

more to the conviction, notwithstanding their objections in the initial stages, that co-operation is the only means by which they will be able to attain their greatest success. The fact that one uniform standardized product should be put upon the market is realized now to be the secret of their success.

The hon. member who introduces this amendment alluded to the fact that some of his constituents had to pay two cents a dozen for the grading of their eggs. Apparently the hon. gentleman's constituents have fallen upon rugged places, because it is done much cheaper out west although the cost of living is higher there. In the town of Courtenay, which is in the district I represent, there is an admirable system of co-operation which has worked out quite satisfactorily. It is true that originally the conditions indicated by the hon. member did obtain. A man brought his eggs to market and was unable to grade them himself. It was not convenient for him to do so, and it was equally inconvenient for the small grocer, to whom he sold his product, to do the grading. The result was that a haphazard system developed. To-day, on the other hand, all local eggs are taken to the creamery where they are graded by an expert. And it does not require any great amount of study, nor does it take very long for a man of ordinary intelligence to become expert in the grading of eggs. The eggs are graded and put into cartons or into other containers according to destination, this being done at the expense of the creamery; and if my memory does not serve me falsely—I do not think it does—the charge is half a cent a dozen. Under this system the public are sure of getting one standard grade of eggs. There is no trouble with dirty and inferior eggs to-day. The creamery after supplying the local demand ships out the surplus to the large markets in Vancouver and elsewhere. The same thing is done in the district represented by my hon. friend from Nanaimo (Mr. Dickie). The result is a vast improvement upon the old-fashioned method of marketing eggs. I have personally seen eggs pour into the country grocer who, although he did not want them, could not refuse to take them. He would cut down the price, but that did not help matters. The consequence was that there was left on his hands a miscellaneous assortment of odds and ends of hen's produce, from first class samples to dirty eggs. The grocer made a feeble attempt, with his meagre knowledge, to classify and ship out the better ones, but in the long run there was nothing but dissatisfaction both to himself and to the farmers.

[Mr. Neill.]

Eggs, I may observe, are now allowed to be shipped by the farmer ungraded if they are going to some wholesaler at a distance at whose warehouse they will be subject to inspection. There is always some objection to compulsory co-operation when it is first mooted. There will always be found persons who are ready to complain of any suggestion of restriction in any direction whatever. Men will say, "We want the right to do as we please. We want to have the freedom to sell our own produce as we see fit." Why, I have heard the argument for freedom of speech and freedom of action carried to absurd lengths, it is rather played out nowadays. I have even heard of the right to get drunk. On one occasion I came across an immigrant from some of the southern European countries who had a very serious grievance. It appeared that he had been arrested and put in jail because he had been discovered beating his wife, and he did not seem to see any reason for such a course. He explained to me that wife-beating was quite a common, and indeed almost an essential, part of the social system over there. Could a man not beat his own wife, he wanted to know. It is of course all in the point of view.

To-day the farmers are coming to see that no one should have the right to dispose of inferior produce in such a way as to injure the market for others. No producer should ship dirty eggs to the market and so spoil the chances of success of his brother farmers. It is in recognition of this principle that the regulations governing the shipment of eggs have been drawn up.

Some suggestion has been made that this was playing into the hands of the wholesalers. The reverse is the case. In 1922 I was present at a meeting held in the Chateau Laurier of representatives of the various egg dealers and producers in Canada. The wholesalers and other dealers outnumbered the producers, whose representatives were comparatively few. The object of the meeting was to study the situation with a view to adopting if possible some means of improving the quality of the product. The wholesalers opposed any suggestion looking to the grading of eggs. They declared that it would be disastrous to their business; they would have to go out of business if any system of egg grading were undertaken. Now, it happened that we had a Dominion act providing for inspection of eggs, but it applied only interprovincially. If a cargo of eggs left Vancouver for Victoria, no inspection was required; but in the case of a shipment from any point in British Columbia to Montreal, say federal inspection was enforced. I know of