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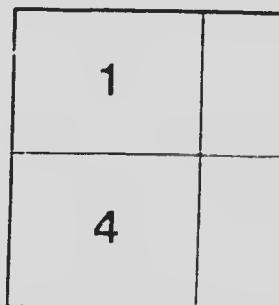
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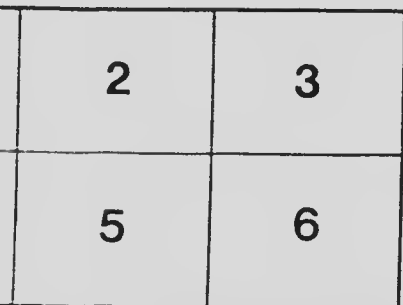
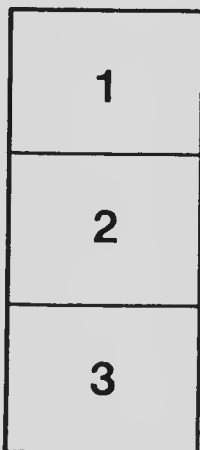
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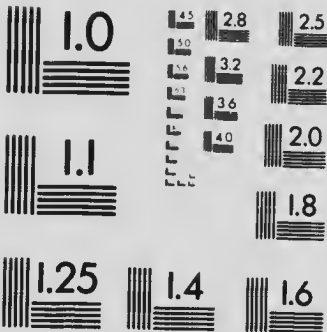
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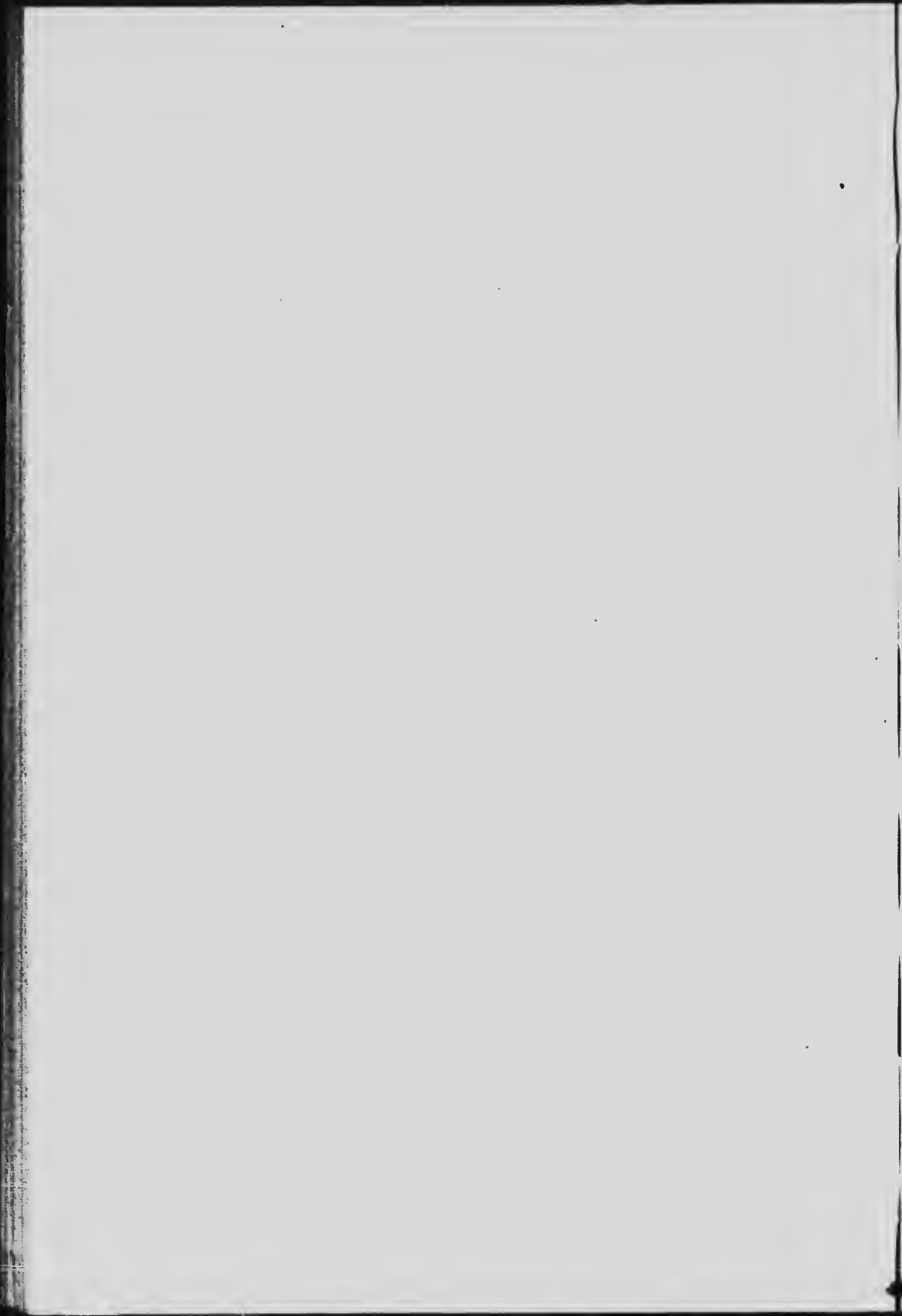
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# THE <sup>e</sup>FRENCH CANADIAN HORSE

