

# FARMERS' PLIGHT

## Must Science be Halted?

### "LIKE ANOTHER WAR"

("News" Special Representative)

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"APPARENTLY science must be halted in order to terminate the agricultural depression which has upset agriculture's apple cart throughout the world, and is like another war," said Gen. J. Smuts, of South Africa, speaking at the conference of the British Association for the Advancement of Science.

ALTHOUGH South Africa was less affected than Australia, Canada, and New Zealand, it was for the farmer as if another war had ravaged the world, he said. He feared vast social upheavals unless a way out was found, because the situation was unbearable.

There was almost economic enslavement in mankind's primary industry, and the progress of science in the development of the Empire had falsified the prophecies of Sir William Crookes regarding agriculture, must co-ordinate results to keep the system in step," he said. "Farmers are bad business men. Production absorbs their energies and prevents them marketing their products. Farming might be organised in order that its products could reach the consumer without paying too much tribute to a host of middlemen."

Activities of the Empire Marketing Board had been most helpful to Imperial relations, said Gen. Smuts. Until the board appeared there was not a nucleus of an essential staff organisation. The board should be allowed to function fully as one of the strongest Imperial links. It could ration markets between various parts of the Empire.

The Empire was favorably situated for organised exchange, and preference would meet many of its economic difficulties. Gen. Smuts hoped that the marketing board would investigate questions which preference could not meet, especially marketing by contract.

Sir Daniel Hall recalled that 1,400 of the 3,600 Australian farmers who supplied statistics to the marketing board did not achieve half the average production. Farming was hampered by human lag and inherited social conditions. Science controlled nature and should control human nature, he said.