

DEPLETION OF HERDS IN EUROPEAN LANDS OPENS OPPORTUNITY

*Live Stock Commissioner
Points out Advantageous
Conditions in Live Stock
Markets Overseas.*

SPLENDID MARKETS.

The following statement on the subject of the live stock export trade of Canada is taken from the Agricultural Gazette, published by the Department of Agriculture:—

The conditions that obtain in Great Britain and other European countries with regard to the need for live stock and live stock products, and the possibilities for Canada of trade in these commodities, were presented by Mr. H. S. Arkell, Live Stock Commissioner, before the Committee on Agriculture and Colonization of the House of Commons and the conference of live stock men held in Ottawa in May. Mr. Arkell dealt with the situation with regard to eggs and poultry, bacon, beef, horses, and sheep.

Prior to the war the United Kingdom imported 40 per cent of its consumption in eggs and 30 per cent of its consumption in poultry, more than half of which came from Russia, Rumania, Galicia, and the Balkan countries. These countries, Mr. Arkell pointed out, have a great shortage of these products and are likely to supply only very limited quantities for a considerable period of years. It is estimated that there are one hundred and eighty odd million fewer fowl on the continent of Europe than there were prior to the war. It was stated that it is the consensus of opinion amongst poultrymen overseas, and amongst those who are studying the trade here, that for a considerable period we should be able to develop the poultry and egg industry, which will secure to Canada a financial return that will compare favourably with the return from other lines of live stock.

The prospects for the continuance of our bacon trade on profitable lines were stated to be good. Denmark, that previous to the war had over two million hogs, has now something less than seven hundred thousand. Her exports to the United Kingdom have been reduced from over two million hundredweight in 1916 to twenty-one thousand hundredweight last year. The same situation is true of Holland. The exportable surplus of these countries is going forward to Central European countries. Owing to the shortage of feed, it is considered scarcely likely that hog production in European countries will reach a normal condition for a considerable time. Irish killings have been reduced to about one-quarter of the pre-war output. Mr. Arkell's observations led him to conclude that the safest course to follow would be to develop the trade with the United Kingdom in the special Wiltshire sides, a product which is now in very keen demand and was never before held in such high repute as at present.

Canadian beef must compete with that from Argentina and Australia, where production costs are less than in Canada. The advantage for the Canadian beef trade would seem to lie in a specialized trade in live cattle of lighter weight than South America and Australia supply. The change in labour and family conditions in the Mother Country, owing to the higher wages being paid, will increase the demand for beef of lighter weight than heretofore, at prices that will be profitable to the Canadian producer. There is a demand in all the European countries for cattle. Belgium, France, Rumania, Poland, and Italy require cattle, especially for breeding and feeding purposes. Ireland is not looked upon as likely to be able to provide as many store cattle as formerly. The demand for cattle in Europe, the United States, and possibly in the United Kingdom, is such as to justify the continuance of production at

the rate maintained during the period of the war.

Two lines of trade in horses are open to the breeders of Canada: first, a permanent trade in heavy horses with the Mother Country, and, secondly, a trade in horses weighing from 1,000 to 1,300 pounds with the countries of Central Europe. In Great Britain draught horses are bringing from 150 to 170 guineas each. Rumania, Serbia, and the Balkan countries are now practically without horse power, or even oxen power, in many cases, to cultivate their land. The same is more or less true of Italy, France, and Belgium. These countries would be glad to get classes of horses of which Western Canada has a surplus, the lighter animals which are similar to those for which the Balkan countries are paying from 4,000 to 5,000 marks each (\$800 to \$1,000).

Sheep feeders, especially in Scotland, are particularly short of stock to finish for market. The supplies from Ireland have been reduced, while the demand for mutton was unusually strong owing to the shortage of other meats. These conditions would provide a profitable market for lambs, so many of which are killed in Canada without proper fattening.

After reviewing the trade in live stock products, and in going over the war area where the Canadians fought in 1917 and 1918, Mr. Arkell is firmly of the opinion that the farmers of Canada should organize themselves as the Canadian army did for its special task, with the idea of developing a trade that will make the country prosperous, and enable us to take our place nationally and commercially amongst the nations of the world and on a basis worthy of the services and sacrifices that have been given during the four years of the war.

TENDER FRUIT CROP CONDITIONS OUTLINED

*Reports from Districts Is-
sued by Department
of Agriculture.*

The July issue of the Fruit and Vegetable Crop Report, published by the Department of Agriculture, contains the following report of crop prospects for tender fruits throughout Canada:—

A decided change has taken place in the Niagara Peninsula since our last report was published. The excessive heat during the first three weeks of June and the exceptionally long spell of dry weather have had such a serious effect that prospects to-day are by no means bright when compared with the promise of four weeks ago. In the district east of Beamsville, where most of the commercial peach orchards are located, the crop will be far below average, many orchards having been seriously affected by leaf curl. There will be a good average crop in the Winona-Grimby district, but taking the peninsula as a whole the yield will not exceed 50 per cent of normal. Reports from St. Catharines claim that the crop will not be more than 30 per cent. Many of the older bearing orchards throughout the peninsula are in an unhealthy condition and severe losses of trees have occurred during recent years. There is great need for extensive replanting. Sweet cherries are a light crop, Richmonds less than medium, and Montmorency about medium. The plum crop will not exceed 30 per cent of normal; a few varieties such as Bradshaw and Yellow Egg give better promise. Grapes should be a full crop from present indications. Niagara and Concord are particularly promising. Pears are very light—about 30 per cent—with few exceptions.

