Agricultural Com. Report

(Continued from page 7)

nipeg, Toronto and Montreal, or if necessary, at Halifax, and kept in the same condition on railway trains or on shipboard, as if in British butcher shops, and retailed over the counter in as good condition as the home killed supply.

Now I do not mean "frozen" beef or "chilled" beef as received from Australia, New Zealand and the Argentine, which is all classed as an inferior grade and brings a much lower price, but I mean "fresh" beef, that should bring the very highest price and benefit our producers to the extent of at least one-half of the 6 cents difference existing at present.

We made a number of communications to the Dominion Department of Agriculture at Ottawa in reference to the subject and endeavored to impress on the Minister the need of fostering this trade, but he does not look on the proposition favorably, as will be shown by one of his letters, of which I shall read an extract as follows:

"My own department killed some fifty of their own as fat cattle at Montreal and shipped them over in a chilled condition, the results from which may be found in a bulletin then issued to the public, and one of which I enclose herewith for your information. After giving the details of the experiment, the more important features of which may be found on pages 9 and 12, permit me to draw your attention more particularly to the last sentence of the summary: 'Even had these agencies not been at work, the expense of shipping chilled beef coupled with the low returns for it as compared with the return for the live animals, makes the profitable shipment of chilled beef practically impossible.' The loss on this cargo of chilled beef amounted to almost fifty dollars per steer, as compared with the prices secured for similar animals when sold as stockers on the same British market."

The minister however, admits further down in his same letter that this "loss was due in some measure owing to its being only a single experimental shipment with obvious incidental disadvantages."

I can go even further than this and say I have it on the best authority of another Canadian shipper who was present at the Smithfield market when this Government beef was sold, and that it brought 1½ cents per pound less than other Canadian beef sold the same day. I am not trying to cast any reflections on the Dominion Department or to criticize its method of handling this shipment of beef, but am simply stating the facts in regard to it.

Packing Houses Persevere

In spite of this report and the loss entailed by it, some of our packing houses continue to kill and ship beef, and the trade is growing from year to year, as the report of the department shows that in 1924 the shipments were 63,656 hundredweight, and in 1925 had increased to 104,224 hundredweight, being nearly 100 per cent increase, and the values had also increased in like proportion.

But what I desire most seriously is that an active propaganda be carried on both by shippers and Government until our beef is received and classed and priced at the same level as the home-killed article on the British market.

And this need not in any manner interfere with the shipment of live cattle, as there is room for unlimited expansion of both, and it may be found profitable to slaughter here the very best of our finished cattle that will make prime beef and send overseas those which are more suited for finishing by the Scotch and English farmer.

J. S. McLean's Experience

Mr. J. S. McLean, of the Harris Abattoir Company, who gave a great deal of very valuable information on the cattle question to this Committee, is very definitely of the opinion, nothwithstanding the position of the Ottawa Department of Agriculture, that trade in fresh-killed prime beef can be commercially developed side by side with the live cattle trade, and that this trade should be encouraged also. He makes the following observations briefly quoted from his statement:

"As a matter of fact, Canada has the natural endowment and the position to be the chief external source of beef to Great Britain, and Canada's beef should be considered in the class of home killed and not what the British butchers call imported beef."

In regard to the Imperial Economic Committee, he says: "I must confess that personally I did not know that such a committee had been appointed, or was taking evidence, and you will note that the report of the Economic Committee is willing to consider beef killed in Ireland or on the continent in the class of fresh killed beef. But no mention is made of Canada in this connection. And as a matter of fact, when chilled beef is shipped from Canada, the British buyers insist on classing it as imported beef. Canadian chilled beef should properly be looked upon by the Englishman as in the same class with home killed beef, for that is really what it is."

And again he says: "It is a great misfortune that advantage was not taken of this Dominion's Economic Committee to set forth the possibilities of Canada as a producer of meat for Great Britain."

Marketing the National Problem

Marketing holds the centre of the stage in the farmer's problem. Practically all the attention of the Committee for the past year has been given to it. The most definite conclusions that could be arrived at are included in the present report. These recommendations, serviceable in themselves, and as far as they go, all lead up to the national plan of marketing suggested last year.

