent salary. In short, he had quite a decent living.

The extensive use of agricultural implements and the gradual disappearance of the small domestic industries have lessened to a great extent the importance and usefulness of this servant. And, later on, the offer of better wages in a factory has strengthened his desire to leave the farm. Rural population has thus been reduced by fully one third, and not to the advantage of the Canadian cities — they having no industries at the time — but for the benefit of the industries of the United States, where our people emigrated during fifty years. In spite of the progress of Canadian industries, which began 25 years ago, the rural exodus continued, but the migrations were from that day directed towards our Canadian cities, and it was not considered as so great an evil. The emigration, which was formerly in our opinion a total loss, became a shifting from one place to another in the limits of our country. But the effect was a change in the occupation and the course of life of a great number of Canadians.

This is how, in my humble opinion, has worked our system of emigration, a calamity which has made the subject of so many speeches and articles religious, political or otherwise. The psychological causes come only in the second place. In any other branch of activity, misbehavior has its effects on the success of the individual; but it has not been established that, as far as the desertion of land is concerned, this cause has been more prevalent than anywhere else. I want to repeat that rural exodus is especially ascribable to economic causes, the main one being the laudable desire to improve one's situation.

These causes are, therefore, explainable and can be remedied. Since agriculture evolved as rapidly as industry and commerce; since the agricultural population goes so far as to consider this occupation as an inferior one; let us try to straighten out the situation by giving back to agriculture its real rank and by procuring the farm laborer on the farm the comfort he expects to find in industrial life in the city. This is quite an easy thing to do by starting small industries in the country. People quit agriculture to devote themselves to industry, let us make of agriculture a genuine industry, the finest of all industries!

The general use of farm implements having given some leisure to farmers, certain prejudiced individuals have taxed them with laziness, because they did not devote these hours to some other work of a nature to increase the yield of their soil.

Such wholesale statements strongly flavor slander.

The farmers' apparent lack of initiative and ambition is due to the fact that nobody, from the farm implement agent to the agricultural lecturer, has shown them the possibilities offered by this new era. To know something, one must have learned it.

AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION

Let us now consider the most proper means of fighting against routine and of making the farmer's situation as enviable as possible. First of all, stands agricultural education.

One's fondness for agriculture increases in proportion to one's insight into its possibilities. This fact, true in the days of Virgil, has remained true nowadays. The gentle poet, who was enjoying the sight of the Roman gardens, could not understand the repulsion of the farmers

of his time for their occupation, and he expressed his astonishment in this much quoted verse:

"O fortunatos nimium, si bona sua norint agricolae!"

Should anyone blame me for introducing poetry in such a matter-of-fact question, I shall reply that the greatest poets are those who blend the gift of imagination with a keen sense of the facts. Those qualities shine in the eclogues of Virgil and in the fables of La Fontaine.

MINDS SHOULD BE EDUCATED

That fondness for rural life must be impressed upon the intended agriculturist from his childhood, at the same time as the first notions of religion; and, later on, at the primary school, which is nothing more than an extension of the home. The young farmer must not grow up as a stranger in the atmosphere he is called to breathe, unacquainted with the history, traditions, dignity, duties and privileges of his situation and class. Unfortunately, it has been so too often in the past, and it is easy to notice that, among the causes of the desertion of land, stands the lack of preparation of the children in tender years. Let us prepare the child from the very beginning for his own vocation. In certain schools of the Canadian West, the day's work is started by raising the flag of the Dominion, and singing: "O Canada, land of our forefathers".

This sight is a great and inspiring one.

SCHOOL GARDENS

Perhaps you have heard, Gentlemen, of the school gardens, whose object is to impress upon pupils the first notions of intensive cultivation. Flowers, vegetables, fruit-

trees and sometimes ornamental plants are grown there, and the children take them over to their parents' homes, after they have made a very interesting exhibition. (1) Well understood and carried out, this idea is more calculated to sow in the young minds indelible remembrances and strong attachments to the sphere where they have been brought up. It does not teach technical knowledge to the youngsters, but it is the base of an education appropriated to their position.

I would respectfully suggest that this system be adopted in our country schools and that, in order to hasten its adoption, the school commissions or the Government of this Province, or both, give prizes to the schools having the best gardens. The authorities would, of course, determine in advance a standard and a program as uniform as possible. A few dollars thus spent would give splendid returns. Let it be tried; the results would be surprising.

DEMONSTRATION FARMS

As second means of agricultural education and propaganda, the demonstration farms seem to have, in my opinion, the greatest efficiency for spreading rapidly among the masses the methods of scientific and progressive cultivation. They ally theoretical lessons to practical ones, demonstrations to examples that are visible.

Who is not aware of the power of example?

The terrific events that are going on in Europe have just given a very impressing instance of this, though it

(1) Read the result of the "First School Exhibition held at St. Casimir, Portneuf County, September 12, 1914", in *Le Journal d'Agriculture et d'Horticulture* of October, 15. There is also, at Verchères, a school museum, which is full of promise.

may be a very common fact during these times of communicative heroism.

