

service, the appearance within her borders of one or other of the diseases scheduled by the British Board of Agriculture, is within the range of possibility. As matters now stand, were such a thing to occur, especially during the short period in which our western cattle are shipped, or at the time when out winter fed steers are being marketed, the consequences to the producer would be disastrous, while the whole trade would receive a blow, from which it would require many years to recover. For this reason, if for no other, the establishment of a chilled meat trade on sound business lines and under proper control, may fairly be termed a matter of national importance.

LIVE CATTLE TRADE MUST BE CONTINUED.

It must not be forgotten, however, that there is a constant paying demand in Britain for home killed dressed beef. This demand is certain to continue and as it can never, under existing conditions, be fully met by the British feeder, it is likely to remain profitable to those countries which, owing to their freedom from disease, are permitted to land live cattle in Great Britain, and are at the same time so situated geographically as to be able to transport such cattle at a reasonable cost and with not too great a risk of loss.

In these two respects Canada occupies, and will probably continue to occupy, a most favourable position. Many countries which, under other circumstances, would be our keenest competitors, have been compelled, for one reason or another, to abandon the export trade in live stock for that in chilled or frozen meat. As they are year by year improving their facilities for the carrying on of this trade, the supply of dead meat in the British markets, is likely, in the near future, to exceed the demand. In the United States, the only country at present in a position to compete with Canada in the live cattle trade, the home consumption of meat is increasing so rapidly, that the surplus for export is likely soon to be a negligible quantity.

It would thus appear that while the establishment of a chilled meat trade is necessary and advisable, it would be a short-sighted policy to contemplate the complete abandonment of our present export business in live stock. It should therefore, in my opinion, be not only continued, but fostered and encouraged, by making the conditions surrounding it as nearly perfect as possible. This can best be done by the maintenance of strict government supervision, involving full control of the methods adopted in transportation and the establishment of some comprehensive system of inspection, which, in addition to the present examination for health, would include the rejection of any animal of inferior quality or condition.

It is, to my mind, somewhat doubtful, whether it would ever be possible, in the face of the keen competition of an honestly conducted dead meat trade, to profitably ship grass fed cattle on the hoof from western Canada to the British market. There is, however, no question that given better transportation facilities than at present exist, a profitable business could be done in grain fed western steers, as well as in the stall-finished cattle from Ontario and other eastern provinces.

In any event it is well to have two strings to one's bow and as each line of trade would steady and balance the other, it is to be hoped that, in the near future, we shall see both firmly established on a solid and paying basis.

I have the honour to be, sir,
Your obedient servant,

J. G. RUTHERFORD,

*Veterinary Director General,
and Live Stock Commissioner.*

The Honourable SYDNEY FISHER,
Minister of Agriculture.