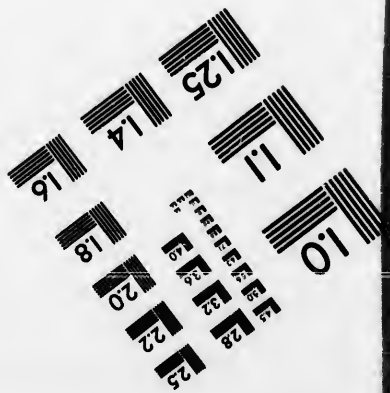
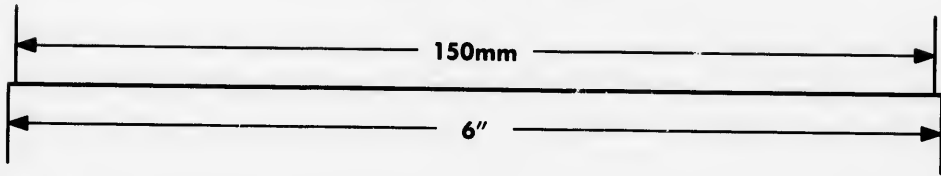
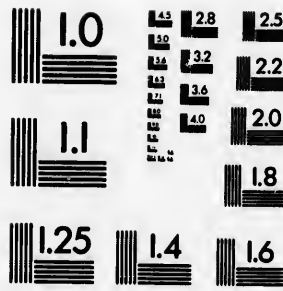
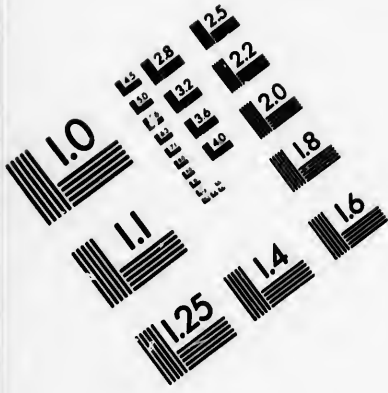


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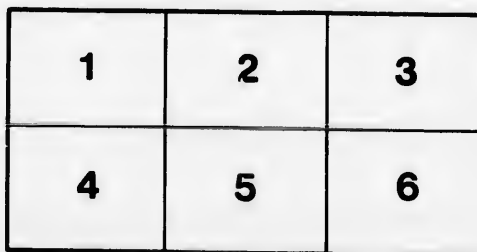
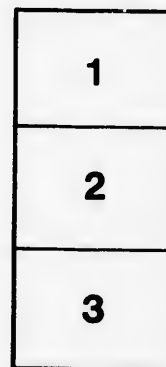
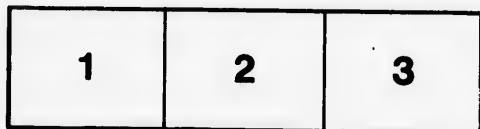
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THE ABATTOIR QUESTION.

*How it Interests the Farmers of the
Province of Quebec.*

51125

THE ABATTOIR QUESTION.

— — — — —
ITS VITAL IMPORTANCE TO THE FARMERS

— OF THE —

Province of Quebec.
— — — — —

What it means and what it involves for them.

For some years past, what is known as "The Abattoir Question" has been before the people of the province of Quebec. Its public press has agitated and its public men have discussed it. But, as it is doubtful whether the class, whom it more specially affects and will benefit, fully realize all its importance and the urgent necessity of prompt and concerted action on their part for its solution, they are respectfully asked to give their earliest and most serious consideration to the following statement of the case :

Of all the current questions, which more directly concern the well-being and prosperity of the farmers of the province of Quebec, there is admittedly none that appeals with more overwhelming force to their warmest sympathy and support than the Abattoir Question. Upon its satisfactory solution, their own future and that of the trade and importance of their province largely depend. This truth will be obvious to all when they recall the leading part played by agriculture in their national economy and the disastrous extent to which their energies, resources and productive powers have been crippled by the limited demand and the low prices inherent to a restricted home market. To such a degree has this crippling process been carried that farming to-day has become one of the least profitable

of callings in the province of Quebec and one of the least attractive to the youth of the country, when, under proper conditions, it should be amongst the most remunerative and the most inviting in which a hardy, independent and industrious population can engage for their own benefit and the national advantage. It is an everyday occurrence to hear farmers in this province complain that farming no longer pays, that they can no longer make both ends meet, and that their struggle for existence is a hard and miserable one. That this complaint is well founded cannot be denied by any observer. Yet there is a remedy at hand for all the evils of their lamentable situation if they only know how to avail themselves of it.