All countries of the modern world which provide a surplus of foodstuffs are adopting national plans of marketing. Canada is somewhat behind, but the way is clearly enough indicated in the present report for a system of distribution of perishable products that will eliminate waste and realize economy These things mean better returns and higher prices to the farmer.

While I have said we are behind some other countries in co-operative marketing, we must admit there has been progress, and already marked benefit has accrued from such organizations as the Western Wheat Pool, the Grain Growers handling of cattle at Winnipeg, which we had an opportunity of observing during our recent visit to the stockyards in that city, the honey marketing by Mr. Halstead, the Wool Growers' Association, the U. F. O. Co-operative handling of cattle and butter, the egg circles, etc.

But we must remember the best and in fact the only reliable market for our food products is Great Britain, and there we have the most discriminating and conservative consumers in the world. Above everything else we must cultivate their taste, and we can only hope to obtain and retain a hold on that market by the most stringent regulations in respect to grading and the supply of regular and constant stream of our products to their markets. All the provinces with which we have been in consultation, either personally or by correspondence, are enthusiastically in favor of some Dominion-wide scheme, and have united in agreeing to press the matter on the attention of the Government at Ottawa, but if it fails to take definite action, then it will be up to the provincial authorities to step into the breach and take independent action.

A Registered Canadian National Brand

I desire to stress a good deal more than for obvious reasons the Committe Report does, the great importance to Canada of adopting a registered national brand for first grade agricultural produce. I would call attention to the fact that the Dairy Control Board of New Zealand has ordered that beginning this month, all the first grade produce of that country must be packed under a registered national brand and that the brand will be extensively advertised in England. Attention may well be directed to the further fact that the Merchandise Marks Bill, now before the British Parliament, applies to foodstuffs and proposes they shall bear indication of origin at the time of importation. A standing committee to be known as the Agricultural Produce Committee is provided by the Bill which not only encourages the principle, but indicates both advantage and necessity of advertising a national brand. I may be allowed to give credit to Mrs. J. S. Amos, who was first impressing this matter intelligently and energetically upon the attention of the Committee more than a year ago. We have looked into the principle from every angle, and I hope the idea I am expressing will strengthen the representations made to Ottawa on the subject.

Big British Importer Interested

Colonel H. Lyle, representative of the firms of William Simpson Company Limited, Liverpool, and of Keevil and Keevil, Smithfield, London, who has studied the report of this Agricultural Enquiry Committee, writes me an important letter which I shall read to the House:

Toronto, Ont., March 22, 1926.

Dr. David Jamieson,
Chairmann, Agricultural Committee,
Parliament Buildings,
Toronto, 5.

Dear Sir:

In reference to our conversation of this morning, re the marketing of our Canadian Products abroad, I am, as you requested, giving you a general outline of the principles I would suggest. This I am doing after five years of a close study of the situation abroad on the different markets.

I am, as you know, connected with two of the largest importers of produce, including live stock, meats, butter, cheese, bacon, hams, poultry, eggs, canned goods, etc., in the British Isles. Our ramifications will cover the British Isles and Europe, also Australia and New Zealand.

Firstly I would like to say that the Canadian produce does not command the prices on the foreign markets that it is entitled to. The reason for this is that there is no Canadian uniform standardization of the commodities sent abroad, and secondly no continuity of supply. The continuity of supply is most essential.

For instance, if we create a market for say a certain commodity, and it is fairly well established, and then all of a sudden the supply ceases, it means we have to switch our customers on to another country's supplies who put up a similar commodity, and it is always harder to get them back.

Now for instance, Denmark controls 52 per cent of all produce shipped into the British Isles and commands at least fifteen per cent more for their goods. Why? Because they standardize, and secondly send over a continual supply. Holland comes a good second for the same reasons, and again you must realize that the United Kingdom is our logical market, it being so geographically situated as to be the distributing centre for all Europe. To give you some idea of the volume in some commodities, I may just say that England in eggs alone last year imported twenty-one million pounds sterling of eggs.

My suggestions as to marketing and standardization are as follows:

Establish a clearing house organized with private capital and supervised by government officials as to standardization of quality. All goods must go through this channel for export and carry the government stamp before it can be shipped. If such a system can be organized, I believe that all Canadian standardized commodities will increase in price the first twelve months at least ten per cent.