On the verge of a wood where the soldiers were comparatively at safety, a company of French infantry is ordered to advance on a plain that is swept by a hurricane of bullets. For a second, the men hesitate. The captain then dashes ahead of all, calmly lights a cigarette and turning around and facing his company with the coldest blood, he asked the men: "Well, boys, are you coming?" All sprung forth as one man, facing death to obey an order that was perhaps strictly necessary to the common success.

Such is, Gentlemen, the almighty power of example. It teaches and stimulates; it makes one fulfill his duty at the time and in the way required.

Demonstration farms should be multiplied and their teaching largely spread. The present organization is especially remarkable by what it lacks. Of what use can be an excursion, a pilgrimage every five or ten years to the great farm of Ottawa? On the other hand, the agricultural lecturers go through the country without leaving any more results than the clouds the wind carries. The rudiments they try to impress upon the farmers may be excellent, but they are few and far between and they lack practical demonstrations. Their effects resemble those of catalogs, upon which the farmer glances very casually. In each country, in each parish, I should say, let there be a farm the lecturer could use for his demonstration, and to which he could point as a permanent example for the neighborhood. For a small sum paid by the authorities, these farms would spread a practical and fruitful teaching. Example will always be the most powerful lever of progress. Is it not through their contact with the Scotch agriculturists of the Eastern Townships that farmers of that district

have acquired cultivation methods evidently superior to ours?

In Europe, these demonstration farms are called "fermes-exemples", and their usefulness is incalculable. What amount of good work we could do in our Province by the wise spending of a million for that purpose! I would be satisfied of one or two demonstration farms for each drill hall built in Canada, because, then, things would be balanced, which should not exclude one another. (1).

Most assuredly the shades of Cartier would rest satisfied if my wish were accomplished, because the founder of our militia was also very interested in farming, and he strongly advised Canadians to devote their energies to it.

I have explained elsewhere (2) what a demonstration farm is. As operated in certain districts of France and Belgium, they proved a powerful medium of agricultural education. Demonstration farms are not very complicated and, consequently, easy to duplicate.

Representatives of the Department of Agriculture buy or rent, in a village, a farm meant to spread the knowledge of the cultivation which would be the most profitable to the district. It is known as a school-farm. The manager, or caretaker of the chosen property, is bound, by his contract, to keep for the people's use certain seeds, plants, fertilizers, samples, implements, etc.; to raise chickens, rabbits; to keep bee-hives and certain specified breeding stock. He is bound to receive once a year during a week's time or longer, the agricultural engineer or the Government lecturer, who comes and gives the farmers

(1) At the beginning of the fiscal year 1914-1915, an amount of \$2,550,000. was appropriated for the construction of drill halls, barracks, etc.

(2) Lecture before l'Union catholique de Montréal, February 18, 1912, on the "General Causes of the high cost of living and Remedies".

some practical lessons. As a rule, the theoretical part of the course is given in the forenoon.

The balance of the day is devoted to practical lessons, on the land where theoretical teaching is put into actual practice. In a district favorable to apple cultivation, the instance, the professor will teach all systems in use in such cultivation, from the sowing of the pip to the packing of the ripe fruit. Elsewhere, the cultivation of tobacco will be taught, or that of tomatoes, or of potatoes, or again, one will learn how to can meats, vegetables, fruit or how to manufacture fecula, etc., etc.

The first visit of the lecturer generally takes place during the spring, in the month of May. He often pays a second one, in August or September, to observe the results of his lessons, inspect the crop and prepare for next season.

Everybody, men, women, the aged and the young, attend these popular classes, so well organized in these countries.

One can easily imagine the fruitful results of such methods which, as a rule, do not require large expenditure. Of course, initial disbursement would be necessary to establish that system in Canada; but we need not undertake everything at a time. No district would be more favorable to an experiment than that of Montreal, for the reasons already given and principally on account of the importance of its market. With the amount required to establish an experimental farm of a type adapted to local conditions, it would be possible to organize fifteen demonstration farms, and with how much more practical results! The trial has been made: large model farms are of use only to the smaller number, to form professors, for instance. They are not within the reach of people, who will never draw out of them what they cost. Such is not the case with demonstration farms, which offer the same advantages as the former and, moreover, spread practical knowledge.

The co-operation of the federal, provincial, district and even parochial authorities could be put in requisition to realize without delay the most useful project which has ever been submitted in this country. Why wait?

If my memory serves me right, the Commission of Conservation adopted it, a year or two ago. Did the Commission forget it, or give it up, or experiment it outside of this Province? It may be. At any event, it is not easy to explain the indifference, not to say the reluctance, of those whose duty it is to promote agriculture.

Demonstration farms have, nevertheless, proved successful in countries far enough advanced to operate them.

Speaking of agricultural education, I have hardly time to mention schools of domestic science so favorably known for the good results they have given and will continue giving in the future; co-operative societies which offer opportunities for mutual education; farmers' orphanages, two institutions which are not sufficiently helped by our Governments. And, finally, I want to recall the proposition, so often but so vainly made, to move from the cities to the country the boarders of reformatory schools, and place them in the agricultural industry.