The admitted cure for all the disabilities under which the farmers of this province labour is a ready and profitable sale for all they can produce. But this great boon cannot be secured without a suitable market and, for many years, conscious of this fact, they have been asking the Government to find such an outlet for the surplus produce of their farms. How far they have succeeded or are likely to succeed in their object, in the present way and at the present rate of going, they unfortunately know to their cost. Yet, throughout all this weary waiting, the great British market has stood open and ready to take all that Canada can produce and send it in the line of food supplies and more if it could get them. What then is it that has hitherto prevented this desirable result, even in the face of all the geographical, climatic and other advantages which Canada and especially the province of Quebec enjoy for placing their products on the British market in the best condition so as to secure the best prices and to take the lead of all other countries in supplying food, and particularly meat, to the British consumer? This question is easily answered. Because Canada is without the *Abattoirs* needful to prepare her superabundant supplies for shipment. The creation of great collecting, slaughtering and shipping facilities of this character is what constitutes the *Abattoir Question* for the province of Quebec.

DEMANDS OF THE BRITISH MARKET.

An idea of the requirements of the British Market in the

article of fresh meat alone, to supplement the deficiencies of home production, can be gathered from the following statement :

"The supply of fresh meat to England from abroad comes mainly from Australia, New Zealand, Argentina and Chicago, and the quantity of beef and mutton imported into England as dead meat in the year 1898 was nearly 6,500,000 carcasses of mutton and 3,123,000 cwts (per cwt. of 112 lbs) of beef."

This was exclusive of 44,000 cwts of beef received from the continent of Europe and 1,231,000 live cattle and sheep from America. As will be seen, therefore, the demands of the British Market are so enormous as to be almost inexhaustible, while there is also the certainty that they will increase rather than decrease in the future. At present, the average annual increase in the quantity of meat consumed in England is about 15 per cent, whereas the supply last year only increased 5 per cent which is not in proportion with the increase of population. For instance, Messrs W. Weddel & Co., the standard authorities, in their annual review of the British meat trade for 1898, published in January last, make the following statements :

*"Supplies in the aggregate have not increased at the usual rate, while the demand has fully maintained its normal growth, with the result that, as a rule, imports have been readily disposed of at more satisfactory prices than in 1897. * * * * Mutton, lamb, and beef from New Zealand have met a good trade throughout * * * Mutton and beef from the River Plate (Argentina) have occupied a strong position all along and a healthy rate of progress has been again maintained in this section of the trade * * * With even a normal growth in the demand, the arrivals would have been short of probable requirements*

At present, Canada has but an insignificant share of this great and lucrative meat trade, owing to the absence of the organization and facilities which are absolutely essential to put the Canadian producer in more direct communication with the British consumer. In killed beef, it has practically none of the trade. Last year, it only supplied 3000 cwts., while the adjoining United States sent nearly 2½ million cwts., and distant Australia, five times as far off, 200 times as much as the whole Dominion. And the same remark applies to live cattle and sheep, in which Canada had only about 16 per cent of the British trade, her neighbour, the United States, about 48 per cent or 3 times as much and the River Plate, nearly 2½ times the distance, about 85 per cent.

ADVANTAGES OF THE PROVINCE OF QUEBEC.

Yet Canada, and especially the province of Quebec, with their vast areas and boundless natural resources, are capable of immensely increasing their production of food-stuffs, while they possess geographical and other advantages, which no competitors, in a position to send such large supplies in such good condition, can ever hope to rival in the British market. A glance at the accompanying map will show the reader how favorably situated is the province of Quebec to secure and retain the lion's share of this lucrative trade, which opens up such vast possibilities of progress and prosperity for it, if its people and, above all, its farming class are only alive to their best interests at this juncture and to the importance of quickening the aroused public interest in Great Britain of late in Canada and its resources. It will be seen that, while from England :—

