

*Supply—Egg Grading*

a pound of bad butter thereby depreciates the value of the whole product and lessens the demand.

Mr. M. R. DUNCAN (North Grey): Mr. Speaker, I am sorry that the hon. member for Southeast Grey (Miss Macphail) did not come to Owen Sound with her eggs on a market day, for then I am sure she would have got more money for them. I am surprised to hear that the farmers of her constituency regard the egg-grading law as a good law, because in my constituency when the regulations came into force the farmers were very much annoyed and expressed their disapproval in strong terms. We have a market in Owen Sound on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays, and private citizens go there to buy their butter and eggs. But those eggs are not graded at all, there being no inspector present for the purpose. Therefore I do not think the law is any good at any time.

Mr. W. D. EULER (North Waterloo): Mr. Speaker, I should not like to be found among those who are opposed to the proper protection of the people's interests so far as food is concerned. I think, though, that in an effort to make a good law it is just possible occasionally to go a little too far, and I am inclined to suspect that that is the case with the present egg-grading law. I am familiar with only one point with respect to this law, which happened to come specially to my notice in the city of Kitchener and the town of Waterloo. In those two centres eggs are offered on the market very freely by the farmers of the surrounding country, and I suppose we have there two of the largest farm produce markets in Ontario outside of the larger cities. Those markets open very early, that in Kitchener at seven o'clock in the morning, which necessitates the farmers starting off from their homes at five o'clock. Under the present grading regulations they are obliged to stand in line until such time as their eggs can be inspected by the inspector, and they are required to pay 2 cents a dozen for the inspection. This delay has caused a good deal of dissatisfaction and inconvenience. My hon. friend from British Columbia (Mr. Neill) says the inconvenience is not very great, and the corresponding benefits outweigh it. I am not quite so sure about that. Certainly it is a very great inconvenience to the farmers I have referred to. There is also the inconsistency mentioned by an hon. member that there is no grading of eggs required when the farmer sells them from house to house or delivers them to his

[Mr. Neill.]

customers. I do not see why the farmer should not have the same freedom on the market.

Mr. EDWARDS (Frontenac): A block or two away.

Mr. EULER: Yes. I think in most cases those who buy their eggs on the market or at the door purchase them mostly from the same farmer; there is an established trade. When this matter came up with us about two months ago, the question was raised whether eggs had to be graded on the market. I took the opportunity of asking the Minister of Agriculture in regard to this, and he expressed the view that in quantities of less than fifteen dozen it was not necessary to grade eggs either on the market or when they were sold from house to house. I thought that was a pretty fair interpretation. However, it was found that the minister was mistaken and that under the law it was necessary to grade all eggs offered for sale on the market. I am not opposed out and out to the egg-grading law. I have my doubts about it, because, as I said at the outset, I think we are prone to make too many laws. At the time the law was enacted I thought it was quite fair because it would protect the farmer trying to sell by retail as against the dealer.

I would suggest to the minister as strongly as I can that he might very well vary the law and allow farmers to sell on the public markets in the same way as they sell from house to house. I know it has been urged that people would very much sooner pay a little more for their eggs even on the market, provided they are assured of getting absolutely good eggs. That may be true. Probably every member of the House, myself included, would prefer to buy eggs of undoubted quality. I think the provision might still be retained of having eggs graded where farmers desired the inspector to do so, but not to make this compulsory on the market. Then if we desire to have graded eggs we will go to those farmers who are taking the precaution to have their eggs inspected and graded. Possibly it would result that after a time those selling ungraded eggs would find it to their interest to have their eggs graded. I hope the minister will make some provision whereby this nuisance of grading at the market may be abolished.

Mr. RYCKMAN: Does the hon. gentleman think there should be grading with No. 1 first and then three grades superior to No. 1?

Mr. EULER: I am quite prepared to admit that we have too many grades. I rather