Before concluding my remarks on agricultural education, allow me, Gentlemen, to again proclaim its importance as a means to develop our main industry, the one that employs fifty per cent of our population. In it lies the great hope of a renovation capable of transforming a state of things all patriotic men have good reason to deplore. This enterprise requires a strong effort, prolonged for at least one generation. But Victory smiles only upon courageous men who go to work with all their might. It is a systematic campaign that is needed, a war against routine, prejudice, ignorance, incompetency

and all the other obstacles blocking our march abreast with other nations.

Let us not forget that we must begin by the beginning, that is to say, appeal to the child of our small country schools. There are two main reasons for doing so: Firstly, because he will probably have no occasion of going to another school; secondly, because, as we have seen above, he being destined, as a rule, to till the soil, it is the true interest of the community that he be kept in his normal sphere, while increasing as much as possible his personal welfare and efficiency.

Permanent households, composed of a strong and prolific race, such is the solid base to erect. All the rest will come in addition.

And let us remember this saying of an author well disposed towards French Canadians:

“Desertion of the land is a crime against the country, in about the same way as would be the rejection of the language and faith of the ancestors”.

LABORERS — EMPLOYMENT BUREAU

Next to education as a means to develop agricultural production stand the laborers, the power or instrument used for the execution of the brain's conception.

The scarcity of laborers is one of the greatest handicaps of Canadian agriculture. At certain seasons, the farmers experience such difficulties to find hands, that they actually lose courage. We have seen above how the farm hands have come to disappear, since the general use of agricultural implements and the widespread growing of hay have put an end to their usefulness. A job that gives work for only five or six weeks a year can evidently not be considered as a permanent one. Those who are still filling it are therefore forced to take some other occupation.

However, laborers are needed to establish intensive cultivation on our farms. That is why it is necessary to carry on propaganda in order to procure these men; that is why we are confronted with necessity of having an employment bureau for recruiting farm laborers in a methodical manner. There is hardly, nowadays, a branch of employment that has not got a recruiting bureau of its own.

When one observes the needs of agriculture in the district of Montreal and the neighborhood, one must admit that such a system should have been in full operation here a long time ago. But we have not such a system, and this lack is hard to explain. Let it be well understood that what we need is a propaganda, recruiting and agricultural employment bureau, of a nature to promote a permanent "back to the land" movement; a bureau that would be a centre of information and study and of efficient work.

It should, in the first place, look after the unemployed of this city, who were in the past farmers and who would very willingly go back to the farm, if they only had a chance to do so. They are most deserving of our sympathy, and our help should go out to them. (1)

Moreover, we may be sure that, as a consequence of war, great numbers of emigrants will come here, many of whom will be welcome and others, not. We must get ready to receive them by endeavouring to sort the wheat from the chaff. Too long, owing to an inconceivable inertia, we have been indifferent before good emigrants going by our door, taken away from us, while the bad ones are imposed upon us by a defective system that works against our best interests. The duration of the economic crisis and that of the war not being known, to find work for all these

(1) The Chamber of Commerce of Regina is planning to give back to agricultural industry a great number of farmers who have emigrated in the cities.

people outside the cities appears as a task that must be fulfilled immediately. The search for convenient positions could be facilitated by newspaper advertisement, and by direct correspondance with the agricultural societies, circles and co-operatives, etc., and, finally, by a number of visits of competent agents.

The publication of weekly or monthly bulletins would also have an excellent effect.

I must confess that such a service should have been established at the beginning of the crisis, a couple of years ago. We can see thus how backward we are, and what efforts we must make to catch up, because the evil has, if anything, increased.

I therefore suggest that the Federal authorities, through the Department of the Interior, or that of Labor, or that of agriculture, or thru the co-operation of all of them, be requested to establish immediately in Montreal a bureau of agricultural employment and promotion for the use of the numerous unemployed, former farmers, who could be sent back right away to the country where they could find various occupations. The French and the Belgians, who are already here, as well as those who will arrive in a near future, would follow. Thus it would be possible to establish an organization which could work efficiently by the end of this winter, when the cultivation of vegetables is started.

I have suggested the co-operation of the Department of Labor, because it is interested in securing work for farm laborers as well as for other classes of workmen, and because it is connected with the general labor organization. As for the Department of Agriculture, the opportunity of its intervention is quite evident. There should even be, in the proposed employment bureau, a department known as one of "agricultural propaganda", well supplied with

the literature which is now distributed by the Department of Agriculture, in Ottawa.

In all respects, the various Federal Departments should in no way resemble the air-tight compartments of a ship. In the present circumstances, they would greatly increase their efficiency by a reasonable co-operation.

But what is most urgent is the acknowledgment of the principle that Montreal should be granted an agricultural employment bureau capable of meeting the present needs, as of allowing us to take our share of profit, in future, in the large emigration, of which we have for such a long time only felt the ill consequences. The time has come for us to claim our just share of farm laborers, the lack of whom has largely contributed, in the past, to keep our Province in economic inferiority.

Let us not forget it: Thousands of farmers are ready to start intensive cultivation to-morrow, if only we supply them at a reasonable cost with the laborers they require.

THE LAYING OUT OF FARMS

Intensive cultivation would require some changes in the present size and shape of Canadian farms; they are all on the length and their area is larger than needed for such a farming.

One could very well, of course, affect a part of his farm exclusively to intensive cultivation and keep the balance as heretofore, transforming it gradually, as his children settle down.