EVIDENCE

OF

DR. J. G. RUTHERFORD

*Veterinary Director General and Live Stock Commissioner*

BEFORE THE

SELECT STANDING COMMITTEE <sup>c</sup>

ON

AGRICULTURE AND COLONIZATION

1909

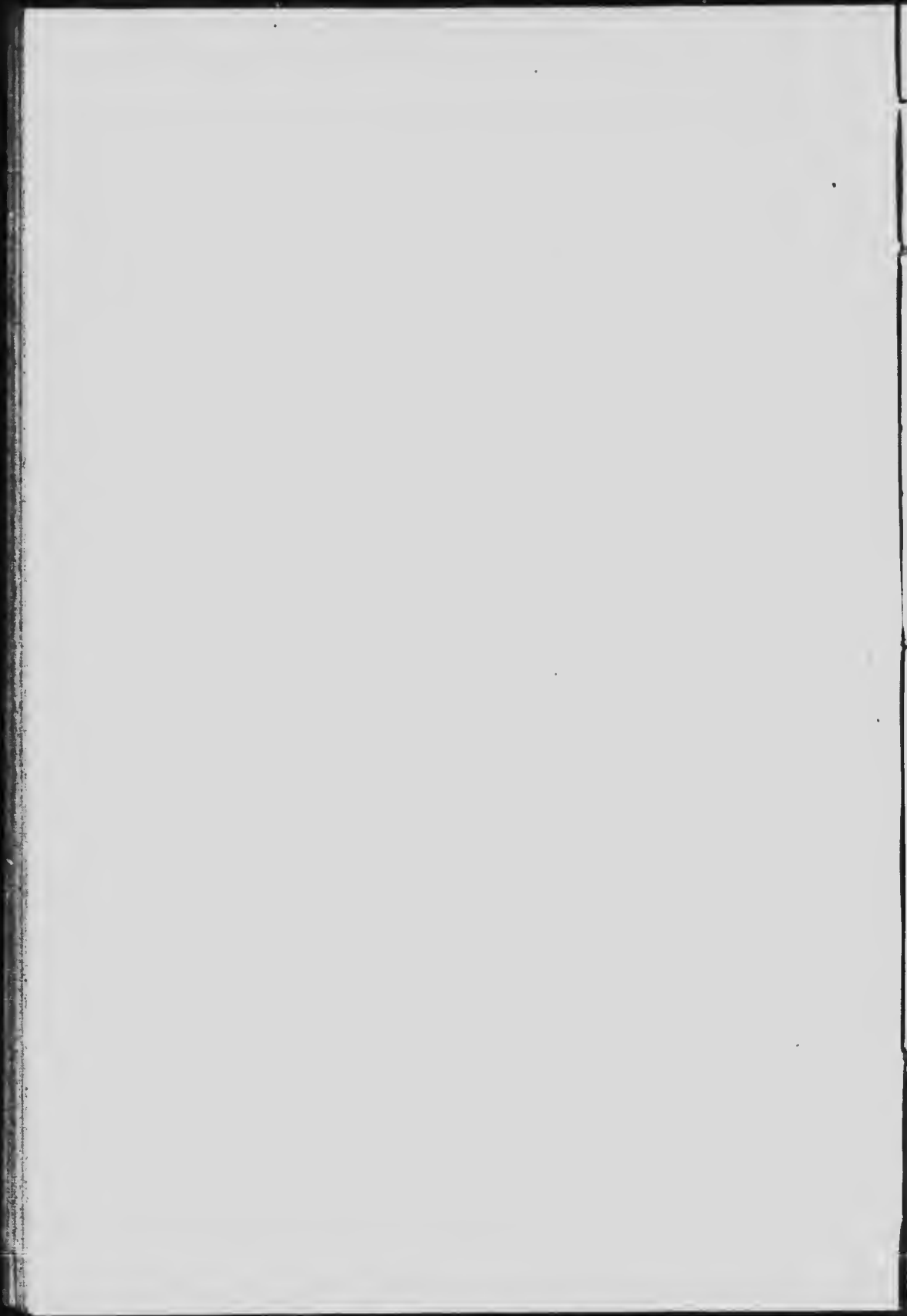
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1909





## THE FRENCH CANADIAN HORSE

HOUSE OF COMMONS,  
COMMITTEE ROOM No. 34,  
WEDNESDAY, March 17, 1909.

The Select Standing Committee on Agriculture and Colonization met here today at 11 o'clock, Mr. Schell, chairman, presiding.

The CHAIRMAN.—We are this morning to hear an address from Mr. J. G. Rutherford, Veterinary Director General and Live Stock Commissioner, on 'The French Canadian Horse.'

### DESCRIPTION OF TYPICAL ANIMAL.

Dr. RUTHERFORD.—The French Canadian is described by those who knew him prior to the great variation in type which, owing to the introduction of other blood, has been brought about within the last thirty years, as an animal of Norman French descent, although of more or less mixed breeding, standing generally but little over fifteen hands high and weighing from nine to eleven hundred pounds. The head is broad and courageous looking, perhaps somewhat coarse, with the ears far apart, the neck thick, the frame stout, the breast full, the shoulders strong, even rather upright, the back rather long than short and sides inclined to flatness, the croup rather round or fleshy with quarters short and somewhat drooping, the muscles well let down and the tendons large, the feet tough and almost immune from disease. Mr. Barnard of Sherbrooke, Que., who perhaps knew the old breed of French Canadian horses as well as any one who has written of them, ascribes the shagginess or abundance of hair on the mane and tail and on the legs which are characteristics of the breed, to the severity of the climate, and suggests that under good cultivation these characteristics would probably disappear long before any change would be perceived in the innate excellencies and peculiarities of the breed.

