

Mr. FISHER. I appreciate the spirit in which the hon. gentleman has made these criticisms, which are perfectly fair and legitimate, but I must join issue with him at once as to the advisability of passing a Bill of this kind. My hon. friend seems to think that the fact that our meat-packing establishments in Canada are sanitary and well conducted is sufficient to protect our trade in these products abroad. I fear that is not the case. I know that some countries at any rate have passed legislation and are passing legislation to absolutely debar any products coming from Canada which are not marked with a government stamp or accompanied with a government certificate. Some years ago Germany did that and shut out United States products. The United States authorities took steps to overcome that difficulty by providing elaborate machinery by which they tagged every package of meat and every animal going to Germany. At that time England did nothing of the kind, but to-day England is thoroughly aroused and the people there are preparing to take steps of a similar nature. The United States itself has undertaken something of the kind. It was only the other day an appeal was made to my department by a well-known man in Ottawa, Mr. Matthews, of the Matthews packing establishment, who said that he had received an order to ship a considerable quantity of meat to the United States and had been informed that he could not ship it unless it was accompanied by an official certificate. The railway company would not accept the goods because they knew that the customs officers at the United States frontier would not allow them to enter the United States. Mr. Matthews came post haste to the department and wanted us to give him a certificate, but we had no authority to do so. With the passing of this Act such a difficulty will be immediately obviated.

Mr. FOSTER. Is that a standing regulation in the United States?

Mr. FISHER. That is the regulation by which Mr. Matthews was powerless to export to the United States some pork products of which he had an order of several thousand dollars worth within the last week or two. The same thing happened with regard to shipments to Germany and Switzerland a few months ago. The shipping companies would not take the goods because they knew that the regulations of the countries to which these goods were billed prevented their being entered without a government certificate of the sanitary and healthy condition of the goods, and there was nobody in this country with authority or power to give such a certificate. The result was that the shipment could not be made. These are instances which have occurred. I have no doubt whatever that England, which is our great market for

these products, will within the next six months make regulations, perhaps not of the same kind as those of the United States or Germany or Switzerland, but so stringent that without a government certificate of full inspection our goods will be at least handicapped if not absolutely shut out from the English market.

This is my reason for taking issue with my hon. friend from North Toronto (Mr. Foster). Notwithstanding his opinion, I do not think that the fact—however we may blazon it abroad—that our packing houses are well conducted, will be sufficient to protect our trade in these foreign countries. We shall require machinery by means of which we shall be able to give such certificate or marking on the articles as will satisfy other countries. Such a marking or certificate must necessarily mean all it implies and can only be given on proper inspection, which will satisfy the officer giving it that the goods are really what he guarantees them to be. My hon. friend has suggested that we might obviate the increase of expenditure by some co-operation with the provincial authorities. But I do not think that a provincial certificate would have the same authority abroad as a federal certificate. Those provincial certificates would be given under different conditions and different regulations in the different provinces, and the purchasers abroad would have to inquire whether the goods came from Ontario or some other province, and what kind of inspection was provided in that province. As regards the giving by the Dominion department of a certificate on provincial inspection, I do not think it would be safe for the department to give a guarantee which would depend on the official action of another body outside its control. I would not, for the sake of saving a few thousand dollars a year, undertake to do that. I think it would be inefficient and unsatisfactory, and very likely result in criticism of the goods shipped and the methods of marking them. We have had some experience of that in veterinary work. In the United States there are a number of state veterinary officials, but their certificates are not accepted by foreign countries. We have always recognized and accepted the certificates of the American federal veterinary officers because we have full confidence in the administration of the federal veterinary bureau, but we have never been able to have the same confidence in the state bureaus, and I think the same feeling would prevail abroad with regard to our provincial inspection. In the United States, the federal authorities refuse squarely to accept the certificate of any except the duly appointed officers of the Dominion government. I fear therefore that I cannot accept that suggestion.

Mr. MONK. I would like to point out one or two suggestions since my hon. friend has said that he proposes making some amend-