

years the quality of hogs handled in Montreal has declined more than any other place in Canada. The prices received have also declined. We have found that in those places where grading has been effective there is a steady increase in production and quality. The farmers in these places are not the kind who are in and out; they continue to produce more hogs at a uniform rate.

Mr. DUPUIS: Are there any officials of the Department of Agriculture available to the farmers in the district of Montreal to give help in the classifying and raising of hogs?

Mr. WEIR (Melfort): There are hog graders in Montreal who grade and will give assistance on request.

Mr. DUPUIS: Is that only in the city of Montreal? I do not understand that they raise hogs in Montreal.

Mr. WEIR (Melfort): Hogs coming into Montreal.

Mr. DUPUIS: Are those men at the disposal of the farmers?

Mr. WEIR (Melfort): Yes. Hogs come into Montreal from eastern Ontario, Quebec and from western Canada as well.

I think there is a misunderstanding between the hon. member for Prince (Mr. MacLean) and the hon. member for Brome-Missisquoi (Mr. Pickel) in connection with egg grading. The great proportion of egg grading is not done by government officials; it is done by the merchants who buy and ship the eggs. We have in our employ only forty-one egg graders and it would take a large army of graders to grade all the eggs delivered by farmers to the different stores throughout the country. These egg graders check up the grading of the storekeeper. It must be evident to hon. members that in the very nature of the work of these men they can deal with only a few storekeepers. We realize that the regulations have been evaded but when our graders find that the grading is out of line, steps are taken to check up the merchants and ensure that right grading is undertaken. A number of conferences have been held in an effort to improve our egg grading regulations. Personally I have been of the opinion that there were too many grades. We had specials, extras, firsts, seconds, fresh, storage, and so on. We had a conference with our egg graders, produce merchants, producers and some members of parliament, and went into the whole question. I felt that if we called one class of eggs firsts there should be none higher than that. It was decided to drop "firsts," "extras" and all that nomenclature

in grading, and to draw up new regulations for the grading of eggs, A, B and C. Perhaps the hon. member who spoke first is not aware that eggs are now graded according to weight, because it does seem the only fair way to grade them.

I have before me a number of letters of approval with regard to the way in which the new grading regulations are working out, but I can assure hon. members that if the subject is referred to the committee on agriculture, no one will welcome more than I any suggestions that can be offered to the officials of the department or myself looking in any way to an improvement in the grading of eggs or hogs.

Mr. MARTIAL RHEAUME (St. John-Iberville) (Translation): Mr. Speaker, I was not in the house when the hon. member for Brome-Missisquoi (Mr. Pickel) discussed his resolution that in the opinion of the house, the Egg and Hog Grading Act should be amended.

I am fairly well acquainted with the question of hog grading on the Montreal market. As to egg grading I am not qualified to discuss the question. The grading of hogs is very important, however, it would be more important for the government to take the necessary steps—not similar to those taken after the coal investigation—so as to protect the farmers on the Montreal market or throughout the dominion. The house is aware that farmers are at the mercy of a trust, perhaps more powerful than the coal trust. There is in Montreal a company known as the Canada Packers Limited which controls the hog market. Others such as William Davies, Canadian Packing, Harris Abattoirs, Gunn-Langlois and Gunn Limited are controlled by the Canada Packers which entirely controls the Montreal market. Mention must be made that the Montreal Abattoirs is also known as the Wilsills; however, the latter is far from having the importance which Canada Packers has.

The farmer as well as the dealer who wish to ship hogs, sheep or beef to the Montreal market, are at the mercy of these two powerful companies; of those who require a commission of 5 or 10 per cent.

I have just heard the hon. Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Weir) state that an inspector is placed at the disposal of farmers to grade or select the hogs shipped to the Montreal market; this means that the farmers receive \$1.00 more per head. I have here the "Journal d'Agriculture," dated March 3. One notes, for instance:

Bacon hog (select), 180 to 220 pounds, \$10.
 Bonus, \$1.
 Bacon hog, \$10.