The French Canadian horse is of no fixed colour and although a good mover with his good perhaps rather forced action, is not inclined to maintain great speed for any length of time although there have been, and are some remarkable exceptions to this

Even though less given to style and showing perhaps less ambition than the Morgan and some of his other relatives, who it may be said in passing, benefited much from the strain of his blood which they undoubtedly acquired, the French Canadian was no whit inferior to any of them or perhaps to any horse of his weight, in strength and endurance. His hardiness and ability to thrive under the most adverse conditions were notable characteristics. Taking him altogether, he was a remarkable little horse, eminently suited for the needs of the habitant, well capable of performing the light agricultural work of the small Canadian farm under the old regime and equally well adapted to the roads of Quebec, which even to this day, especially during the winter season, demanded the employment of a light and active horse, capable of negotiating deep pitch holes and deeper snow drifts, which would bring to grief many animals of more weight and greater pretensions.

I have here in the Report of the Ontario Agricultural Commission of 1881 about the only decent picture of the French Canadian horse which I have been able to find

anywhere. I think it might be passed around among the members of the committee. There is nothing in the book that is germane to the subject except the picture.

While, as above stated, some allege that many different strains were commingled to produce him, the fact remains undisputed that the basic blood of the breed was of the best then available. The following quotation from a recent able report by Dr. J. A. Couture contains facts of great interest:—

'All of these animals were descended from those sent out from France in the early days of the Colony. Louis XIV. so liked to do things in a grand way, had instructed his Minister Colbert, himself very eager to see the Colony flourish, to send here only the best animals of the kingdom.

'Thus on the 16th of July 1655 there were sent to us twenty mares and two stallions from the Royal stables, (unfortunately eight of the mares died during the voyage). Others were sent us in 1667, including a stallion and two mares for the Ursulines. In 1679 eleven mares and a stallion were landed in Quebec; other shipments followed.'

'These horses which remained the King's property for three years, were distributed among the gentlemen of the country who had done most to promote colonization and cultivation.'

In these early days the symmetry and quality which characterise our modern improved breeds were practically unknown so that it is perhaps scarcely fair to attribute the faults or rather peculiarities of conformation, which in our day and that of our fathers have been characteristic of the breed, to want of care or judgment in selection on the part of their breeders, although it is altogether likely that these also had their effect in intensifying the marked peculiarities already mentioned.

There can be no doubt, in view of the evidence adduced that the hardihood and endurance of the French Canadian horse were derived from the same source as the like attributes in the Thoroughbred, namely the Eastern blood, Arab, Turk or Barb, to which all our modern breeds of light horses owe their best qualities.

#### IDENTITY OF THE BREED ALMOST DESTROYED.

From the above description, it must I think be admitted, that the French Canadian breed of horses was well worthy of preservation and that with care in selection, the development of good, the elimination of bad qualities, and the general improvement which might reasonably have been expected under present day conditions, it would, had no adverse circumstances intervened, have been by this time an exceedingly valuable addition to the light horse stock of the Dominion. As has been well pointed out on more than one occasion by Dr. Couture, to whom perhaps, more than to any other man in Quebec is due the present revival of the French Canadian horse, as well as that of the French Canadian cow, a very grave mistake was made thirty years ago by well meaning but short sighted live stock reformers, who, by the introduction of stallions of many different breeds, succeeded in almost entirely destroying the identity of the native strain, and substituting for it the nondescript mongrel now far too frequently found in the stables of our French Canadian fellow citizens.

There are many of us in this room today, myself among the number, though I have been but little over thirty years in Canada, who will recollect the French Canadian horse as he was before the introduction of these foreign sires, and it will be generally admitted that, though now he is seldom seen, he was an infinitely more attractive and valuable animal than the great majority of those who have usurped his place. Every credit is therefore due to those who, actuated by no mercenary but by patriotic motives, have been endeavouring to preserve and perpetuate this ancient and historic breed, and although some mistakes and errors of judgment have undoubtedly been committed, I think, keeping in mind the object they had in view, we should be 'to their faults a little blind and to their virtues very kind.'

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## ESTABLISHMENT OF FRENCH CANADIAN STUD BOOK.

The first step towards the preservation of the original strain was taken in 1885 when as the result of an agitation commenced by Dr. Couture, the Honourable Dr. Ross, then Prime Minister of Quebec, established among other records a French Canadian Stud Book, this being formally opened on December 16, 1886. Its management, as well as that of the French Canadian Herd Book, was entrusted to a Commission composed of M. J. A. L. sage, the Assistant Commissioner of Agriculture and four other gentlemen, namely Dr. J. A. Couture, and Messrs. Chuvant, Barnard and McEachern.

## FORMATION OF FRENCH CANADIAN HORSE BREEDER'S ASSOCIATION.

The work made but little progress until 1895 when the French Canadian Horse Breeders' Association was formed and the work of inspection inaugurated. Between 1895 and 1905, eighteen hundred and one (1801) animals were registered, of which six hundred and twenty-eight (628) were males and eleven hundred and seventy-three (1173) were females. The work progressed in spite of difficulties and drawbacks with more or less success until the year 1904, when as the result of the movement for the establishment of the National Records, the various live stock associations of Quebec surrendered, to some extent, their individuality, and became part and parcel of the new system.