Australia	is distant	13,500	miles.
New Zealand	"	12,000	"
Argentina	"	6,000	"
Chicago	"	4,000	"

the distance from the proposed abattoirs in the province of Quebec would be only 2,600 miles. But the immense advantage of vastly shorter transit is not the only one that this province enjoys. The conditions of temperature are also in its favour. All the mutton and a considerable quantity of the beef now imported into England from abroad have to cross the Equator and must be frozen solid in order to keep it. Even then 20 per cent of these cargoes arrive damaged, while Canadian meat needs only to be chilled and, the time of transit from Quebec to Liverpool or London being only eight days by steamer, fresh killed meat sent from here and kept in a properly cooled chamber, would improve in quality and tenderness and arrive in the best conditions at its destination, thus commanding the highest prices in the British market. Everything in fact, combines to place the province of Quebec in an exceptionally favourable position to put her food products, in the shape of live stock, dead meat, fish, fowl, and fruit on that market and to build up a profitable and ever growing trade with the mother

country that will infuse new life and importance into Quebec agriculture and assure the prosperity and increase of its population on a solid basis.

THE PROPOSITION BEFORE THE GOVERNMENT

From time to time, in recent years various plans for opening up this lucrative trade have been submitted to the Provincial Government, but until now nothing really practical has been put before it. The present proposition is from British capitalists of the highest standing and respectability who possess an intimate acquaintanceship with the trade and who offer, on certain guarantees, to finance a sum of \$1,000,000 and to organize a company to construct, equip and operate an abattoir and its auxiliary industries in the province of Quebec, the point to be chosen for the purpose being in the vicinity of the port of Quebec owing to its favorable location from the standpoint of railway connections and to the fact that open navigation from the port in question can be had for shipping during eight months of the year. The promoters ask that the Provincial Government shall guarantee the principal and interest at the rate of $8\frac{1}{2}$ per cent per annum for forty years, on gold bonds amounting to \$1,000,000 for a company to be formed and registered in England, with a share capital of \$5,000,000, of which the promoters bind themselves to personally subscribe \$125,000. Only \$500,000 of the guaranteed bonds to be issued and the balance, only if deemed advisable, by the company and sanctioned by the Government. The net profits of the company to be applied in the first instance to the payment of the annual interest on the issued bonds, and secondly, to provide a sinking fund of $1\frac{1}{2}$ per cent per annum in the Government's own hands to pay off the bonds at maturity. In addition, as a guarantee of their good faith and solvency, the promoters are prepared to make a substantial deposit in gold in any bank approved off by the Government, forfeitable to the Government in the event of non-fulfilment of their obligations within the delays agreed upon ; to make the bonds a first mortgage on all the company's assets ; to elect domicile in the province of Quebec and to report half yearly to the Government, which shall also have the right to appoint two of its own representatives, residents of the province, on the Board of Directors, besides an Inspector whose salary shall be

paid by the company. As will be seen therefore, the Government, in granting the proposed guarantee, runs absolutely no risk whatever, nor is it called upon or likely to be ever called upon, to disburse a single cent, while it is further protected against the possibility of all mismanagement or deception by the presence of two of its own nominees on the Board of Directors and by the other safeguards provided.

On the other hand, with the advantage and prestige of the Government guarantee, the promoters will be enabled to finance their project more easily and on better terms in the British money market, so that its success will be thereby further assured and there will thus be added a new and important industry to the province, which will entail an immediate expenditure of at least \$500,000 for buildings, plant and equipment alone and which will in a few years materially alter for the better the state of its agriculture and the condition of every section of the community.

ITS ADVANTAGES TO THE FARMERS

Every intelligent farmer in the province will see at a glance the immense advantages to him of the establishment in his midst of a system that will supply him with a ready and profitable sale for all the products of his farm and thus furnish him with an incentive to increase them. If he be at all observant he will have noted, that, by reasonably encouraging and supporting cheese and butter making, a very large and flourishing industry has been already created in the province and that one result of that industry has been to increase four or five times the number of cattle owned by the agricultural class and to thus pave the way for the still greater industry which it is now proposed to introduce.

