

one phase of this matter as supplying a reason why, even in difficult times, we endeavoured to purchase as many pure bred cattle as possible so that the production should not cease. The minister must know that the spring sales of pure bred bulls held in Calgary have attracted the notice and attention and purchasing power of people from every part of the country. If production falls off because of lack of markets, it takes a long time to restore the market. The government by reason of its purchases has become rather an important factor in the development of the industry. We have bought from year to year in this country from two to five hundred, and sometimes it has not been easy to find the money. But now, in days of expanding revenues, it seems to me that an additional ten or twenty thousand dollars might readily be found for the purpose of providing pure bred stock and the encouragement of those who are engaged in that industry.

Mr. GARDINER: It has gone up \$5,400 this year.

Mr. BENNETT: I know. Probably \$5,400 means the purchase of between forty-five and fifty head.

Mr. GARDINER: About thirty or forty.

Mr. BENNETT: Yes. The price has gone up from the period of great depression. The average price was about \$125, and I think it has gone up to nearly \$140 now.

Mr. GARDINER: One hundred and forty-five dollars, I think.

Mr. BENNETT: That would, as the minister says, involve the purchase of less than forty head. I do not think I can exaggerate the importance of it from the standpoint of the breeder. This purchase by the dominion seems very small; in one sense it is; but it has had a marked effect upon the whole industry in Alberta. It was frequently brought to my attention by those engaged in trying to maintain a very high standard of excellence, that they found this market of tremendous importance, not alone because of the number purchased, but because it gives importance to the industry to have the country as a country making purchases for the purposes which have been indicated here this afternoon. I do not think it is too much to say that the assistance thus given by the government did much to maintain not only a high standard of excellence but the very industry, the pure bred industry itself in that province. I hope the minister may yet be able, if further supplementary estimates are

[Mr. Bennett.]

introduced, to bring in an additional sum sufficient to acquire another fifty or sixty head of cattle this year. That would still limit the total purchases to less than four hundred. I believe that somewhere in the vicinity of three hundred have been acquired, if I followed the figures this afternoon. With the additional \$5,400 available, the total purchases would be less than three hundred.

Mr. GARDINER: Less than three hundred and fifty.

Mr. BENNETT: Less than three hundred and fifty at the present minute, and I think that if we could bring the number up to four hundred it would be very desirable. Not only from the standpoint which has been so admirably presented to the committee, to which presentation, with my limited knowledge, I could not hope to add, but from the standpoint of the industry as such, the maintenance of the industry, the preservation of the morale of the producer and the incentive to those who have taken a just pride in their production, I urge the minister to consider the possibility of providing for an expansion of purchases. I realize of course that they would not all be made in Alberta; but some of them would, and the fact that some of them were made in that province would be extremely helpful in maintaining and supporting an industry whose value has not, I think, been overstated by my colleague to the right in the very strong plea he made this afternoon for the assistance of the industry.

Mr. GARDINER: I should just like to say, with regard to the remarks made by the leader of the opposition, that we in the department realize the importance of this work. One phase of it probably has not been emphasized. It will be noted that the average price in 1933 was \$121; in 1934, \$129; in 1935, \$132; in 1936, \$133; and in 1937, \$143.

Mr. BENNETT: Lack of purchasing power in the dark days of the depression, clearly.

Mr. GARDINER: That is true. And there is this to be kept in mind, that when the government goes to these sales to purchase cattle it has a considerable effect upon the price. I think there is a limit to what the government ought to do in that direction, because if we raise the price we may make it impossible for some people to buy bulls. There is much in what has been said as to the necessity for distributing more and more of these bulls, but we have to consider both aspects of the matter in making our purchases.