The time is now ripe and will brook no delay, if we want to get into the market firmly. Put up the quality, and you will get the price (Quality counts).

Again, English buyers would buy more freely from this market if we had standardization, but as it is they will only accept on consignment because they are not sure of the quality until it arrives.

I firmly believe if Ontario starts this system, all the other provinces would follow, and what a wonderful thing it would be for Canada as a whole!

Any assistance or information I can give will be gladly furnished. I am,

Yours sincerely,
H. LYLE.

Mr. J. S. McKinnon, who was director of Industrial Exhibits at the British Empire Exhibition of 1924-5 and who has been interested by the recommendations of this committee has also written me a constructive letter going into some details of the marketing problem in England and pressing the importance so far as Canada is concerned of proper selection and grading, branding and continuous supply.

A Call to Action

The time for action is opportune, as the mother country has already demonstrated its sympathy with any method whereby the products of the overseas British Dominions may have the first chance, and whereby the foodstuffs of Canada, Australia and New Zealand may, as far as possible, displace the products of foreign countries in the British market. The Imperial Government has shown its desire in a most tangible manner by appropriating a grant of one million pounds per year for the purpose of fostering and extending this trade.

We have had considerable correspondence with the Imperial Economic Committee for the purpose of ascertaining how this money is to be expended and to find just in what way we could take advantage of it in order to secure as much benefit as possible for our own province. Several meetings have been held in England, but not sufficiently advertised to enable all interests to be properly represented. This is such a big and important question that, even at the cost of considerable amount of money, a number of our biggest and brainiest men should be sent over to attend some of the meetings and try to avail ourselves of the opportunity and the invitation extended to us by the mother country.

Action along this line is more urgently necessary in view of the fact that within a few years we may look for other competitors in the market, and I would just name the great Soviet Republic of Russia, having a soil and climate very similar to our own, and capable of producing similar foodstuffs, but which has been held back by the unsettled condition of the Government. But this condition will not last permanently, and when their Government becomes stabilized and the farmers then get down to work, we may look for an enormous surplus to be exported and thrown on the world market in competition with the very products which from which our own Canadian farmers are dependent for a living.

Mutual Empire Advantage

I, therefore, wish to emphasize in the strongest possible manner the need for bending all our energies to the cultivation of the British Market, and to lose no time in doing every possible thing to co-operate with this Imperial Economic Committee in its most laudable desire to confine itself to the purchase of all foodstuffs within the Empire. This should also furnish another very good reason, although perhaps a mercenary one, why we should continue to form a part and assume a share of the responsibilities as well as the advantages of the old British Empire.

The Committee Endorsed

Very little criticism has been as yet offered concerning the work of the Committee, in fact we have had the most favorable comments from all parts of the province and from all classes of people. Perhaps it yet remaips for adverse opinions to be given either in this House or out of it, and I wish to assure you we shall welcome any fair criticism, and I hope consideration of our Report will be carried on sufficiently long to enable us to show we have fairly done the work set out for us, and that will justify the Government in having adopted the policy of appointing such Committee.

Very favorable opinions have been expressed in many quarters regarding the work which we have accomplished, and endorsation of recommendations as set forth in our report. I shall just take time to quote from two or three of them:

Hon. John S. Martin, Minister of Agriculture, said:

"So far as Ontario and the Department of Agriculture of this Province are concerned, I may say that we are anxious to work in any way that is possible, with other provinces, and we shall do all that we can do to such an end."

J. J. Morrison: "This Committee has taken the initiative. Who else than such a committee as this could take the initiative? In my opinion the committee has got the project to a phase that it never attained before, and could not reach without the efforts this committee put behind it. . . . . I cannot see organized agriculture indifferent to this movement."

W. A. Amos: "I cannot help but perceive that this committee has been proceeding along the only possible line available to include the various provinces. This committee did the very best with the resources we have—took account of the good will and common interest of the provinces in the movement, and proposed a basis of co-operation among them."

Editorials in The Globe and other papers of all shades of political opinion are to the same effect; but, Mr. Speaker, I shall not delay the other speakers on this important subject.

