

7 EDWARD VII., A. 1907

Q. There is another question which I think has been asked Mr. Ruddick. If we desire to encourage a co-operative movement in this country, is it your opinion that a uniform law, a uniform system of statistics, and a centralized movement in that direction is better than a movement heading from each province and being made separately in each province?—A. There are many advantages, certainly—there are a few corresponding disadvantages. It is difficult to have a general law which must apply to and authorize actions all over Canada, come down to and regulate, built upon those specific conditions which are chiefly prevalent in a province. Thus I can quite believe that features would be introduced into Nova Scotia or Prince Edward Island, or Quebec and work very admirably there which it might not be advisable to apply to the whole of Canada. But if those features are introduced into the by-laws of the institutions in those sections then the general features which might be applied to all Canada might safely be put into a general Act applying to the whole country, and so far might be much better than any provincial Act.

Q. I suppose a uniform law under which a man going from one part of Canada to another would find the same, and a uniform system of statistics would be a good thing?—A. A uniform system of statistics, of reports, and of information, is very desirable.

*By the Chairman:*

Q. The Labour Department, with a view of encouraging thrift and industry and stopping as much as possible the operations of usurers among the labouring classes, endeavours by means of the *Labour Gazette*, to encourage and educate the people to the advantage of such institutions, always accompanied by the proper safe-guards?—A. Yes. I find, in looking over the returns and methods of co-operative organizations in other countries, that the features which you have already introduced into the Agricultural Department, of giving special lectures by experts on the operations of agriculture, of diffusing information of that kind, might be admissible and desirable in connection with the co-operative system.

The CHAIRMAN.—No better lecturer could be had than the present witness.

Mr. MONK.—I wish we had such a lecturer throughout the country.

The CHAIRMAN.—I might, perhaps, suggest, with the leave of the Committee, this fact: Professor Shortt has examined the by-laws of 'La Caisse Populaire de Lévis,' and I see that he has blue-pencilled some of the clauses. Would any member have any objection to Professor Shortt placing his views on those by-laws in writing before us?

Professor SHORTT.—I think myself that any such consideration would be unnecessary at this stage. If it came to the stage of drawing up a model set of by-laws with the representatives of the interests concerned, it would be much more to the point and more effective to discuss the details with them, and I would be happy to meet with the Committee and discuss the details.

Mr. MONK.—I hope, Professor, that the Minister will then ask you to give him your valuable assistance as to the preparation of model by-laws, if he is still in office.

The witness retired.

Mr. A. McNEIL, head of the fruit division, Department of Agriculture, was called and examined.

*By Mr. Monk:*

Q. You have had occasion to look over Bill No. 2, which is under consideration of the Committee?—A. Yes, sir.

Q. Will you please tell the Committee, in a general way, if you think the co-operative societies, which it is contemplated to organize under the provisions of this