

The Work of the President's Cabinet

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

FARMERS AID IN FOOT-AND-MOUTH FIGHT

The recent lifting of the foot-and-mouth quarantines from large areas previously closed and the modification of the quarantines in still other sections has been made possible, federal authorities say, by the co-operation not only of the various state officials but of farmers and stockmen themselves. Where this co-operation has been most in evidence, progress in the eradication of the disease has been most rapid. The federal authorities have, of course, control over the movement of live stock in interstate commerce only; the local quarantines are established and enforced by the state. Their efficiency depends in great measure upon the willingness of the people to submit to the necessary restrictions.

Indiana and Michigan are cited as instances of the importance in this respect of public opinion. In Michigan the first herd was slaughtered on October 19. Cases of the disease existed in 15 Michigan counties and in 18 in Indiana. In all, 330 herds were affected. Sixty days later these herds had all been slaughtered and the infected premises cleaned and freed from disease. In the interval there had been only a few scattering instances, half a dozen possibly, of the plague spreading for these different centers of infection to neighboring farms.

The people not only observed the quarantine regulations but they did all in their power to expedite the work of slaughter. In many cases they had the ditches in which the animals were to be buried dug and waiting for the killing gangs.

Public sales of live stock had proved themselves most dangerous agents in spreading foot-and-mouth disease. In Indiana and Michigan the state authorities absolutely prohibited the holding of such sales in or adjacent to areas where the disease existed. The spread of the contagion in other states where this prohibition was not enforced shows the value of the precaution, but it requires strong and determined action on the part of the local authorities.

\$2,500,000 FOR FOOT-AND-MOUTH DISEASE

Under the recent urgent deficiency act which was signed by the president on January 25, \$2,500,000 is now available for the eradication of the foot-and-mouth disease. Up to January 1, 1915, the outbreak had cost the federal government a total of \$2,129,138.04. Of this sum, \$1,840,328.99 represents the federal government's share of the expense of slaughtering affected herds and reimbursing the owners for their loss, of which the government pays half and the individual states the remainder. The figures show that exclusive of the work in January, 101,176 animals have been slaughtered. Of these 46,268 were cattle, 47,735 swine, and the remainder sheep and goats.

The money now at the disposal of the department of agriculture, will, it is believed, aid the campaign against the pestilence by enabling the government to make prompt payment to all owners of infected herds, and thus minimize the reluctance of farmers to have their stock slaughtered.

FOOT-AND-MOUTH DISEASE IN EUROPE

Because of the prevalence of foot-and-mouth disease in Europe and South America, importations of live stock are now limited practically to shipments from Great Britain, Ireland, and the Channel Isles. Even with these countries trade has been interrupted several times in recent years, for the government does not permit the importation of animals from countries where the disease exists, and there have been several outbreaks in Great Britain lately.

MORE LIVE STOCK NOW THAN A YEAR AGO

For the first time in many years, information collected by the department shows that all classes of live stock in the United States are increasing in numbers. Thus the real facts contradict, absolutely, sensational reports that prices for meat and shoes would rise to unprecedented figures in the immediate future. It has even been said that a government statistician predicted meat at 50 cents a pound and shoes at \$10 a pair within the next two years. Such a prediction, the real government statisticians say, is quite unwarranted.

On January 1, for example, the number of beef cattle showed an increase of 3.4 per cent

over a year ago, and an actual increase of 1,212,000 head. Hitherto the number of beef cattle in the United States has declined steadily since 1910. There are also more milch cows in the country than last year, the increase being 2.5 per cent, or in numbers, 525,000. Swine, however, showed the greatest increase of all classes—9.6 per cent. On January 1, 1914, there were only 58,933,000 swine in the country; on January 1, 1915, 64,618,000. This is accounted for by the fact that the production of swine can be increased more rapidly than that of other classes of live stock and consequently an enlarged demand can be met more readily.

The prediction of 50-cent meat and \$10 shoes was accompanied by the declaration that France alone has taken from America nearly 300,000 horses within the last five months and that the other countries at war have drawn upon our resources in the same proportion. The facts are that more horses were on the farms of the United States on January 1, 1915, than there were a year before, the increase being 233,000 head, or 1.1 per cent. So far from France alone having taken 300,000 horses from us, the total exports since the war began have certainly been much less than 100,000 and very likely not over 75,000. Since there are approximately 25,000,000 horses altogether in the United States, the drain on account of the war is scarcely alarming.

EXHIBITS FOR SAN FRANCISCO FAIR

The U. S. auxiliary Ceasar has arrived in San Francisco with a strange cargo made up of exhibits intended for the Panama-Pacific International exposition. These include a miniature slaughter house with the latest appliances for killing live stock in a sanitary and economical manner; a full-sized lookout tower such as used by foresters in protecting the national forests; a miniature Yosemite valley with roads, waterfalls and other scenic features reproduced complete; groups of stuffed animals such as the American elk and prairie dog; and a collection of the instruments that Uncle Sam's weather man uses to forecast weather conditions.

