



HOW THE GOVERNMENT WATCHES THE WORK AT THE GREAT PACKING HOUSES

Photos by a Staff Artist.

Inspector taking a sample of pork.

Dr. Dan C. Ayer, Veterinarian in Charge

Putting Uncle Sam's Seal on a Car

In the Sheep Shambles.

Examining for Trichinae

Work of Bureau of Animal Industry

IF OUR European neighbors only knew how much pains are taken by the government of the United States to prevent diseased meat from being placed before the consumer much less trepidation would be felt by them when asked to sit down to a dish of American beef or pork. They must not flatter themselves that it is for them alone the government inspects the meats put out from the packing houses. On the contrary, Uncle Sam is quite as much concerned in the health of his own nephews and nieces as he is in the welfare of customers across the ocean. That every animal passing through the great slaughter houses of the country is subjected to both antemortem and postmortem inspection may surprise many, but such is the fact. The Bureau of Animal Industry does its work so quietly that only the few who come directly into contact with it are aware of its existence, and yet it is one of the most thoroughly organized and efficient branches of the government. South Omaha, being one of the largest packing centers in the world, naturally has one of the largest stations of the bureau. Its headquarters are in the federal building, but its field of activity lies in the stock yards and packing house district.

Dr. Don C. Ayer, inspector in charge of the station at South Omaha, in talking of the work done under his supervision, says: "There are employed in the Bureau of Animal Industry at South Omaha twelve inspectors, three clerks, ten stock examiners, twenty-six taggers and fifteen assistant microscopists, all having passed civil service examinations, being certified by the civil service commissioner and having served a probationary period of six months, have become permanently appointed subject to the rules.

Inspectors Have Plenty to Do.

"It is the duty of the inspector to carefully examine all animals in the stock yards at the time they are weighed and all

diseased animals are condemned, tagged and removed to the packing house by a numbered permit and when the animal is slaughtered the inspector carefully examines the viscera and all parts of the carcass and if found free from disease he passes the carcass for food, otherwise he condemns it. Should the carcass show to be infected with disease it would be condemned. All animals that pass inspection at the yards are driven to the different packing houses and are there subjected to a very careful postmortem examination.

"Some of the diseases for which we condemn are: Hog cholera; swine plague; charbon or anthrax; rabies; malignant epizootic catarrh; pyaemia and septicæmia; mange or scab in advanced stages; advanced stages of actinomycosis or lumpy jaw; inflammation of the lungs, the intestines or the peritoneum; Texas fever; extensive or generalized tuberculosis; animals in an advanced stage of pregnancy or which have recently given birth to young; any disease or injury causing elevation of the temperature or affecting the system of the animal to a degree which would make the flesh unfit for human food; any organ or part of a carcass which is badly bruised or affected by tuberculosis, actinomycosis, cancer abscess; suppurating sore or tapeworm cysts must be condemned; animals too young and immature to produce wholesome meat; animals too emaciated and anaemic to produce wholesome meat; distemper, glanders and farcy and other malignant disorders; acute inflammatory lameness and extensive fistula.

"There were slaughtered at the South Omaha packing houses from January 1, 1901, to June 30, 1901, 242,502 cattle, 1,208,168 hogs, 392,157 sheep. All were subjected to the usual ante and postmortem examinations by the government inspectors. There were 731 beef carcasses and 648 parts of same found diseased and unfit for food and were tanked and rendered into fertilizer during the first six months of the present year. During the same months

3,968 hog carcasses were condemned; this is not an unusual condition; it runs along in about the same proportion.

Disposing of Condemned Meat.

"All condemned carcasses and the viscera of the same are tanked in a tank under the immediate supervision of a government inspector, who first seals the lower opening of the tank with a lead and wire seal and then places within the tank the condemned carcass; then the cover of the tank is sealed on in the same manner, steam is then turned on and the contents of the tank are rendered into grease and fertilizer, after which the tank is unsealed by the party that sealed the same. The grease makes lubricating oils and the residue makes fertilizer.

"The total amount of meat products exported for the first six months of the present year from South Omaha was 14,500,000 pounds. Each and every package, barrel or box, carcass or part of same is covered by a numbered stamp or a numbered tag, of which a record is kept in this office and a report made to the chief of bureau's office in Washington. Each employee reports to this office the work performed by himself each day and such report forms the basis for the daily reports which are transmitted to the chief of the Bureau of Animal Industry at Washington. From day to day a record of all stamps, tags and material used is also kept in this office and transmitted to Washington. The record is so complete that the number on the stamp on the box and the number on the tag on carcasses would indicate the day the tag was affixed to the carcass, by whom affixed and also the inspector that would be responsible for the postmortem work done, so that in cases where anything is wrong or the meat unfit for food the fault can easily be traced to the inspector in charge, thus making it hardly possible for diseased meats to be passed for food.

"Microscopic examination of pork is made

only for those countries that require such examination, which are Germany, France, Austria and Denmark. The samples for examination are cut from three different parts of the carcass, one piece from the muscle of the diaphragm, one from the psoas muscle—better known as the tenderloin—and one from the inside of the shoulder. Each of the three pieces is then placed in a small tin box, a duplicate tag is placed in the box with the samples and the other part of the tag is affixed to the carcass that is to be examined. One hundred and eight such samples are placed in a case and brought to the microscopic room for examination.

"Cases of 108 samples being received at the microscopic department are distributed to the assistant microscopists and the number so taken charged to the individual and credited when they return their report at the close of the day's work. An assistant microscopist is expected, each hour, to examine the samples from five boxes, twelve minutes being allowed, viz., two minutes to prepare each slide or specimen and two minutes for the examination; as there are three samples in each box, three preparations must be made, the first from the diaphragm, the second from the psoas muscle (tenderloin) and the third from the shoulder. Each preparation must be made and examined separately. Separate glasses and frames must be used for each preparation. A proper record must be made by each assistant microscopist and all tags retained on spindles.

"All condemnations must be verified by the microscopist; the tags in samples condemned must accompany the report to the inspector in charge, who will forward it to the employe whose duty it is to remove and dispose of condemned carcasses. He must then return the duplicate tags and a report of the disposition of the same to the inspector in charge.

"After the examinations are complete the carcasses of those condemned for trichinae are removed from those examined

and the carcasses of those found free from trichinae are cut up into the different cuts required and placed in enclosed cellars under government lock and the meat is removed from the cellars under the supervision of government employes for export."

Two Kinds of Juries

Pittsburg Gazette: Two Pittsburgers interested in painting met in front of an art store window downtown and fell into conversation regarding the jury that is to pass upon the paintings submitted for exhibition in the coming display at the Carnegie institute.

"There is," said one, "a similarity between the functions of an art jury and those of the twelve men whose duty it is to try defendants indicted for murder."

"Where is the similarity?" asked the other.

"Well, both juries decide whether the object of their investigation shall hang."

"That is true, but there is also a strong dissimilarity."

"How do you make that out?"

"The art jury hangs the best pictures and the murder juries hang the worst men."

"I don't know that what you say is always true of an art jury. Painters whose pictures are rejected say not, but perhaps we had better drop the subject."

And it was thereupon dropped.

He Liked It

New York Weekly: Wife—How do you like my new hat?

Husband—The idea of paying big prices for—

Wife—Big prices! Why I made it myself.

Husband—Um—yes—er—as I was saying, the idea of paying big prices for such monstrosities as the milliners are showing! Now, your hat is a work of art. Looks as if it came from Paris. Beautiful, my dear!