But if we want to rapidly spread intensive cultivation, it is urgent to have ready for buyers or lessees a certain number of suitable farms. I have already mentioned the possibilities within the reach of companies or individuals owning building lots they could not get rid of for some

years to come. Companies or individuals could also draw profits in buying a few acres of land and dividing them in farms of 15, 20 or 25 acres, for intensive cultivation. It has been clearly proved that such farms would be sufficient for an average family to live, and even to thrive.

In the Canadian West, British Columbia included, the Canadian Pacific and other companies have done more, They have erected buildings and supplied the necessary rolling stock, with the land sold or leased. In certain cases, they have even lent money to the buyers, and this has proved to be an excellent investment. This way of proceeding shows a great business acumen; and I wonder why the same investment would not be successful in our Province. The busy bee, working in an up-to-date hive, produces more and quicker than the one kept in an old-fashioned wooden box, away from the bee-master's eye. So, with the man in search of a home.

On this subject, I am pleased to point out to the members of this Chamber an experiment recently made not far from Montreal, at St. Isidore de Laprairie. The lots of the "Compagnie des Jardins" were sold at a profit for the shareholders; and the experiment would have been conclusive from the start, had it not been for the departure of the farmers for the battlefields of Europe. But the Company does not doubt in the least of the final success of its commendable undertaking. Close to the village of Boucherville, a few miles from the markets of Montreal and Maisonneuve, another company will make the same experiment for the benefit of some ten market-gardeners, to whom interesting propositions are being made. It will be a new proof that the idea is forging its way ahead. Everybody should be glad to see the number of small proprietors increase, especially since they produce as much, and even more, than the large proprietors.

Semi-ready farms have the invaluable advantage of permitting the most up-to-date methods of farming to be applied. Doubtless, the above-referred-to initiative is worth encouragement and will find imitators. It could be duplicated in numerous places within a radius of one hundred miles of our metropolis.

Businessmen and patriots, please take notice. In all frankness, however, I should warn you, in so doing, to remember the ordinary rules of prudence. The obstacles to be most apprehended would be, on the one hand, an immoderate taste for speculation, and, on the other, unexperience in farming, which would be nough to imperil the final success.

Forewarned is forearmed!

INDUSTRIAL ORGANIZATION OF AGRICULTURE

In the industrial field, there is still more to do; and I would be very much surprised if the demand for food-stuffs created by the war did not cause the rapid growth of the canning business, of the manufacturing of clothes and of other industries more or less closely connected with agriculture.

Ahead of all others, in the Province of Quebec, stands the dairy industry, which is very prosperous, since all the first prizes, at the great exhibitions of Toronto and Ottawa, last September, were awarded to our butter factories. (1) Let us doff our hats to this fine industry and to its intelligent promoters and express at the same time the wish that the output be doubled and even tripled. With the land they possess and by growing weeded plants, our farmers could increase the number of their milk cows to such an extent as to obtain that result.

1) At the last Exhibition held in Toronto, la Société coopérative des Fromagers de la province de Québec was awarded 20 prizes out of 26.

There is another industry quite as profitable, that an unhappy experiment has unjustly discredited, the industry of the sugar-beet. There is no doubt, though, that it is as feasible in Canada as in Germany, where it is one of the main sources of wealth. In the case of a revival instead of promising a certain sum for the construction of factories, perhaps it would be better to grant a reasonable premium for each ton manufactured. Besides the production of a material of first necessity, the establishment of the beet industry would accelerate cattle raising, cattle being very fond of the residual pulp left after raw material has been treated.

The cultivation of flax and linen weaving, so dear to Canadians of begone days could give birth, nowadays, to a prosperous industry. Such cultivation, as well as that of the beet, improves the land and favors cattle rearing. The weaving industry would employ thousands of men and, with that of sugar, would operate in the country a veritable revolution.

The newspapers are announcing that a Belgian manufacturer desires to move his industry into Canada, if he finds encouragement. Let him come; I know, very close by this city, an ideal locality, whose citizens are anxious to efficiently co-operate with him by granting a large piece of ground, exempting him from taxes, and giving free electric power and other facilities.

Often enough the crop of certain vegetables and fruit, such as cauliflowers, onions, tomatoes, cucumbers, butter-beans, green peas, strawberries, plums, raspberries, etc., is too considerable to be entirely sold on the local market. This is where the canning and preserving industry comes in. It may be extended to pork, poultry and many other foodstuffs.

Every locality, even those having but a moderate pro-

duction, should have an establishment of this kind, to enable it to utilize all the resources of the soil in stimulating everyone's labor. After a considerable tomato crop was partly lost last fall, at Contrecoeur, enterprising citizens decided to build a canning factory, the usefulness of which makes no doubt, the soil of that place being suited to small farming.

Tobacco is another much-consumed article, and its production is by far inferior to the demand. Tobacco cultivation is very remunerative. I know certain districts, poor in former times, who enriched themselves by growing the fragrant weed. People there are not satisfied to see the plant grow, but they transform it on the spot. At St. Jacques de l'Achigan, St. L'n and other places, tobacco factories have been established and are in full operation the year round, and they yield good dividends to share-holders, while giving employment to a large number of hands.

In these districts, depopulation has ceased, and an opposite movement has started.

