

farmers of the Dominion than has ever been rendered by any previous Minister of Agriculture. We have heard, it is true, within the last three or four months, that certain gentlemen on the other side of the line, who are gifted with wonderful inventive genius, have invented a separating box which has been introduced into Canada, and which they guarantee will separate the sheep from the goats when an election is on, provided, however, that the person to whose lot it may fall to operate the machine does so as intended by the inventor. But although that machine was introduced into the province of Ontario at the last general elections, it evidently was one of those machines which did not meet with the approval of the farmers, judging from the tremendous vote they gave against the late provincial government.

I feel that legislation is against the agricultural interest of this country, is legislation in the wrong direction. Why, our agricultural interest is the greatest interest we have, it is the foundation of our prosperity; and legislation that bears against that interest is an injury to our country. We are proud of the millions of acres of fertile land belonging to the Dominion of Canada where millions of settlers may make their homes. As each settler tills his farm, the soil yields its return to his labour. His children grow up about him, and as they grow their little hands do what they can to help their parents. And as they grow to manhood and womanhood they branch out and more settlers' homes are established. And the wealth that is produced, being greater than the people can consume, it is exported, and brings back to the Dominion gold for our exchequer. And, better than gold, better than diamonds and rubies, it brings to our shores the man of intellect and energy and ambition to settle upon our lands and till them, to build up our country until it becomes the strong right arm of the British empire. Now, Mr. Speaker, through you I desire to appeal to every honourable gentleman in this House, who, like myself, is a practical farmer and desires that the produce of his lands shall not be lowered in value on the one hand or overcharged for on the other—through you, I appeal to these hon. gentlemen not to support the third reading of this Bill, through you I appeal also to the professional gentlemen in this House—and there are a fine lot of them here. No men are more anxious than they that our farmers shall prosper, knowing, as they do, that, if the farmers prosper, they have a better opportunity to obtain all that is right and honest from that portion of the agricultural community to whom they may be called upon to give their professional services. Once more, through you, I appeal to the business men in this House. We know that none are more anxious than the business men of the country that our farmers should

prosper. They know that when the farmers prosper the whole country prospers, that bills are more easily collected, that, in fact, the prosperity of the farmer seems to oil the machinery of business so that it moves on smoothly and effectively, as we all desire that it should. This Bill has been discussed at considerable length, yet, what I would like to see is the Minister of Agriculture, of his own accord, lay the Bill over until next session. We are told that in the multitude of counsellors there is wisdom. And I am sure the wisdom would be pouring in from hundreds of thousands of farmers all over the Dominion, between now and next session; and, undoubtedly a better Bill would result.

Here is what I would suggest to the hon. minister: Instead of going on with this Bill let the government offer a prize of \$1,000 or \$2,000 to any person who will invent a fanning mill that will entirely eliminate the noxious weed-seeds from the good seeds and that can be sold at from \$30 to \$50. Such a machine would be within the reach of every farmer, and its use would overcome the difficulty that is sought to be met by this Bill. Every farmer would clean his own seed at home, and no noxious weed-seed would be taken to the market at all. There would be no difficulty for the farmers, no difficulty for the merchant, no difficulty for the Minister of Agriculture;—everything would be right and prosperous without the need of such legislation as is here proposed. In closing my remarks, Mr. Speaker, I thank you and the attention they have given me during this my first speech in the House of Commons.

Mr. SPROULE. I wish to congratulate the farmers of Middlesex and of the country upon the able representative whom they have sent here to speak on their behalf. After the appeal he has made to the Minister of Agriculture, it is hardly to be supposed that that hon. gentleman will persist in forcing this Bill to a third reading at the present time. But I rose more particularly to refer to another question in connection with the Bill. While I support the motion of the hon. member for Brantford (Mr. Cockshutt) that this Bill shall be sent to a special committee, where evidence from all sources may be taken in regard to the important questions involved, the committee to which above all others, this Bill should be sent is clearly, in my opinion, the Agricultural Committee. Years ago we had an inquiry in this House which lasted for several weeks. Its object was to help in deciding whether it would be beneficial and in the interest of that important class, the farmers of the country, that we should have an Agricultural Committee, and that all questions affecting the interests of the farmers coming before this House, and all measures and proposals for the benefit of