In the Okanagan Valley there have been a heavy drop of cherries. The crop will be 25 per cent less than last year, or about 65 per cent of average. Plums and pears are a fair crop, about equal to 1918. Early peaches are medium and Elbertas and late varieties heavy. Apricots are an average crop, but scattered.

On Vancouver Island there is a fair crop of cherries. Plums, prunes, and pears are light to very light.

CONDENSED SUMMARY OF PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY

Investigation into Prices Charged for Foodstuffs, Clothing, Fuel and Other Necessaries of Life and Profits Made by Producers and Distributors.

[Continued from page 10.]

internal trade of the country was impossible.

PRICES NOW UNSTABLE.

18. It cannot be said that the higher price level has become fixed. All the evidence is to the effect that under the present circumstances prices are unstable. Whether they will go higher, stand where they are, or fall, has not and apparently cannot be determined.

19. The truth is that the adjustment of the changed conditions has not yet been achieved, and any weighing of the factors affecting it in advance is impracticable. So many factors operating can only find their true adjustment in the actual operation of business.

20. While individual prices of the present as compared with 1914 appear extravagantly high, comparison of the price of any commodity to-day with prices of other commodities of to-day presents through all classes a uniformity of increase.

21. While the underlying conditions above referred to have increased prices, the close attention and control by Government agencies over the country's trade has been a large factor in preventing exceptional rises in some commodities, and in securing the uniformity referred to.

22. The Committee's investigation has shown that many of the companies engaged in trade have increased their capitalization during the past five or six years very largely. Before the war there had been many mergers, and very considerable stock-watering, and a steady increase in prices have enabled corporations to make large profits and bring inflated issues to the dividend-bearing stage. Some of the profiteering was inevitable through the increase in value of stocks held, and justifiable in view of subsequent expected depreciation of the value of stock when adjustment takes place. These companies which have built up reserves without capitalizing their earnings may justify upon the course they have followed. Yet with this allowance, the fact remains that in many businesses the profits have been very high, and required that the Government should take cognizance of the situation. Your Committee in their second report therefore recommend to the House the establishment of a Board of Commerce having powers of regulation and control of the present abnormal situation.

23. Individual cases of high profits have been discovered, but these are probably no more numerous or excessive than during ordinary times of peace. In some cases these are due to war orders, in other cases to speculation and efficiency, and again in other cases to a favoured condition and greed.

WASTEFUL BUYING.

24. The Committee desire to point out that some of the responsibility for higher living costs, in their opinion, rests upon the consumer's wasteful buying, as, for example, in the case of meats. The ordering of household supplies by telephone, where the usual habit is to order the best, may be mentioned as another case, and this has a distinct relationship to the third, namely, delivery costs. These are, no doubt, run up by an indiscriminate use of the telephone in making several orders to the retailer in the course of a day. During the period of high wages which has attended the increase in prices the public has been demanding a high class of goods of all descriptions, which is a matter entirely within the control of consumers. Lack of diligence in buying is also a factor in increasing living costs.

25. The Committee feel that the industrial expansion due to munition making in Canada is another cause of high prices. The big wages offered drew large numbers of people from the rural

districts to the cities. This movement in Canada had been in progress for some time before the war, but was then accelerated. The result has been a scarcity of labour on the farms, and some very considerable reduction in the production of the farms. Many of these people are loth to return to farming, and there is consequently labour congestion in the cities. There may be no way to correct this condition but the stern alternatives presented by a business depression.

REMEDIES SUGGESTED.

26. Your Committee in their interim report recommended the constitution of a Board of Commerce, which would continue and extend the work done not only by this Committee but by the various controls the Government have put in operation during the war. The publicity given to the investigations of such a board will have a steadying effect. Its powers of regulation applied to trade practices and agreements will speed reform, and large questions of policy where trade tends to combinations and restrictions may be submitted to the board for advisory action.

27. Your Committee also inquired into the question of co-operation and had before them representatives of several co-operative bodies, and in each case the evidence given was to the effect that great difficulty was experienced in securing goods direct from the manufacturers and wholesalers. While your Committee had not sufficient time to warrant definite conclusions, they are of the opinion that the whole question of co-operative buying and distribution should be carefully investigated, for the reason that in all lines investigated the greatest spread was found to have occurred in the distribution from the manufacturer to the consumer.

28. The specific remedy for these conditions can only be expressed in general terms: Get our men back into productive industry as rapidly as possible. Every war in the past has resulted in greatly increased prices of commodities, and the only way in which nations have been able to rehabilitate themselves in the post-war periods has been by intensive application to productive industry. Having said this, your Committee do not feel that they should leave the subject without strongly urging what they consider to be the paramount necessity at the present time, namely, the need of getting our people to see the situation as it is. Canada must get more men into productive activity if our people are going to cope with the conditions now confronting them. Your Committee desire to emphasize the need of united effort in order to restore the waste of the last five years so that Canada may be brought back to normal conditions. In the final analysis the solution of the whole problem rests in a willingness on the part of all the Canadian people to seize and make use of the splendid opportunities before them.

Sunflowers as Ensilage.

Russian sunflowers are reported to be a successful ensilage crop by American investigators. They are claimed to be more productive than corn. As yet no tests have been made by the Experimental Farms as to their value, but such a test is being made this year, as stated in a bulletin issued by the Department of Agriculture.

Passchendaele Barrage.

During the battle of Passchendaele the Canadian Corps Artillery fired 2,100,000 shells of all kinds. If this amount of ammunition could be loaded on a train, the length of this train would be 17½ miles, it is stated in the report of the Overseas Minister of Militia.