I could give a long list of the agricultural products that can be manufactured on the spot. Let us devote ourselves to these operations, that would, in a short time, enable our country to support itself, instead of always relying on others.

Farming industry and the various industries connected thereto offer the widest, the most varied and permanent field of activity in the world. While the fate of most manufactures is linked to the raw material they work up farming industries can draw out of the soil ever-renewed sources of life and wealth.

To put within reach of the farmer, in the country, the advantages he fain would come to the city to get, is not that the best way to keep him at home? It can be done by developing agricultural industries; this is how to fight against land desertion.

COMMERCIAL ORGANIZATION OF AGRICULTURE

The intimate relations between commerce and agriculture need not be demonstrated. They are cog-wheels in the same machine; so much so, that sometimes one who is engaged in farming works if he is not in trade, and *vice versa*. The farmer and the merchant must, then, work hand in hand, since they have a common object in view.

I am, indeed, greatly flattered by the extreme kindness with which the members of this Chamber welcome my humble effort. But I can see the danger there would be for me, were I to treat of my subject from a technical point of view. Therefore I shall refrain from that, being content with pointing out the main lines, especially those directly connected with agricultural production and of such a nature as to influence the high cost of living.

Among the most powerful mediums of exchange and distribution of merchantable products, are the transportation routes. The selling price of goods depends, to a large extent, on the facility with which they can be delivered. This has been experienced by the people of the West, who bitterly complain of the railroad tariffs. Here, at home, the evil is not quite similar; it lies rather in the want or in the lack of connecting roads leading to the city market and centre of export. Intensive cultivation is impracticable where there are no good roads. Without these, the farmer is bound at home, far from his market, and must fall a prey to middlemen of all kinds. His products will reach the consumer faded and far too dear. He may often lose his whole crop, owing to the absence of laborers and to inadequate communications.

This has, at last, been understood and strenuous efforts

are being made in the direction of a real improvement. But what a task lays before the people of the Province of Quebec! The cost of the Georgian Bay canal would hardly exceed the amount required to built up a complete system of highways, and this last project is but a trifle less important than the great national one, so valiantly championed by this Chamber. You can see that the co-operation of all men of good will is necessary; otherwise, the goal would never be reached.

It is to be hoped that, after roads have been properly classified, the Federal Government will do its share and that the Provincial Authorities will gradually increase the efficiency of their organization. Elsewhere, the labor of prisoners is profitably utilized; who knows if circumstances will not soon allow us to do so? It has also been suggested to give work to the foreign unemployed, especially if war keeps them here for a long time. The idea is excellent, and I would suggest its application to the rebuilding of the old "military road" that formerly connected St. Johns with Montreal.

In short, however formidable the effort required to restore our highways, we can no longer shirk our duty. Such was the conclusion of the late Honorable J. I. Tarte, after studying our transportation facilities. "To promote agriculture, said he, I would act more vigourously and more cheerfully than if it were for any other industry. We are backwards in that respect; so we must hasten and put all our might to the wheel.— There is nothing in this Province in which we can be more interested than farming; our most evident wealth is in the soil."

Poor markets, as well as bad roads, favor the intervention of middlemen who, by the profit or commission they make, increase the price of produce, consequently, the cost of living. It is therefore the duty of the citizens to

urge farmers to bring and sell their produce on markets of easy reach. This aspect of the farming trade is more important than is generally thought. Not only as citizens and electors, but as members of a Chamber of Commerce, are you, gentlemen, justified in taking interest in the improvement of city markets, because the question is a commercial one.

I would not want to hurt anyone's feelings, but it seems to me that Montreal's main market-hall, Bonsecours market is not what it ought to be. It should be enlarged or branches should be established, or both, without delay. It is hard to understand why we should continue to force the farmers to come and crowd themselves between the river and the City Hall, when three quarters of this space are already required for the needs of navigation.

We must admit, to our shame, that we are out-routining the farmers themselves! A word to the wise is sufficient!

Besides the ordinary civic markets, there are the counters for the distribution of many agricultural products to be delivered to large centres or exported. It would be expedient to study these with the object of establishing a certain number of them, if necessary. According to current opinion, they would certainly eliminate a few middlemen, and, consequently, reduce the cost of living.

There is, lastly, another system comprising both the display and sale of animal and other farm produce, raw or manufactured. Being quite similar to the fair, as it is generally held in Europe, it attracts great crowds of spectators and buyers; and important business is transacted there. For your information, allow me to offer, as an example, the spring exhibition of the county of Huntingdon. One cannot witness such an exhibition without being impressed with the fact that it stimulates cattle rearing,

the development of agricultural industries and the general progress of a district.

Quite different are the consequences of the unrestrained selling of live stock that is going on in Canada since the readjustment of the American tariff. People are forgetting the fable of the hen that laid golden eggs. During the fall of 1913, particularly in counties close to the border, the Montreal region not excepted, an exodus of a new kind could be observed. Oxen, cows, sheep, hogs and calves, to say nothing of poultry, butter and eggs, everything was going to the United States. The sight strongly reminded one of a liquidation, a general auction sale or a moving *en masse*. Railroad trains were packed with our spoils.