Seventeen thousand square feet of floor space is to be occupied by the department of agriculture, most of it being in what is known as the palace of agriculture. The office of public roads' exhibit will be found in the palace of machinery. Many of the features have been especially prepared for the new fair and the whole exhibit aims to give, as far as possible, a comprehensive idea of some of the important things which the department is trying to do for the farmer.

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

The letter of the Manufacturers' association of Montgomery county, Norristown, Pennsylvania, written to the president on December 24, 1914, complaining of business conditions and requesting as a remedy the restoration of the protective tariff, was answered by Secretary Redfield as follows:

"Attention Mr. C. P. Williams, president.—Your favor of December 24th has been referred to me and has received careful consideration. It is a cause for sincere regret that any circumstances should have resulted in business conditions that are troublesome. You will kindly permit me to hope that matters may soon mend and to extend for that purpose in any practicable way the assistance of this department in any or all of its branches. Indeed, I venture to trust that before this arrives, you will have shared in the business improvement to which both the general and trade press testify, and of which the increase of unfilled orders for steel during December is so plain a witness. Perhaps also you will kindly allow my suggesting that other causes than that on which you lay stress may have operated to produce the results of which you speak. If a tariff were the cause of prosperity, Brazil would be happy, for she has the highest on earth; but Brazil is very badly off. If the assurance against competition secured by a tariff were the thing needed, then this has in truth existed and does exist today in the fact that one of our greatest commercial competitors is practically excluded from the world's markets and important textile districts of a second great nation, the very seat of hostilities. The industries of a third great competitor are closed if not ruined, and those of a fourth are taxed to meet her own pressing needs. Never had America less effective foreign competition than today.

However, it is not my purpose to discuss economics, but to tender assistance. That the exact situation you describe may be made more clear than it was possible for you to do in your letter, I have directed the bureau of foreign and domestic commerce to send one of its best men to call upon you. He will seek, as I know you desire him to do, to learn all the facts both within and without your establishments that bear upon the condition that you state is troubling you. It will be his desire, as it is mine, only to be helpful. Whatever information is given him will be confidential in so far that names and individual businesses will not be disclosed and every personal and commercial confidence will be respected. His report on the facts will, of course, be a public document, but since he will seek facts in a considerate and impartial spirit of helpfulness, I do not doubt you will afford him the fullest knowledge on the subject you have of your own motion so forcibly brought before the public. Meanwhile, if this department can aid in any way in relieving any difficulties or annoyances, it will act with sympathy and promptness on learning what it can do."

BUREAU OF FOREIGN AND DOMESTIC COMMERCE

With a view to making its contents timely, the bureau has inaugurated certain changes in the manner of publishing the Daily Consular and Trade Reports. The new form of publication, which is known as "Commerce Reports," contains latest cable dispatches from the commercial attaches and commercial agents of the department, as well as similar information from the American consular service. This publication is issued by the bureau of foreign and domestic commerce, as hitherto, and the initial number of January 2 contained a special announcement by Secretary Redfield in which he outlined the work of this very important branch of the government service.

A new feature in the style of publication of these reports is the issuance in the form of supplements to "Commerce Reports" of the American consular officers, reviewing industrial, commercial, financial, and other conditions in their respective jurisdictions. These supplements are in a convenient form for ready reference.

BUREAU OF STANDARDS

In recent months the bureau of standards has been conducting experiments for the purpose of determining the utility of American materials for the manufacture of certain articles heretofore imported almost entirely from Europe.

Up to the present time, practically all the porcelain crucibles and dishes used in chemical laboratories throughout the country have been imported from Germany. An investigation begun two years ago by the clay products section has developed that clays exist in this country from which such wares could be made equal to the foreign product so far as their resistance to temperature changes is concerned, a quality absolutely essential in this ware, but owing to impurities in the clay, defective in color. Recently there has been developed a method of purifying the clay, which makes possible the manufacture of ware of good color, a detail important not only in this particular ware but in all white wares. One concern has taken up the manufacture of chemical porcelain, and while the process is yet somewhat in the experimental stage, it is probable that in a short time all varieties of such ware will be made in this country.

In the manufacture of chemical porcelain and similar products, leadless glazes are the only ones that can be used. For this reason and on account of the poisonous nature of the lead compounds used in making the usual type of white-ware glaze, the bureau has been conducting an experimental study in the field of leadless glazes.

The glass used in this country for the manufacture of lenses is practically all imported except in the case of some of the smaller and cheaper lenses. For several years past, the bureau of standards has been endeavoring to persuade the glass manufacturers of the United States to take up the manufacture of this material, but they have been unable to do so, partly because of the limited quantity used as compared with other glasses, but largely on account of the varying composition required and the difficulty of annealing the glass, as good optical glass must be entirely free from strain.

With a view to working out some of the underlying problems sufficiently to enable manufacturers to start in this matter, the bureau secured two years ago an expert interested in the computation and testing of optical systems, and a little later secured another man skilled in the