It was not however until after I assumed office as Live Stock Commissioner, in July, 1906, that this new chapter in the history of the Quebec records was really opened. I found on taking charge that our French Canadian breeders, although nearly two years had elapsed, were still to a large extent in outer darkness, and that though a majority of the swine and some few sheep had been recorded, nothing whatever had been done in the way of registering either horses or cattle, while an overwhelming majority of the sheep of Quebec had also been, through one technicality or another, debarred from participating in the benefits of the new order of things. As can readily be imagined, considerable dissatisfaction existed over this state of affairs, inasmuch as a large number of breeders had two seasons' produce unregistered, while the outlook from their point of view was anything but reassuring. It took but a short time to adjust matters as far as the French Canadian Herd Book was concerned and registration of cattle was soon in progress. The sheep question was much more difficult owing to the fact that the standard of registration in Quebec differed considerably from that adopted by the breeders of Ontario, who were naturally, from their business relations, in close touch with the various American Records. The sheep difficulties were however eventually overcome and although a few flocks, either palpably unbreed or the registration of whose ancestors had been neglected, were disqualified, the majority were found eligible for registration, and the situation being loyally accepted, the irritation disappeared.

An examination of the record maintained by the French Canadian Horse Breeders' Association revealed the fact that although the organization had apparently started well and had during the first years of its existence maintained a fairly uniform and strict standard of registration, the same could scarcely be said with justice of the years immediately preceding its merger in the National Records. It was evident that more or less carelessness had occurred in the inspection of horses and their acceptance for registration, the result being that many of the animals entered in the Stud Book were anything but eligible either from the view point of genealogy or from that of conformation. These facts having been brought to the attention of the Minister, steps were immediately taken under his authority with a view of bringing about a more satisfactory state of affairs. The necessity for a change in the existing standard and a general stiffening up of the Stud Book were first brought to the attention of the Association by means of correspondence and subsequently at the annual meeting of the Association held at Montreal in February, 1907, where the Minister discussed the whole

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question with the officers and members. It was then decided to establish a new record, having a fixed and definite standard of qualification and entry, which could only be accorded to such animals as were found eligible after inspection by a special Commission composed of four gentlemen familiar with the breed, two of whom were to represent the Association and two the Department of Agriculture. Those representing the Association were Dr. Couture of Quebec, and M. Arsene Denis of St. Nebert, while the Minister named on behalf of the Department, Mr. Robert Ness of Howick, and Mr. Louis Lavalley, of St. Guillaume d'Upton. Dr. J. H. Vigneau of Three Rivers, one of the official inspectors of the Department was delegated to examine the animals for hereditary unsoundness and also to act as general secretary to the Commission.

#### STANDARD OF REGISTRATION.

The standard agreed upon is as nearly as possible that of the old French Canadian horse which I have already roughly described. Stallions must not exceed in height 15.3 and mares 15.2. The weight preferred is for stallions between eleven hundred and thirteen hundred and fifty pounds, for mares from ten hundred and fifty to twelve hundred and fifty pounds.

Up to date 2,528 horses have been presented to the Commission for inspection, of which 470 had been registered in the old book. Of these, nine hundred and sixty-nine, (134 males and 835 females) of which one hundred and twenty-five had been previously registered, were accepted for entry in the new record. It will thus be seen that 345 animals which had been in the old stud book were refused entry to the new.

The understanding reached at the annual meeting in 1907 was that registration, except for horses the progeny of unregistered sires or unregistered dams not sufficiently matured to allow the Commission to form a correct opinion as to the height, weight or conformation, was to cease on December 31st, 1908, but although every effort was made to cover the ground before that date there still remain a few horses to be examined in Bonaventure, Gaspé, and Isle aux Coudres, as also a number in the provinces of Ontario and four or five in Manitoba and Alberta. Those animals as also the youngsters already referred to, will be inspected during the current year, after which the stud book will be definitely closed unless it is decided to admit a few selected stallions of other light breeds with a view to improving and fixing the type. This step however is one which will only be taken, if at all, with the full approval and consent of the members of the Association.

Meanwhile, as a further encouragement to the breed, the Minister, through the Live Stock Branch of his Department, has authorized the offering of prizes for stallions and mares registered in the new record, and as a result of this action there appeared last year at St. John's, Quebec, over one hundred and twenty high class representatives of the breed. The exhibition on this occasion was most striking and one which evoked much enthusiasm among the spectators.

#### DIFFICULTY LIKELY IN RESUSCITATION OF OLD FRENCH CANADIAN HORSE.

It may be said that owing to the lack of line breeding and the diversity of type in the foundation stock now available for registration, considerable difficulty is likely to be experienced in resuscitating the old French Canadian horse. This is to some extent true and it must be admitted that the task of bringing back the breed in its original purity and with all its original characteristics, is perhaps somewhat beyond the compass of the present organization. On the other hand the history of the development of most of our modern breeds of horses, as well as of other animals, indicates clearly that it is possible by intelligent selection and careful mating to establish in a comparatively few generations a fixed type, capable as a rule of perpetuating itself, although of course, subject from time to time to atavistic variations.

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There is thus, heretofore, every ground for the hope that the French Canadian horse which we are now trying to establish, will be, if not absolutely identical with his early progenitors, at least as good and possibly, although our friends from Quebec may have difficulty in believing it, very much better.

*By Mr. Owen:*

Q. Was there not at one time a horse called the St. Lawrence horse in the province of Quebec?

A. Yes.

Q. It was mated with the French Canadian?

A. Yes.

Q. Are those horses extinct now?

A. Yes, I fancy so. There are a great many of them in the Morgan book you know.

*By Mr. Currie (North Simcoe):*

Q. Is there not a family known as the St. Hilaire?

A. Yes.

Q. Black and a little heavier than the French Canadian horse?

A. Those are practically extinct.

## VALUE OF FRENCH CANADIAN HORSE IN CROSSING WITH OTHER BREEDS.

*By Mr. Miller:*

Q. I would like to ask some questions as to the value of the French Canadian horse in crossing with other breeds. First, what would you think of the value of a French Canadian mare to be bred to a standard bred sire. Second, what would be the adaptability and what would be the result of breeding from a French Canadian male pure bred sire, and the third place, breeding from an Arab sire?

