

From the *Montreal Weekly Witness*, June 14th, 1913:

DEAR MEAT.

The cost of living still keeps going up, according to the statistics which the Department of Labor goes to so much trouble and expense carefully to compile each month. The *Labor Gazette* for April is just issued, and shows an advance from 135.9 to 136.3. This means that the cost of living is now 36.3 per cent. higher than it was for the average of the ten years, 1890 to 1900. The cost of groceries, including vegetables and all kinds of manufactured articles, has only risen about 17 or 18 per cent. over the price of the period that is taken as a standard of comparison. By far the larger part of the increase in cost is due to the great rise in the value of animal products. Meats have advanced 86 per cent., leather products 60 per cent., and fish also 60 per cent. Animal farming would on this showing be now nearly twice as profitable as it was fifteen years ago were it not that the cost of labor has advanced materially. In the case of poultry it would be two and one-third times as profitable. Even if the farmers began now to increase their live stock as rapidly as possible, meat is likely to be still dearer before it becomes cheaper. Indeed, the only way to increase the live stock output is to hold a larger number out of the market for breeding, and so still further shorten the supply. The results of these high prices will certainly be to introduce mixed farming on thousands of one-crop farms, as well as to greatly increase the number of cattle kept, where but a few head have usually been maintained. An incidental benefit will be the betterment of the land itself. It will take some time for a readjustment of the country's farming, such as will equalize prices and provide for the inrush of immigrants to take place. Its accomplishment will, however, work good in many ways. Unfortunately the farmer does not reap the whole profit of this large rise in the price of meats. It is very largely absorbed by the monopolistic