

The Commercial

WINNIPEG, OCTOBER 19, 1896.

INSPECTION OF FOODSTUFFS.

The Commercial has several times referred to the need of some system of inspection of foodstuffs offered or sold in Winnipeg. Complaints have frequently come to our knowledge of the sale of fish, poultry, meats, etc., which were unfit for food. The winter season will soon be on, when frozen stuff is offered on the market, and in this form it is very difficult to detect damaged stuff. Many persons are in consequence imposed upon, through the purchase of fish, poultry, etc., which, when thawed out, is found to be in a partially decayed condition.

So far as the inspection of dressed meat is concerned, this is a difficult matter, particularly when the goods are offered in a frozen state. Still, an expert would be able to detect a great deal of the stuff which would be unfit for food while the average consumer would not notice that anything was wrong with the goods.

A proper system of inspection would include a strict inspection of all live animals, before they are slaughtered. Inspection of live animals can be carried out to much better advantage than in the case of dressed meats. In the case of live animals, an expert would have no difficulty in detecting any that were unfit for food. Animals which would be readily detected as unfit for food while alive, would, no doubt, sometimes pass inspection in a dressed form. An inspection of live animals is therefore of the greatest value from a sanitary point of view, and in the summer season an inspection of this nature would cover a most everything offered for sale in the city. In the winter season, when frozen stuff is being shipped into the market from outside points, a closer inspection of dressed meats, etc., is necessary.

So far no systematic effort has ever been made here to have an inspection of either live animals or foodstuffs. The health authorities have occasionally made a seizure of stuff offered which was considered unfit for food, but the efforts had only been of a spasmodic nature, and no regular system of looking after such matters has ever been introduced. It is evidently time that something should be done in this matter. The Commercial is informed that a large number of lumpy jawed cattle are being slaughtered and sold for food in the city. We were informed that one party alone slaughtered eight of these diseased animals in one week recently. Animals are afflicted with this disease are generally regarded by experts as unfit for food. The slaughter of such animals for food is prohibited in some cities. We understand that at Chicago the rule is, that animals afflicted with lumpy jaw go in to the rendering vats.

If animals afflicted with this and other diseases, or badly wounded or bruised, are unfit for food, their slaughter and sale for food should be prohibited. Unscrupulous persons will always be ready to handle this class of stuff. In fact, they can make more money out of the animals than they can by handling

healthy ones, as the diseased or bruised animals can often be bought very cheap, some times for only a few dollars per head, while the dressed meat from them is sold at only a moderate reduction from the ruling market price.

What is required in order to provide a proper inspection, is a central station, where all slaughtering for the city should be done. With a central station provided, and slaughtering there made compulsory, it would be an easy matter to provide for an efficient inspection of animals before slaughtering.

Besides the facilities which would afford for inspection, a central abattoir would do away with the present objectionable system of having slaughtering houses scattered about the outskirts of the city. Aside altogether from the question of inspection, these slaughter houses scattered about the suburbs of the city, are not at all desirable in situations.

COLD STORAGE

Cold storage is a modern institution, the great value of which is we may say, only beginning to be realized in this country. A great deal has been done of late by private enterprise in establishing cold storage warehouses throughout the country. In our own city of Winnipeg for instance, we are now well supplied with cold storage facilities, sufficient to the demand of the local trade, and also capable of accommodating the export trade in dairy produce.

But while a great deal has been done by private enterprise, a great deal yet remains to be done before the country will have a properly equipped cold storage system throughout the land. A complete cold storage system would be a great thing for Canada. In view particularly of our large export of dairy produce, fruit, eggs, meat etc. A complete system of cold storage connecting the Canadian produce with the British consumer, would make a revolution almost in our export trade in many lines.

A complete system of cold storage would make cold storage a necessity with butter and cheese factories, etc. It would mean cold storage warehouses at all important markets where produce is received, and finally it would mean refrigeration service by rail and steamship all the way through to the British consumer. By such a system we would be enabled to place our goods on the British market in better condition than can be done at present. Take the case of butter, for instance. Deterioration is very rapid, as soon as the butter is made and stored away, and without proper storage facilities, this deterioration is very rapid. With first class storage facilities all along the line, from the factory to the producer, this deterioration in quality would be minimized, and our goods would reach the British consumer fresh and sweet. With such a system provided, goods could be held longer in case of unfavorable markets, with very little loss in quality, while without proper storage the goods would have to be sacrificed, either on the unfavorable market or in quality by holding under poor storage conditions.

There are also great possibilities in connection with our export live stock trade, in connection with a complete cold storage system. Instead of exporting live

animals, the dressed meat could be exported often to far better advantage, were the facilities provided for handling a chilled meat trade. To do this slaughtering centres would have to be established in connection with refrigerating warehouses, and refrigerating transportation facilities. By such a system there would be great economy in handling the trade, as compared with the expensive plan of exporting live animals. From a humanitarian point of view, everything would also be in favor of slaughtering as near the seat of production as possible.

At the recent session of the Dominion parliament a small grant was made for cold storage purposes. It is understood the government contemplates undertaking the establishment of a complete system of cold storage for the country, including rail and steamer service. An ocean service will be considered in connection with the proposed fast Atlantic steamship line. This fast Atlantic line, by the way, as a passenger and mail line, will be a very good thing, providing the cost will not be too great, but the cold storage scheme, we believe is of rather greater importance than a fast Atlantic service. It is also understood that the government specially contemplates the establishing of an export trade in dressed meats, in connection with the proposed cold storage system. The small sum voted at the late session of parliament, will only be sufficient for some preliminary work, and in the meantime the matter will be further considered. Next session the government may be prepared to submit something on a comprehensive scale, in the line of a national system of cold storage.

MIXING WHEAT.

At the recent meeting of the Ontario flour millers, known as the Dominion Millers' Association, very strong ground was taken against the mixing of wheat alleged to be done at Fort William. The principal complaint is against the mixing of scoured wheat (wheat treated for smut) in the No. 2 hard grade. Mr. S. Ink, of Toronto, read a paper on the grading and inspection of Manitoba wheat, in which he condemned some features very strongly. The president also spoke against the mixing of scoured wheat, and urged the association to bear the cost of making a test to see if the millers are compelled to accept scoured wheat, or wheat largely composed of scoured stuff, for No. 2 hard. In this connection the president said:

"The result has been that the inspection, except for No. 1 hard, has virtually been a farce, as the order-in-council not specifying any proportion in which scoured wheat might be mixed in, the inspectors have interpreted it so broadly that there are two cases where wheat was two-thirds scoured, and it was claimed that in one case it was all scoured, and No. 2 hard certificates have been issued for it. It seems to me this is a matter in which the association has failed in its duty, as I am satisfied that if it had taken hold of some of the cases which have been brought to the knowledge of your secretary, pushed them to a conclusion before the board of survey in Winnipeg, and then pressed them, by a strong representation at Ottawa against the inspectors, this fault would have been cured long ago, and the millers