

said, "You have two selects." This gentleman replied, "I think we had better put these into a pen here and wire Ottawa to have someone come and grade them. I have been a swine judge at a number of fairs in the province of Quebec for a good many years and I know a great deal more about hog grading than you will ever know." They became rather hot under the collar and argued for a while; finally they cooled down, and then this same grader gave him 37 selects out of the lot instead of 2.

The Egg Grading Act is worse than the Hog Grading Act. The egg grader is not even a government employee; he is a little two-by-four clerk in the employ of the commission house, and naturally he is going to do all he can to help the commission men. I could give the details in scores of cases where the egg producers throughout the eastern townships have been exploited in the shipping of eggs to Montreal. The condition has become so bad that the small dealer in the country will not buy ungraded eggs because every time he sends a crate of eggs to Montreal he loses. As a result the farmer is penalized; when he does take his eggs to the grocery store to exchange for goods or cash he receives a very small price because the shipper cannot afford to pay him more and take a chance on the grading in Montreal.

I should like to cite two instances with regard to the grade of eggs which were shipped to Montreal. One crate of select eggs was picked up in the morning and reached the Montreal market at noon. In two or three days the producer received a letter from the commission house giving the grade of the crate; there were two dozen selects, two dozen first, and the remainder were mostly seconds, cracked, rotten and so on. Two or three days later he picked up another crate of specially small eggs; there was not an egg in the crate that would grade over a pullet's egg. In two or three days he received a return showing that the grading was just as good as it was on the case of selects. This demonstrates that they do not look at the eggs at all; they just guess at them. I think they have a blank grading which they send out to the farmer, and they are stealing fifty per cent of his eggs all the time.

I have a particular case in point. On June 6 last we telephoned to a packing house in Montreal for a crate of select eggs. They were sent over, and I have here the tag which was attached to the crate. They were tagged, according to law, with letters an inch high, and we paid \$6 for the crate of thirty dozen eggs, at the rate of 20 cents a dozen.

That crate of eggs was shipped out by express to the eastern townships; it was repacked into another crate in the presence of witnesses and shipped back within twenty-four hours to the same packing company for sale. Here is the result: We paid \$6 for the crate. It was returned to the same packing house within twenty-four hours and the return we got from it was \$3.20. We had extras,  $8\frac{1}{2}$  dozen at 15 cents; first, 13 dozen at 12 cents; seconds, 6 dozen at 10 cents, and cracked, 19 at 9 cents. I want to say right here that when the crate reached its destination in the eastern townships there was not a cracked egg in it, but when those eggs reached Montreal there were 19 cracked and 4 rotten. That is the kind of grading we have to put up with. I have all the evidence before me to prove what I have said, including express bills and all other documents.

As I stated before, it is not the object of the farmers to have impossible regulations imposed against the consumers, but we have to have some method by which the farmer will be assured of a just return for his goods. As conditions exist to-day I say that neither hog grading nor egg grading is satisfactory. The department states that it is doing good work, and that the consumption of eggs is increasing. I say, however, that the farmer is paying for it. He is giving his eggs away. Perhaps by making a gift of them consumption may increase, but that is not what he is farming for. He must make a living on his farm and under present conditions he cannot do it.

I therefore move, seconded by Mr. Tummon, that this matter be referred to the committee on agriculture, or a special committee, or, if it has time, the committee investigating price spreads and mass buying which is now sitting. This matter could be considered and grading regulations could be adjusted. I contend that a small good egg is just as good as a large good egg. There should be two grades, good eggs and bad eggs. Further, in my view the proper way to sell eggs is by the pound, just the same as you would sell hogs or sheep. I believe I have outlined the only logical way for the marketing of eggs.

Mr. PAUL MERCIER (St. Henri): Mr. Speaker, I have listened with a great deal of interest to the speech delivered by the hon. member for Brome-Missisquoi (Mr. Pickel) on hog grading and egg grading. Last year he came along with a motion about milk, stating that the farmer was not receiving enough for that commodity and that the consumer in the city was paying too much. The matter was referred to the committee on agriculture and a report made. No legislation, however, was