Fortunately, American customs have put a check, under the pretence of a contagious disease among our cattle, to our exporting propensities, so apt to reduce (?) the cost of living in our country. But the evil may crop up some day or other, according to the good will or the needs of Uncle Sam, who is suffering from the same evil.

In fact "Since 1907 (1) the number of oxen reared for the American market has fallen from fifty one million to thirty million yearly. The number of sheep has decreased from fifty threemillion to fifty one million. And all the while the population increased ten million."

One would be either ignorant or apathetic if one did not deplore this huge export — for the benefit of foreign consumers — of such an indispensable element of our home production. Cattle is part of the asset of a farmer; the farmer who disposes of his herd deprives himself of an instrument of success: he may some day follow his cattle and have to abandon the farm. To renew their

(1) Wrote Mr. B. Van Vorst, in "Le Gaulois," of Paris, in February 1914.

stock our farmers will have to start all over again, and it may take years to climb the hill.

It is not all. The soil, deprived of its main fertilizer, will suffer for a long time, because, as a rule, in this Province, very little use is made of chemical fertilizers. In short, the evil takes distressful proportions; it is time for us to think of stopping it. There are means to do so, and, if this Chamber is willing to go deeper into the study of this question, I will try to disclose them.

I would have liked to say a few words on the part played by the middlemen in the trade of farm produce and in the increase of the cost of living. But I am afraid I have already taken more time than was allotted to me. And, moreover, this side of the question is fairly well known to businessmen. Only let me say, after many others, that middlemen are a plague to trade. The typical story of a barrel of apples paid 75 cents to the producer, in Ontario, and sold for \$5.75 to the consumer in Manitoba, is familiar to all. It is evident that, from the moment the farmer receives a fair pay for his labor, he produces more, while the consumer pays less for produce, thanks to the surplus of production. We should, therefore, fight middlemen, whose business deserves no sympathy whatever, but is a danger to honest trade, especially in the country.

It is indisputable that direct delivery of goods from the producer in the country to the city consumer will always be the most efficient and the cheapest way.

In the same respect, our foreign trade, that with France, for instance, will work only when our Canadian agents will themselves go abroad and offer directly to the French buyer our expert goods. The system of entrusting others with this work is simply pitiful. And it has lasted too long.

Once again, a word to the wise is sufficient.

*ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL ORGANIZATION
OF AGRICULTURE*

This study would complete the remarks made so far. However, Gentlemen, be reassured; I will not undertake the task for two reasons: firstly, it would require too much time; and, secondly, I feel that I am not properly qualified to do so. Given its great importance, I hope, nevertheless, that others will, in due time.

To be candid, I refrain for still for another motive. I would fear to hurt the feelings of persons I very much respect and who may not share my opinion on the subject. As the time is not for discussion and misunderstanding, but rather for harmony between all classes of society with the common welfare in view, I believe it is better for me not to go beyond general considerations.

As we have already seen, farming, industry and trade are closely connected, as are also the means to promote them. Everything is linked in the huge machinery of national activity. A part of the population tills the soil and stimulates its fertility by proper labor. Farms and industrial products are then exchanged in order to satisfy the respective needs of persons, places, districts, provinces, counties. This last operation is called trade. Thus, to promote farming and industry is to create and multiply commercial transactions. Produce increases the country's wealth. The accumulation of wealth goes back to agriculture and industry, that are gradually developed. That is how the interests of all classes of the community are intimately connected and require mutual understanding and support.

There is one point, however, I wish to briefly submit to the consideration of this Chamber. It is the possibility of finding, in the rural population, the financial elements

necessary to carry out the program disclosed in the course of this lecture.

Contrarily to the opinion of many, money is plentiful in the country, witness the two or three hundred bank branches that are draining it. The fault lies in the way it is invested: that money is not used for the development and improvement of agriculture and other local conditions.

I have never investigated what use financial institutions make of the funds they have raised in the rural districts, but I have reasons to believe that these funds are not used to support the metropolis trade, if I may judge by the complaints made. Would it not then be better to use these funds for increasing the yielding capacity of our farm land, which would assuredly promote, efficiently though indirectly, trade and industry?

Were the available funds still short of requirements, the various financial mediums to be established in this Province could be completed by an institution of agricultural credit, like those to be found in France and Belgium, where they have proved so useful. A financial agent of Montreal, just starting in business but who is perfectly worthy of confidence, was to put this system into practice, with the co-operation of some European capitalists, but the War cut him short. He is not discouraged, however, and he claims he will succeed equally well through a couple of Canadian banks with which I think he has come to a satisfactory arrangement.

The old habit of having recourse to foreign financial markets to finance our public and private enterprises will receive, through war, a serious blow, which will, to a certain extent, be beneficial to us, for it will force us to be self reliant. For months to come, maybe for years, the relation between the offer of capital and the demands for it will be deeply modified; and the European market,

forced to face the enormous necessities created by the war, will not be of easy reach to Canadian borrowers. When I affirm that such a situation will be profitable to us, my claim is founded on the declaration of a reliable economic review, that foresaw a reaction in Canada more than a year before the present war.

"All economic and financial exaggeration must be paid for some day, said the writer. "And it cannot be denied that abuses have been perpetrated in Canada.

