

Mr. McKENZIE (Assiniboia): I see by the votes and proceedings of May 18 that item 45 was carried.

Mr. WEIR (Melfort): Yes.

Mr. McKENZIE (Assiniboia): That, I believe, was on the understanding that we might discuss anything relating to health of animals. The matter I want to take up is the examinations held last summer in Saskatoon for veterinary surgeons. There was an examination for part time service, but owing to economic conditions and the financial position of veterinary surgeons generally, some of them found it difficult to take the examinations; they could not stand the expense. I have received a letter from one of these gentlemen and also a letter from the registrar of the veterinary surgeons' association, informing me that the men who passed these examinations have not been able to get work.

Mr. WEIR (Melfort): We have taken between thirty and forty of the men who did pass, and where there is work anywhere near we are taking on more veterinaries. I was discussing the matter with the veterinary director general—because I have a special interest in it—and he is of the opinion that we shall be able to give work to practically all these men who have passed the examination, provided the work is within reasonable distance of their own practice. When it is decided to go ahead with the new testing areas in Saskatchewan these men will be given work in connection with that.

Mr. McKENZIE (Assiniboia): There are a number of our veterinary surgeons, fully qualified and registered, who think that it is unnecessary for them to be put to the expense of taking an examination for part time work. Do the veterinary director general and the veterinary department generally feel that the regularly qualified men who have passed examinations and are registered in their own province are unfit to do tuberculosis testing work?

Mr. WEIR (Melfort): The men employed in the health of animals branch, except some taken on at a very early date, have themselves to pass an examination before they can act as officials in the health of animals branch. The hon. member for Assiniboia knows that many veterinary surgeons came to western Canada and engaged in farming or ranching or other work of that kind and naturally would become rusty in their veterinary science, and it was felt to be only fair as a protection to farmers that these men

[Mr. R. Weir.]

should be asked to pass an examination. In Saskatchewan they were particularly fortunate, especially those who could afford to take the course, which was provided at very low cost, because Doctor Fulton, of Saskatchewan university, put on a short intensive brushing up course; and that will be offered again before the next examination is held. We are of the opinion that by holding these examinations once a year or once every two years a great boon is provided the practitioners themselves. The hon. member asks whether it is thought that these men are not qualified. With that question in mind, when the examination papers were prepared we had in members, and men recommended by members, of the veterinary colleges, because they might be of the same opinion, namely, that these men having once passed, it was a slur on the college that they should be asked to write again. They came in and sat at the reading of the papers which were gone into very carefully and I think these men would be the first now to acknowledge that these examinations are very necessary not only as a check but to have the veterinaries themselves brush up on their work.

Mr. McKENZIE (Assiniboia): Did the result of the examination prove what the minister said, namely that many of them are getting rather rusty?

Mr. WEIR (Melfort): Yes.

Mr. McKENZIE (Assiniboia): I can believe that myself because I was a graduate of a veterinary college about thirty years ago and I do not know that I would care to re-register. But the thing that seems to annoy these veterinary surgeons is the fact that under present economic conditions they cannot afford to go to the expense of taking this short course. So far as tuberculosis work is concerned I do not think there is anything particular about it requiring any special examination, and I imagine that is the greater part of the work. Probably the minister has a copy of the memorandum that was passed at a meeting of the council of the Veterinary Association of Saskatchewan in February last. From the letter accompanying it I believe a copy was sent to practically every local member of the house as well as to the minister himself, but in case the minister has overlooked it I will just put it on Hansard so that we can see what is the feeling of the veterinary association. The memorandum reads:

1. To draw the attention of the minister to the fact that the men who passed the part-time examinations held last summer have as yet received no work from the health of