

TELLS SENATORS ABOUT BEEF COSTS

This May Throw Some Light on the Price You Pay for Beefsteak.

Testifying recently before a body of senators in Washington, a vice-president of one of the large packing concerns (F. Edson White of Armour and Company) made the astounding statement that so far in their fiscal year, which would cover the past eight or nine months, his company had "made no money whatever on beef."

This statement is doubtless well nigh incredible to the average man. Yet it was made in full knowledge that the senators had access to the company's books.

Recovering from the first shock, this same average man will say, "Yes, but the packers are shrewd; what they do not make on the beef they more than make up on the hides."

But even this illusion was destined to be shattered. Mr. White explained that his statement included everything that was derived from the steer as purchased—the hide, fat, even the intestines which are used largely for sausage casings.

Make Money, Nevertheless.
Well the packers make money—how do they do it? Mr. White admitted that they did, quoting figures secured by auditors of the Food Administration, to the effect that packers' profits on food commodities of all kind last year were 1.6/10 cents on each dollar taken in. These would include such things as sausage, shortening, canned meats, etc., in addition to fresh meats, hams and bacon. On all the products of his company, Mr. White explained, comprising both foods and inedible commodities, the profits during the same period were 1.8/10 cents on each dollar sale.

All of which would lead many to say that the packing business is not well understood. It isn't. Yet as one of the leading industries of the country, its workings and, above all, its profits, should be familiar matters to us. It is quite useless to orate against the high cost of living without digging into some of these fundamentals.

By-Products at Market Values.
One of the most enlightening bits of Mr. White's testimony was his explanation of the way in which cost price of beef is arrived at. If a steer is bought at \$125.00 and hides are bringing \$16.00 in the open market, then \$16.00 is credited to the cost of the steer. If hides are selling at \$23.00 that amount is credited. The visceral fat, offal and everything else that comes from the steer are likewise credited at their prevailing market values. What remains is taken as the cost price of the meat. The beef carcass is then shipped to one of the local distributing branch houses, and the manager there is given the cost price with instructions to sell the beef at a profit if he can. But in any event, whether the local market be lively or dull, he must sell for what he can get, for the commodity is a perishable one and must be sold.

Manufacturer's Profit on By-Products.
However, there is another hitch to the packing business, quite as little understood apparently, that goes to show how a loss on fresh meats may be accompanied by a profit on the total amount of business done. Take, for example, the banjo strings aforementioned, which are made from the intestines of sheep. The department that makes banjo strings (and likewise surgical ligatures, tennis strings, etc.) "buys" the intestines from the sheep-killing department, paying exactly the same price that these bring when sold to the outside market. On this basis the string department manufactures its strings and sells them, bringing a profit into the business.

In like manner the fertilizer department buys blood and tankage; the soap department buys fats; the glue department buys hoofs, horns, bones and sinews; and so on through the list of "by-products." The fertilizer, the soap and the glue, just as the music strings, bring in a manufacturer's profit.

In all cases these by-products, whether they be sold to outside manufacturers or to one of the manufacturing departments in the business (at the same prevailing market price), are credited to the cost of the meat portion of the animals, just as in the instance of the hides mentioned above. Thus the "utilization of by-products" system of which we have heard much, and the method by which it is conducted, show the packers' manufacturing profit on a great variety of commodities ranging all the way from pharmaceuticals to glue, do, in reality, bear the burden of fresh meat prices.

Suffrage Opinion Written by Wolfe.

S. M. Wolfe, attorney general, yesterday gave an opinion in which he holds that should women of the state procure the ballot in the immediate future, they will not be denied the right to register to vote in the general election this fall because of inability to produce poll tax receipts. The tax has not been levied, consequently this can not be invoked to debar the women from voting, should the equal suffrage amendment be ratified by one more state prior to the general election.

Mr. Wolfe also points out that the women can qualify to vote in the Democratic primaries, if slight modifications to the Democratic party rules are made at the state Democratic convention in Columbia May 19. The opinion follows:

Mrs. Eulalie Salje, President, South Carolina Equal Suffrage League, Aiken, S. C.: Replying to your inquiry of March 19, I direct your attention to Article 2 of the constitution of 1895, which sets forth requisites for suffrage in this state. Of course the term "male" in Section 3 of this article will have been superseded by the 19th amendment to the constitution in the event that this amendment is duly ratified and so promulgated by the secretary of the state. Otherwise the qualifications of this article will apply. It may not be amiss, however, for me to suggest that subdivision (a) of Section 4 of Article 2 relative to the payment of poll tax could not be invoked as against women voters, inasmuch as the language of that section is that there must be proof of payment six months before any election of any poll tax "then due and payable." Unless, therefore, the women citizens of the state were under law liable to poll tax six months prior to an election, there would naturally be no poll tax due at that time.

