

By the Chairman:

Q. What do you mean by productive co-operation?—A. An association of workmen furnishing the capital themselves and working it.

Mr. Smith (Nanaimo):

Q. Developing operations?—A. The development of co-operative operations.

By Mr. Monk:

Q. The sale of agricultural produce?—A. Yes.

Q. There has been a revolution in the sale of agricultural produce on account of these agricultural associations?—A. If you will allow me to say so, another form of co-operation, what I might call a mixed one, for agricultural purposes has been developed to such a wonderful extent in Denmark, that it is almost unimaginable. It has made that country the first in the world, relatively speaking, so far as agricultural products are concerned. That was the productive and distributive system of co-operation amalgamated. Of course each country has its peculiar needs and those needs have to be satisfied by peculiar associations. That is the reason why—as shown by the latest report of the International Co-operative Congress held in Buda Pesth in 1904, where a special study has been made of the legislation in different countries, the laws in the countries in Europe have been very liberal and very generous, in order to let that kind of movement take its own shape; I mean that a hard and fast rule or a cast-iron rule should not be adopted, but that the association should be allowed to develop by itself gradually and take its intended shape according to the needs and the circumstances of the people—the prejudices even, because you have to reckon with them.

By Mr. Bourassa:

Q. It is a very important point which shows that the laws should be quite broad. In a country like this it might be that in one province the banking co-operation, for example, would be the most needed; in another province distributive co-operation might be desired; and in another province industrial co-operation. The Bill should be broad enough to allow all these powers to be exercised so that it will be made use of according to the special needs of the country at large and then according to the special needs of any section of the country?—A. You might find it necessary to amalgamate two or three kinds of co-operation, or they might evolve a new shape of co-operation which is not thought of now for the particular districts where colonization is going on, for instance. You see, the special needs of our country may be such that they may create that new shape. Of course if the law was cast-iron it would prevent development, like the means taken to stop the feet of Chinese women from growing.

Having made my exposé, perhaps too long, I would be very glad to answer any further questions that might be put.

The CHAIRMAN.—Are there any other points upon which you would like to hear Mr. Desjardins?

Mr. MONK.—I have no more questions to ask.

Mr. Smith (Nanaimo):

Q. Have you had any experience with regard to the distributive co-operation societies at all?—A. No, I have not, only a friend of mine, co-operatively speaking, wrote me some time ago from Hamilton, Mr. J. P. Whelan, president of the Canadian Co-operative Concern.

By the Chairman:

Q. In Ontario?—A. Yes. The society has an authorized capital of \$250,000.