

"The dealers in attendance at these meetings were not of one mind upon the question of 'quality payment' as a satisfactory solution of the difficulty. Opposition was offered on the ground that unless the practice of quality payment were made universal it would not be practicable, for the reason that the few who adopted it could not compete successfully with those buying on a case-count basis. On this point F. G. Pruer, of New York, editor of the *New York Produce Review*, speaking recently at a meeting of the Southern Carol Shippers' Association, said:—

"That only when eggs are paid for at different prices, according to their real value, can there be any effective inducement for producers to market their eggs when fresh or to take proper care of them. . . . A good many packers say that the proposition of quality payment is all right in theory, but that it cannot be put in practice in any section unless done by all; that a packer cannot successfully institute quality payment so long as his competitors continue to buy case-count at an average and uniform price. I cannot believe that this is so if the candling is properly done and if so much difference is made in the paying price as the real value of the eggs justifies. When different packers are competing for goods from the same source of supply, it would seem inevitable that those who paid the full value for new-laid quality would attract such, as compared with those who paid an average price for good and poor together."

"The stand was also taken by certain dealers that it would be difficult for country storekeepers to adopt 'quality payment' for the reason that farmers would take objection if any reduction in price were made on account of the presence of bad eggs. In this way the country merchant, thinking that he would possibly lose the patronage of some farmers, would therefore object to the system. It was thought that if some means were adopted by which farmers could be shown the exact quality of their eggs as they were marketed, this prejudice against the system would be easily overcome.

"It was also argued that, unless a simple and rapid system of candling were devised, it would be difficult at times for the country merchant to accurately determine the quality of eggs delivered. In reply to these points, the use of a large candling outfit similar to that which is used in Denmark was recommended. Such an outfit would permit of placing 120 eggs before the light at once. The process of candling would thus be made both easy and rapid.

"A report was received of the progress of a similar movement in the State of Michigan. It was shown that within an incredibly short time the system of 'quality payment' had gained wonderful progress. Those who had taken it up in that State declare most emphatically that it would be a mistake to go back to the original case-count method. Their experience has proven, contrary to their former ideas, that 'quality payment' was gladly accepted by the producers. The dealers also found it much more satisfactory to conduct their business by following such a system. They were convinced that it would be a matter of only a short time until it would be adopted throughout the entire State.

"At the conclusion of the last meeting it was moved that the association of dealers adopt, after June 1st, 1913, three grades in purchasing eggs, viz.:—

"New-laid—Eggs which are sound, full, sweet, and not more than five days old.

"Firsts—Eggs which are sound and sweet but having a limited shrinkage.

"Seconds—Eggs of inferior quality but not bad.

"It was further moved that the association petition the Government to enact legislation making it illegal to buy or sell bad eggs, and also to appoint official inspectors to enforce such legislation. The motion was received reluctantly and when put to the meeting was lost.

"It was then moved that the members of the association agree to purchase all eggs after June 1st, 1913, on a 'loss-off basis'; that is, to pay absolutely nothing for bad eggs. This motion carried and was supported by all the dealers present."