It has been calculated that in less than 7 years, from 1907 to 1913, the London market has lent to the Dominion more than one billion 200 million dollars, 300 million of which during the last year only. The United States have supplied for their part, since 1907, about 500 million dollars. According to Sir George Paish, Canada's debt towards foreign countries amounts to 5 billion 600 million dollars and requires 160 million dollars of yearly interest".

Adding to this the balance of trade, that is against us fort 187 millions, we find a statement that could perhaps be amended. (1)

"The development and future of Canada could not be doubted for all that, continued the review, and these figures need not create a panic, for the value of real estate and the output of the country have also increased in great proportion".

The review concludes that "Canada has, at the present time, entered a period of liquidation following a too eager campaign of speculation and an abnormally rapid growth".

(1) The balance of trade against us has been of

\$170,000,000	in 1911
225,000,000	in 1912
300,000,000	in 1913
180,000,000	in 1914

and it is being paid for by borrowed capital, at the rate of one million a day!

Everything considered, prudence warns us not to rely too much on foreign sources for the execution of our public works, highways, buildings, churches, schools, etc. In a certain respect, we have no reason to fear this situation or to regret it. In the past, we have lost considerable advantages and paid useless commissions by placing our bonds, debentures and other stocks on far-away markets, while all the capital required was lying at our door.

In fact, loans made to municipalities, vestry-boards, school commissions and other public bodies duly authorized to negotiate them, are of the very first class. A wider experiment, which I readily recommend would certainly establish the comforting fact that our available funds are almost sufficient to meet most of our ordinary needs.

In this way, our economic situation would gradually resemble that of older countries, who borrow money at home and have no obligation to foreigners.

Besides, this practice is apt to develop among the people earnest public spirit, progressiveness and thrift, so necessary to the accomplishment of national enterprises. It would also change certain pernicious ideas, that are too often an obstacle to the advancement of rural classes, and with which the other classes are more or less tainted. Our people, as a rule, have not enough confidence in one another; they are sometimes jealous to the point of discouraging the initiatives of others. That is why they are generally incapable of a concerted move with a useful object in view. It is only fair to add that there are a large number of honorable exceptions.

The example of peace and harmony given us recently at the convention of the Manufacturers of the Dominion and of the farmers of the West is a lesson of great significance. In the light of the dreadful events that are taking place abroad and that may have such far-reaching consequences

on the economic situation of this continent, they have recognized that class selfishness cannot be an ideal, because it rests solely on exaggerated ambition and is not apt to yield any good for the community. In perfect harmony, they have forgotten their old grievances and proclaimed that the tilling of the soil is the very foundation of national prosperity, and resolved to oppose a united front to the perils of the hour. It is to be hoped that such a miracle will be repeated everywhere.

With these remarks, that are only a glance upon the general aspect of the question, I will conclude what I had to say on the financial organization of agriculture. I am confident that they will suffice to impart a clear notion of the fertile part such an organization would play in the development of our natural resources.

CONCLUSION

The development of agricultural production has always been, in this country an important question to sound minds, representing, as it does, the most important form of our factor of national activity. Since the beginning of the present economic crisis, which — it should be carefully noted — has preceded the war and will outlast it, the importance of such development has doubled. And now that nations are engaged in a death struggle, in which the exhaustion of their economic resources will probably play a decisive part, the question occupies the foreground and becomes an absolutely vital issue.

Our duty appears very clearly, whether from the point of view of patriotism or that of interest. Twenty million men, most of whom came from rural districts, have been mobilised in Europe. Even in neutral countries, a great number have left their farms to join the army. There is good grounds to believe that they will not be back in time for the next sowing, whence an enormous shortage in future crops. Agricultural production will be disorganized for a long time to come perhaps; and immense needs will have to be met in foodstuffs of all description, animal and vegetable. As an agricultural paper rightly observes, "Now is the time for our farmers to develop their resources, to improve their methods with an eye to greater yields; to increase their live stock, etc. Let everybody sit up and get busy!" This is the right watch-word, not only for the farmer, but for everybody else.

Need I add to this, Gentlemen, the patriotic note by alluding to the special interests of the French Canadians in Confederation? The hour is well chosen for inventories and introspection; and we could usefully devote to this

task a part of the leisure moments we have been granted by the present crisis.

I have no reproach to address to anybody; but don't you think that those who should be most concerned, you and I, are altogether too indifferent to the fact that our province is under-populated, and is still, as compared with other regions of the earth, a vast solitude? (1)

I have heard, at my village school, that the pioneers of this country, such as Louis Hébert and his comrades, started their work of civilization as early as the beginning of the 17th century. Should they come back, after three hundred years, would they not be chagrined on finding that we, their successors, who have not been compelled to fight the bloodthirsty Iroquois¹ or to meet the almost insuperable difficulties of founding a new country, have not as yet completed more than 1/10 of the task they had set up for themselves?

But for a few exceptions, populating our immense domains is considered a task of second or third importance, whilst it is, in fact, primordial. One third of our population live in the City of Montreal, for which the latter deserves no congratulations, at least for the time being. During the last decade the urban population of Canada increased by 62 per cent, while that of the country gained a paltry 17 per cent. To-day, the rural class is very little over 50 per cent of the total population, when in the past it constituted the seven eights of it. Our "habitants" are simply vanishing.