As live beef stock, the cattle of the province of Quebec as a rule are small and not suitable for export. Moreover the prospects are that the export trade of cattle on the hoof is drawing to its close. Consequently, the only market for these cattle is the restricted local one, with the result that the prices obtained for them are low and do not pay the farmer for raising them. Prepared and exported as dead meat, however, with all the advantages enjoyed by the province for reaching the British market ahead of all competitors, they would command

infinitely higher prices. An idea of these can be formed from the following statement of the wholesale prices in London and Liverpool during the year 1898 :

American beef killed on landing,	10	cts. per lb.
" chilled beef	9 $\frac{1}{4}$	" "
" veal	12	" "
English and Scotch mutton	12 $\frac{1}{4}$	" "
Pork	10 $\frac{1}{4}$	" "

If we take 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ cents per lb. from the above prices as the charges of the Abattoir Company for handling, slaughtering, shipping, insurance, etc., the province of Quebec farmer would receive

For his beef	6 $\frac{1}{4}$	cts. per lb.
" veal	9 $\frac{1}{4}$	" "
" mutton	10 $\frac{1}{4}$	" "
" pork	8 $\frac{1}{4}$	" "

if the quality be satisfactory. Compare these with the prices that he has had even the greatest difficulty in obtaining for many years past, and let him say whether it is better for him to go on in the same old, unsatisfactory way as he has been going for years or to insist upon the change proposed. Another circumstance that should not be overlooked is that there are now many more calves produced in the province than are required to maintain the milch herds. Indeed, it is officially stated that 460,000 calves are killed at birth annually. In this waste alone, if prevented, there is a certain source of wealth to the farmer, if the Government, was to assist an enterprise which would utilize these wasted calves and make it worth the farmer's while to raise them into beasts. The following conditions of the proposed contract are of special interest to farmers :

Article 16..... "That the farmers of the Province of Quebec and other persons purchasing their farm produce shall be entitled to receive at the abattoir the value of their goods according to their value in the English market as dressed meat, less two and one half cents per lb., charged for the handling, slaughtering and shipping the same. The offal and hides to belong to the Company.

Article 17.....“The Company shall be obliged to receive all the cattle, sheep and hogs offered by the farmers of the Province of Quebec, and by other persons purchasing their farm produce in preference to those produced in other parts of the Dominion and upon the conditions mentioned in the preceding Article. The Company shall, however, have the right of refusing any animals which they consider in an unfit or unhealthy condition.”

It may be added for the public information that, in the event of the Company going into operation, it will appoint reliable and trustworthy resident agents, chosen from among the farmers themselves, in every county in the province, whose duty it shall be to receive at all seasons of the year, the live stock offered for sale within their districts, and to forward the same to the Abattoir, paying a sum of cash on account of the purchase price and the balance when the weight and quality of the animal have been properly ascertained and established as dressed beef at the Abattoir. Farmers can thus find immediate sale for their products all the year round, in their own localities without the necessity, trouble of proceeding to the public markets, and without the necessity of feeding throughout the winter, should they not wish to do so.

THE DUTY OF THE HOUR

Under the circumstances, it would seem perfectly clear that it is not alone the interest, but the urgent duty of the farmers of the province of Quebec to consider the present project in all its aspects and, if they approve of it, to not only give it at once their most earnest sympathy and support, but to express their opinion in its favor, through their various farmer's clubs, agricultural societies, municipal organizations or otherwise, in such manner as will leave no doubt in any mind as to their views and wishes on the subject.

EXTRACTS FROM A
L E C T U R E

Delivered before the Committee on Agriculture of the Legislative
Assembly of Quebec, at the Parliament House, Quebec,
on Wednesday, December, 18th, 1895, by

PROFESSOR JAMES W. ROBERTSON

DOMINION DAIRY COMMISSIONER AND AGRICULTURIST.

The Province depends for its well-being upon the progress of agriculture, and the object of this committee, I take it, is to stir up your farmers to make the most of your resources. It is not sufficient to say that you have wonderful resources unless you turn them to good account. You must realize on them or they are no good to anybody. So far, therefore as this committee can stir up the farmers of the Province to make the most of their opportunities, just so far will it be rendering the very largest kind of good service.

There are certain places where these products must go. We cannot consume them all in this country. We have to find a market.—Now the only one that we can find is in Great Britain; as represented by their markets the British people are the great eaters of the world. Their country is the only importing one for these products.

To give stability to the profits from farms, and thus to ensure prosperity to the whole country, it is necessary that all perishable food products from Canadian farms should secure as good a place relatively in the British markets as has been won by Canadian cheese and creamery butter. Judicious and energetic action by the government can accomplish as much for beef, mutton, pork, poultry and other products, as has been done for cheese and butter. It is most urgent and desirable that something of this kind should be done.

