

APPENDIX No. 3

dustrial and Co-operative Societies, and have agreed to report the same with amendments.

Your committee have held several sittings and taken the evidence of a number of witnesses as to the possible advantages to Canada of legislation upon the lines indicated in above-mentioned Bill, which authorizes the formation of co-operative associations.

From this evidence, derived from persons who have made a special study of the co-operative movement in Europe, it appears clearly that co-operation offers very great advantage to the farming classes, particularly in certain branches of agricultural pursuits, such as dairying, market gardening and fruit culture. Co-operation has also been proved of great use in the purchase by farmers of agricultural implements and fertilizers.

Your committee found that co-operation offers a means for the labouring classes to purchase, under the most favourable terms, the necessaries of life and the articles required for the exercise of any trade. It also provides a system by which the wage-earners can either build or acquire their own homes, by means of small loans from credit and savings societies.

Your committee have given the credit and savings feature of the Bill their special consideration and have arrived at the conclusion that any general movement to foster co-operations destined to provide small loans and means of investment for people whose situation removes them from the sphere of action of our ordinary banks.

In dealing, however, with this feature of the proposed measure, your committee have provided special clauses destined to surround the exercise of the credit and savings power by these societies with all necessary guarantees to prevent any possible abuse.

The interesting experiment made by Mr. Alphonse Desjardins with the institution known as 'La Caisse Populaire de Lévis,' establishes clearly that this special form of co-operation is productive of the best results and can be carried out without risk, if under proper control.

This control and supervision your committee have sought to ensure in the Bill.

The witnesses heard by your committee are persons well versed in the co-operative movement since its inception ; their testimony bears out with singular unanimity the conclusion to which your committee have arrived, that the proposed Bill, as amended by your committee, if enacted, would be productive of the best results, and your committee therefore recommend that the government take charge of the measure and have it passed.

Your committee also report herewith their minutes of proceedings and evidence, and the exhibits filed, and recommend that the same be printed, with the exception of exhibits from Nos. 2 to 10, inclusive.

All of which is respectively submitted,

R. LEMIEUX,
Chairman.