A. The French Canadian mare and the French Canadian horse have already demonstrated, with reference to the American standard bred trotter, the excellence of their qualities. Some of the best and most fashionable strains of the American standard bred trotter trace directly back to the French Canadian horse. The same is also true of the Morgan, and I think that while perhaps the theory of extreme speed on which the breeding of the American standard bred has been perhaps too much based might not be strengthened by the introduction of French Canadian blood, the endurance, the courage, the symmetry and the soundness, as regards the legs and feet of the trotter would be greatly increased. With reference to the use of the thoroughbred horse I can scarcely speak without prejudice. I myself am a very strong and devout believer in the advantage of thoroughbred blood judiciously infused into all our breeds of light legged horses. I look upon a thoroughbred, as in fact I hinted in the paper I have just read, as having the best of all the good qualities of all the light legged horses that we know anything about at the present time, and, therefore, I would think a judicious mixture of thoroughbred blood would be beneficial to the French Canadian. Of course, the thoroughbred as a race horse would not be benefited by the introduction of French Canadian blood but on the other hand the opposite would be true.

Q. What would you be likely to get with that cross, good saddle horses and hacks?

A. Yes, I think so. The thoroughbred horse, provided he is good, bred on proper lines and capable of transmitting his characteristics, will get a good horse from almost any kind of light legged mare. The Arab I don't know quite so much about. The Arab is a very symmetrical little horse and improves the conformation of almost any breed with which he is crossed; but he is deficient in size and he is not at the present day—although he is the progenitor of the English race horse,—nearly as fast, has not

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as much endurance and has not nearly as many good qualities, as his descendant, the thoroughbred. So I would be rather chary of recommending the introduction of Arab blood to any of our light legged breeds although I know it is advocated by a great many people.

OBJECT IN LIMITING WEIGHT OF FRENCH CANADIAN HORSES FOR REGISTRATION.

*By Mr. Wright:*

Q. Why do you limit the registration of French Canadian horses to a certain weight?

A. The custom is followed not only in regard to French Canadian horses, but to other breeds as well. The Hackney horse in England is limited in the same way and it is about the same size. It is to discourage the almost universal tendency on the part of breeders to increase the size of horses. You keep on increasing the size until you get a horse which is altogether different from what you started out to get. Then you lose your uniformity of type and you get away from the original breed entirely. That is the case with the Hackney. A large number of Hackney breeders have been breeding too big. Their standard is 15.3 for stallions and when they get a horse over 16 hands, 16.1 and sometimes up to 16.2, it is not a Hackney at all but a great big coach horse entirely different from what the breed originally was supposed to be. I have an illustration here which will show the necessity of doing what the Department and the Association have been doing in Quebec in the way of stiffening up the Stud Book and looking after our registration and this also has some bearing on the size. I happened to be up the Gatineau one Sunday afternoon a couple of years ago and I found this (holding a poster up to view.) Having been brought up in Scotland I did not take it away without leave but I asked the owner of the building on which it was posted for it. He gave it to me and I brought it home with even more pride than he displayed in making me a present of it. The pedigree of the horse described in this poster is very instructive

“FRENCH CANADIAN STALLION KING JOHN.

KING JOHN.

Is dapple grey in color with heavy mane 4 feet long and good tail. Stands fifteen and a half hands high, weighs about fifteen hundred pounds, good action. His sire was bred by John Montgomery Camp-towneuk, Twynholm, Kirendbright, Scotland. Sire Tinwald (1514) vol. 3. Dam Lovely II (1500) vol. 5 sire of Dam Monkland Farmer (543) vol. I; grand dam Lovely of Banks (266) vol. II; sire of grand dam, Lockfergus, Champion (449) vol. I; Great Grand Dam, Solly by Lothian Tam 506.”

I don't think we could get a better illustration than this bill affords of the need of doing something to try and preserve the purity of our French Canadian horses.

UTILITY OF THE FRENCH CANADIAN HORSE.

*By Mr. Currie (North Simcoe):*

Q. What type of utility do you consider the French Canadian horse would fill, what would be the particular utility of this type of horse apart altogether from the consideration of breeding to a type?

A. That is a very important question and one which is perhaps a little difficult to answer. I think that he would make an excellent roadster. He was always a strong, thick, stout horse and he would, therefore, in my opinion be a very good horse for general purpose use on small farms.

## APPENDIX No. 2

*By Mr. Staples:*

Q. Why limit it to small farms, Doctor?

A. Because on the larger farms they generally prefer a larger horse, one with more weight, as there is heavier and more work to be done. The French Canadian horse would have in my opinion more endurance, more toughness than the Hackney horse. The Hackney horse while a very showy and very handsome animal with great conformation as bred at the present day, in too many instances is deficient in staying power. The old French Canadian strain if properly adjusted and assimilated with the blood of other breeds would give that staying power which the Hackney horse to some extent lacks. We would also have a better conformation than prevails amongst the American standard breeds and we would have a much handsomer horse. Very fortunately now they are beginning to pay a little attention to the breeding but up to the present time they have devoted their attention almost entirely to the production of speed.

Mr. CURRIE.—Too much.

Dr. RUTHERFORD.—Conformation, soundness and substance have been lost sight of. All these things should be carefully looked for in this breed which we are trying to re-instate in the province of Quebec. The question you asked is perhaps the most important one that could be submitted here to-day, viz., what after all is the object in trying to bring back this breed or improve upon it?