Such is the position of our agriculture the public men, in their husting speeches, describe as the keystone of our national edifice.

(1) In our Province, there are not 6 inhabitants per square mile, but exactly 5.69. Belgium had 381 inhabitants per square mile.

On the other hand, our share of the federal debt, our provincial and municipal obligations and all our other taxes amount to quite a sum for a new country. We rest, for the future, on the wealth of our resources, of which various prospectus assert that they are inexhaustible. But what is the use if we do not work them?

How often have I heard Europeans say that people in this country do not till the soil, but merely scratch it a little, relying, for the rest, upon the natural fertility of the land and upon Providence ! (1)

It is true, Gentlemen, that pessimism begets no good. But it is time to consider our present position and see if we Canadians are not sowing the tempest, only to reap the whirlwind ?

It would seem that, in our disdain for good old mother Earth, we have waded chin-dip into very troubled and dangerous waters !

In the face of such a serious problem, I am confident that the *Chambre de Commerce du district de Montréal* "will do something". I hope it will proceed with the aggressiveness it has shown from the very beginning of this economic and financial crisis, in order to defend and promote the interests of Canadians and those of all their Allies, for whom we all have the warmest sympathy and the deepest admiration.

(1) We use, as an average, 3 pounds of chemical fertilizer per acre, to be exact, 2.68 pounds! Which shows what kind of farming we are doing on our sparsely populated lands.

Facts and Figures

In 1913, according to the Dominion Government's statistics, Canada has imported the following foodstuffs, agricultural and other farming industry produce:

Articles	Quantities	Values
Biscuits	lb. 2,433,405	\$ 276,566.
Beans	bush. 400,848	777,375.
Peas	" 166,894	360,583.
Indian corn for distillation purposes	" 975,250	686,540.
Indian corn	" 8,901,946	5,525,982.
Indian or corn meal	bbl. 55,754	176,804.
Oats	bush. 207,281	83,316.
Oatmeal	lb. 95,274	3,347.
Wheat	bush. 616,395	549,617.
Wheat flour	bbl. 59,081	267,917.
Other grains	bush. 127,801	86,678.
Cereal foods		353,211.
Other grain products		221,777.
Macaroni and vermicelli	8,035,873	392,890.
Vegetables		3,242,214.
Apples	bbl. 320,325	837,134.
Apples, dried	lb. 339,758	16,520.
Cider	gal. 4,762	2,705.
Cherries	lb. 971,619	103,038.
Plums	bush. 151,650	267,580.
Prunes	lb. 8,942,599	466,668.
Other fruit		389,356.
Other dried fruits	lb. 5,527,385	365,815.
Fruits, preserved		787,826.
Jellies, jams, preserves	lb. 8,826,833	805,242.
Hemp, dressed and undressed	cwt. 64,990	381,797.
Fibre, vegetable	" 8,811	73,963.
Florists' stock		293,416.
Plants and trees		236,703.
Seeds, garden, field, etc.		1,343,364.
Seeds, all other		279,454.
Other agricultural produce.. . . .		2,379,003.
Hay	ton. 36,472	485,564.
Straw	" 1,151	10,026.
Fertilizers		540,644.
Pickles	gal. 707,214	456,546.
Sauces, catsups and soy	" 389,956	339,862.
Oils, vegetable	" 4,664,593	2,382,265.
Oils, vegetable	lb. 1,200,404	107,108.
Sugar, maple, and maple syrup	lb. 24,634	2,719.
Tobacco, unmanufactured	" 22,153,588	5,719,755.
Tobacco, cigars, cigarettes.. . . .		1,563,617.
Cattle	8,661	242,956.
Hogs		2,879.

Articles	Quantities	Value
Sheep	229,771	627,677.
Horses	19,924	2,569,826.
Other animals		170,969.
Bacon and hams lb.	13,554,394	1,946,278.
Beef, salted "	1,018,857	69,057.
Mutton and lamb, fresh "	5,649,118	543,779.
Pork lb.	10,204,676	1,026,277.
Other meats "	4,778,216	630,301.
Canned meats and canned poultry and game lb.	2,228,484	393,174.
Extracts of meats, fluid beef, etc.		327,173.
Milk, condensed lb.	261,555	21,171.
Butter "	7,989,269	2,081,989.
Cheese "	1,495,758	302,153.
Fowls "	27,118	45,026.
Poultry and game		402,634.
Eggs doz.	18,240,111	2,783,665.
Feathers		190,389.
Honey lb.	652,817	66,871.
Wax, bees' "	116,173	36,255.
Bones, crude and bone dust, etc. cwt.	99,271	150,009.
Bristles lb.	252,418	223,263.
Hair, horse "	1,104,167	282,927.
Grease "	16,118,878	1,007,404.
Lard and lard compound, etc. lb.	13,835,493	1,520,450.
Hides and skin, raw "	64,856,440	13,305,471.
Oils, animal gal.	117,653	64,840.
Sausage casings		162,474.
Wool lb.	9,209,170	2,063,026.
Wool and mfs of		30,557,107.
Candles lb.	820,751	98,705.
Soap		1,332,927.
Animal and their produce, other articles		290,080.

