

think that this matter should be brought very forcibly to the attention of the Railway Commission. I have in my feeble way tried to do that, but I was informed in reply that you could produce an argument in favour of a reduction of freight rates on anything. That was a rather flippant way to deal with a question which is of the greatest importance, to us at least. When you increase the price of ground limestone from \$5 to \$7 or thereabouts, through increased freight rates, it is a very serious thing, and I would like to see some action taken to afford us relief.

Mr. MOTHERWELL: I will keep the matter in mind.

Mr. JOHNSTON (Last Mountain): The minister will remember that his predecessor in office met those interested in the production and marketing of bacon through a conference held last fall, with a view of discussing the improvement of the quality of our bacon, both in its raw state and in the finished condition. What results, if any, have come from that conference?

Mr. MOTHERWELL: The conference was held in November and was attended by representatives of all the departments of Agriculture as well as by producers and representatives of abattoirs, the idea being to work out a plan of grading of hogs or bacon. Shortly after the new government was formed we started to carry out the conclusions of the conference. The necessary Orders in Council have gone through, and the whole question has got the 'once over'. But it is amazing what an intricate matter it is to get appointments made. It is simply a question now of getting the men for the positions. As my hon. friend knows, advertisement has to be made and applications have to be received. I assume that when the positions are advertised there will be from 150 to 200 applicants for the 20 or 22 positions. It will take about two weeks to advertise the positions; then the receiving of applications will take a little while longer, after which the process of examination must take place, the rating of the applicants, and so on. I cannot, therefore, give my hon. friend any assurance when the actual grading of hogs will be in operation. My deputy tells me that with reasonable luck—because I cannot put it in any other way—we shall be able to put the ball into play about the first of June; we were aiming at starting about the first of May. We would like to commence when the business is slack, so there will be the least possible disturbance

to the old order of things in the introduction of the new.

Mr. JOHNSTON (Last Mountain): Does the minister's explanation mean that his department is implementing the work done by those conferences?

Mr. MOTHERWELL: Yes.

Mr. JOHNSTON (Last Mountain): Might I ask the minister's opinion as to the grading of live hogs? Does he think it will be effective, and what benefit will result to the producer?

Mr. MOTHERWELL: Before I answer the first question I may say that provision for paying these men is made in the vote under discussion. Everything has been provided for: Regulations have been drafted, Orders in Council passed, and the matter is now either before the Civil Service Commission or on the point of being sent there—I do know it has got to go to the commission. As to my hon. friend's other question, I was not at the conference referred to, but I have had a discussion with a number of those who were, and the idea is this: As time goes on the tendency in all agricultural countries, owing to the keen competition—not only to secure markets but to retain them—is to put all farm products on the market in a graded condition, and to encourage the buying based upon quality. That is to say, in order to get quality you must encourage quality, in order to encourage quality you must pay on that basis; and—just as the hon. member's wheat, oats, barley or rye out in Last Mountain is paid for on the basis of quality—the hope is that by the grading of hogs, which is certainly difficult but not impossible to carry out, payment will be largely made on the basis of quality and that will encourage quality. Now, the idea of these hog graders is not to grade every consignment that comes in, but rather to grade those that the buyer and the seller disagree on. If my hon. friend were the purchaser of hogs and I the seller, as long as we could agree on the grade there would be no difficulty about the transaction; but if we disagreed then the matter would be referred to this grader or, as it would be more proper to call him, referee. That is the way we propose to start. I think that even the grade my hon. friend and I might agree on should be made the subject of record even though we do not refer to the referee at all, so that we would be able to keep track of how the amount in hogs corresponds with the