One thing to which the Committee gave a considerable amount of attention and which should be considered of the utmost importance, and where we believe we have had a fair amount of success, is in the endeavor to bring about a better feeling between the different interests and classes of our people. At all our meetings throughout the province, we invited not only farmers but business men, manufacturers and others and endeavored, successfully, I believe, to get them to realize that all our interests are so interlocked that what is bad for one class works in injury to the whole community, and that it is only by working together and looking at problems from the other fellow's viewpoint that we can build up a prosperous country.

A Better All-Round Understanding

In addition to our regular meetings at country points, we called a number of what might be termed Round Table Conferences, to which representatives of farming, manufacturing, transportation, banking and marketing were invited. A hearty response was given to these meetings, and sitting around with all our feet under the table, I am sure a better understanding was arrived at, and a most earnest desire was manifested to do anything in reason to help one another with their various problems.

It is unfortunate that for some reason there has been during recent years a feeling of suspicion existing between rural and urban communities, but I am glad to say this feeling is dying out to a great extent, and we are coming to realize we are all in the same boat, and must sink or swim together.

The old idea that anyone can build himself up by pulling another down is a most serious mistake, but whether it is caused by a propaganda by selfish agitators or by the innate natural "cussedness" of human nature, there is no doubt it still exists to some extent. I might illustrate this by telling a story of a small merchant in a small town who had a competitor in the same line of business of whom he was extremely jealous. During his sleep an angel appeared to him and said that any wish he had a mind to name would be gratified no matter what it was for, and no limit would be placed on the amount he could have, but he was told that anything he received should be doubled to his competitor. He considered the matter, but at the moment could not come to a conclusion, as it grieved him so much to know the other fellow would get double what he asked for, but he requested to think it over. When the angel came back, he said he had decided he would ask that he should be "half dead."

Now this about represents the attitude of mind of some people, who regret to see other people being successful. We fully recognize agriculture as being the basic industry of Ontario and believe that every encouragement and assistance should be given so that those engaged in it should be enabled to maintain the highest standard of living and enjoy such a measure of prosperity as will make them the best customers for all other classes of our population and render country live so attractive and profitable as to induce the young people to remain on the farm.

Hon. Charles McCrae adjourned the debate which continued through the following day when at six o'clock the motion was put to the House and carried unanimously.

PRETENDER TO FRENCH THRONE DIES

Duc D'Orleans, grandson of King Louis Philippe of France, and pretender to the French throne, died suddenly at his villa in Sicily.

Too Much for Him

The new country constable was being initiated into the mysteries of his duties by the resident sergeant, who warned him to keep a particularly sharp look-out for intoxicated motorists.

"And how will I know they're drunk, sir?"

"If you have any doubt, ask the suspect to repeat after you, 'Surely Susan should suit shy Sam'."

Later in the day a motor car pulled up outside the police station and unloaded the new constable with a handkerchief tied around his head. He had dislocated his jaw.

"They'll wear you well, my boy---
because they're made of heavier cloth securely tacked, hip pockets lined and that means less mending for me."

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Watch our tables for some of the choice Bargains we are continually offering.

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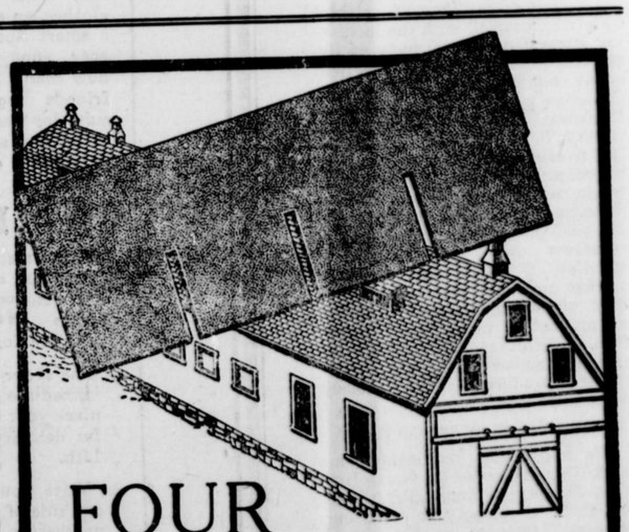

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