

before the House, though I believe that, as an actual fact, the Government have not found it necessary to slaughter any animals yet. But the day may come at any time when contagious diseases may prevail to such an extent in Canada as to render it absolutely necessary for the Government to kill and destroy a large number of animals, many of whom, perhaps, may not be diseased at all. According to the law as it now stands, I think if any farmer or any owner of animals neglects to report even the most trifling contagious disease among them, he could not recover anything, even ten years afterwards, and he would have no claim against the Government for the loss of any animals they might have to destroy. There are to-day in Canada animals of very great value. In my county of Wellington the farmers have paid a great deal of attention to raising first-class stock, which is very valuable indeed, and it certainly would be a great hardship, in case a contagious disease broke out amongst them, and it became necessary to destroy a number of animals, if the Government did not remunerate those farmers who had sustained the loss, where there had been no neglect according to the spirit of the law, though there might be according to the letter. I think there is no doubt that the law in that case requires amendment, and I trust the House will back up the efforts of the hon. member.

Mr. PATERSON (Brant). In connection with this Bill I wish to bring a point to the notice of the Minister of Agriculture, so that if the present Act is defective in granting adequate compensation for the destruction of valuable animals, it may be remedied. I may illustrate by stating that in my own county, though not in my own riding, there was a severe outbreak of hog cholera. It came to my notice, and I at once reminded the gentleman that we had passed a very stringent Act requiring that as soon as any infectious disease broke out among animals, the owner should notify the Minister of Agriculture. I asked this gentleman to do so, and he did at once inform the Government. The disease spread very fast among his own herd of hogs, and there was danger of its spreading elsewhere. He took all the steps required under the Act to prevent the spreading of the disease. A local veterinary surgeon was called in—I do not know whether he was a Government official or not—and the disease was clearly manifested. It was known to be contagious and fatal, and seemed to require the slaughter of the hogs. Well, the hogs were slaughtered; I think, speaking from memory, that something like sixty hogs were slaughtered, a very valuable lot; yet this was done without the officer of the Department having ordered the killing of the hogs. If I remember rightly the officer did not reach the scene of the inspection until some weeks, perhaps, certainly some days, after notice had been sent to the Department of Agriculture. But it was clearly evident that it would not do to keep the hogs in that state, and they were slaughtered in the public interest. Now, I want the Minister to consider this fact. I am not blaming the Minister. The question is under adjudication now, and I believe the Minister is desirous of doing what is just in the matter and I trust that, under the Act, even as it stands, he may see his way clear, within the spirit of the Act to grant compensation in that case. But if the Act is deficient in that respect, it seems to me that a person acting in good faith, taking all the steps that are required, giving instant notice, and who is willing to sacrifice his property in that way, as he must do, even under the law of compensation that is provided in the Act, there should be no difficulty about his recovering the compensation that the Act intended he should have. When Parliament agreed to this Act it was considered a very stringent measure, but the House, I think, were unanimously of opinion that it was a wise step on the part of the Minister

Mr. ORON,

of Agriculture to introduce a Bill of this kind, because, as he pointed out, and as the House very rightly recognised, our cattle industry is such an important one that anything that would endanger it in the slightest degree would almost be a national calamity. But if we are to have an Act in which the Minister himself will not be able to allow compensation, except in very rare cases, then it seems to me we have frustrated our first intention. I believe the intention of this Act was in good faith, that if a person found a disease breaking out amongst his hogs or cattle, and if he immediately communicated the fact to the Government, not trying to hide it, and if these hogs and cattle were slaughtered for the benefit of the community, then compensation should be given to him, and that should be done without waiting for an order from the Government officer to slaughter them, except he should come upon the scene within a very short time after notice had been given. If the notice is given to the Department, and the officer does not put in an appearance for two or three weeks, then there must be action taken, and if the action is taken in the interests of the community, it seems to me there ought to be power given to the Minister, upon being satisfied that the cattle were not slaughtered by the direct order of the inspector, he not having arrived in time, to give some compensation for the loss of the animals. That is a point I wish to bring to the attention of the Minister. The mover of the Bill does not seem to have recognised that difficulty—perhaps no case has arisen in his own part of the county. His Bill deals more particularly with what he deems fairer and larger compensation for the animals. But I am pointing out a practical difficulty that exists in many cases where animals are slaughtered in the public interests. If it be true that in such a case as I have pointed out there is no power to grant compensation, I think the law should be remedied. I feared from some remarks I heard, that there was a difficulty in that respect, and the Bill being before us now I have taken this opportunity of making these remarks that I would have preferred to defer until the Minister had decided whether he had power in the matter.

Mr. SPROULE. While I think the Bill introduced by the Minister of Agriculture last year hardly went far enough, I think this one goes a little too far, while one did not allow compensation enough for animals killed, I think this allows too much compensation. In this amendment there appears to be only provision made for two classes of disease, rinderpest and pleuro-pneumonia. It provides a specific amount for animals affected by those diseases that are killed. Then it includes all other kinds of diseases in one class, and goes on to say that in every other case compensation shall be made on the value of the animal immediately before it was slaughtered, but the compensation shall not in any case exceed \$200. If those were the only prevailing diseases to which animals were liable, then I could understand why they were classed together and the balance of the diseases were put in one class. But there are other diseases equally contagious and infectious and as common and as dangerous and injurious and as likely to spread. In what class would the hon. gentleman put glanders, one of the most dangerous diseases in the country?

Mr. MULLOCK. That is not a cattle disease, and this amendment only deals with cattle.

Mr. SPROULE. I do not know what the interpretation of the word cattle in this Bill is.

Mr. MULLOCK. The amendment is limited to cattle.

Mr. SPROULE. If that is so why should the hon. member for Brant (Mr. Paterson) introduce hogs.

Mr. PATERSON (Brant). Because they come under this class.