*By Hon. Mr. Douglas:*

Q. Would it not be a first class horse for the delivery of goods in city streets?

A. That is a rather plebeian occupation which is generally filled by the inferior specimens. I was speaking only of the best specimens bred.

*By Mr. Currie (North Simcoe)*

Q. What would you say as to the employment of the French Canadian horse for military purposes, for instance for artillery?

A. He would be too light a horse almost for artillery purposes. He might do very well for what they call horse artillery but for the ordinary field guns he would be a little on the light side. However, these horses make very useful remounts for cavalry purposes, especially with a little admixture of thoroughbred. There is no reason why this horse should not be bred and extensively used for cavalry purposes. They would also make good mounted infantry ponies.

*By Mr. Wright:*

Q. Is the French Canadian horse used very much in the other provinces?

A. We have not any horse in the other provinces which is very much like the French Canadian. He is perhaps nearer to a cross between a thoroughbred and a standard bred than any other but even those would be of different blood. They would be higher and perhaps leggier, less blocky and not so stout.

*By Mr. Meigs:*

Q. Could you give us the pedigree of the French Canadian horse?

A. I have just given it to you.

*By Mr. Thornton:*

Q. Is the French Canadian horse a good feeder?

A. Yes, a very good feeder, very hearty. In fact history records that in the early days the French Canadians bred so many horses that they ate up all the provender in the province and there was nothing left for the cattle and sheep.

Q. He would not take so much feed as a heavy horse?

A. No, nothing like it.

*By Mr. Smith (Middlesex):*

Q. The French Canadian horse is the best general purpose horse raised in Canada?

A. Yes, I think so.

Q. He fills that position to a very much greater extent than any other?

A. Yes.

*By Mr. Thornton:*

Q. On our sandy land he would be the most profitable horse for the average farmer?

A. That is for the actual work of the farm.

Q. Yes?

A. Of course, the average farmer nowadays is figuring on selling a colt now and then and many of them for that reason prefer to breed to heavier horses.

Q. Yes, but for the farm work itself?

A. For the work itself I think he is admirably adapted especially on such soil as you mentioned.

#### SPEED OF THE FRENCH CANADIAN HORSE.

*By Mr. Miller:*

Q. Is the French Canadian horse speedy enough as an ordinary driver?

A. Yes, he is a horse that will go along very nicely. As a rule he has not got extreme speed and even when he has a good deal of speed he does not care to keep it up for any great distance; he prefers a reasonable gait. He will go on all day but does not care to keep up extreme speed. I think perhaps that is owing to the fact that his action, as I said in my address, is rather forced. He is often a high stepper but rather forces his action.

Hon. Mr. FISHER.—I would like to say that I have frequently known the French Canadian horse to go from 12 to 14 miles an hour for 2 or 3 hours in a day without any trouble.

*By Mr. Currie (North Simcoe):*

Q. The reason I asked you about the utility of the French Canadian horse for military purposes was that I saw on one occasion several teams of French Canadian horses that the Royal Canadian Artillery had. They were heavier horses than those outlined in your address. I never saw such magnificent teams in my life. I understand these horses went all through the South African war and came back home safe and sound?

A. Yes.

Q. I don't know whether you have heard or know anything about that. The horses I speak of weighed possibly from 1,450 to 1,500 pounds, they were a little heavier than the type you mentioned. These horses are very handy.

A. Probably they had a cross of French Canadian blood.

Q. The horses I speak of were black with a curly mane and tail?

A. They would be a cross with French Canadian blood. A great many of the horses that we know now in Canada as French Canadians are really a cross between either the Clydesdale or the Percheron and the old French Canadian blood.

Mr. OWEN.—Judging from the description given by the Hon. Minister of Agriculture the French Canadian horse must possess quite a bit of speed. I am a great lover of horses and when I get a hold of a horse that can travel 14 miles an hour I



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consider him a crackerjack as a roadster. However, such horses are very few and far between.

*By Mr. Hunt:*

Q. How are these horses registered? Are they put as being of a certain breed?

A. A good deal of attention is paid to the breeding, to the genealogy, and the owners who present them for registration are questioned very closely as to their breeding. But it is quite impossible to depend entirely upon the spoken statements of these men, and it being impossible to trace back the breeding, or verify it in any way, as a matter of fact they are largely accepted on their conformation alone.

*By Mr. Sexsmith:*

Q. Are there any of these thoroughbred stallions in the province of Ontario now?

A. You mean the pure bred French Canadian stallions? There are a few but they have not been re-inspected yet. We intend to have another inspection next month and no doubt a large proportion of them will be thrown out of the new stud book. I would not like to make any promise as to any of these horses now in the province of Ontario being accepted by the members of the Commission.

*By Mr. Wright:*

Q. Is there any such system in regard to the other breeds? Generally in the registration of live stock there are the pure bred sire and the pure bred dam to qualify for registration in the stud book without any inspection?

Hon. Mr. FISHER.—I think every other book is closed for foundation stock. I do not think there is any other book except the French Canadian book which is still open for what is called foundation stock. Where the books are closed for foundation stock it is only the progeny of the registered animals that can be registered.

Mr. WRIGHT.—But can all the progeny be registered, no matter what they may be?

