

a car which was about to leave the province, but as the eggs did not come up to the grade required, the shipment was turned down with a resulting loss to the producers. That same dealer in Montreal went to the United States and bought a carload of eggs on which he made a good deal of money for the reason that he did not have to have them graded. He sold them as just eggs, and, as I say, he made money on the transaction and he did not come back to British Columbia. At the time of which I speak there was no compulsory grading so far as trade within the province was concerned, nor was there any restriction on eggs coming into the country. An effort was made to secure legislation controlling the situation, but it was impossible to get the wholesalers and the producers to agree. At the meeting to which I have referred the wholesalers were more numerous and influential than the producers, so that no recommendation was made. The government, however, afterwards took the matter up and decided to provide grading regulations to apply to all eggs coming into Canada. This provision resulted in the immediate exclusion of all eggs coming from the orient as well as in a marked reduction in imports from the United States. The opposition of the wholesalers was based on the assumption that inasmuch as the Americans did not grade their eggs the Canadian business man would be at a disadvantage. But did it result in any loss to the farmers or in a restriction of the sale of eggs? Not at all. It resulted, as the records of the Department of Agriculture will show, in an enormous increase in the consumption of eggs per capita.

I am surprised that the hon. gentleman who has introduced this amendment should take this attitude in regard to the question now being considered, for if the grading of eggs means anything at all it means protection in a definite form and of a most desirable kind. It is the kind of protection we can all agree upon. It protects the producer without adding any expense to the consumer. I am sorry that the debate has come on so unexpectedly, because I should have liked to have got all the data available to discuss the subject fully. I am safe in saying however that, as things have worked out, the consumption of eggs per capita in Canada since egg grading regulations have gone into effect has increased very materially. And this is readily understood. People in comfortable circumstances will buy eggs so long as they are assured of getting a sound article; but if they come across a bad egg now and then, they are apt to turn against the commodity for a

while. They are, however, prepared to pay the highest price for the finest article. So that the grading of eggs, assuring as it does a uniform and high standard, has resulted in a large increase in sales. The poultry dealer as well as the farmer, is therefore satisfied, and the consumer is pleased because he knows just what he is getting. If anyone likes to buy an inferior egg at a lower price he is at liberty to do so, but the important point is that the eggs are not all mixed together now as they were formerly.

I am sorry I cannot produce the resolutions to-day, but when speaking a few months ago on another subject I read to the House two if not three resolutions passed by egg producing associations in British Columbia. They all emphasized this one demand: Please ask the Dominion government not to monkey with the grading regulations. One resolution was to this effect: It has been called to our attention that an effort has been made, or is being made, or is going to be made by the wholesalers and egg dealers of Canada to modify these regulations. We hope and we beg the government not to give heed to them. I read two, if not three, of those resolutions, and they will be found on Hansard. Therefore I think this amendment is not justified. While I admit it would make it a little easier for the farmer to retail his eggs directly, any inconvenience he is now subjected to is a small matter in comparison with the greater benefit that will accrue to him and all of his class in having a better demand for eggs as a result of these regulations.

As regards British Columbia and Ontario, while Ontario probably produces more eggs on account of its greater size and population, I think per capita British Columbia is a far larger producer of eggs, because the poultry men there engage in specialized egg farming. It is not uncommon for a poultry farmer to have from 4,000 up to as high as 10,000 birds. In their associations the poultrymen express their views, and I am quite free to state that not one of those associations, which are composed of the most advanced poultry farmers, has ever expressed a desire to go back on the egg regulations now in force.

Mr. EDWARDS (Frontenac): Would my hon. friend favour the application of this principle of grading to butter, so that farmers would be obliged to grade the butter that they offer on the local market?

Mr. NEILL: Yes, I think I would go that length in the interest of the farmer himself, because every man who sells a bad egg or