

Hon. Mr. WEBSTER: Yes. Mr. Scott was the inspector down there. He died last year, and the present inspector is Mr. Sadler.

Hon. Mr. BOSTOCK: It would seem, from what my honourable friend has said, that there might be some overlapping as between the Department of Agriculture and the Department of Trade and Commerce, under this Bill. This proposed statute comes from the Department of Agriculture, I understand. The objection that I see is that it is brought up here in the very last hours of the Session. We have not had time to look at it or learn anything about it, and, however good a measure it may be, it is going to be very difficult for us to understand what we are doing and to deal with it as we ought. I am not at the present moment prepared to state whether I would be opposed to the Bill or in favour of it. I do think it is very objectionable to introduce legislation of this kind at this late hour of the Session, when we are expecting prorogation to take place so soon, and nobody, so far as I know, has heard anything about the Bill. I have to use a copy of the Bill in the form in which it was introduced into the House of Commons. I do not know that the honourable minister (Hon. Mr. Robertson) who is in charge of it, can say whether any alterations have been made in it in the Commons or not. We are left in the position of not knowing what has happened to the Bill in another place. They may have amended it. All sorts of things may have been done with it. We have no information about it.

Hon. Mr. ROBERTSON: This Bill has been discussed carefully in the Commons. I have had the advantage of discussing it briefly and informally to-day with a gentleman who is, I think, the president of the Dairymen's Association of the Province of Quebec. He is not a supporter of the Government. He is in favour of the Bill. He represents the dairymen and the important dairy industries in Quebec, and it may reasonably be assumed that it is satisfactory to the dairy interest and should be passed. I am somewhat surprised to learn that my honourable friend from Brockville (Hon. Mr. Webster) is not in accord with the provisions of the Bill. It is true that upon the second reading of any measure we discuss and either adopt or reject the principle involved. The principle involved in this particular Bill is that dairy produce—

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cheese and butter—should be inspected and graded just as meat, canned goods, and other articles have been inspected and graded for years, in order that the consumers' interests may be protected, and, further, that the interest of the Canadian producers may be protected by seeing to it, by means of inspection and grading, that nothing of inferior quality is marketed in a foreign country as a superior Canadian article, and thereby allowed to damage the reputation of our dairy produce. I trust, honourable gentlemen, that the Bill may receive its second reading. In committee all necessary details can be discussed.

Hon. Mr. CASGRAIN: Just before leaving I heard the honourable member from Brockville (Hon. Mr. Webster) make an inquiry, and I do not know that he has been answered. He asked who wanted this Bill. Well, I am informed that all the provincial Ministers of Agriculture, at a conference, were unanimous in asking for this Bill. I am also informed that the National Dairy Council asked for it. I understand, further, that the Dairymen's Association of the Province of Quebec want it. I have received that information from the president of the Association himself, who happens to be a member of the other House, and who spoke in favour of the measure this morning.

It appears, furthermore, that during the war the grading gave great satisfaction. An Imperial Commission, during the war, bought cheese and graded it as No. 1, No. 2 or No. 3 quality, and that grading gave great satisfaction to all concerned. If people have a good article to sell, they naturally want the full price. If the article is not so good, they must be prepared to accept less. If there is no grading, everybody naturally wants to sell his article at the best price, and the effect is that in other countries the reputation of our cheese is injured.

Hon. JOHN WEBSTER: In reply to the honourable minister, I might say that Mr. Thompson, member of the House from Hastings, who is a large buyer, feels regarding this Bill just as I do. In answer to the honourable gentleman who has just taken his seat, I would say that the cheese is not owned by the factory men when it reaches Montreal; it is owned by the merchant in Montreal. Then why should you give that man a certificate for quality that he is shipping to some customer in England whom he has supplied for the last twenty years, and who knows exactly what he wants?