## GOVERNMENT INSPECTION.

Hon. Mr. FISHER.—Oh, yes, there is no system of inspection by the government; that would be a matter for the association to discuss. This is a case where the old French Canadian book maintained in the province of Quebec was examined and before we could, on the part of the Department of Agriculture, put our stamp on the animals registered, or rather on the certificates which we now do in the case of the national records of Canada, we felt that we ought to go over the animals and reconsider them and for that purpose this system of inspection was established. In making that inspection there were a large number of animals which the owners had not registered in the old stud-book, but which they still claimed were French Canadian horses of the best stamp. We, therefore, advertised that any body that would bring us horses for examination by this commission would be entitled to that examination, and, if they passed, to registration. That was to be done for a certain limited period and when that period is passed the books will be closed and no new blood will be permitted entry. The suggestion has been made that the breed would be benefited, and perhaps made better in every respect, if a system of allowing the infusion of some out-crosses of selected stallions might be permitted. That is a subject which is now under consideration by the French Canadian Horse Breeders' Association and the officers of my department. It has its advantages but it also has its dangers; we have not yet come to a conclusion in the matter.

Mr. CURRIE (North Simcoe).—The Standard Bred Books allow an infusion of the thoroughbred.

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Hon. Mr. FISHER.—Well the Standard Bred Books as I understand them are a little different from any other horse books.

Mr. CURRIE (North Simcoe).—Does not the Hackney permit of the thoroughbred strain?

Hon. Mr. FISHER.—I am not certain, but in the Standard Bred a record of performances and performances of progeny will entitle an animal to be registered, it does not matter what its breeding is. I don't think there is any other breed that allows that kind of thing and for that reason the Standard Bred Book is a little different from any other register. Some other registers, I think the Hackneys, allow—

Dr. RUTHERFORD.—Not now.

Hon. Mr. FISHER.—Not now? They used to allow a certain infusion of thoroughbred.

Dr. RUTHERFORD.—In the case of Yorkshire coach horses.

Hon. Mr. FISHER.—Some of the coaching breeds I think have allowed the same. If such a permission is given in regard to the French Canadian horses we will have to consider carefully the conditions, and the breeds which would be permitted to be infused, with the greatest care. I may say in regard to the French Canadian horse that I have ever since I was a boy been connected with horses. The first animal I was ever put on in my life was a French Canadian pony which my father had and drove for many years. That pony could go his 12 to 14 miles an hour at any time. My father was a doctor and used to drive from morning until night and many a time I have driven him 12 miles an hour.

Mr. WAUGH (Muskoka).—What were his sire and dam?

Hon. Mr. FISHER.—I cannot tell you what his sire and dam were. In the province of Quebec they had then an immense quantity of what they called pure French Canadian stock, and this pony had all the characteristics of the breed. He was an almost exact image of the horse which Dr. Rutherford described. He was a deep, dark mahogany brown with a mane and tail that swept the ground almost.

Mr. WAUGH (Muskoka).—How much did he weigh?

Hon. Mr. FISHER.—He was from 14 to 15 hands in height and would weigh probably about 900 pounds. There used to be hundreds of such horses around Montreal driven by the laborers in their charrettes, drawing heavy loads and doing the general work of the farm. There was another class that I remember very well too, a much larger type that we used to call St. Lawrence. They were generally black, big, proud horses, holding their heads high, with tremendous forelocks, manes and tails, very broad chests, of course, strong animals. These animals you never see today around the island of Montreal; they are practically destroyed.

Mr. CURRIE (North Simcoe).—Is there is any possibility of reviving the breed?

Hon. Mr. FISHER.—That is the kind of work we are trying to do.

Mr. HOBANS.—Where have you discovered the type of the true French Canadian horse?

Hon. Mr. FISHER.—The ones we have examined and registered so far have been chiefly on the north shore of the St. Lawrence and around St. Hyacinthe and St. Johns and there are quite a few down below Quebec on both sides of the river, but the type has been practically destroyed by the infusion of other blood in an unscientific and reckless and irregular way.

Mr. CURRIE (North Simcoe).—Have you any hope of reviving the St. Lawrence type?

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Hon. Mr. FISHER.—The present stallions as seen at the horse shows are larger than the old type that I was first describing, the French Canadian pony. The St. Lawrence horses used to weigh as high as 1,300 pounds, 1,200 I think was their average. The present stallions that we see at exhibitions run I think about 1,200 and some as high as 1,300.

Dr. RUTHERFORD.—1,350.

## EXHIBITION AT ST. JOHNS, P.Q.

Hon. Mr. FISHER.—I don't know whether you gentlemen have visited any recent horse shows in the province of Quebec. The last exhibit at St. Johns was a magnificent one. There were over 100 horses and they were really very fine animals. The gentleman who went down from Bowmanville to judge them has been handling French Canadian horses for many years, Mr. Pollard, who is perhaps known to some of you as a horseman. He was perfectly astonished and delighted with the exhibit, and he said that it was a very difficult task indeed to award the prizes, there were so many thoroughly good horses.

Mr. SMITH (North Middlesex).—I will only detain you a moment, but I would like to give a little testimony to the good qualities of the French Canadian breed of horses and as to the advisability of re-establishing that breed if it be possible. There are quite a number of these horses that I have had the pleasure of handling personally, and I know of the good qualities that they possess. I have in mind one particular team which was typical of the large number that I was conversant with. This team weighed 1,250 pounds each as nearly as possible. They were very well matched. They were black and of the same type as that shown in the illustration which was handed around, except perhaps they were a little chunkier. Unlike the characteristics that Dr. Rutherford has spoken of, viz., their desire to go a little slower than required, they would travel up to the 10 miles an hour without any urging whatever and if they would make 12 miles an hour and continue it for a couple of hours or more, I have seen them do it. On a 10 mile gait they would continue for three or four hours without any trouble whatever. Besides that they would walk with a good ordinary sized load at about 4 miles an hour. I think that is one of the best qualities you could have in a farm horse, and the French Canadian is an ideal farmers' horse. Besides that I have seen the same team matched against other heavier horses, horses that would weigh probably 1,600 or 1,700 lb. The French Canadian horses would draw a heavier load than heavier horses, not because they had the weight, but simply in the starting the heavier animals would get down to it and by sheer force would be able to move while the smaller team by quicker action would start. Once started the greatest trouble was overcome. That is one of the characteristics I have found in these French Canadian horses and I fancy that we have not yet developed any breed, or mixture of breeds, of horses that would come up to the French Canadian as a general purposes horse. It is perhaps the most valuable horse that the farmer could have either in Quebec, Ontario or the West. Doubtless a heavier horse is more profitable to raise because you can sell it at a larger price.