Of course, the Democratic primary is governed entirely by the rules of the Democratic party in this state, adopted at their regular annual conventions. This year I understand the convention is to be held May 19, at which time some slight modifications of the present rules may be adopted so as to render eligible all legalized voters in the state. If you will write to John Gary Evans of Spartanburg, S. C., who is chairman of the state Democratic executive committee, he will be glad to furnish you such information as you desire in this connection.—The State.

COULD HARDLY STAND ALONE

Terrible Suffering From Headache, Sideache, Backache, and Weakness, Relieved by Cardui, Says This Texas Lady.

Gonzales, Tex.—Mrs. Minnie Philpot, of this place, writes: "Five years ago I was taken with a pain in my left side. It was right under my left rib. It would commence with an aching and extend up into my left shoulder and on down into my back. By that time the pain would be so severe I would have to take to bed, and suffered usually about three days... I suffered this way for three years, and got to be a mere skeleton and was so weak I could hardly stand alone. Was not able to go anywhere and had to let my house work go... I suffered awful with a pain in my back and I had the headache all the time. I just was unable to do a thing. My life was a misery, my stomach got in an awful condition, caused from taking so much medicine. I suffered so much pain. I had just about given up all hopes of our getting anything to help me.

One day a Birthday Almanac was thrown in my yard. After reading its testimonials I decided to try Cardui, and am so thankful that I did, for I began to improve when on the second bottle... I am now a well woman and feeling fine and the cure has been permanent for it has been two years since my awful bad health. I will always praise and recommend Cardui." Try Cardui today. E 78

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WOULD LOCALIZING MEAT TRADE PAY?

Senator Currie, Stock Raiser of Nebraska, Makes Experiment.

Meat is high; the packers admit it, though they say that other foods are higher in proportion. The farmer says he is not getting too much for his cattle, in fact not enough, he says. How about numerous local slaughtering plants scattered throughout the communities of our country, or a more direct-from-farmer-to-consumer relationship?

There is almost a sentimental attractiveness about the thought, like dreams of one's boyhood home. It looks so simple. Indeed, it is simple after a fashion, and is the way most meat was handled before the industry grew to national and international proportions. But would it pay?

Tried to Build Up Local Market.

Experimentation and testing is doubtless the best teacher. And inquiring minds have not hesitated to dig into the matter. Senator F. M. Currie of Broken Bow, Neb., himself a stock raiser, relates a bit of experience of his own along this line.

He tried for years, he tells us, to establish a market for fat cattle with local butchers, invariably finding that he could not meet the price made to them by the packers.

"In other words," he says, "the packers could pay us more for our cattle on foot, and sell the product to our local butchers for less money than they (the butchers) could pay us for our cattle and slaughter the beef themselves."

During the fore part of the present year he carried his inquiry further. He shipped two carloads of cows to Omaha, and they were sold to Armour and Company for \$7.90 per hundred-weight. Among these was one cow which he wished to have himself for beef. This cow weighed 840 pounds and therefore brought him \$66.36. The animal was tagged and the identical carcass was shipped to him by express to Theftord, Neb., and charged to him at the prevailing wholesale price of such meat on that day in Kansas City, Omaha and Minneapolis. The carcass included carrying charges of about \$6.00, cost him \$60.11, or \$6.25 less than he sold the animal for in Omaha.

What Cow Would Cost Consumer.

"Now," continues the Senator, "suppose a consumer in Omaha had ordered this meat direct from me, and I had slaughtered the beef at the ranch and sent the meat direct to the consumer. Taking as a basis the price received for this cow in Omaha, \$66.36, less the freight of 17 1/2 cents per hundred, it would make the cow worth on the ranch \$65.00."

