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FARMS AND FARMING

Sheep Raising in British Columbia.

"As a result of the new system of handling grazing leases in the province, I look to see a very great increase in the sheep-raising industry here"; so said the Hon. E. D. Barrow, Minister of Agriculture in British Columbia, when in Vancouver in December.

"Under the new system, instead of great areas being set apart for individual graziers to administer as they thought best, a commission of grazing experts will administer the lands, charting out areas to which the graziers must take their flocks and herds at certain seasons.

"There are great areas in the interior which have not been used for grazing because the lands have been too high and rocky for cattle to do well. In most of these places, too, the flies have been too bad for the cattle to exist, so that they have had to go to the lower levels. These high rocky lands, however, with large patches of pastures and flowering herbs, make splendid pasturage for sheep, which are protected by their long wool from the attacks of flies."

Self Feeders for Hogs.

Much of the drudgery is taken out of hog-feeding by the use of the self-feeder. According to investigations carried on at the Experimental Farm at Ottawa, hogs after they have reached a certain age, do better when fed in this way, provided the proper mixtures are used. Strange to say, when properly handled, dangerous and wasteful overfeeding is not so likely to occur with the self-feeder as when meals are given at stated hours. It has been shown that the hogs are the best judges of when they should take food. The feeder is fully described in Special Circular No. 15, obtainable at the office of the Publications Branch of the Department of Agriculture at Ottawa. This bin-like receptacle is easily made at a cost of about \$10, even when new lumber is used in its construction.

The Live Stock Commission's Report.

A vista of development, vitally affecting the interest of agriculture in this province, is disclosed by the publication of the Saskatchewan Live Stock Commission.

The inquiry conducted by the commission has been careful and prolonged. The recommendations of the commissioners, all of whom were men whose opinions, either as experts in the live stock industry or in economics as applied to marketing, have always been received with respect, have been arrived at unanimously, and for that reason amongst others will carry weight both with the general public and with the government. The summary now published, while giving the recommendations rather fully, does not, of course, give any of the facts and figures on which the opinions and conclusions of the commissioners were based. For these it will be necessary to wait for a short time until the full report is published. The list of recommendations, however, has been so well received on all sides, that the publication of the report itself will merely serve as it were to clench the matter, and to make it more obvious that the best possible method of dealing with a most difficult question has been hit upon.

The commissioners recommend that:—

(1) Co-operative shipping agencies should be vigorously encouraged in order to increase

the marketing of stock through these agencies.

(2) The greater potentialities of the live stock industry in Saskatchewan, together with the long haul to existing markets, make it advisable to establish a public central market in Saskatchewan as soon as financial and marketing conditions warrant.

(3) To complete marketing facilities, packing plants are a prime necessity, first at the central market and later at local points.

(4) A number of cold storage warehouses should be established as rapidly as possible at strategic points throughout the province.

(5) As far as organisation is concerned, the best course would be to take advantage of existing machinery, and by utilising the Saskatchewan Co-operative Creameries, Limited, a ready-made nucleus is found for subsequent development.

The last recommendation, on the subject of financing, is quoted in full:—

(6) "In financing this development, your commissioners are of the opinion that the method which has already been tried and proven successful in Saskatchewan, of seeking from the farmers mainly concerned subscriptions to the shares of a co-operative company, together with a loan from the provincial government, to cover a definite proportion of the capital outlay, would be most satisfactory. In view, further, of the concentration of the company's activities, in large measure, at the centre where the stock-yards and packing plant are established, it is recommended that substantial assistance in the form of a stock subscription should be sought from each municipality. Assuming that an arrangement is effected with the Saskatchewan Co-operative Creameries, Limited, the immediate programme suggested is an extension of the aid given it by the province so as to provide for the opening of cold storage warehouses at the following centres, as rapidly as conditions warrant, in addition to the plants of this company already in operation or under construction at Regina, Saskatoon, North Battleford and Vonda: Melfort, Yorkton, Prince Albert, Swift Current, Weyburn, Moose Jaw, Wadena, Melville, Canora, Lloydminster, Estevan and Carlyle.

As soon as the establishment of the stock yards and packing plant is found feasible, the commission recommends that the provinces should make a loan, at cost, and repayable on an amortisation basis in thirty years, for an amount not to exceed two-thirds of the expenditure so incurred, and conditionally on the subscription of the requisite amount of stock by new and old shareholders in the company.

It will thus be seen that the carrying out of the recommendations of the commission is, after all, only the next logical step in the government's now well-established policy of applying co-operative principles, wherever possible, to the solution of our agricultural and other difficulties. The farmer can already sell co-operatively his grain, dairy products, wool and poultry, while our agricultural credit system is also essentially co-operative, and he transacts his business over a co-operative telephone system. Practically there only remains the live stock to be dealt with, and the report of the commission indicates a line of procedure which should commend itself to all concerned.

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