The CHAIRMAN.—I can add a word of appreciation on the same lines that Mr. Smith has referred to. When quite a boy our folks got possession of a French Canadian, or what was said to be a French Canadian, pony, weighing one thousand and a half pounds. It was quite black and a beautiful type of horse, well quartered, good clean legs, and could do on the road a mile in four minutes. This pony could go at the rate of 12 miles an hour for one, two, three or four hours; in fact pretty nearly for the whole day, and I have driven him 30 or 40 miles and he would come home just as bright as when he left. We had this pony from the time that he was 4 years

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old until he died. He was admired wherever he went. Whether it was in the city or the country people would admire him and say, 'That is a pretty horse, where did you get it?' He was raised by a farmer in the neighbourhood, I don't know where the mother was obtained, but he was just typical of what I understand the French Canadian horses to be; one of the handsomest and most useful horses that we ever had upon our farm, a beautiful animal and useful in every way. I think he must have been an ideal French Canadian horse.

## TELEGONY.

*By Mr. Owen:*

Q. I wish to ask Dr. Rutherford to explain this fact. I was told it by a Presbyterian minister. He owned a mare of the light harness type. He bred her to a registered pacing stallion. She lost a colt about 2 months before her time. A few months after that he bred her to one of the best pure bred Hackneys, and the result was a pacing colt of the light harness type. Can you explain that?

A. I would ask you before endeavouring to answer the question whether the service by the pacing stallion was the first service that the mare had ever had?

Q. Yes, I think it was.

A. That is what is known as telegony and it is one of the most disputations subjects among breeders at the present day. It is claimed by many breeders and many men of experience, and I myself am a strong believer in the theory, that an animal bred for the first time is liable ever afterwards to show in her progeny some of the characteristics of the first male with which she has had connection. Prof. Cossar Ewart, who is a brother of the Chief Architect of the Public Works Department here, has gone most exhaustively into the subject and has demonstrated to his own entire satisfaction and to that of those who believe with him, that no such thing exists. I have, however, in my own personal experience, which has now unfortunately extended over a great many years, seen so many instances of it that it will take a great deal more than proofs which Prof. Ewart has produced to convince me that such instances as that which you describe are not quite in the natural order of things.

## DISPOSITION OF THE FRENCH CANADIAN HORSE.

Hon. Mr. FISHER.—There is one thing more I would like to say about the French Canadian horse—it has not been touched on—and that is as to his disposition. The horse as a rule is the most kindly, gentle and docile horse I have ever had the opportunity of handling, and he is also one of the truest to his work; he never gives out, it does not matter what he is at, if it is on the road he travels along forever, and if he has a load behind him he will tug at it until he moves it. He never balks and children can handle him with the greatest safety. In every way he is docile and kindly.

*By Mr. Currie (North Simcoe):*

Q. What result would you get by crossing the French Canadian mare with a Clydesdale horse such as you referred to?

A. King John, I think, is perhaps more of a Percheron than a Clydesdale, from his picture. The horse, himself, King John, was a very handsome horse, a horse of great symmetry and conformation. I think myself that in the first cross you would get probably a very useful animal, off the Clydesdale, a very good horse, but then you could not go any further with that cross; you would simply have to stop there.

Q. The reason I ask you is this: the farmers of Western Ontario, especially in the district I represent, will only breed to a thoroughbred or a close well bred

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Clydesdale either for work or for the coach, and they say these are the only two types of horses that are of any use if you want to sell them. When you ask them to introduce any new blood they are very chary of it unless they think they can improve along these lines. I would like to know whether that type of horse would assist them in that direction?

A. I do not think it would.

Mr. MILLER.—Some reference has been made to the exhibition of French Canadian horses held last year. I would like to know when and where they purpose holding their exhibition this year?

A. The exhibition will be held during the month of September at St. Hyacinthe. It was held in St. Johns last year, but this year, according to the present arrangement, it will be held at St. Hyacinthe.

*By Mr. Currie (North Simcoe):*

Q. Are these horses exhibited at Toronto?

A. No, I do not think so.

Q. Why?

A. There is no class for them.

Q. There is no class for them?

A. No.

Q. Could not a class be got for them?

A. That, of course, would be for the people of Toronto to say.

*By Mr. Hodgins:*

Q. About what is the value of these French Canadian stallions?

A. Well, there are comparatively few good ones for sale. The highest price that I have heard of was \$1,500.

Q. About the same as the Clydesdales, I suppose?

Q. Yes. Really good ones are very difficult to get because people do not like to part with them.

*By Mr. Cash:*

Q. Are there many of such horses?

A. We have registered in the present stud book 969—the majority of them of course are mares.

Mr. MILLER.—I think, Mr. Chairman, this is about the best address we have heard before this Committee and I move a very hearty vote of thanks to Dr. Rutherford.

Having read over the foregoing transcript of my evidence, I certify the same to be correct.

J. G. RUTHERFORD,

*Veterinary Director General and Live Stock Commissioner.*