To this \$65.00 he adds \$3.00 for slaughtering at home and \$6.00 for express from Theftord to Omaha, and he deducts \$7.00 credit for the hide. According to these figures the dressed carcass of his cow would be worth \$67.00 in Omaha, as against the packers' price of approximately \$54.00 (which is derived by deducting the express charges to Theftord, \$6.00, from the price the carcass was sold to him, \$60.11).

Cheaper to Buy Than Kill.

"After thorough investigation," the Senator says, "I am convinced that it does not pay for us to slaughter our own meat at the ranch; that we would better ship our cattle to Omaha, and buy our beef from the packer. I have been engaged in the cattle producing business all my life; there is no particular reason why I should be friendly to the packers, but I am thoroughly convinced I am receiving, and always have received more for my cattle on foot, than if I had been able to sell direct to the consumer, and consequently the consumer has been able to buy my product for less money through the packer than under any other system which is known to business up to the present time."

SENATOR KENYON'S CONTRASTING VIEWS.

Just what is the purpose of the Kenyon bill now in hearing at Washington would be hard to deduce from Senator Kenyon's own statements. In the bill itself the purpose is set forth as follows: "To stimulate the production, sale, and distribution of live stock and live stock products, and for other purposes." This stimulation of live stock production may be well taken as a bid to the consumer to hope for lower meat prices.

But he has a different thought to present to producers. In a letter addressed recently to the Wallace Farmer he says: "I do not believe myself that the situation as to restricted consumption is going to be changed very much, and there will be the necessity of less production." Of course less production would supposedly mean higher prices for live stock, but also higher prices for meat.

Are either the general public or the farmer going to be fooled by this method of playing up the one against the other? It is not likely. Farmers and consumers are both coming to the realization that hampering the packers is not going to bring higher prices for live stock nor lower prices for meat, but quite the opposite.

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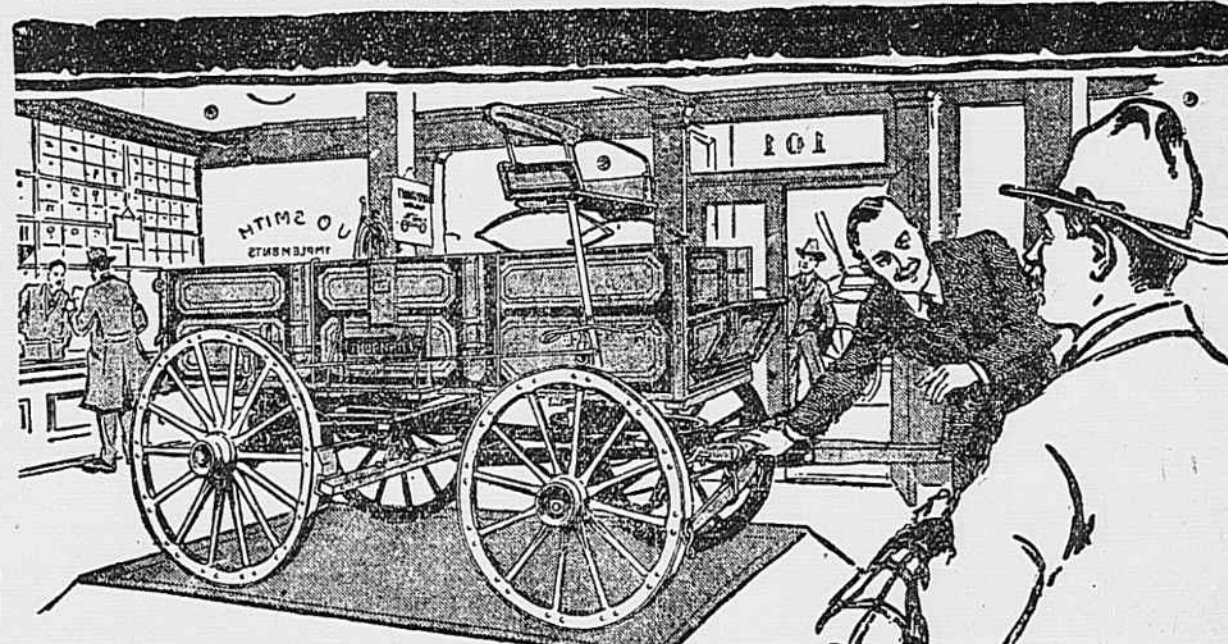
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Solid trust bars extend the full length of the axles giving them double strength.

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