

permitted. This would not in any way interfere with the egg-grading system, because the buyer and seller both know the eggs are not graded and no harm would be done. I think we must have some grading system, but I believe that if my suggestion were adopted it would meet most of the objections raised to-day.

I do hope this matter will be sent to the committee on Agriculture where we will have a better opportunity to discuss the question fully. Possibly the regulations could be amended in such a way as to meet the wishes of honourable members who have raised this question and still safeguard the system of egg-grading in Canada.

Hon. W. R. MOTHERWELL (Minister of Agriculture): I have to thank those who have contributed to this debate, Mr. Speaker. This is by no means a new theme; it has engaged the attention of the farmers, consumers and middlemen not only of Canada but of the United States, Great Britain, Ireland, and practically every other country where eggs are produced for export for many years. I would like to correct as gently as possible some of the erroneous views held by the hon. member for South Wellington (Mr. Guthrie) before starting to discuss this matter. He seems to want to throw the responsibility for this act, so far as eggs are concerned, on this government; he has brought it up on a motion to go into supply so that the responsibility will be placed squarely on the shoulders of the government. In other words we may have to bear the yoke, so to speak. Surely this is not a sufficiently serious question on which to defeat a government which has come safely through the trials and tribulations we have during the last four or five months. We deserve to live a while longer, and should not succumb to an attack of this nature. I assume that my hon. friend is not desirous of upsetting the government on this momentous question, but at the same time if he were more desirous of improving the situation I think he would have waited until my estimates came up, because the very first item has to do with live stock and this whole question could have been threshed out.

However, that is all by the way. The responsibility of introducing the Live Stock and Live Stock Products Act, as my hon. friend said, dates back to 1917; the original act was assented to on September 20 of that year. The moment 1917 is mentioned one's mind immediately goes back to the Union government, but do not place this at the door of the Union government, because I believe that government did not come into

[Mr. Coote.]

existence until later on. The elections were not held until December; perhaps the Union government existed before that, but at all events it was before our time. I would like to know what article my hon. friend was reading when he said the act prior to 1923 contained no reference to eggs or wool.

Mr. GUTHRIE: In the statute.

Mr. MOTHERWELL: We will have to get that reconciled in some way, perhaps before the agricultural committee, in regard to which the hon. member for Macleod (Mr. Coote) made a very good suggestion. Here is chapter 32, an act respecting Live Stock, assented to September 20, 1917. I am not wanting to repudiate responsibility in any way; I merely want to show that I am correct. The definition clause of this act of 1917 provides:

"Live stock products" means meat, poultry, eggs and wool.

I will pass this over to my hon. friend when I am through, if he will pass me over his authority. Then section 9 provides:

The Governor in Council may make regulations prescribing,—

(a) the manner in which stock yards are to be constructed, equipped, maintained and operated.

(b) the manner in which complaints against commission merchants and the operation, maintenance or management of stock yards shall be made and investigated;

(c) the manner in which live stock, meat, poultry, eggs and wool shall be graded and branded or marked, and what shall be the size of packages containing meat, eggs and poultry, the kind of package that may be used, and how such packages shall be branded, marked or labelled.

I am not wanting to put my hon. friend in a corner or anything like that, although I am afraid he was trying to put me in one, and he did not give all the information correctly. Were we in power in 1917? I remember that we had an election at that time, and that we did not get in. Here is the act of 1923, and it provides:

"Live stock products" means meats, poultry, eggs and wool, the word "eggs" where used to include frozen eggs, liquid eggs, desiccated eggs and eggs in the shell.

That is the only difference. I am not wanting to squirm out of anything at all, but my hon. friend has left the impression on the House that the consolidated act of 1923 was sort of smuggled through the House. Maybe the word "smuggled" is rather suggestive to him in view of what has been happening this session, and he thinks I am going into smuggling too. One of the reasons why there was very little discussion when this act was before the House was that there had been a very long discussion of it in the committee on