

cattle were gathered and started on the long overland trip to the United States. As they slowly progressed, at six to eight miles a day, other cattle were purchased and added to the herd. They were corralled for veterinary inspection, and then the cowboys drove them south to the American shipping points. It was a revival of the old trailing method which was in vogue before the open ranges were criss-crossed with fences and railway tracks. More than 240,000 cattle have been shipped into the United States, and they would supply about one and a half per cent of that country's consumption of beef.

The lifting of the embargo brought a real supply of American dollars into Canada. Furthermore, statistics show that there was no decline in the use of meat by Canadians. On the contrary, more meat than ever was consumed in this country. The increased revenue received by the industry was a great help also to the income tax department. Most important of all, it gave the people engaged in the ranching industry an opportunity to pay their debts, to meet their costs of production, to undertake certain improvements, and to get back on the trail which they were travelling before the embargo was imposed. It is fondly hoped that this natural market will never again be closed, and that ranchers, who are noted for their hospitality and neighbourliness, will not in future be handicapped by artificial trade barriers.

I also wish to say something about the development of oil production in Alberta. That province at the present time is having the greatest oil boom in its history, and great credit is due to the private oil companies which have invested so much of their risk capital in the search for oil on the western prairies. In 1948 the expenditures on oil development were about \$50 million, or an average of roughly \$1 million a week; it is expected that this year they will run to about \$100 million, or about \$2 million a week. Credit is also due to the technical men who went into the remote and relatively inaccessible districts. Travelling by canoe, pack-train or airplane, in groups of three or four, they spent months in the lonely wilderness, making observations and charting the way for other specialists, who predicted to the best of their ability where oil might be found. Eventually there was a lot of drilling, and in spite of many discouragements this has paid off. In 1948 the number of wells drilled in Alberta was 366, of which 210 proved to be oil producers, 23 were gas wells and 133 were dry holes.

The daily output of crude oil has been about 35,000 barrels, and the average during one week in the middle of November was 39,572 barrels. Oil men hope and expect that by

1950 the wells will be producing 65,000 barrels a day. The oil production has been of great benefit not only to Alberta but to the whole country. Rentals and royalties have brought millions of dollars to the provincial treasury, and four to five thousand persons are employed directly in the oil industry. As the Canadian consumption of oil is about 250,000 barrels daily, we have had to depend upon imports for about 86 per cent of our requirements. Every barrel of oil produced in Alberta saves from \$3 to \$5 of our American exchange.

There is one other matter to which I wish to refer at this time, and that is divorce. Ever since confederation parliament has had to deal with a number of applications for divorce, and it seems that at almost every session some honourable members have spoken of the undesirability of the procedure. In a book written by Gemmill it is stated that not only is there no jurisdiction in Quebec to deal with divorce but that a pre-confederation law, which was continued by the British North America Act and will continue till parliament chooses to repeal it—as it has power to do under section 91 of that act—declares that marriage is dissolved only by the death of one of the spouses. As nothing has been done by the various parliaments down through all the years to repeal that law, it seems likely that divorce applications will continue to come to parliament for a long time yet.

Partly owing to the war, the number of divorce cases has increased; but altogether aside from that cause it seems that divorce is greatly on the increase. It has occurred to me that it might be possible to appoint a King's Proctor or some such official whose duty it would be to inquire into every divorce application right on the ground and try to reconcile the parties, and where that is not possible, to send a report to the body hearing the application. If it is not practicable to employ such an officer, perhaps a system could be developed whereby some reliable official, such as magistrate or police chief, would endeavour to bring about reconciliation in certain cases and forward a report in every case where attempts at reconciliation were unsuccessful.

**Hon. Mr. Euler:** Is my honourable friend referring only to cases coming from Quebec or to cases from the whole of Canada?

**Hon. Mr. Gershaw:** I should think it would be well if some such system could be worked out for the whole of Canada, for divorce is on the increase in every province.

The following statement by the Chairman of our Divorce Committee (Hon. Mr. Aseltine)—who, by the way, deserves great credit