If the business of shipping dressed meats be begun at once it would give safety to the outlook for the whole of the live stock interest of Canada and prevent a panicky disaster, which might come at any time, if our cattle were to be wholly excluded

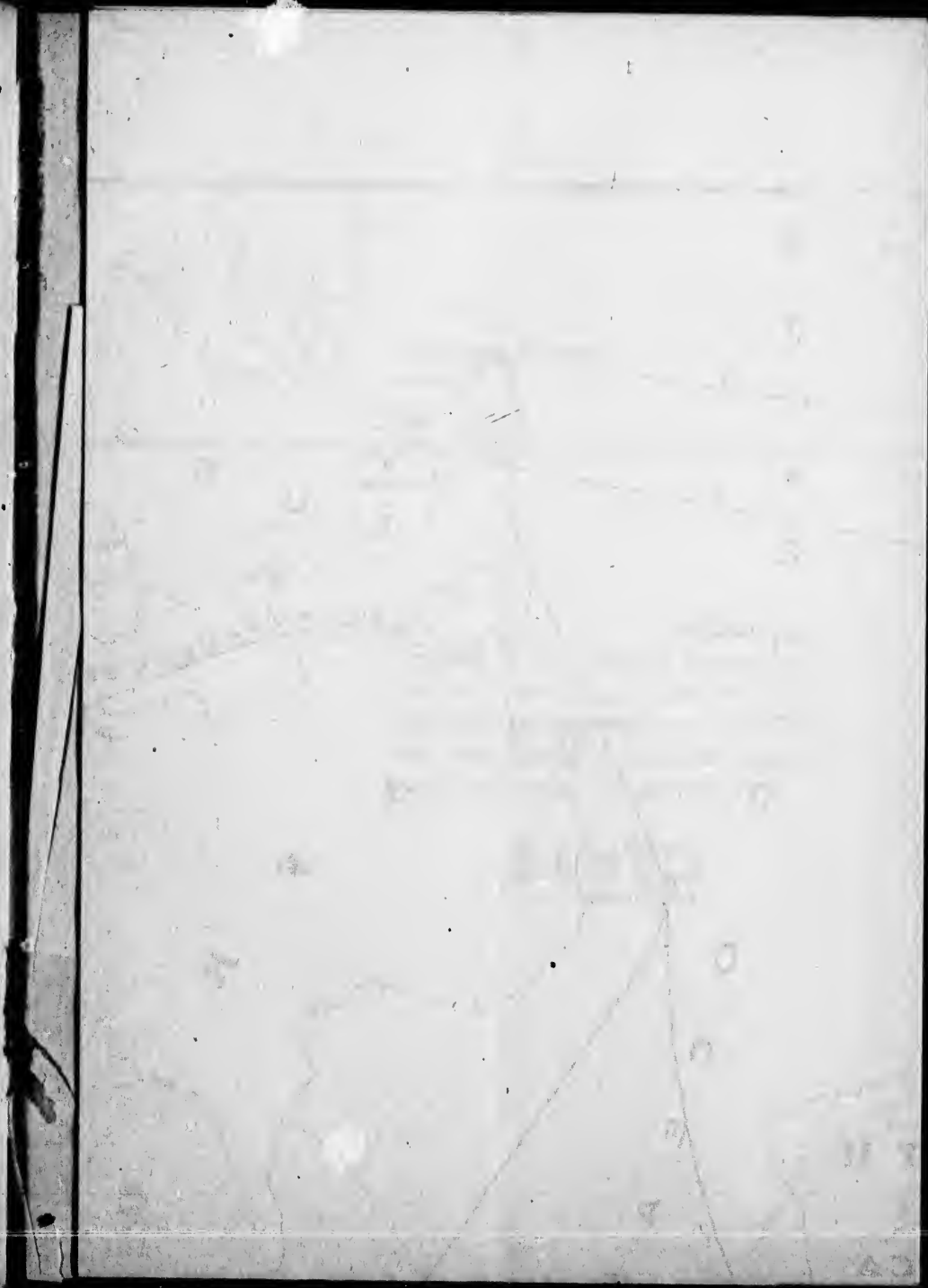
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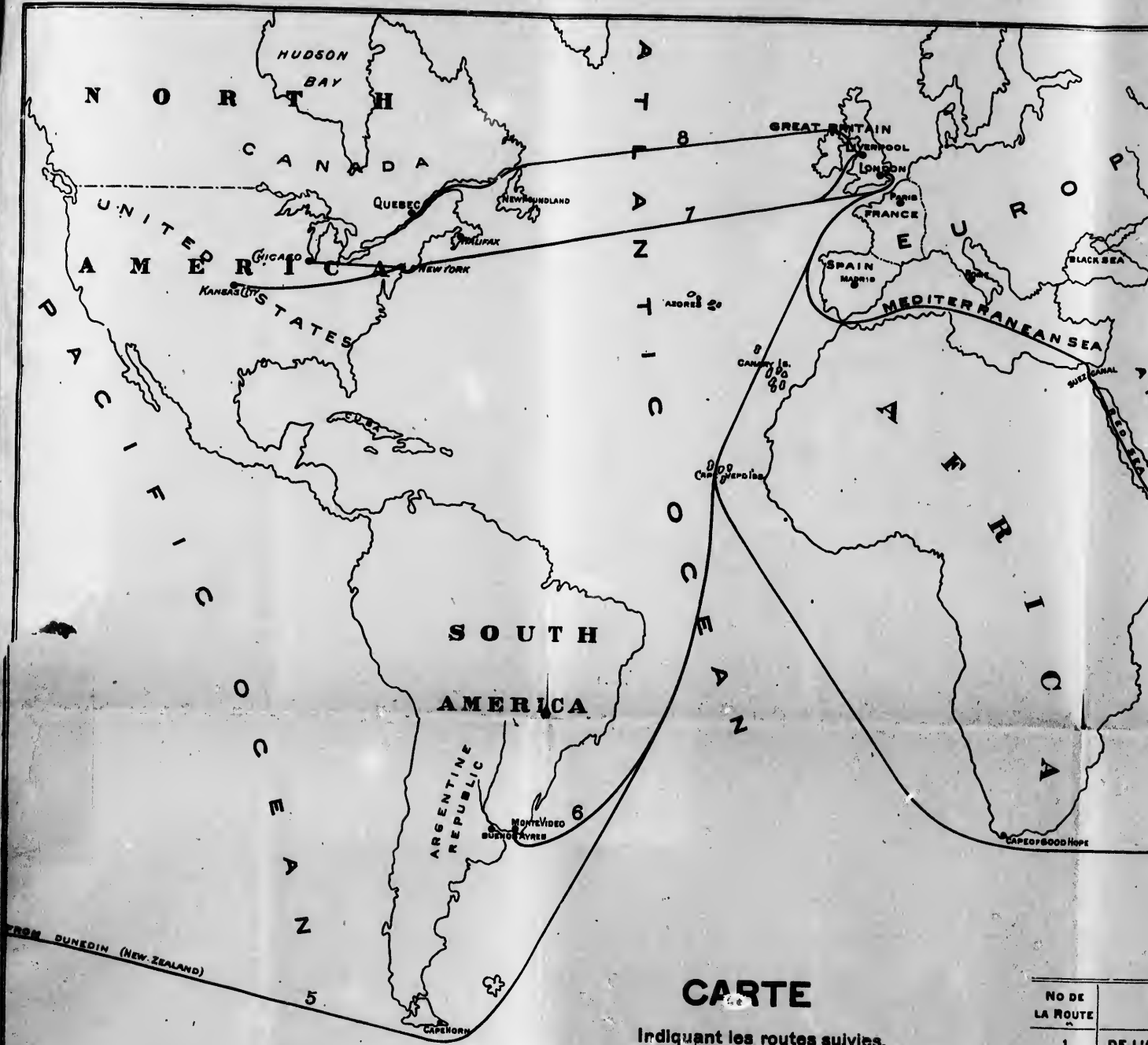
from being landed alive in Great Britain. An export demand for Canadian dressed beef might also be created, which would last during the whole year.

Immediately after the close of navigation at the port of Montreal, exports of cattle from Canada practically cease. That results in great lowering of the prices of fat cattle until the opening of navigation during the following season. During the present month, it is reported that quarters of beef are being sold in Toronto and other markets as low as two cents per pound.

Thus, the opening up of an export trade to Great Britain in dressed meats would be an undoubted, immediate, and lasting benefit to the farmers.

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CARTE

Indiquant les routes suivies, et les distances parcourues, par les steamers qui transportent les viandes, et les bestiaux, des différents points du Globe en Angleterre.

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FRED. DRAYNER.
 Draughtsman.
 Quebec, 25th MARCH 1899.

